

Firefighters' Cancer Group Draws Business Support

PHILANTHROPY: Network assists firefighters felled by occupational hazard.

The Firefighter Cancer Support Network celebrated a three-day event and fundraiser earlier this month to support firefighters and their immediate families diagnosed with cancer.

One of the donors for the event that took place the weekend of Nov. 1-3 was Los Angeles-based **Resmark Apartment Living**, which recently opened a new community in the Santa Clarita Valley, The Townhomes at Lost Canyon.



GIVING

Jacquelinne Mejia

Tim Sipowicz, vice president of asset management for Resmark, said the company decided to donate \$2,500 to the Firefighter Cancer Support network in appreciation for the local fire station, which is up the road from the housing community.

"We wanted to thank Station 150 for their time, to honor them and all firefighters, and decided to get involved with the Firefighter Cancer Support Network," he said. "We learned after the donation that the founder and treasurer both are firefighters and residents of Santa Clarita, which was satisfying for us to get involved with the local community."

The annual event and foundation was started by local firefighter and paramedic **Mike Dubron**, who works for the Los Angeles County Fire Department. After being diagnosed with cancer in 2003, Dubron said he came up with the idea for the Burbank-based non-profit after receiving support from fellow firefighters who had their own experiences with cancer, and he wanted to extend that same support to others in his line of work.

"I had the small idea of forming a group, with other firefighters from the Southern California area, survivors that might be interested," he said.

The non-profit was incorporated in 2005 and currently includes support groups across the country. Dubron said the organization currently operates on a \$300,000 annual budget. It educates firefighters on different methods of preventing exposure to carcinogens in their work, such as teaching them to clean equipment and shower immediately after a fire.

The annual dinner event was held at the Sheraton Universal City, with major corporate sponsors including the Van Nuys-based law offices of **Straussner & Sherman, Honeywell International Inc.**, and local area fire stations.

He said although he has not seen the numbers on how much was raised this year, he estimated \$50,000 was made on the silent auction alone.

Dubron plans to continue expanding the mission of the philanthropic group through marketing, golf tournaments and bike rides across the country to raise funds for the cause.