

# Caritas Family Solutions' Raises Largest Total Ever at 7th Annual Heart & Soul Gala

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**BELLEVILLE** – More than 300 people gathered at the Four Points Sheraton in Fairview Heights recently to attend Caritas Family Solutions' 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Heart & Soul Gala. This was the most successful gala ever for the organization. More than \$195,000 will go to support the nonprofit's mission of strengthening the social and emotional well-being of individuals and families by creating healthy relationships, loving homes and strong communities.

Caritas Family Solutions' CEO, Gary Huelsmann, said the goal of this year's event was to raise awareness about the agency's full scope of services, which include pregnancy care for women who are homeless, adoption, foster care, counseling and independent living for adults with disabilities.

"The goal of our program this year was to show people the numbers, but also help them understand the difference they can make on an individual's life," said Huelsmann. "We wanted them to know that we serve more than 4,500 people each year through our programming while at the same time giving them a greater understanding of how our services impact the life of a child in foster care or mentally disabled person. We couldn't accomplish all that we do without the community's support and we're very thankful for that."

This year's Heart & Soul Gala included cocktails and silent and live auction bidding, followed by a three-course dinner complete with wine service. The Honorary Chairs of this year's event were longtime supporters Kevin and Debra Bastien. This year's Presenting Sponsor was the locally-based company, Performance Roofing Inc. KSDK's 5 on Your Side Morning News Anchor Rene Knott served as the Master of Ceremonies. Musical entertainment was provided by Brock Elmore with Let's Celebrate DJ's.

Caritas Family Solutions Annual Heart & Soul Gala took place on Saturday, February 8 at 6 p.m. at the Four Points Sheraton in Fairview Heights.

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