



## Actor donates \$50K in celebrity 'Jeopardy!' winnings to 1736 Center

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Tobi Quintiliani's heart raced as she watched the three contestants write down their answers for the Final Jeopardy question.

As the senior director of community response and relations at the nonprofit 1736 Family Crisis Center, Quintiliani "almost died." "I was so excited I was hitting our director of resource development's arm," Quintiliani said. "I hit her so much I bruised her."

The object of her excitement was actor Charles Shaughnessey, who promised to give his earnings on the show's Million Dollar Celebrity Invitational Tournament last week to the Hermosa Beach-based shelter.

Known for his role in "The Nanny," Shaughnessey was among the celebrities chosen to appear on the "Jeopardy!" tournament. A volunteer with the Family Crisis Center, he decided to put his winnings toward 1736.

The last time Shaughnessey appeared on the show, he donated his winnings to Sunshine Mission in Santa Monica. But that nonprofit went out of business, so he decided to look for another, similar agency. With people losing their jobs and the slow economy, Shaughnessey realized the importance of a family unit. However, many of the victims 1736 helps don't receive that love and support from their families.

"It's the scariest thing in the world when you can't rely on (your family), especially for young children," Shaughnessey said. "1736 is well-organized, small and not well supported, but there are lots of passionate people involved."

Quintiliani called Shaughnessey an active volunteer. "He sits down with the clients, plays 'Jeopardy!' with them, talks with them, plays with the children," she said. "He's amazing."

As the audience sat in complete silence, host Alex Trebek asked the final question: "When this entrepreneur died, the flags of the Kentucky State Capitol flew at half-staff." Shaughnessey decided to go with Colonel Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame.

After the familiar "Jeopardy!" tune faded, the three contestants revealed their answers. Trebek announced Shaughnessey correctly answered the final question, putting him \$200 ahead of Chris Matthews from MSNBC's "Hardball," who also got it right. But when actor David Duchovny got it wrong, Shaughnessey knew he had won.

His winnings came to \$50,000, a huge amount for the center. "It was really intense," Shaughnessey said. "I was experiencing great excitement - I was going to go in the semifinals and make them even more money."

In the stands, Quintiliani yelled out in excitement. "We were ecstatic," she said. "It was one of the most pleasant surprises we've ever had."

A Torrance-based nonprofit, 1736 serves domestic violence victims and homeless youth with shelters around the Los Angeles area. The agency has a youth shelter in Hermosa Beach and four confidential shelters located throughout the L.A. area. The organization provides clothes, shelter and food to victims free of charge for up to two years.

With the economy in a slump, 1736 has seen an increase of domestic violence cases but a decrease of funding from the government and public donations. Shaughnessey's large donation will go toward clothes, food, professional counseling and transportation for victims.

Shaughnessey will return to "Jeopardy!" for the semifinals in May and the opportunity to compete in the finals for the chance to win a million dollars.

"I don't know if there are any words to describe how we'd feel if he won the million dollars," Quintiliani said. "It would be beyond our wildest dreams and expectations. A real joy."

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