



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
September 17, 2021

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## **Northwest Center Virtual Derby Event Wins National Recognition in 2021 Ragan Communications CSR & Diversity Awards**

*Fundraiser Earns Honorable Mention for CSR or ESG Event (Virtual or In-Person)*

SEATTLE – Northwest Center is proud to announce that our 2020 Virtual Derby fundraising event has been awarded Honorable Mention out of nationwide entries in the Ragan Communications 2021 CSR & Diversity Awards in the category of CSR or ESG Event (Virtual or In-Person). The 2020 Derby was selected for its incredible success in engaging audiences and driving record-breaking donations despite being a first-ever all-virtual event for Northwest Center.

According to Ragan, “The winners on this list created powerful campaigns, initiatives, programs and projects that made the world safer, healthier, more equitable and sustainable. They told stories about their efforts that made a positive impact on their communities, within their organizations and around the world. Bottom line: Their work made a difference for the better.” Northwest Center is honored alongside organizations including Disney, Walgreens, Google, and Lowe’s.

In January 2020, Northwest Center (NWC) was four months away from the annual in-person Derby fundraiser. By the first week of March, they were scrambling in the face of a global pandemic. The nonprofit ultimately reimaged the Derby gala into a live, multi-sensory-engaging, COVID-safe virtual experience featuring entertainment from auctioneer Fred Northup and KING5 TV personality Chris Cashman, along with in-home culinary experiences provided by award-winning chef John Howie.

By the time the event wrapped on the evening of October 23 (like the actual Kentucky Derby, the event moved to October), NWC in partnership with the Derby Committee, Sponsors, and Virtual Table Captains had:

- Exceeded attendance goals by welcoming more than 400 attendees—a 33% year-over-year increase.
- Outraised the 2020 Fund-a-Need portion of the program by 57% for a total of \$167,000.
- Broken records for overall amount raised, with a 34% increase in net revenue.

Overall, the 2020 Derby was the Northwest Center’s most financially successful fundraiser—not just as a virtual event, but in the history of the organization.

“We are humbled to be recognized by Ragan Communications,” says NWC Chief Development Officer Robyn Brown. “But most important to us is the fact that our guests made a significant impact on our programs for kids with disabilities, even in the face of COVID-19. So many attendees told us they felt like they had attended a ‘real’ event. Despite the distance, the audience felt connected, engaged, and motivated to support our mission of inclusion.”

- Registration is now open for Northwest Center’s 2021 Derby at <https://nwcenter.ejoinme.org/2021Derby>.
- To view all winners in the 2021 Ragan Communications 2021 CSR & Diversity Awards, visit <https://www.ragan.com/awards/corporate-social-responsibility-diversity-awards/2021/winners/>.

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**About Northwest Center**

*Northwest Center is a nonprofit founded in Seattle in 1965 by a group of mothers who went on to write and pass historic civil rights legislation guaranteeing access to public education for children with disabilities. Today, Northwest Center is a leading voice in advancing equal opportunities for children and adults with disabilities, providing early supports, early learning and school age programs, employment and job placement services ,and vocational training. Visit [nwcenter.org](http://nwcenter.org).*

**About Ragan Communications**

*For more than 50 years, Ragan Communications has delivered news, training and intelligence for internal and external communicators, HR professionals and business executives via conferences, webinars, training, awards, subscriptions and membership divisions. It publishes daily news sites [PRDaily.com](http://PRDaily.com) and [Ragan.com](http://Ragan.com) and acquired Communications Week in April 2021. Learn more at [ragan.com](http://ragan.com).*