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DANIEL CRAIG AND RACHEL WEISZ CO-CHAIR THE OPPORTUNITY NETWORK'S 11th ANNUAL NIGHT OF OPPORTUNITY GALA

Event at Cipriani Wall Street Celebrates 15 Years of Opportunity by Honoring President of Essence Communications Michelle Ebanks, TV Host Van Jones and Actress Gabrielle Union

New York, NY (April 9, 2018)—On Monday, April 9th, [The Opportunity Network](http://TheOpportunityNetwork.org), a New York City nonprofit that works with students from historically and systematically underrepresented communities to develop the skills, knowledge, and passions to achieve both their college and career goals, hosted their 11th annual *Night of Opportunity* at Cipriani Wall Street on 55 Wall Street in New York.

With support from Tulco, LLC, this year's event will honor Essence Communications President **Michelle Ebanks**, CNN TV Host **Van Jones**, actress and author **Gabrielle Union** and some of OppNet's dynamic student Fellows.

Co-chaired by **Daniel Craig** and **Rachel Weisz** along with **Alba** and **Thomas Tull**, the event raised over \$2 million for the organization.

“We are honored to be celebrating 15 years of paving pathways to success for students at this year's *Night of Opportunity*,” said Founder and CEO of The Opportunity Network **Jessica Pliska**. “Our honorees show what's possible when determination, courage, and a fierce commitment to social progress come together. Michelle, Van and Gabrielle's steadfastness in centering diversity and inclusivity in our nation through media is an inspiration to everyone, especially our OppNet Fellows who are at the helm of their careers and eager to make a difference.”

The evening featured remarks from Gala co-chairs Thomas and Alba Tull and Daniel Craig and Rachel Weisz, this year's honorees, as well as speeches from students who have experienced powerful growth through the program. With over 770 students participating in OppNet's intensive six-year founding Fellows Program this year and reaching nearly 1000 students through the Program by 2020, the event created an immediate impact for current and future OppNet students. Later this April, Christie's will also be auctioning off Daniel Craig's personal Aston Martin, a 2014 'Centenary Vanquish' numbered 007 with all sale proceeds benefiting The Opportunity Network. The car was on display at the *Night of Opportunity* event.

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“The Opportunity Network’s commitment to supporting students from underrepresented communities is as important as it’s ever been,” said Daniel Craig. “Rachel and I are proud to further The Opportunity Network’s ongoing work as board members and Gala co-chairs as this is a cause we care about deeply.”

Founded in 2003 by Brian Weinstein and Jessica Pliska, The Opportunity Network’s track record of success over the last 15 years is marked by an unflinching commitment to preparing students from historically underrepresented communities for college, introducing them to career opportunities, facilitating paid summer internships, training students in professional etiquette and teaching them how to build networks. More than 90 percent of OppNet’s students will be the first in their families to graduate from college. One hundred percent of these students graduate from college, compared with only 10 percent of students from low-income communities nationwide. Within six months of graduation, 85 percent are admitted to graduate school or find meaningful employment.

This year, The Opportunity Network is expanding their impact to support schools and youth-serving organizations across the nation through their Career Fluency® Partnerships program, working with dedicated Partners to train their teachers, guidance counselors, and staff to best support students in reaching their college and career goals.

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About The Opportunity Network

The Opportunity Network (OppNet) connects high school and college students from historically and systematically underrepresented communities to career opportunities, professional networks, and college success. One hundred percent of students graduate from four-year colleges and eighty-five percent secure meaningful employment or graduate school admission within six months of graduation.

OppNet accomplishes this through its two programs, OppNet Fellows, an intensive six-year experience for students beginning in the summer after their sophomore year aimed at honing their passions and skills to get through college and launch the careers of their choice, and Career Fluency® Partnerships, OppNet’s national capacity-building work centered on its best-in-class [Career Fluency® curriculum](#) to amplify college and career outcomes for partner institutions. For more information, visit www.opportunitynetwork.org.