



## **Ascend Dallas Celebrates Fifth Annual Pop, Fizz, Clink!** *Signature Fundraiser Honors Carrie Freeman Parsons with Ebby Empowering Women Award*

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**DALLAS, May 1, 2026** – Supporters, stakeholders and community leaders gathered to celebrate [Ascend Dallas](#)' meaningful mission and raise funds to continue the organization's impactful work during the fifth annual **Pop, Fizz, Clink!** fundraiser at the Fairmont Dallas on May 1. The event raised a remarkable \$450,000, which included a \$100,000 challenge match from an anonymous donor.

Proceeds from the "Bangkok Brunch"-themed event directly support Ascend's Economic Advancement and Nurse-Family Partnership programs, which serve as lifelines for women and families working toward brighter, more prosperous futures. The Economic Advancement program drives measurable economic mobility, with 84% of participants increasing savings, 73% improving credit scores and nearly half securing full-time employment. The Nurse-Family Partnership strengthens family stability through more than 3,100 nurse visits each year to first-time mothers, supporting early prenatal care, healthy births, and positive child development outcomes.

Chaired by community leader and philanthropist Grace Cook and joined by honorary chair Jennifer Sampson, President and CEO of United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, the signature spring event showcased Ascend's mission to uplift and empower women and families while transporting guests with vibrant décor, inspired cuisine, and celebratory energy.

“Pop, Fizz, Clink! is such an important event for Dallas, not just because of what it raises, but because it brings people together in a way that creates real impact,” said event chair Grace Cook. “It’s both celebratory and meaningfully invests in women’s potential, which is what makes it feel lasting.”

“This event is a powerful reminder of what happens when a community invests in women,” said Jennifer Sampson, McDermott-Templeton President and CEO of United Way of Metropolitan Dallas. “Ascend Dallas is a valued community-impact partner of United Way, and its work is critical to building a stronger, more equitable community where North Texans have the opportunity to grow and succeed.”

A highlight of the morning featured the presentation of the **Ebby Empowering Women Award** to Carrie Freeman Parsons, Chairman of the Board of Freeman. Now in its fifth year, the award celebrates an influential woman whose business achievements and philanthropy impact reflect the enduring legacy of Ebby Halliday, the legendary Dallas real estate pioneer and philanthropist. The Ebby Empowering Women Award recognizes those who create meaningful pathways for women and girls through mentorship, advocacy, and community impact.

“I am deeply honored to receive an award that represents the legacy of empowering women,” said Carrie Freeman Parsons, 2026 Ebby Empowering Women Award recipient. “When women are supported with opportunity, mentorship, and belief, entire families and communities thrive. Ascend Dallas is doing transformational work, and I am proud to stand alongside this mission.”

As a third-generation steward of the family global event production and marketing company founded by her grandfather in 1927, Parsons has championed the advancement of women in the live events industry. Her work includes serving as executive sponsor of Freeman’s Women’s Development (FWD) program, which has supported and elevated women for more than two decades.

Parsons has dedicated her civic involvement to expanding opportunities for women and girls locally, nationally, and globally. In addition to her support of Ascend Dallas, she has served as Chair of the Texas Women’s Foundation, Board Chair of Girls Inc. of Metropolitan Dallas, and member of the Nobel Women’s Initiative, which supports worldwide efforts to advance peace, justice, and equality for women.

“Carrie Freeman Parsons exemplifies the spirit of the Ebby Empowering Women Award through her unwavering dedication to advancing opportunities for women and girls,” said Kate Rose Marquez, CEO of Ascend Dallas. “The generosity of our supporters ensures the women and families Ascend serves have access to financial education, career pathways and resources that create lasting economic independence.”

For more information about Ascend Dallas or to support its mission, visit [www.ascenddallas.org](http://www.ascenddallas.org).

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### **About Ascend Dallas**

Founded in 1908, Ascend Dallas offers robust and immediate solutions to women in the Dallas community, constantly evolving to meet women’s changing needs. Formerly the Dallas YWCA and more recently WiNGS, Ascend Dallas has a long history of empowering women to lift themselves out of poverty and adversity, while pursuing a new chapter for themselves and their children. Ascend Dallas provides a tailored suite of services and resources – including financial literacy, one-on-one financial coaching and in-home healthcare for first time moms – to help women gain confidence and skills needed to start a new chapter, a new business or a new family.

### **Contact**

Betsy Dixon | Tony Fay PR | 214.534.8909 | [betsy@tonyfaypr.com](mailto:betsy@tonyfaypr.com)  
Katie Fay | Tony Fay PR | 214.709.1670 | [Katie@tonyfaypr.com](mailto:Katie@tonyfaypr.com)

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Tony Fay PR | 2626 Cole Ave, Ste 300 | Dallas, TX 75074 US

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