

## THE GLAMOUR OF GIVING, PART 2

*Bryan Rafanelli, Planning with a Purpose*

Alexis Clark | February 7, 2012



Event producer Bryan Rafanelli is largely known as the creative genius behind Chelsea Clinton's wedding and high profile charity galas across the country. But, he's also a champion for the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts. Saks POV chats with the Boston-based master planner about the organization that so dear to his heart.

**SPOV: How long have you been involved with the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts and what drew you to the cause?**

**BR:** "I have been involved with AIDS Action for over 20 years. I became a volunteer in the beginning of the AIDS epidemic after losing a friend to the disease. I joined the special events committee and volunteered for all sorts of great fundraisers. The experience helped me to create my own events company, and today, we offer our services to many worthy organizations."

**SPOV: What are some of the special services that AIDS Action provides that you are most proud of?**

**BR:** "Prevention, prevention, prevention. I am proud that since 1999, AIDS Action has helped reduce new diagnoses of HIV by 54% in Massachusetts, which will save the state \$2 billion in health care costs, while saving thousands of lives in the process."

**SPOV: Why have you decided to partner with Saks?**

**BR:** "I believe in the power of relationships. Saks is a model corporate citizen and is constantly thinking of new ways to serve the communities its stores are in."

**SPOV: What's your most memorable trip to Saks?**

**BR:** "Recently, at the last minute, I was invited to meet the President and First Lady in D.C., and did not have a tuxedo with me. I dashed to Saks 45 minutes before closing and found a pair of Prada shoes, black silk socks, a beautiful tailored Hugo Boss tuxedo, a fitted Zegna tuxedo shirt and a long black skinny tie. The entire store jumped into action to make it all work."

**SPOV: Since shopping the latest trends from Saks can benefit such causes like AIDS Action for the month of February, what favorite items will be in your Saks shopping bag?**

**BR:** "I am really digging the Salvatore Ferragamo Borg Lug Sole Brogue – these shoes are classic and I cannot wait to wear them. Also, I have a hankering to get down to Miami, so I love the Penguin Volley swim trunks in bright orange."