

**NEWS ALERT**[Story Home Page](#)**MALIBU SURFSIDE NEWS**

Phone: 310-457-2112

Telefax: 310-457-9908

[Email: News](#)[City of Malibu](#)[Malibu Chamber of Commerce](#)[Malibu Schools](#)[Malibu Surfing Report](#)[Malibu Road Info](#)[Fictitious Business Name Filing Forms](#)

Exceptional Bequest Gives Boost to SMMUSD Coffers

• \$4.8 Million Creates Arts Endowment

BY SUZANNE GULDIMANN

Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation Executive Director Linda Greenberg Gross announced that the foundation is the beneficiary of an estate gift of \$4.8 million, the largest gift in the effort's 30-year history.

"The gift from the estate of the late Peggy Bergmann will be divided into two parts: \$2.4 million has been designated to establish an arts endowment for the purpose of providing semi-private music instruction, as well as the purchase and maintenance of musical instruments, for economically disadvantaged students throughout the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District," according to Greenberg Gross.

The new Peggy Bergmann Arts Endowment Fund honors her parents Lenore Bergmann and John Elmer Bergmann.

The second \$2.4 million "has been designated as current-use dollars to address SMMEF's critical needs within the district," the release states. "District Superintendent Sandra Lyon will be working with the newly-formed Superintendent's Advisory Council, made up of district, foundation, and community leaders, to assess the district's most critical needs in determining the best and most impactful use of these dollars."

"We are so pleased to join with the foundation to announce this magnificent gift that will have an enormous effect on our schools today and in perpetuity," said Lyon.

"As state funding for public education continues to decline, it's never been more important that we seek support from our communities to ensure continued excellence in our schools. This is a tremendous step in that direction."

"The Bergmann bequest arrives at a time when the District is moving toward a centralized fundraising model in which the education foundation broadens its focus from events and annual appeals to major and planned gifts that will create sustainability for important programs at schools throughout the district," the release states. "Cultivation of long-term relationships, such as the one that resulted in this gift, is now a core focus of the Foundation's centralized fundraising efforts."

Bergmann, who lived in Pacific Palisades and did not attend SMMUSD schools or have children in the district, died on Dec. 10, 2011. She reportedly left more than \$15 million to charitable causes. Nearly a third of her estate was donated to the district.

The bequest was developed through collaboration between Greenberg Gross and Bergmann's executor and estate attorneys, Bruce and Sonya Sultan, who are former SMMUSD parents.

"It was Ms. Bergmann's hope that this gift would encourage others to give large and small gifts to the education foundation to make program equity a reality for all children in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District," said Sonya Sultan, attorney for the Bergmann estate.

She added that "the fact that Ms. Bergmann's friend and executor was familiar with the fine reputation of Linda Greenberg Gross helped solidify Ms. Bergmann's decision to benefit the education foundation.

Web www.malibusurfsidenews.com

Copyright © 2012 [Malibu Surfside News](#) . All Rights Reserved.



**CUSTOM
Oversized
Checks**



**SAVE
10%**

ORDER NOW

**USE CODE:
SAVE10**

0

Website Designed and Maintained by
[Bytedancer Productions](#)