“Everybody loves Rick,” Conan O’Brien assured the crowd at the Beverly Hilton as he saluted his longtime agent, WME TV chief Rick Rosen at the Alliance for Children’s Rights dinner on March 7.

But then he paused and suggested an alternate scenario, to the delight of the room.

“Maybe Rick just seems like a nice guy compared to Ari,” O’Brien said, referring to WME co-CEO Ari Emanuel. Emanuel was a co-chair of the dinner with CBS’ Leslie Moonves but was unable to attend. He came in for a little more ribbing before O’Brien turned earnest, noting Rosen’s steadfast support during his “Tonight Show” drama with NBC a few years back.

“I can’t tell you what this man means to me as a human being,” O’Brien said.

In a prepared vid, “Community” star Joel McHale also cited Rosen’s all-around-good-guy stature in biz and philanthropy circles. “He’s done almost enough charity work to not go to hell for being an agent,” he said.
By the end of the night, the affection for Rosen and the work of the non-profit org that aids children and youth in L.A. County’s foster care system added up to a haul of $1.4 million. Philanthropist and education reformer Melanie Lundquist was also feted with the Alliance’s award for service.

Rosen, in accepting the Champion for Children kudo, noted the sharp contrast between the lives of donors in the room and those who need the Alliance’s services, which range from legal aid to health care to lobbying. The coin will go a long way to “narrowing the opportunity gap” for kids in foster care, Rosen said.