



Candlelight 2013

DÉCOR DIVA DESIGNER LINDA YOUNG HELPS MAKE FUNDRAISERS FABULOUS

Fundraising galas in support of nonprofits are important elements of the philanthropic world in Orange County, with some raising \$1 million or more in a single evening. The preparation and planning of the events involves volunteers, staff and gala committees that often begin working on the next gala as soon as the curtain closes on the current one.

There's pressure with each event to create something memorable and inspiring, and one of OC's go-to experts doing just that is

Linda Young of Elite OC Productions.

One of the most glamorous and successful events in OC is Segerstrom Center for the Art's Candlelight Concert. Young and Elite OC Productions have worked with The Center for three years, transforming Segerstrom Hall from a theater into a dramatic and elegant ballroom and satisfying some of SoCal's most demanding and discerning philanthropists.

"I believe in treating a nonprofit client like a partner by understanding their goals

and vision," Young says. "And in so doing, creating a vehicle for them to tell their story, draw people to their cause and raise funds to implement their mission."

Before entering the event business, Young was an entrepreneur who owned a gift basket company with clients that included the Irvine Company and The Angels. She founded Elite OC Productions in 2007.

Young's duties in partnering with nonprofits go way beyond decor. Even



Wedding dinner



Linda Young with son Stuart and husband Burton

with innovative themes and aesthetically appealing designs, it's hard to "wow" those who attend dozens of events a year. But if a crucial behind-the-scenes detail is left to chance it can impact the experience for those attending, potentially affecting fundraising and ticket sales at future events.

Silent and live auctions can be organizational nightmares, with winners demanding ease of check out to pay for items that may run into thousands of dollars.

At a recent Great Gatsby-themed fundraiser for Laguna's Friendship Shelter, Young's team handled numerous details, including creating signage for the live auction categories, managing volunteers for registration, the silent and live auctions, find-a-need, checkout and item pick-up.

Other charities Elite OC Productions created memorable events for include CASA, UC Mind Institute, Assistance League of Saddleback Valley, Rivals United for a Kure, Soccer for Hope and many others.

And Young's work isn't only in the nonprofit sphere. She'll happily create a memorable wedding, party or other event for individuals as well.

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