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The Herb Alpert Foundation gives \$1.5 million for a 5-year process to establish arts education at Lawndale Elementary School District

P.S. ARTS to guide effort as part of Los Angeles County's *Arts for All*

The Herb Alpert Foundation has made a \$1.5 million gift to Santa Monica-based P.S. ARTS to fund a five-year program at Lawndale Elementary School District to establish comprehensive, sequential arts education for the district's nearly 5,000 elementary students at its six elementary schools. ***The Herb Alpert Arts Education Initiative at Lawndale*** supports the Los Angeles County Arts Commission's ***Arts for All***, a ten-year landmark effort launched in September 2002 by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to restore dance, music, theatre, and visual arts education to all 80 county school districts in compliance with California's Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Standards.

Announcing the gift, musician and visual artist **Herb Alpert** said, "The arts allow us to express ourselves authentically. As the voice of the spirit, they help children know themselves, build a positive self-image and develop skills for a richer and more positive life. We hope that this project will motivate others to support the *Arts for All* program and ensure comprehensive arts education for Los Angeles County children. Many county school districts still operate without sequential arts education and would benefit from additional support."

Rona Sebastian, Herb Alpert Foundation President said, "The Foundation wanted to support a project to impact a large number of children and also be a model for other school districts. Supporting Lawndale's engagement in *Arts for All* fit the bill."

Laura Zucker, Los Angeles County Arts Commission executive director said, "This exceptional gift will help Lawndale Elementary School District provide comprehensive arts education to its students as well as a roadmap for other districts seeking to implement *Arts for All*. By working with P.S. Arts, Lawndale will develop a concrete arts education plan to give its students comprehensive arts education throughout their elementary experience. *Arts for All* is creating the blueprint for comprehensive arts education for all Los Angeles County students. We commend the Herb Alpert Foundation for this tremendously constructive gift that will benefit so many."

The Lawndale Elementary School District initiative evolved from a relationship between the district and P.S. ARTS begun in 2002. As a medium sized district serving 6,200 students (4,900 at six elementary schools and 1,300 at the district's one middle school Will Rogers Middle School)

Lawndale provided the perfect laboratory to be monitored and evaluated. Also, Lawndale's Board of Education fully supports efforts to integrate arts education into the general curriculum.

“We are deeply grateful to The Herb Alpert Foundation for this magnificent gift,” said Lawndale **Superintendent Dr. Joseph Condon**. “The Foundation's generosity will expand arts education for all elementary students and help us provide a comprehensive, integrated district-wide arts education policy and plan for all students.”

In working with Lawndale, P.S. ARTS will place teaching artists at schools, to provide sequential instruction in all four arts disciplines and train teachers to strengthen their integration of the arts into the general curriculum. Likewise, Lawndale teachers will bring their subject expertise to help P.S. ARTS teaching artists better merge subject-specific material with arts frameworks to improve and connect how children learn the entire curriculum. Teachers will attend after school and summer institutes to learn ways to integrate arts education. Lawndale also plans evening programming and other events to allow parents and the community to better experience the arts with their children.

Within the first year of this partnership, P.S. ARTS will help Lawndale Elementary School District define its district-wide vision for arts education and achieve Board adoption of an integrated arts education policy and plan--the foundation of the **Arts for All** countywide arts education model.

“This is not a scripted plan,” said **Condon**. “In building this process what we learn will help guide other school districts to fully integrate the arts into their entire curriculum. We are thrilled to be the prototype. We look forward to an engaged and evolving process with P.S. Arts to benefit Lawndale and districts through Los Angeles County. We are deeply grateful to the Herb Alpert Foundation for helping make Los Angeles County's **Arts for All** a reality.”

Sheila Bergman, P.S. ARTS' Executive Director said, “The arts are essential to every child's education, which is why the arts are one of the core academic subjects in the *No Child Left Behind Act*. An arts curriculum benefits students in their intellectual, personal, and social development. Literacy should not be limited to the written word. Children need to be prepared to fully represent, interpret and express a wide band of knowledge to enable them to think independently. An arts education does just that.”

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 provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a grants program that funds more than 250 nonprofit arts organizations annually; 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 60 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2005-2006 President of the Arts Commission is Hope Warschaw.

The **Herb Alpert Foundation**, Rona Sebastian, President, makes significant annual contributions to a range of programs that support the arts, arts education, youth development, compassion and well-being. Its current roster of programs includes The Alpert Award in the Arts -- \$50,000 unrestricted grants annually to five mid-career artists, administered by Cal Arts; the Emerging Young Artists Awards ---\$20,000 in scholarship to four college-bound students, administered by the California Alliance for Arts Education; The Thelonious Monk Institute, The Dave Brubeck Institute, The Henry Mancini Institute, The New Visions Foundation, and UC Berkeley's Center for Peace and Well-Being, to name a few. The Foundation's funding is directed toward projects in which Herb and Lani Alpert and Foundation President Rona Sebastian play an active role. (Please note: the Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals.)

P.S. ARTS Sheila Bergman Executive Director, was founded in 1991 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with a grant from The Herb Alpert Foundation by Santa Monica's Crossroads School, acclaimed for its arts programming. P.S. Arts is dedicated to restoring arts education to public schools by providing comprehensive, skills based, sequential classes in dance, drama, music and visual arts

to children attending Title I schools. Initially serving 450 students, P.S. ARTS now serves thousands of students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, Lennox Unified School District, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, Reef Sunset Unified School District and Lawndale School Districts with arts education curriculum aligned with California's Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards. P.S. ARTS provides access to the arts through in-school programs to thousands of children in some of the most underserved neighborhoods in California. In addition, P.S. ARTS is active in the educational community, offering arts-related workshops for classroom teachers. The workshops are designed to inspire and instruct teachers how to integrate creative expression and the arts into the core curriculum.

Lawndale Elementary School District Dr. Joseph Condon, Superintendent, consists of eight school sites educating approximately 6,200 students. The district office is located at 4161 147th Street, Lawndale, CA 90260. Five elementary schools provide kindergarten through sixth grade classes, one kindergarten through third grade classes, and another fourth through sixth grade classes. One middle school serves the seventh and eighth grades. Situated at the southern edge of the Los Angeles basin, Lawndale Elementary School District welcomes students and families from throughout the world serving first generation immigrants and long-established residents side by side. Lawndale Elementary School District unites faculties, families, and students as joint decision-makers and leaders in the life of the schools. These leaders then seek local businesses to partner with schools, enlivening school life and bringing fresh perspectives. The district maintains before and after school enrichment programs, an open media center, and a sports program, making school resources available to families each day, from morning until night. By balancing our curriculum and broadening our view of intelligence, by supporting educators in continually advancing their expertise, by opening schools and their resources to more people for more hours, we create a community in which all are scholars and all are teachers, working together to spark a life-long love for learning.