

Mothers' Club Recognized as Top- Performing Non-Profit

On September 16 at the Getty Center, the **California Community Foundation** ("CCF") and the **Eisner Foundation** presented their top award in the category of education to Mothers' Club Family Learning Center for its innovation, resilience and impact in improving the quality of life for low-income L.A. residents.

The Foundation's *Unsung Heroes* event, which was hosted by actor and CCF donor **Noah Wiley** (television's ER), celebrated the power and impact of philanthropy in Los Angeles. In total, 15 agencies were honored for their outstanding work in the areas of education, the arts, health care, human development and neighborhood revitalization.

Each of the top five agencies received a Palevsky Award of \$10,000, named for the late philanthropist Joan Palevsky who left a \$257 million bequest to CCF in 2006 and helped double the foundation's competitive grantmaking to about \$20 million a year.

"This is a time when top-performing nonprofits will shine more than ever because they have been able to weather the storm..."

*- Antonia Hernández,
President & CEO, California
Community Foundation*

"These awards are welcome news amid a string of challenges our non-profit sector faces every day. We are proud to honor and support these terrific organizations," said **Antonia Hernández**, President and CEO at CCF. "This is a time when top-performing nonprofits like these will

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*Two Mothers' Club participants
share their latest challenges...*

Moms Rally Together in Times of Need

You know that old saying "it takes a village"? Well, it's more than just a saying at Mothers' Club. It's a principle that has served our families well, especially during the current recession.

For instance, every year our moms raise money for an emergency fund by organizing a yard sale and selling food to each other and staff. The fund enables families to borrow cash for emergency needs with no questions asked. Typically, \$50 to \$150 is borrowed to help pay rent, utility bills, buy groceries, a pair of children's shoes, and, recently, a mom borrowed gas money to drive her toddler to a medical specialist in Hollywood.

In the past, funds were usually repaid within two months. But, this last year, more and more parents were not able to replenish the fund, and the \$1,250 that was raised by the parents' efforts has been almost depleted.

Sometimes it is the most tragic of circumstances that bring our moms closer together. Recently, they raised money for the funeral services of a newborn baby who died after three months in intensive care. Our moms literally went door-to-door collecting

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account and search for Mothers'
Club Family Learning Center

**Mothers' Club
Family Learning Center**

980 N. Fair Oaks Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103
626.792.2687 Office
626.793.1832 Fax

From the President... Mothers' Club Guardians - The Power of Many

At Mothers' Club, our motto is, "The Power of Two." Everyone who is involved with Mothers' Club has seen that phrase many times. But, what does it really mean? We are a family learning center, and our motto refers to the power of a parent and child, together, working to achieve what would have been difficult or impossible for each to achieve alone.

We teach children and mothers together fundamental skills they will need to navigate our complex and difficult world. We teach them to make connections - with each other, with their classmates and neighbors, with their schools and the community around them. The "power of two" is the first step toward the power of many.

"The Guardians truly do guard and protect our organization. Their substantial donations help us open the doors each morning, keep the lights on, food in the pantry for our children and teachers in the classroom."

Mothers' Club itself relies on this power of connection. As an organization, we do not stand alone. We are connected in many ways - to public and private grant-making agencies, to peers and, perhaps most importantly, to our individual donors. Throughout our nearly fifty-year history, individual donors have been critical to our growth and survival. Generous individuals got us started, kept us going through our decades in the cottages at the Quaker meeting house, and provided much of the capital for our move to the wonderful facility we now occupy.

In these very difficult times, with formerly reliable government, corporate and foundation grants all substantially reduced and uncertain, our individual donors have held steady.

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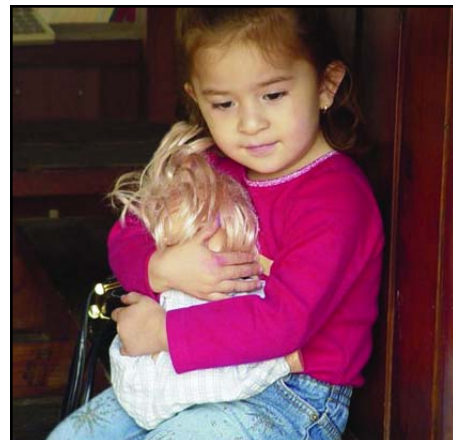
Welcome New Guardians

Thank you to following individuals for joining the Mothers' Club *Guardians*; a group of individuals who provide cornerstone support for our programs by donating \$1,000 or more to our annual fund.

