



# Virtual Gala Watch Party Tips & Tricks

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Mercy Foundation has shifted our biennial fundraising gala event completely online. While we are bummed that we can not gather in one venue this year, we want to encourage you as our guests to create your own fun by hosting a gala watch party!

We have put this tips and tricks sheet with helpful suggestions to make your watch party a totally tubular success!

## **In-person vs. online watch party - What is right for me?**

During these challenging times, some people are understandably hesitant to have gatherings in their homes. If you decide to host an in-person watch party, make sure to follow all pandemic safety guidelines; host your party outdoors, implement social distancing, provide masks, and make hand sanitizer readily available.

You can also decide to meet online with your friends! Free online systems such as Zoom or Skype allow you to virtually hang out before the event starts and after the program concludes. Your guests can easily use their smartphones, tablets, or computers to be part of your virtual watch party.

## **Your RSVP guest list.**

Social gatherings are always nice, but with this watch party, you can take it to the next step and share your passion for Mercy Medical Center Merced and why you are encouraging your friends to be part of the event with you. We would love for your guests to participate in the event any way they can, by bidding, donating, or just learning more about the medical center overall.

## **Timing.**

Our virtual gala experience will begin at 6:30 pm on the evening of the event. We suggest kicking off your party about one hour before the program begins. Our virtual program will last approximately 30 - 45 minutes, leaving plenty of time for you to party before and after with your guests.

## **Focus on the “party” part of the watch party.**

Here’s your chance to have fun and make this a memorable evening! Invite your guests to dress the part, with a cool and casual California-style surf theme, we are talking tropical-print tops and flip flops, or whatever is most comfortable for your guests to “hang-ten” with you.

Event sponsors and ticket purchasers have the opportunity to unpack their swag bags full of fun! Umbrella drinks anyone? Sip on the signature cocktail and wine provided and flex your culinary muscles by heating and enjoying the three-course meal and dessert sourced from local Merced County vendors.

### **Technically speaking (technology that is).**

Since you will be hosting your watch party at home, the method we suggest for viewing the virtual gala experience would be to connect your laptop or desktop to your TV. Our program link will be emailed out in the days leading up to the event.

You will want your guests to participate in our online auction, so ask them to bring their fully-charged smartphones too!

We realize that technology needs may vary depending upon the equipment you have, so we have found the following online resources helpful to get you connected. When and doubt, Google or Youtube can be very helpful too!

<https://www.cnet.com/tech/computing/how-to-connect-your-laptop-to-your-tv-wirelessly-or-with-hdmi/>

<https://www.asurion.com/connect/tech-tips/how-to-easily-connect-your-laptop-to-your-smart-tv/>

<https://www.bestbuy.com/site/home-entertainment/connect-laptop-to-tv/pcmcat1496253834782.c?id=pcmcat1496253834782>

<https://www.androidauthority.com/how-to-connect-a-laptop-to-a-tv-987441/>

<https://www.techsolutions.support.com/how-to/how-to-connect-a-windows-laptop-to-a-tv-over-hdmi-12554>

### **Questions?**

Give Foundation staff a call at 209.564.4200. We will be pleased to assist you!