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Beyonce, Wyclef Jean, Dan Fireman Boost Phoenix House Charity

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By Patrick Cole



March 30 (Bloomberg) -- Private-equity manager Dan Fireman got hooked on the **Phoenix House** drug-rehabilitation charity after attending last October's fundraiser in Manhattan's Meatpacking District.

Fireman, 36, liked the event's music and host **Wyclef Jean** and the hip-casual dress code. Since then, with contacts in the financial, entertainment and sporting worlds, Fireman has been able to marshal a roster of boldface names -- including **Eli Manning** and **Shaquille O'Neal** -- as the stuttering U.S. economy has abetted a 25 percent drop in donations to Phoenix House. Beyonce and **Derek Jeter** have long helped the charity by donating money or visiting recovering addicts.

Fireman got \$150,000 from his associates at Fireman Capital Partners, which he co-founded in Boston. His father is **Paul Fireman**, founder of **Reebok International Ltd.** and co-founder with his wife of the **Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation**, where Dan Fireman serves on the board.

The foundation gave \$100,000 this month to the New York-based nonprofit, which treats about 7,000 daily in more than 100 alcohol- and drug-abuse facilities in nine states.

"We focus on family homelessness, drug and substance abuse, and we wanted to give a gift that's meaningful," Dan Fireman said in a phone interview.

The two donations bolster the spring fundraising effort of the 42-year-old Phoenix House at a time when many charities are struggling for money.

The gala event, tonight at Manhattan's Plaza Hotel, is focused on introducing potential donors and entertainers to the organization's mission instead of raising a specific amount of money, said **Howard Meitiner**, the president and chief executive officer of Phoenix House and the former chief executive officer of beauty products retailer Sephora.

Hip-Hop Violinist

Grammy Award winners Jean and Miri Ben-Ari, an Israeli-born hip-hop violinist, will perform for the dinner's more than 300 guests.

The event will honor **Lisa Ellis**, Jean's business partner at the Carnival House record label, with the organization's Phoenix Rising Award. Ellis, who nurtured the careers of Prince, Beyonce and vocalist **John Legend** as a Sony Music executive, also made a gift to the nonprofit.

"When times are rough, people turn to things they otherwise would not, such as drug addiction," said Ellis, also a partner at Fireman Capital, in a phone interview. "Phoenix House addresses a large piece of that puzzle."

Fireman, whose company has invested in ventures such as Hudson Jeans and the Liberty National golf course in New York, was brought to Phoenix House by board member Rose Marie Bravo, former chief executive and vice

chairman of **Burberry Group PLC**, Meitiner, 57, said.

"There are new networks and new investment that come from these relationships," said Fireman Capital general partner Andrew Spellman. "We brought some people to Phoenix House who can bring sizzle to the steak."

The 2009 Phoenix Rising Award Dinner takes place tonight at 6:30 p.m. at the **Plaza** Hotel, Fifth Avenue at Central Park South. Tickets start at \$1,000. Information: +1-212-997-0100;
<http://www.phoenixhouse.org/NewYork/WhatsNew/Events.html>.

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