

Joe and Jennifer Montana Honored at Holiday Heroes



Kristi Yamaguchi, Amy Wender-Hoch, Jennifer Montana, Taiwan Jones and Joe Montana Credit: Drew Altizer Photography

The Wender Weis Foundation for Children (WWFC) presented its fourth annual Holiday Heroes event at AT&T Park. The nonprofit organization is committed to encouraging underserved and low-income children throughout the San Francisco Bay Area to help them develop confidence and self-esteem.

At the extraordinary event, more than 600 kids of all ages had the rare access to the San Francisco Giants' dugout and batting tunnels along with the exclusive opportunity to meet current and former athletes such as George Kontos of the San Francisco Giants; Taiwan Jones of the Oakland Raiders; Alan Gordon of the San Jose Earthquakes; skier and Olympic Gold medalist Jonny Moseley; hockey player, Olympian and Stanley Cup Champion Bret Hedican and figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi. Kids and adults alike also enjoyed s'more-making on the field, holiday cookie decorating, teddy bear stuffing, face painting, photo/video booths and a silent auction.



Jonny Moseley and kids enjoy some Holiday Heroes fun Credit: Drew Altizer Photography

WWFC's first ever Inspiration Award was presented to Jennifer and Joe Montana. These days, the couple fills their time with their charity, the Four Rings Montana Family Foundation, which is dedicated to supporting, protecting, and strengthening benefits women and children in the Bay Area. Jennifer is passionate about giving back; she is the founder of her newly launched jewelry line, Jennifer Montana Design, where the majority of the proceeds go directly to the Four Rings Montana Family Foundation.

Jennifer & Joe took a moment from the fun-filled event to discuss philanthropy, Jennifer Montana Design and receiving the WWFC's inaugural Inspiration Award.



John Hoch, Amy Wender-Hoch, Joe Montana, Jennifer Montana Credit: Drew Altizer Photography

HL: How do you both feel to be honored with this first-ever award?

Jennifer and Joe: We are so grateful to be honored with the inaugural Inspiration Award at Holiday Heroes! Our first time we worked with the Wender Weis Foundation for Children was 17 years ago and it is so nice to come back and work with such a great organization.

HL: Jennifer, what inspired you to create your jewelry line?

Jennifer: I was inspired to create Jennifer Montana Design (JMD) to help the community and employ the women of Harbor House and to continue with my creative passion. I also wanted to create inspirational necklaces for people and help contribute to our foundation The Four Rings Montana Family Foundation to support children in need. All of the collections from Jennifer Montana Design are named after my four children. And the idea for the motivational words came from my family. We try to raise our children in a positive way, and these are words we've felt that they either needed or represented. For example, my youngest son is in college, so he wears believe and dream, since we want him to believe in himself and to dream big.



Jennifer Montana Design Source: blog.plumpjack.com

HL: Tell us about the line and your favorite pieces.

Jennifer: We create distinctive, inspirational jewelry while providing employment opportunities to and for economically disadvantaged people. Our chain reaction key necklaces are all influenced by my children. My love for my family and my children inspired me to create the encouraging designs. Each necklace has inspirational words and shows appreciation for all your blessings. The key itself represents the opening to a new beginning, new life, new outlook and new opportunities, and therefore a chain reaction of good things to fall upon you.

I can't pick a favorite — I really love them all! When looking through the necklaces on our site for gift purchases just think about the recipient's taste and about the words of encouragement on the designs.

HL: Aside from your jewelry line and foundation, what do you do in your spare time?

Jennifer: I love to cook, spend time with family and children, and paint.

HL: What is your biggest wish for 2014?

Jennifer: My biggest wish for 2014 is to remain happy and healthy and continue to help people in need by employing the women of Harbor House. We really like to focus on donating to family and children organization but it always depends on who and where we can help.

HL: Joe, how do you feel about your wife starting her own line?

Joe: I am so proud of her and it is so nice to watch her do what she loves. The only problem is that there is always jewelry spread around the house!

HL: You've worked with IfOnly to donate an experience to benefit the Four Rings Montana Family Foundation; what else do you have in the works to support the foundation?

Joe: I will continue to support Jennifer in her work with JMD, which donates 80% of the proceeds back to the foundation.

HL: How do you fill your time these days?

Joe: I love to spend time with my four kids. Jennifer has also been putting me to work lately so I help stamp the keys.

HL: What is your biggest wish for 2014?

Joe: I want to continue to support our community and spend time with my family.

WWFC raises funds for and awareness about charitable organizations that provide assistance to children in need. Beneficiaries of this year's event included the Junior Giants Baseball Program, 49ers Foundation, Holy Family Day Home, Raphael House, San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Center, Always Dream Foundation, Fit Kids, and Four Rings Montana Family Foundation.