



## **Melanoma Research Foundation**

*Case Study: Expanding an Organization Nationally*

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) is the largest independent, national organization devoted to melanoma in the United States. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer and is the fastest growing cancer in the United States and worldwide. Every eight minutes, someone in the United States will be diagnosed with melanoma and every hour someone will die from the disease. Based in the DC area, and with an annual fundraising gala in New York City, the MRF sought to introduce new donors, while simultaneously raising awareness and funds for the organization on the west coast.

The MRF has outsourced their annual New York gala for the past six years to Powered by Professionals (PBP), a professional fundraising and event management firm specializing in the non-profit sector. Powered by Professionals' model for engaging individuals affected by melanoma and the company's process of rallying the networks of those individuals around them and the organization, has proven successful year after year. On October 7, 2011, the MRF celebrated the 10th Anniversary of their New York Gala and raised nearly \$700,000 – making it their most successful fundraising event ever!

After two fundraising galas in San Francisco, executed with the help of a locally-based event planning company, the MRF decided to higher PBP. The MRF felt confident that, in conjunction with the 3rd Annual Fundraising Gala, PBP could help them raise more than the \$100,000 they had raised both years prior.

PBP implemented their honoree/award recipient model by identifying and working with Dr. Steven O'Day of The Angeles Clinic, who would receive the *Humanitarian Award*, Suzanne and Michael Lescure, who would receive the *Vision of Hope Award* and five individuals who would receive *Courage Awards* in recognition of their battles with melanoma. PBP also introduced the "Fund-A-Grant" in place of a Live Auction, which enables individuals at the event to raise their hands and pledge an amount of money they are comfortable with, ranging from \$1,000 - \$10,000, in support of a melanoma grant.

On Wednesday, May 4, 2011, the MRF held their 3rd Annual Fundraising Gala at the Bently Reserve in San Francisco. The event had twice as many guests and raised over \$267,000, an increase of 167%. The feedback from guests regarding the food, entertainment, program, silent auction, fund-a-grant and overall atmosphere was overwhelmingly positive. The MRF is looking forward to another successful San Francisco gala under PBP's leadership and is eager to allow the company's expertise to help the organization expand their reach to additional cities nationwide in the coming year.



### **Non-Profit Fundraising Event Management**

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