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Ed Foundation's Live Online Santa Monica Wine Auction Raises \$148,000 for Local Schools

The event transitioned to an online format in response to COVID-19 restrictions

Santa Monica, Calif., May 6, 2020 – In spite of COVID-19 restrictions, the fifth annual Santa Monica Wine Auction raised \$148,000 for programs in Santa Monica schools next year. For the last four years, the Santa Monica Education Foundation's annual event raised funds for local public schools through a gala food and wine tasting at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows. COVID-19 made gathering in-person for this year's event impossible. Instead of cancelling, the Ed Foundation moved to a fully online model for this year's event.

On the evening of Sunday, May 3, the Santa Monica Wine Auction was broadcast live via YouTube, with attendees bidding on live auction items and donating online in real time. The event featured appearances by Ed Foundation Executive Director Linda Greenberg and SMMUSD Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati. Three Lincoln Middle School students, who were scheduled to perform at the in-person Wine Auction, brought down the house with a from-home rendition of Hakuna Matata from their school production of The Lion King, Jr. Several Santa Monica principals, along with Dr. Drati, ended the event with a video dance party.

An online silent auction of wine and other items, which ran from April 27 through May 3, also raised funds as part of the event.

"We rely on funds raised from the Wine Auction to support Santa Monica students each year," said Ed Foundation Executive Director Linda Greenberg. "We knew that we couldn't let our students down so we decided to move forward with a modified event to support arts, STEM and wellness in schools next year. I was overwhelmed by the response to this event. It was a truly unprecedented evening of supporting our local public schools. From their individual homes all across our community, over 300 people rallied together to support our schools in such a unique way."

This year's event brings the combined total raised at the five Santa Monica Wine Auctions to \$1.14 million. The money raised directly funds arts programs, classroom aides, STEM and student health and wellness programs in Santa Monica public schools next year.

Businesses that support students through the Ed Foundation's year-long Corporate Hero program were also recognized as sponsors of the Wine Auction.

The Wine Auction's presenting sponsors were Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows/MSD Partners, L.P. Bird; David Yun and the Eighty8 Group; Kilroy Realty; Santa Monica Place/Macerich; The Plaza at Santa Monica; and Saint John's Health Center Foundation Community Impact Fund.

Platinum Sponsors: Boston Properties; Cedars-Sinai; FreeAssociates; Harding Larmore Kutcher & Kozal LLP; Santa Monica Daily Press; Sir Speedy Santa Monica; UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica; and Wells Fargo Foundation.

Gold Sponsors: Boardwalk Pictures, Inc.; The Gallery Food Hall and Social Eats; Harley Ellis Devereaux/Moore Ruble Yudell Architects; Huntley Santa Monica Beach; Raymond James; and Sunnin Lebanese Cuisine.

Silver Sponsors: Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo; Bob's Market; DFH Architects; DLR Group; Downtown Santa Monica; Gelson's Markets; HGA Architects and Engineers; Jones Hall, A Professional Law Corporation; Khedr Management Company and Southern California Disposal & Recycling Company.

Annual donations and Ed Foundation endowments are funding \$2.64 million in programs during the current school year. Fundraising for 2020-2021 school-year programs will continue through June 30, 2020. At this point, donations are still needed for students. The COVID-19 crisis has impacted fundraising and all donations are greatly appreciated.

For more information or to make a donation, go to smedfoundation.org.

About the Santa Monica Education Foundation

Contributions to the Santa Monica Education Foundation fund excellent programs at every Santa Monica public school – from arts to STEM to wellness – that shape our future problem solvers, visionaries, and global citizens.

Established in 1982 by a dedicated group of parents, community leaders, and local business owners, the Ed Foundation raises funds to enhance and supplement the curriculum of the Santa Monica schools. The Foundation's mission is to engage the community to invest in a vibrant educational experience for all public school students in Santa Monica.

To learn more about the Ed Foundation, visit smedfoundation.org.