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Obama releases list of top money 'bundlers'

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WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's re-election campaign identified its top fundraisers on Tuesday, including 61 people who each raised at least half a million dollars. Altogether, the more than 440 fundraisers collected at least \$75 million to help Obama win a second term.

Among them are embattled former New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine. Obama's campaign and the Democratic National Committee late last year returned \$70,000 in contributions from Corzine and his wife following questions about the collapse of MF Global, the financial firm Corzine ran.

Corzine is no longer raising money for the re-election, campaign officials said.

The campaign divided the list into four groups based on how much money donors raised: \$50,000-\$100,000, \$100,000-\$200,000, \$200,000 to \$500,000 and those who raised more than \$500,000 apiece.

The donors represent a broad network of contributors, many of them longtime Democratic Party stalwarts.

The list includes two fundraisers linked to Solyndra LLC, the California solar company that received a \$528 million federal loan and then later declared bankruptcy, prompting a federal investigation. Steve Spinner, an Energy Department adviser, raised at least \$500,000 and Steve Westly, a venture capitalist who was an unpaid adviser to the department, raised between \$200,000 and \$500,000.

The disclosure came as Obama headed back out on the money trail, speaking Tuesday night at two high-dollar fundraisers in the Washington area where donors paid \$35,800 per ticket to see him. At an event at the posh St. Regis Hotel, the president told donors that Republicans have "the wrong vision for America," though he didn't mention any of his opponents by name or reference the voting under way in Florida, where polls were closing in the state's GOP primary.

Obama said voters needed to know "that this is not an abstract ideological argument, that this is a practical concrete argument," and that the election is about whether they'll be able to find a good job with a living wage and get health care for their families. "They've got to feel that we are actively advocating on their behalf."

Obama's campaign ended the year with more than \$81 million in the bank, but Republicans are gearing up in the race for the White House.

The Republican National Committee collected \$27 million during the final three months of 2011, compared with \$23 million by the DNC. In December, the RNC raised \$11.6 million while the DNC collected \$8.8 million.

Through the end of 2011, the RNC had \$20 million in the bank and \$13 million in debt, while the DNC held \$12.5 million in cash on hand and \$6.5 million in debt.

Though Obama rejects contributions from lobbyists, his top fundraisers include individuals involved in the business of influencing government.

Michael Kempner, among those who raised more than \$500,000, is president and CEO of MWW Group, a public relations firm with a large lobbying business. Kempner himself is not a registered lobbyist.

Sally Susman, another fundraiser in the \$500,000-plus category, is executive vice president for policy, external affairs and communications at Pfizer Inc., a job that includes directing the pharmaceutical giant's government relations operations.

California figured most prominently on Obama's roster of big money "bundlers." Sixteen are from California and 13 are from New York.

Top fundraisers include movie producers Jeffrey Katzenberg and Harvey Weinstein, and Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour. Actress Eva Longoria was in the second highest tier, bundling \$200,000 to \$500,000 for Obama's re-election.

Associated Press writer Erica Werner contributed to this report.