

**Philanthropic Ventures Foundation Partners with Private Donors in
Race to Fund Bay Area's Vanishing School Arts Programs**

**Teams with Westly Foundation to Provide "Immediate Response" Art Resource Grants
To Teachers Who Identify Critical Needs *and* Creative Solutions**

Oakland CA (March 18, 2008) Philanthropic Ventures Foundation (PVF), the groundbreaking Bay Area foundation that specializes in developing creative giving programs tailored to the interests of private donors, has teamed with The Steve and Anita Westly Foundation to help fund local school arts programs. PVF's "immediate response" Arts Resource Grant Program provides up to \$500 to public school teachers, grades K-8 in the Southern half of San Mateo County, to support classroom and after-school arts programs. The grants are intended to enhance arts education in music, theatre, dance, & visual arts by funding necessities such as art supplies, visiting artists, scripts, instruments, scores, sound equipment, stipends for after-school arts teaching, costumes, props and professional development.

"For too long," notes PVF Executive Director Bill Somerville "teachers who understand the impact of the arts on improved learning have had to watch as desperately needed programs fall victim to ongoing budget cuts. Our goal is to unburden the teacher and enrich the students by streamlining the process of providing donor advised funds to worthy projects and programs."

Getting Money Where It's Needed Faster

Teachers requesting an Arts Resource Grant are asked to fax a one page application with a brief description of their program or project request, the number of students it benefits and an itemized listing of how the money will be spent. In return PVF funds approved applications within 48 hours – an unheard of turnaround in world of foundation grant making. The simplified, single page application and immediate funding are part of PVF's unique streamlined approach that champions people and ideas over paper trails and risk aversion in order to maximize the social impact of every donated dollar.

Examples of the projects funded through PVF's Arts Resource Grant Program include: art supplies for first grade students to make maps of their class, their neighborhood, and the Earth at Green Oaks Academy, East Palo Alto; classroom art project kits to support the kindergarten language arts program with art projects that encourage language, creativity and team work at Hoover Math & Technology Magnet School, Redwood City; art supplies for integrating art into math and science projects for the six Kindergarten classes at Nesbit Elementary School, Belmont; interactive theater performance for middle school students to learn about the Civil Rights Movement during Black History Month at East Palo Alto

Charter School, East Palo Alto; field trip to Stanford University for 7th graders to see historical artifacts, create mentoring alliances, and see college as a possibility at John F. Kennedy Middle School, Redwood City and four new desktop piano keyboards for the 4th grade beginning music students at San Carlos Charter Learning Center, San Carlos.

Johanna Gelb, a 3rd grade teacher at Alvin S. Hatch Elementary School in Half Moon Bay, underscores the special value of arts programs for English learning students, saying “Particularly in a rural school district such as ours, where families frequently haven’t the money or the resources to offer their children extracurricular activities, our public school classrooms are their only hope of exposure to art education. Giving children from all socio-economic backgrounds a voice is particularly important at Hatch, where the arts provide common ground and a creative space in which our students can express their hopes, dreams and concerns.”

Helping Donors Put Their Money Where Their Heart Is

As with many of PVF’s initiatives the Arts Resource Grant Program was developed in response to the giving interests of specific donors. In 2004, former eBay executive and California State Controller Steve Westly together with his wife Anita asked PVF to craft a vehicle through which they could support critically needed arts curriculum in local schools. Since then, their Westly Foundation has funded 350 Arts Resource Grants with donations in excess of \$200,000.

"We are thrilled to offer this grant opportunity to public schools," says donor Steve Westly. "We know that arts education funding is scarce and we really respect teachers. Rather than create a cumbersome program, we love partnering with Philanthropic Ventures Foundation to deliver quick results with minimal paperwork for applicants." "It is a joy to see our funds help kids from all cultures experience art of all kinds," Anita Westly echoed. "\$500 per teacher really makes a difference in the classroom."

About Philanthropic Ventures Foundation

Since its inception in 1991, Oakland-based Philanthropic Ventures Foundation (PVF) has distributed over \$50 million in grants to those who need it most; gaining national recognition for pioneering innovative approaches to grassroots philanthropy. Under the stewardship of Bill Somerville, PVF has operated as a “living lab”, incubating first-of-their-kind funding programs including: Immediate Response Grants delivered in less than 48 hours of request; First Response Disaster Relief, which

guarantees \$25,000 to ten designated agencies addressing emergency food and shelter needs for the needy during a natural disaster; and the Juvenile Judges Program, which provides immediate grants to youth in the foster care system as identified by Juvenile Court Judges. In addition to their own programs, PVF works with donors and private foundations to customize their giving to specific areas or programs of interest. PVF is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity. Philanthropic Ventures Foundation. 1222 Preservation Park Way, Oakland, CA 94612. www.venturesfoundation.org

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