

Silver Circle Gala Honors Chris Silbermann, Pointer Sisters Make Guests 'Jump'



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As the dust of the Oscars settled, the Venice Family Clinic's 32nd annual Silver Circle Gala honored Chris Silbermann, Dr. Jonathan Fielding and Ruth Ziegler on March 3 at the Beverly Hilton.

The clinic, which provides primary healthcare to 24,000 low-income, uninsured and homeless families and individuals in Los Angeles each year, is supported by the Silver Circle, its premier annual membership program that raises over \$1.2 million annually.

Before the honorees were presented with their awards, host Hal Sparks channeled his inner Matthew McConaughey and spoofed portions of the Oscar winner's speech in his opening remarks.

"Whenever I host one of these things, I like three things: something to look up to, something to look forward to and something to chase," Sparks said in a Texan accent.

Sparks even uttered McConaughey's signature "all right, all right, all right" before introducing the night's first presenter.

Dr. Robert Wexler, president of American Jewish University, presented the Irma Colen leadership award to Ziegler for her philanthropic work and support for higher education, including her Ziegler scholars program at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Ziegler, just two weeks shy of her 95th birthday, did not give an acceptance speech.

Upon receiving the visionary award for his service in the field of public health, Fielding did address the audience and continued the Oscars-themed humor as he began by joking, "First, I'd like to thank the Academy. Oh, wrong night, sorry."

Fielding continued by explaining, "Well, maybe it's not the wrong night, because those of you who contribute to this pioneering human service system that is the Venice Family Clinic – whether as volunteers or supporters or employees – you, in fact, constitute an academy of caring."

"Breaking Bad's" Vince Gilligan and "House's" David Shore, who are partnering on the CBS drama "Battle Creek," were on hand to present the humanitarian award to Silbermann, one of the founders of talent and literary agency ICM Partners.

The two called Silbermann "a generous man" and shared made-up, yet funny, examples of his generosity.

"A few years ago, Chris came to me and offered me this idea he had for a TV show about a chemistry teacher who develops cancer and decides to deal meth," Shore joked. "I told it was a stupid idea."

Silbermann also poked fun at his own profession during his speech.

"I know you'll all agree with me that the words Hollywood agent, humanitarian and humble all go hand-in-hand," Silbermann teased.

He then turned serious, discussing the current state of healthcare and the need for quality healthcare for all. He advocated for the support of orgs like the Venice Family Circle that provide care to those who would not otherwise have access to healthcare.

"People talk about problems, but the Venice Family Clinic offers solutions," Silbermann said. "Right now, it's more important than ever for us to ensure the viability of such an organization."

The event also featured a silent auction to raise money for the clinic's efforts.

Following the formal portion of the evening, Sparks turned the mic over to music guests the Pointer Sisters, who got the party started and raised the energy level in the room as the audience prepared to sing and dance along.

The trio performed R&B hits like "Happiness" and "I'm So Excited" before closing the night with "Jump."

Filed Under: Chris Silbermann, Pointer Sisters, Silver Circle Gala, Venice Family Clinic