



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on February 11, 2015

## \$100K Per Ticket for Jeb Bush Park Avenue Bash

If Jeb Bush fails to nail down next year's GOP presidential nomination, it won't be from a shortage of cash or the lack of financial angels in his corner. The former Florida governor will be greeting deep-pocket donors Wednesday evening at [a \\$100,000-per-ticket Park Avenue event](#), *Politico* reported, citing further evidence of Bush's "shock and awe approach" to early 2016 fundraising.



The event will be hosted by private equity mogul Henry Kravis and his wife, according to *Politico*, citing "two people familiar with the event" who confirmed the \$100,000 ticket price. A spokesperson for the Bush campaign declined to comment.

"We don't detail info on private finance events," Kristy Campbell said in an e-mailed reply to the *Politico* inquiry. The event is organized by Bush's Right to Rise super PAC. Between the super PAC and other sources, Bush is expected to eventually raise between \$50 and \$100 million for his yet undeclared presidential campaign.

Kravis will likely be joined at the Park Avenue gathering by other members of the Kohlberg, Kravis and Roberts firm, including Ken Mehlman, a former chairman of the Republican National Committee and the manager of George W. Bush's 2004 reelection campaign. The high-priced fundraiser is part of an intense campaign by Bush to corral the contributions early and freeze out the fundraising efforts by potential rivals.

The former governor — who has earned the wrath of Tea Party and other grassroots conservatives for his support of Common Core school standards and a liberal stance on illegal immigration — has concentrated on consolidating his support among establishment Republicans and high-roller donors. The Right to Rise PAC is sponsoring a luncheon on Thursday, when the star attraction will be former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, an eminence on the Council on Foreign Relations and a champion of a "[New World Order](#)" under the aegis of the United Nations. Bush will also attend, the *New York Observer* reported.

The Wednesday night Park Avenue event will be the second this year hosted by Henry Kravis, whom *Forbes* describes as "the more visible, headline grabbing" member of the equity firm that has about \$98 billion and earned a \$691 million profit in 2013. On January 8, the *Observer* reported, Kohlberg, Kravis and Roberts hosted an event at its offices where Bush met with 80 supporters. That night he met with prominent money men from New York and New Jersey at a dinner hosted by New Jersey lawyer and former Republican National Committee finance chief Larry Bathgate. The night before, the undeclared candidate was in Greenwich, Connecticut, greeting 130 potential supporters. Bush's frequent forays in the tri-state region appear designed not only for fundraising purposes, but also to establish a narrative that Northeast Republicans are flocking to Bush in preference to New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, another likely entry into the field of GOP presidential contenders.

Bush has also profited from former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney's announcement that he will



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not seek the nomination in 2016. That opened up avenues of support from well-heeled Republicans who financed Romney's campaigns in 2008 and 2016. "One big remaining question is whether Bush will lock down the fundraising services of Romney confidant and investing partner Spencer Zwick," wrote *Politico's* Ben White. "Such a move would signal to many that Romney — who seemed cool to Bush in remarks upon deciding not to enter the race — had given his blessing to supporters to move to the former Florida governor."

Plenty of the party's plutocrats are betting big bucks that the son of one former president and brother of another will be the third member of the Bush dynasty to take up residence at the White House. Whatever might be his own strengths and weaknesses as a candidate, Jeb Bush might need his Park Avenue pals, Wall Street connections, and all the air time money can buy to win over voters with recent memories of a Bush administration with bloated budgets and ballooning deficits, two wars, a financial meltdown, and a steep recession. He must remind them, early and often, that not only is he not his brother's keeper; he's not his brother.



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