

San Diego nonprofit raises over \$7,000 for women with breast cancer using bingo and luxury handbags

Decked out in pink jackets and dresses, guests arrived at a salon in Encinitas on April 8 to try their luck at winning a name-brand handbag and to help support San Diego women suffering from breast cancer. The event was called "Purse Bingo," and it was hosted by Shades of Pink Foundation California, (SOPFCA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing grants directly to women in active breast cancer treatment.

Guests paid \$50 an entry in exchange for wine, pizza, and a handful of bingo cards. Prizes included purses by Kate Spade, Michael Kores and Tory Burch. By the time the night was over 11 lucky guests carried new handbags on their shoulders, and SOPFCA had raised over \$7,000.

According to SOPFCA President Vembra Holnagel, the amount raised by the Purse



Survivor Kelly Eastwood



Gretchen Mitchell with a purse at the event.



PHOTOS BY AUGUST MICHAELLE
A raffle ticket winner.

Bingo event will fund three full grants and a partial fourth grant.

"This is our fourth year hosting Purse Bingo," Holnagel said. "Our community loves the game and the purses but, more importantly, they feel great knowing that their money is going to help women in the

San Diego community."

So far in 2019, the organization has already given out grants totaling \$21,830. The average grant is \$1,593 and is used to help women cover the cost of housing, groceries for their families, transportation to treatment, and more.

"Women with breast cancer face surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation," said Holnagel. "Most are too weak and sick from treatment to work, but the bills keep coming. The number one thing our grant recipients tell us is that they are afraid of losing their homes. Our grants make sure that doesn't happen."

According to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, one in eight women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in women and the second leading cause of cancer death in women.

To learn more about Shades of Pink Foundation California and to read about the San Diego women who have received grants from the organization, visit shadesofpinkfoundationca.org.