



For Immediate Release

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SWEET CHARITY EVENT OFFERS EXCITEMENT FOR FOODIES AND FASHIONISTAS

*Top chefs turn chocolate and sugar into fanciful dresses and accessories
to benefit local charity with national impact*

Washington, D.C. (June 21, 2010) – Award winning chefs demonstrated their mastery of cocoa and couture at this year's 9th Sweet Charity event; a local benefit co-hosted by Albert Uster Imports (AUI), a Swiss fine gourmet food company, and The Heart of America Foundation®, a national nonprofit headquartered in Washington, D.C. that uniquely combines volunteerism and literacy to support children in need nationwide. Proceeds from Sweet Charity will go to help The Heart of America Foundation's Books From The Heart® program to provide books to children living in poverty who have few or no books of their own.

Held at the beautiful Mandarin Oriental, Washington D.C. hotel, the event featured more than 50 local award winning chefs who offered sweet and savory tastings as well as presented fabulous chocolate creations and chocolate fountains. Attendees were able to sample the delicacies as well as enjoy a silent auction, open bar and the evening's highlight—the Des Alpes Chocolate Fashion Show, where 13 models walked the runway in chocolate couture designed by local chefs.

Contestants from the hit reality TV show Top Chef took part in the evening, including Mike Isabella from Season 6, Spike Mendelsohn, the runner-up from Season 4, and Tamesha Warren from the new Season 7, which just premiered June 16th and takes place right here in D.C.

Among the other exciting elements of the evening, there was also time to recognize several individuals who are making a difference both in D.C. and nationwide. Dr. Benjamin Carson, one of the most famous and respected doctors in the world, known for his groundbreaking work in the field of neurosurgery, was awarded the National Heroes of the Heart® Award for his support of literacy and efforts to engage and motivate the youth of America. Wayne Ryan, principal of the Crosby S. Noyes Education Campus was awarded the Principal of the Year Award for his leadership in transforming Noyes Campus from one of the nine lowest performing schools in our nation's capital to meeting the academic targets in both reading and mathematics during the last three academic years. Finally, Mendelsohn was honored with the Albert Uster Chef of the Year Award for not only his culinary gifts, but his work with Michelle Obama's Let's Move campaign to improve the school lunch program and end childhood obesity. Mendelsohn has been teaching cooking classes to students and parents at metro area schools as well as helping to plant school gardens.

www.sweetcharity.org





About The Heart of America Foundation®

The Heart of America Foundation, a national nonprofit headquartered in Washington, DC, uniquely combines volunteerism and literacy. The organization’s focus is to provide children in need everywhere with the tools to read, succeed and make a difference. The Heart of America Foundation puts books into the hands of children who need them the most while transforming school libraries in underserved communities into vital and vibrant centers of learning that become the heart of a school. Since 1997, the organization has provided children living in poverty with over 1.85 million library and take-home books, and engaged volunteers in more than 1,020,000 hours of service to the community.

About Albert Uster Imports, Inc.

Albert Uster Imports is an importer and distributor of over 1,000 high-quality ingredients, semi-finished and finished gourmet products. Predominantly known for its Swiss Des Alpes Chocolate (and all things sweet), the company branched into savory as well as frozen lines, becoming a well-rounded, fine gourmet food house that it is today. The wide range of services include: excellent customer service, recipe and menu development, a comprehensive website www.auswiss.com, an online store, newsletters, continuing culinary education classes and a database of over 500 recipe.

About Mandarin Oriental, Washington D.C.

Mandarin Oriental, Washington D.C. redefines luxury as Washington, D.C.’s most sophisticated hotel. Transitional in design, with stylish oriental flair, the hotel provides an unparalleled guest experience, with Mandarin Oriental’s legendary reputation for award-winning service.

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