Maye Albanez & Tim Marty
Peggy Coleman
Charles Kurzweil
Julie & Scott Ward
Dr. Irene Sang

Our Continued Thanks to Our Guardians

Judy Smith Asbury & Greg Asbury
Phillip "Ted" Atalla
Gwen & Guilford Babcock
Carole & Mike Babcock
Ann & Olin Barrett
Renu Bhat-Hansen & Alex Hansen
Claire & Bill Bogaard
Clara & Emily Lanzas-Bogaard
Elisa & Eric Callow
Barbara Campbell
Marie Campbell
Nancy & John Carlton
Mary Anne Cunningham
Leslie Dennis
Dorlys Devereux
Bonnie & John DeWitt
Anne Esbenshade & Michael Miele
Helen Minton Farley
Christine & Ira Felman
Jean & Louis Fleming
Susan Futterman & Arnold Siegel
Jennifer & Mark Giles
Marcia Goodstein & Bill Gross
Sandra Guerrero
Stephanie & J. Dale Harvey
Deborah Heitz & Shaw Wagener
Tracy & Richard Hirrel
Adelaide Hixon
Mariko & Martin Howard
Charles Hubay & Kathleen Shields
Jane Kaczmarek
Ellen & Harvey Knell
Annette Kunzman &
Douglas Soloman
Marge Leighton
Valerie & George Leiva
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Judy & Stephen McDonald
Pat & Jim McLaughlin
Margaret & David Mgrublian
Norah Morley



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Wendy Munger & Leonard Gumport
Jennifer & E. David Murphy
Nanette & Henry Nevins
Mary Lois Nevins
Beth & Christopher Orndorff
Kathleen & Donald Orth
Sandra & Charles T. Osaki
Claudia & Ramon Pack
Sylvia & Benjamin Paz
Manny Perera
Marsha V. Rood
Shanna & Michael Rosengarten
Aty & Howard Rotter
Elsa Ruiz-Balle
Susan & Mitch Sawasy
Nan & Howard Schow
Pam & Tony Schwarz
Carol & Carl Selkin
Jil & Joel Sheldon
Victoria & John Tongish
Maxine Tongish
Lorraine Triolo & Jeffrey Burke
Heather & Michael VanMeter
Connie & Arthur White
Judith & John Whiting
Cindy & George Wiley
Judy & Randy Wilson

Teen Moms to Benefit from Two-Generation Learning

Mothers' Club is beginning an exciting new partnership this year with Learning Works Charter School in Pasadena. This charter school helps teens that are facing many challenges get their high school diplomas, including about 60 teen mothers.

In October, Mothers' Club will begin providing a weekly Parenting Education class to girls ranging from 15-20 years old with children between the ages of 4 and 36 months. The moms will come to our center with their babies and while their children's development is nurtured by our early childhood teachers, the young moms will have the opportunity to learn about their babies' development and needs, strengthen their

mother-child bonds, and focus on their important new role as a mother.

Teen parents have to grow up quickly, interrupt their studies, and care for another person 24/7. But, they themselves are still growing and don't always have a clear vision for their future. It is important that we provide these young mothers with a nurturing environment, resources, support and education so that both mother and child can have hope for a bright future.

Mothers' Club is uniquely positioned to help these young women develop confidence and skills in caring for their vulnerable children, and develop dreams and goals for themselves.

- Silvana Casalegno
Parent Program Director



A young mother with her baby at Mothers' Club.

MOMS RALLY, cont. from page 1

money from neighbors and local stores to help pay for the funeral service. As Silvana Casalegno, Parent Program Director, put it "the relationships here are so strong they literally radiate out into the community."

In another, more positive case of stick-togetherness, a group of veteran moms is taking turns driving a new family to Mothers' Club every morning. "It's such an accepting environment that even a new mother can find support quickly," Silvana

explained.

Our moms demonstrate time and time again how community can bridge the gap between hunger and a full tummy. And even though times are tough and the emergency fund is tapped out, we are confident our moms will help each other find a way to make sure that every family has a roof over their heads and food on the table.

- Jason Wurtz
Volunteer Manager

GUARDIANS, cont. from page 2

Now, more than ever, individual donors are the foundation on which our future must be built.

In 2005, in order to establish a closer connection with our individual donors, Mothers' Club created the *Guardians* as a special acknowledgment of donors who pledge at least \$1,000 in a year toward our annual fund. In that first year, we had 30 *Guardians*; now we have 75. Every Board member is a *Guardian*, as are many former Board members and long-time donors. Our goal is to have 100 *Guardians* by 2011.

The *Guardians* truly do guard and protect our organization. Their substantial donations help us open the doors each morning, keep the lights on, food in the pantry for our children and teachers in the classroom. The rock-steady support of our *Guardians* allows us more accurately to predict income, and helps us plan for the future.

With our new facility, which has been completely paid for, we have more than doubled our capacity to serve children and families in need. We have created *First Connections*, a program for parents and children 0-3 in the afternoon, are embarking on a new partnership with a charter school, "Learning Works," to serve teen mothers who are working towards their diploma, and are exploring other strategic partnerships to support our programs for families.

