



Media Contact:

Cara Van Dijk:
760-668-2424

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Auen Foundation Grant Supports Intergenerational Program

Elementary students and local seniors collaborate on musical performance

Palm Springs, Calif., (June 11, 2012) –Cielo Vista Charter School, in conjunction with the Mizell Senior Center, will present “The Quest,” a musical that was born out of an intergenerational program supported by the Auen Foundation. “The Quest” was written by teachers and parents from Cielo Vista Charter School and produced with the assistance of volunteers from the Mizell Senior Center. The one-night only performance is **Wednesday, June 20 at 6 p.m. at the Palm Springs High School Auditorium** and will feature more than 200 elementary students, K-6th grade.

“‘The Quest’ reinforces the six pillars of character that our school is built on and our teachers emphasize all year. The pillars are Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship,” said Michael Fergon, fulltime music director at Cielo Vista Charter School and Palm Springs Unified School District 2010 Teacher of the Year.

Fergon and parent volunteers created songs for the musical by adapting popular melodies with original lyrics about the exemplary character traits taught at Cielo Vista Charter School. The result is a toe-tapping, dance in your seat performance that teaches its performers more than carrying a tune or remembering lines.

The Auen Foundation grant allowed Cielo Vista Charter School to purchase microphones, speakers and a DVD burner for the music department. Volunteers from Mizell Senior Center are assisting with some of the behind the scenes efforts for the production and will serve as ushers the night of the performance.

The musical is one of many components of a collaborative intergenerational program that began in 2011. Throughout the school year, Cielo Vista Charter School students write letters and design greeting cards that are delivered to homebound seniors through Meals on Wheels. Senior volunteers are also teaching students to play bridge, which enhances math skills. In the fall, Mizell Senior Center will coordinate tutoring sessions in various subjects at Cielo Vista Charter School, and students from there will go to the Mizell to teacher members about Apple computer products, software and new ways to communicate through the Internet.

“We are very excited about the prospect of this program that connects children and seniors,” said Catharine Reed, Program Director for the Auen Foundation. “We are already seeing inspiration in both the students and the adults who are communicating through letters and collaborating on projects. Intergenerational programs expand the day-to-day ‘worlds’ people live in and helps them see things from a new perspective.”

For more information about the intergenerational program and how you can get involved, call Thomas Hengy at the Mizell Senior Center, (760) 323-5689. Tickets to “The Quest” are \$10 and \$15 and are on-sale now as a fundraiser for the music department at the only charter school in PSUSD. For tickets to the musical call 855-853-8886.

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About the Auen Foundation: Established in 1992, The Auen Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the overall quality of life of the aging population and raising awareness of the precious-end-of-life stage. We support charitable programs and services aimed at meeting the social needs of mature adults and their families.