

VIPs celebrate first anniversary with benefit for KIND

More than 200 guests attended the South Florida VIPs' (Very Innovative Professionals) first anniversary "Bar Hop" through The Shops at Boca Center, raising funds for Kids In New Directions (KIND).

KIDS IN NEW DIRECTIONS

The evening began with check-in at Total Wine & More, where the bar hoppers were organized into groups and given a commemorative T-shirt and "passport" to lead them through The Shops at Boca Center. They were treated to a wine tasting accompanied by bread samplings from the center's newest tenant, Panera Bread.

"Boca Center is pleased to open its doors in support of a young professional group and help raise funds to benefit a wonderful charitable organization like Kids in New Directions," said Candace Goldstein, assistant real estate manager of Boca Center.

"The turnout was better than expected," said Lori Ludwig, co-founder of the South Florida VIPs. "We saw many new faces, along with members who have been our biggest fans. This coming year will be even a bigger challenge to be creative and help raise more money for KIND."

South Florida VIP members had the opportunity to sample drinks and appetizers at each of the participating venues: Morton's Steakhouse, Sushi Ray, Uncle Tai's, Cucina D'Angelo and Absinthe. The last stop on the tour was Big City Tavern, where the groups

converged to enjoy an after-party.

"This has been an exciting milestone," said Nicole Flier, co-founder of the South Florida VIPs. "Lori and I are completely awestruck by the community support and the success of our fun events throughout the year."

The South Florida VIPs was formed in 2006 to bring together young professionals in their 20s, 30s and 40s for social networking. The group holds events throughout South Palm Beach County, with proceeds from each event going to benefit KIND. Members pay for the events they attend. For information, visit www.sfvips.com

KIND, established in 1997, is a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to provide access to after-school programs for children ages 5 to 12. For information, visit www.kindprogram.org, or call Natalie Cwick at (561) 962-4185.