While we worked hard over the last 6 months to trim this year's budget by 10% without reducing services, the possible elimination or reduction of government funding is comprising up to 25% of next year's budget. This means that the generous support of our *Guardians* is more important than ever in helping us maintain our services even in these uncertain times. That is the power of many.

If you are currently a *Guardian*, we thank you, and please renew this year. If you are not yet a *Guardian*, please consider becoming one. Every dollar you give contributes to our mission of preparing families living in isolation and poverty to succeed in school and in life.

- John Carlton
President of the Board

'Tis the Award Season for Mothers' Club and its Executive Director

On September 11 at the Santa Anita Race Track, **The San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership** honored Mothers' Club and GL Kaplan Construction Company for their contributions to the quality of life and economic vibrancy of the San Gabriel Valley. Mothers' Club, and our contractor Kaplan Construction, were specifically recognized for our Gold Level LEED Certified sustainable building (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System, a national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings).

Mothers' Club is honored for its contribution to the quality of life and economic vibrancy of the San Gabriel Valley.

The San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership is a non-profit corporation with the mission to sustain and build the regional economy for the mutual benefit of all thirty-one cities, chambers of commerce, academic institutions, businesses and residents.

In addition, **Susan Kujawa, Executive Director** of Mothers' Club, will be among 25 exceptional businesswomen honored at the **10th Annual Women in Business Legislative Update and Awards Luncheon** at the Pasadena Hilton on October 2, 2009.

State Senator Carol Liu (D-La Cañada Flintridge), Assemblymember Paul Krekorian (D-Burbank) and Assemblymember Anthony Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge) recently announced the 25 honorees, each of whom are being recognized for their contributions to the economic growth and well-being of Southern California. These women exemplify the broad range of accomplishments that women have achieved in their fields of expertise and in our communities.

Mothers' Club is honored to be recognized by so many for our work in the community.

Five Community Leaders Join the Mothers' Club Board of Directors

Now more than ever, non-profit agency's are dependent on skilled and dedicated volunteer leadership to help lead them through these volatile times. On July 1, after a year-long nomination process, Mothers' Club added five new community leaders to its Board of Directors:

- **Maye Albanez**, Principal at Clifford Swan Investment Counsel
- **Peggy Coleman**, Consultant, Strategic Creative and Experiential Marketing Solutions
- **Mark Giles**, Principal at KKE Architects
- **Marcia Goodstein**, President and COO of Idealab, which creates and operates pioneering companies based on ideas that challenge the status quo, and change the way people think, live, and work.
- **Julie Ward**, Retired Partner, Arnold & Porter, LLP; President of the Board, Pasadena Art Alliance; Other affiliations include Armory Center for the Arts, East Arroyo Resident's Association, Alumni Council U.C. Santa Cruz



Like the children at our center working to help their gardens grow, Board members work hard to help Mothers' Club grow.

Board President John Carlton stated, "Mothers' Club is very fortunate that these five highly qualified people, who bring a range of skills and experience from diverse backgrounds, have chosen to devote their time and energies to our organization. These are challenging times, and the work our Board faces will not be easy. The willingness of individuals like these to join in that work is a testament to their public spirit, and also to the mission and values of Mothers' Club."

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shine more than ever because they have been able to weather the storm and at times come out even stronger."

"Now is the time to support organizations like these, especially as demand for their services grows and resources are cut short," said **Jane B. Eisner**, President of The Eisner Foundation and chair emeritus of CCF's board of directors. "We hope that the awards will play a part in helping them do what they do best - serve the most vulnerable people in our communities and ultimately create a more vibrant society."

In her acceptance speech to more than 500 attendees, **Susan Kujawa**,

Executive Director, explained that developing deep, trusting relationships with impoverished moms is a critical step in helping them see the value of education for their children and themselves.

"Building relationships with families is at the core of what Mothers' Club does every day - with lonely, frightened, over-stressed mothers and their very young, vulnerable children. Children won't wait - every day that they are neglected or relegated to the background is a day that is lost." Ms. Kujawa went on to explain the challenges our families face and how Mothers' Club intervenes early to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy.



Despite the fact that these two mothers did not finish elementary school themselves, they work together, practicing their letter recognition and phonics, so that they will be able to support their children's education.

From the Director...

The beginning of school is always an exciting time. This year, on the first day of school, with fires raging in the foothills, we had eager families knocking at the door at 7:45 AM! Several fathers accompanied their wives and children. At mid-morning, in our two year old classroom, I saw several little boys with their faces pressed against the glass door leading to our outdoor play area - momentarily distracted by their desire to be outside, but not allowed on this smoky day.

