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### ***For Immediate Release***

#### **Let the Music Play**

#### **West Contra Costa Public Education Fund**

#### **23rd Annual Excellence in Education Banquet Honors Teachers**

- Who:** The West Contra Costa Public Education Fund (The Ed. Fund)
- What:** 23rd Annual Excellence in Education Banquet: *Let The Music Play*
- Where:** Craneway Pavilion, 1414 Harbour Way South, Richmond, CA 94804
- When:** Friday, May 20, 2010, 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
- Cost:** \$75 per adult; \$25 for WCCUSD students (Valid school ID required)
- RSVP:** [www.edfundwest.org](http://www.edfundwest.org) - [events@edfundwest.org](mailto:events@edfundwest.org) or (510) 233-1464 x100

Richmond, CA (April 13, 2011) -- The West Contra Costa Public Education Fund invites the public to join them in celebrating the vast and impressive work of K-12 teachers while raising funds at its 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Excellence in Education Banquet: *Let The Music Play*, May 20, 2011. For over 28 years, The Ed. Fund has supported teachers as they strive to offer public school children an excellent education in West Contra Costa County.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Excellence in Education Banquet is the chief source of funds for The Ed. Fund, which supports classroom success and district-wide initiatives. The banquet highlights teachers, staff, and volunteers who make a difference in West Contra Costa County schools. With the ongoing budget cuts in California, the need for The Ed. Fund in the community is increasingly imperative.

Notes The Ed. Fund Executive Director, Joel Mackey, "Each year, we get the opportunity to recognize and showcase our children's heroes, by presenting the Teaching Excellence Award at this special event. It is especially important for us to celebrate our teachers and their success with the children of our district. Together, we are striving to build bright futures. This year, we've helped nearly 10,000 students with 67 grants awarded to 36 different schools within the West Contra Costa public school system."

The Banquet begins at 5:30 p.m. with a VIP reception for award winners, sponsors and special guests; at 6:00 p.m. doors open to all for a cocktail reception; dinner, performance, live auction, and award presentation to follow. Pinole Valley High School Jazz Band and special

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guests, the Jazz Mafia All Stars, will entertain with musical performances that highlight this year's theme, "Let The Music Play." The 2011 musical banquet theme underscores the need for music education in the classroom and how it affects student well being and future success.

The Excellence in Education Banquet is an inspiring experience that brings the entire West Contra Costa community together. Guests of the event include West County community and government leaders, corporate partners, WCCUSD educators, administrators, parents, and community members.

Donations to The Ed. Fund directly contribute to the success of schoolchildren throughout West Contra Costa County. In addition to generously supporting the Banquet through sponsorships, Presenting Sponsor Chevron has donated \$500 for each teacher receiving a Teaching Excellence Award. Significant sponsors of the banquet include Wells Fargo and SGI Construction Management.

Media interested in attending the event, please contact Sarah E. Kidder, publicist: (510) 832-2032.

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#### **About the West Contra Costa Public Education Fund (The Ed. Fund)**

Founded in 1983, The Ed. Fund is a non-profit, public education fund dedicated to inspiring student achievement, encouraging commitment to lifelong learning, honoring and supporting teachers, and building community partnerships committed to public education in West Contra Costa County. For more information call (510) 233-1464 or visit [www.edfundwest.org](http://www.edfundwest.org).

#### **About the Excellence in Education Banquet**

The Ed. Fund's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Excellence in Education Banquet: *Let The Music Play* is an inspiring and important community event honoring public school teachers and students. It raises money to support The Ed. Fund programs which include teacher grants, college scholarships and projects across disciplines including music education. This year's special focus is on music education, and the need to support music in our public schools.

**Honorary Hosts of The Ed. Fund's 23rd Annual Excellence in Education Banquet:** Rep. George Miller, US Congressman; Hon. Mark DeSaulnier, State Senator; Hon. Loni Hancock, State Senator; Hon. Nancy Skinner, Assemblymember; Supervisor John Gioia, Contra Costa County; Superintendent Bruce Harter, WCCUSD; Mayor Ann Cheng, El Cerrito; Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, Richmond; Mayor Paul V. Morris, San Pablo; Mayor Joanne Ward, Hercules; Eric Zell, West Contra Costa Health Care District Director; Hon. Dion Aroner, former Assemblywoman; Hon. Bob Campbell, former Assemblymember; Uriah Duffy, Musician; Jennifer Henry, former Executive Director, The Ed. Fund; Michael Morgan, Oakland East Bay Symphony; Eddie Orton, Orton Development, Inc.; Shilen Patel, Veolia Water; Charles Stella, Music Producer; Ron Whittier, Tech Futures; McKinley Williams, President, Contra Costa College; Susan Wittenberg, Founder, Emerita Executive Director, The Ed. Fund