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Business

Raising money again for More Than Words

By **Jon Chesto**
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Gala season is back. But smaller. While the first gala season since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic is finally underway, things are definitely not back to normal yet.

But people are still happy to have an excuse to try on their fancy clothes again — even if it means wearing a mask, eating outside, or gathering in a smaller crowd.

Among them: corporate financiers

Ward Mooney, Kevin Murtagh, Cheryl Carner, Ken Frieze, and Kevin Vercauteren. They launched what they hoped would be an annual tradition in 2018, bringing the corporate finance community together to benefit **More Than Words**, a nonprofit led by **Jodi Rosenbaum** that teaches entrepreneurial skills to city teens in its South End and Waltham bookstores and with its online shop.

In 2018 and 2019, about 500 people attended the event. But the group scaled things back for its return in 2021, on Oct. 7 at the **InterContinental Boston hotel.**

About 150 people came; the food was casual, not a sit-down meal, and outdoors.

Murtagh, a lawyer who cochairs **Riemer & Braunstein's** commercial finance practice, estimates the group raised about \$295,000.

“We were a little worried that because of COVID, we were going to lose that momentum, but ... people were so hungry to meet in person,” Murtagh said.

“Many of us hadn’t seen each other for a long time,” added Mooney, a financial entrepreneur. “The energy this year was electric.... People were high-fiving all night long.”