In our pre-kindergarten classroom, now funded by **Los Angeles Universal Preschool**, we welcomed one four-year-old boy who had never, ever been in a school setting. It continues to amaze me that with all of the emphasis on early learning we still find families who have fallen through the cracks. How can that be? As we have seen so many times at Mothers' Club, the answer often lies with the mother - in this case, a young woman who can neither read nor write.

The mothers are as eager to learn and to make new friends as their children. This year we begin an expansion of our long-standing collaboration with **Pasadena City College Community Education Center**. In addition to providing parent education classes, PCC instructors now teach two ESL classes at Mothers' Club. These classes, one beginning and one intermediate, are a part of PCC's outreach in the community, with the goal of providing high quality

education at locations where the need is especially great and the access to learning opportunities is limited.

Our new collaboration ensures that our adult education programs continue to address our parents' educational needs, and enables us to decrease our direct costs for teacher salaries by almost \$30,000 per year.

We have a full house this year, with 65 families and 76 children in our morning program; and 19 families with 22 children enrolled in our afternoon program, *First Connections*. These are families with the youngest of children, between birth and three years old, who are isolated, lonely and at-risk for being another family to fall through the crack. *First Connections*, offered three afternoons a week, focuses on strengthening the emotional bond between mother and child, as well as providing practical advice on parenting, child development, and other life skills.

And our services continue to grow, with our newest program, targeting teen moms, which will serve up to 20 moms and 20 babies each trimester (*learn more on page 3*).

Add up all of the parents and children who will be participating in our various programs and we have more than 100 parents and 110 children enrolled. We feel so fortunate that our new facility allows us to expand our programs to meet the needs of vulnerable families, and continue to be grateful to everyone who makes our work possible.

- Sue Kujawa
Executive Director

Recent Grant Awards

Thank you to the following funders for their support of our work with children and families in Northwest Pasadena:

- All Saints Church
- Angell Foundation
- The Atlas Family Foundation
- California Community Foundation
- A matching Grant from
The Capital Group Companies
Charitable Foundation
- Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation
- Los Angeles Times Family Fund, a
fund of the McCormick Tribune
Foundation
- National Charity League, Pasadena
Area Chapter
- The Rose Hills Foundation
- Rotary Club of Pasadena
- The Schow Foundation
- United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- Weingart Foundation

Shop at Ralphs? Earn Money for Mothers' Club!

By registering your **Ralphs Rewards card** with their **Community Contributions Program**, a percentage of every dollar you spend at Ralphs will go to Mothers' Club. Ralphs requires that you re-register each year, even if you have registered in the past. Please follow these simple steps to register or re-register today:

1. Make sure you have a Ralphs Rewards card! If not, pick one up at your local market.
2. Register online at ralphs.com and clicking on the upper right-hand link "Sign-In/Register"
3. If you do not already have an account, create one. Once you have an account, click on the "Community Contribution Program" in the left column.
4. Confirm your Ralphs Rewards card number is correct.
5. Locate Mothers' Club by entering our code: 90748
6. Select Mothers' Club and know that you are helping families every time you buy groceries!

Executive Director

Susan Kujawa

Board of DirectorsJohn Carlton , *Chair*

Maye Albanez

Marie Campbell

Peggy Coleman

Leslie Dennis

John DeWitt

Susan Futterman

Mark Giles

Marcia Goodstein

Ellen Knell

Linda Lopez

Kathy Magistrale

Pat McLaughlin

Ramon Pack III

Sylvia Paz

Manny Perera

Aty Rotter

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Jil Sheldon

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Fran Scoble

Maria Low Way

The Power of Two

May 2009

Editors: Sarah Orth

Mothers' Club is a 501(c)3

non-profit organization.

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About Mothers' Club

Founded in 1961, Mothers' Club prepares families living in isolation and poverty to succeed in school and in life. We promote strong parent/child relationships and encourage friendship and mutual support among mothers through our educational programs and social services, thereby creating a stronger community for all families. Since our inception, we have evolved in direct response to the needs of families in our community. Today we are a model family support and education center.

Learn more at www.mothersclub.org

Open Houses

Please join us for a tour and conversations with staff and Board members.

Thursday, October 15 - 11:30 am

Tuesday, November 10 - 9:00 am

Thursday, December 10 - 11:30 am

Please check our website for dates throughout the year:

www.mothersclub.org - click on *Community Open House Schedule*

To provide a courtesy RSVP, or for more information, please call us at (626) 792-2687 ext. 122

We're Still Working to GO GREEN! Here's How You Can Help...

Sign up for our E-Newsletter today to receive this and other publications, as well as news and special announcements. Follow these simple steps:

1. Go to our website at www.mothersclub.org
2. Click on the "Newsletter" link at the top of the Home Page
3. Click on the "Sign-up for our E-Newsletter Today" link in the left hand column
4. Fill in your name and email and click "Submit"



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980 N. Fair Oaks Avenue
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