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WALLACE FOUNDATION GRANTS \$1.8 MILLION TO TWO ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPROVE ARTS EDUCATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Los Angeles, California, October 28, 2008 – Building on its longstanding effort to expand participation in the arts, The Wallace Foundation has announced grants to two Los Angeles arts learning initiatives to support activities crucial to strengthening coordinated arts learning efforts and to bring high-quality arts experiences to more young people in Los Angeles County.

As part of its effort to support and share effective practices and ideas, The Wallace Foundation announced a \$1.2 million grant to the Los Angeles County Arts Commission (LACAC) to advance the region’s six-year-old coordinated arts education initiative, *Arts for All*, and a \$600,000 planning grant to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to support development of a second 10-year plan for arts education to build on its first successful decade of expanding arts instruction throughout the district. . Both initiatives will be studied by the Foundation to document and share lessons with the field about how communities can improve arts learning throughout school districts.

The Foundation chose Los Angeles after conducting a nationwide scan to identify communities with noteworthy efforts coordinating resources to improve arts learning, with committed school district personnel and representatives of cultural organizations and the demonstrated support of local funders.

“We believe every child – and our broader society – benefits from high-quality arts learning and that arts education deserves a secure place in our communities. Arts learning can enhance a child’s ability to learn how to learn; it can develop skills of persistence and teamwork; it can enhance the school experience for students -- sustaining their interest and enthusiasm for learning; and it can nurture empathy and foster imagination through experiences that the arts uniquely provide,” said Wallace Foundation President M. Christine DeVita. “Although fragile, community wide coordinated efforts are showing success in improving access to arts learning. We hope our work with leaders in Los Angeles to support the LACAC and LAUSD initiatives, and our investment in research, will yield useful knowledge about how communities across the country can deliver high-quality arts experiences to more young people.”

“The Wallace Foundation gift will play a crucial role in propelling *Arts for All* forward and bringing quality arts education to more students,” said Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Yvonne B. Burke. “Arts education is a key ingredient in preparing students to work in today’s creative economy and to assume leadership positions in the community. That Wallace has recognized the considerable achievements of *Arts for All* and made a visionary investment in the initiative is most satisfying. We thank The Wallace Foundation not only for its magnificent gift but for entrusting Los Angeles County with a key role in insuring that every public school student receives a quality arts education.”

“It is gratifying to receive national acknowledgment of the long-standing efforts in Los Angeles Unified School District to re-instate dance, music, theatre, visual arts and media arts into every classroom, in every school, for every student from kindergarten to graduation,” said Richard Burrows, LAUSD Director of Arts Education. LAUSD Superintendent David L Brewer commented, “We are inspired by the opportunity afforded by The Wallace Foundation gift to move us closer to the guarantee of every Angelino student’s right to a comprehensive, coherent, sequential arts education. LAUSD is proud to be a national partner with The Wallace Foundation and a community collaborator with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.”

Los Angeles County Arts Commission: *Arts for All*:

The \$1.2 million Wallace grant will enable *Arts for All* to build on the achievements of its first six years by expanding its ability to increase the impact of the arts in classrooms. The strategies the grant supports call for deepening *Arts for All*’s partnerships with the 28 Los Angeles County school districts which joined the initiative 2003-08 and strengthening advocacy for arts education.

Several new elements will be added to the technical assistance provided by *Arts for All* to help the districts realize the goal of providing equitable access to quality arts education for students. These include coaching customized to meet district-specific needs and building a national cadre of specialist coaches to augment local expertise; the creation of a Leadership Fellows program to enhance the arts education knowledge of district leaders; and the launch of a comprehensive professional development program to increase the capacity of arts coordinators and teachers to deliver quality arts instruction.

To empower local stakeholders to advocate for arts education, community arts teams, which are formed in *Arts for All* districts to develop policies, plans and budgets, will receive advocacy training and transition to advocacy teams to monitor the implementation of district long range plans and hold decision makers accountable for delivering quality arts education to students.

Los Angeles Unified School District:

The \$600,000 planning grant to the Los Angeles Unified School District will support research on current arts instructional practices that involve arts teachers, classroom teachers and the arts community, a precursor to devising ways to improve the effectiveness of K-12 arts instruction and to deepen and expand arts instruction to all students. The grant will support efforts to broaden community support for sustainable, high quality arts learning, including effective methods to enlist teachers, administrators, arts and cultural institutions, colleges/ universities and parents in the creation of the second 10-year plan.

There are two primary components to the Wallace “Arts for Young People Initiative” at LAUSD. The first major component involves the convening of 7 separate constituency groups to consider, think, plan and make

recommendations for the second 10-year plan for arts education in the district. These convening groups include teachers, arts teachers, large budget arts organizations, post-secondary and pre-service colleges/universities, arts/culture/service organizations, public education administrators, national arts experts and the general public and parents.

The second component is the retrieval of essential information and data related to the implementation of arts education for all students. At the elementary level, careful consideration of the implementation of the K-5 arts instructional guide from 8 case studies will be analyzed for effective use to meet the needs of all students in various education situations. At the secondary level, a thorough analysis of selected feeder families of schools to detail the arts instructional opportunities articulated from Kindergarten through Grade Twelve.

At the conclusion of the planning work and data analysis, recommendations will be revealed in a culminating conference for stakeholders and the public. These recommendations will serve as the backbone for initiating a Board of Education resolution and operational plan for the district 2010-2020 efforts in the arts.

The Wallace Foundation: The Wallace Foundation is an independent, national foundation dedicated to supporting and sharing effective ideas and practices that expand learning and enrichment opportunities for all people. Its three current objectives are: strengthening education leadership to improve student achievement; enhancing out-of-school learning opportunities; and expanding participation in arts and culture. More information and research on these and other related topics can be found at The Wallace Foundation Knowledge Center at www.wallacefoundation.org.

LACAC: The Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest county in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. The Arts Commission, in addition to providing leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*, administers a grants program that funds more than 300 nonprofit arts organizations annually; oversees the County's Civic Art Program for capital projects, funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Foundation, programs the John Anson Ford Theatres and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. The Commission also produces free community programs, including the L.A. Holiday Celebration broadcast nationally, and a year-round music program that funds more than 50 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2008-09 President of the Arts Commission is Betty Haagen.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is the second largest school district in the United States with more than 694,000 students in Los Angeles and neighboring communities. Encompassing 710 square miles, the LAUSD is geographically divided into eight Local Districts, oversees 1,190 schools and centers, and employs almost 84,000 people. The culturally diverse district, in which 90 languages are spoken, is governed by the seven-member Los Angeles Board of Education and manages an annual budget of nearly \$14 billion.

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