



PRESS ROOM – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



125 People. One Night. \$2.8 Million.

PURPOSE 2026 shatters records in Paso Robles, proving once again that the size of a room has little to do with the size of its impact.

PASO ROBLES, Calif. — PURPOSE has never played by the usual fundraising rules.

The annual invitation-only fundraising experience benefiting Must! Charities is intentionally intimate. There are no tickets for sale. No ballroom packed with thousands of people. No endless rows of tables.

Instead, approximately 125 people gather by invitation, hosted by some of Paso Robles' most respected winemakers and winery owners. They come from across the country. They come for the wine, the food, the beauty, and the relationships.

But they also arrive understanding that this isn't simply a night to enjoy. It's a night to give. Come ready to make a difference.

On August 8 at Law Estate Wines, they did exactly that.

PURPOSE 2026 raised a record-breaking \$2.8 million in a single night, marking the most successful year in the event's history, and another extraordinary chapter for an event that has now generated nearly **\$13 million**.

The setting was worthy of the moment. High above Peachy Canyon Road, Law Estate Wines rises from the rugged hills of Paso Robles' west side, surrounded by steep vineyard slopes and sweeping views that seem to stretch forever. Its contemporary architecture sits boldly against the landscape while somehow belonging entirely to it.

As the afternoon faded into evening, the property took on a different energy. Musicians, artists, and an illusionist transformed the property into a scene difficult to capture on paper. Wine, Champagne, and cocktails flowed as exquisite bites were passed. Conversations became laughter. Winemakers welcomed guests not simply as attendees, but as friends.

And as the sun disappeared behind the hills, the energy in the room began to climb.

Then came the auction.

Among a collection of experiences that could not simply be purchased elsewhere, Lot 6: Uncorked Masterclass stopped the room. The private wine and culinary experience offers access to SÉDUIRE Wine, a closed-to-the-public hilltop estate in Paso Robles' Willow Creek District. Guests will join Chef Julien Asseo of Les Petites Canailles for an intimate, hands-on culinary experience featuring Champagne, caviar, dinner, rare wines, and behind-the-scenes access.

By the time the paddles came down, the single auction lot had generated \$360,000. It was an electric moment. But it wasn't the most important one. That came when the auction ended, and the giving became deeply personal.

During the Fund-a-Need, giving began at an extraordinary level: one paddle rose to \$152,000, another to \$151,000, another to \$150,000, followed by paddles rising at every level. Again and again, people gave.

Within minutes, the room generated **\$1.3 million**, with donors receiving nothing in return but the knowledge of what their giving could make possible. The main focus of this year's Fund-a-Need is the launch of **Dentistry in School**, a project with **Tolosa Children's Dental Center** that will help bring essential dental care directly to local children in San Miguel.

For Must! Charities CEO Becky Gray, the numbers are staggering. But they tell only part of the story.

"People will see \$2.8 million and understandably focus on the amount," said Gray. "But what moves me is everything it took to get there. Long before a paddle was raised, people were already giving. They gave their time. Their wine. Their talent. Their relationships. Their resources. Their ideas. Their trust. Winemakers opened their cellars and their tables. Sponsors stepped forward. Volunteers, staff, and committee members poured countless hours into creating something extraordinary. Guests traveled from across the country, ready to give generously. That is collective giving."

Gray continued, "There is tremendous power in what happens when people decide that caring isn't enough, and that they're willing to act on it together. To have the opportunity to serve this community, to lead alongside people who care this deeply, and to love this place well is something I will never take for granted. PURPOSE reminds me what is possible when we stop asking, 'What can I do?' and start asking, 'What can we do together?'"

That question has become the heartbeat of PURPOSE. In a philanthropic world often defined by bigger events with bigger crowds, PURPOSE has chosen a different measure of success. PURPOSE isn't remarkable because so few people attend. It's remarkable because of what happens when the right people decide to show up for something bigger than themselves.

Must! Charities extends its deepest gratitude to Law Estate Wines, this year's event host, as well as AgWest Farm Credit, RE: FIND Handcrafted Spirits, Silicon Valley Bank, The Ava Hotel, FIJI Water, Les Petites Canailles, and the many sponsors, vintners, donors, auction partners, volunteers, and friends whose generosity made PURPOSE 2026 possible.

About Must! Charities

Must! Charities is changing the model of philanthropy by uniting donors, pooling resources, and investing strategically in long-term solutions that strengthen San Luis Obispo County. Through collective giving, strategic investments, and hands-on partnerships with nonprofit organizations, Must! creates lasting change for children, families, and communities. Learn more at www.MustCharities.org.

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