

The Giving Back Fund's 6th Annual Big Game, Big Give To Be Even Bigger

Written by Emily Glynn



The Giving Back Fund's annual Big Game, Big Give has been called the No. 1 Super Bowl Party of the Year by ESPN and after speaking with co-chairs Erika Williams and Linda Pope, it's easy to see why.

The theme of this year's soiree, Arizona Shines, was selected by Williams and Pope, who have been working alongside their prestigious host committee to create an event that will both dazzle guests and showcase the southwestern state in its entirety. "What we wanted to do through this wonderful opportunity was really [emphasize] how Arizona shines with all its wonders, philanthropy, people [and] opportunities. We truly are, in our minds, a magnificent state," Pope says.

"This is such an incredibly philanthropic community," adds Williams. "People are shocked when they find out how much [money] Arizona raises." The fundraiser is expected to raise \$1 million, with 25 percent going towards both the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix and The Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation. Donors who give \$10,000 or more will be given the opportunity to designate another 20 percent of the proceeds to an Arizona charity of their choice.

The event will be held on Jan. 31 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the private Paradise Valley estate Williams shares with her husband Matt, who was recently named NL Manager of the Year for his work with the Washington Nationals. Michael Bay, director of the epic "Transformers" franchise, and Hollywood mainstay Mark Wahlberg will co-host.

Under the guidance of Phoenix Theatre's Michael Barnard, Arizona's most unique destinations are being recreated across the property, each boasting a signature cocktail crafted by talented Valley chefs. Highly anticipated is the area portraying Flagstaff and Arizona Snowbowl, which will be outfitted with real snow, a fire pit and fully-functioning chairlift.

Guests eager for more will have the opportunity to purchase pre-party packages, including a private viewing session with Michael Bay in the Williams' luxurious home theatre. The event will also feature a live auction where party-goers can bid on what Williams describes as "once-in-a-lifetime" experiences.

Tickets to the Big Game, Big Give Super Bowl XLIX Benefit are available by invitation-only and require a minimum donation of \$5,000 per couple. USA Today is orchestrating \$250,000 media coverage of the glamorous event, where contributing sponsors will receive national recognition for their generosity. <http://www.biggamebiggive.org/>

For ticket packages and live auction items, visit <https://www.charitybuzz.com/support/GivingBackFund>.