

AZ Insider: Bear Hugs for the Bashas

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

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"The AZ Insider" with Kathy Shayna Shocket: Get the inside scoop on Arizona's social scene and celebrity news.



This was Bear Hugs for the Bashas

Giant Pandas filled the ballroom of the Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa for a fundraiser that's beat the odds in its 11 years! Yes, the ballroom and the foyer swelled with Giant Pandas. Ok, so they were stuffed. But that's still a lot of bear hugs to go around.

And well deserved.

The black and white Giant Panda- an international and well protected treasure - is the perfect mascot for this event "bearing" the name "Children Helping Children."

The fashion show is sponsored by the Phoenix Women's Board for the Steele Children's Research Center located at the University of Arizona. Its acronym PANDA stands for "People Acting Now Discover Answers." It's clever and it's incredibly meaningful, as the board's mission is to support discovery processes that lead to improved treatments and cures for devastating childhood diseases.



Eddie and Nadine Basha, as in the Bashas grocery stores (pictured above), who have championed many children's causes in the Valley were honored at the afternoon affair. They've been friends of the Steele Children's Research Center for many years, donating money towards the **Louise Thomas** Endowed Chair in Pediatric Cancer held by **Dr. Emmanuel Katsanis**.

Dr. Katsanis and **Dr. Faye K. Ghishan**, director of the Steele Children's Research Center, are also stars of this successful luncheon and mingled with guests at the event chaired by **Lizabeth Matthews** and **Helen Yeung**. Kudos to the hard working duo.

Tina Curran was the afternoon's elegant emcee. Tina, also a board member of the Phoenix Women's Board of the Steele Children's Research Center, is pictured below "bearing" flowers with **Stephanie Walker Helsten** – PANDA President.



The proceeds from this year's event will complete PANDA's \$1-million commitment for the establishment of the PANDA Children's Neurological Center and establish the PANDA Children's Cancer Immunology Program.

The fashion show featured 65 children who adorably paraded down the runway in fashions by Garage and Urban Kidz.



And pictured above.. resting .. after a long and successful afternoon.. is one of the Giant Pandas. The stuffed Panda, along with a customized golf cart with the Panda logo, was the raffle prize. Great event!

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Kathy Shayna Shocket is a Phoenix based writer. If you have a good item for *The AZ Insider*, you can email her at redkarpetgirl@aol.com.