

State Schools Chief Expected at Foundation's 20th Anniversary Celebration

Jack O'Connell is planning to attend ESEF's gala event at McCormick & Schmick's

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., - February 13, 2004 – The El Segundo Educational Foundation (ESEF) invites the community to celebrate its 20th Anniversary with California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O'Connell, at a gala evening at McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant on Monday, February 23.

Superintendent O'Connell said he was pleased to be invited to El Segundo to celebrate the Educational Foundation's 20-year history of supporting public education. "This Foundation has created a successful partnership between the local business and residential community that is a model to others," O'Connell said. He believes the ESEF's financial support has given El Segundo schools a measurable boost over the years. "The Foundation's grass roots fundraising efforts have provided things like the wide area network, PowerSchool, and now music and art instruction. These gifts have had a dramatic impact on the quality of education in El Segundo's already high-achieving schools," he said.

Superintendent O'Connell and other guests will enjoy delicious appetizers prepared by McCormick & Schmick's executive chef, Melba Rodriguez, at the Foundation's signature biennial event to raise money for El Segundo schools. El Segundo business owners, residents, and others have donated a myriad of creative and valuable prizes for the opportunity drawing and silent auction that have come to be a favorite part of the evening's festivities.

A sampling of items to be auctioned to the highest bidder include a 14 kt yellow gold, bezel set diamond necklace from The Jewelry Source; a two-night stay for four at a private bay front home in Baywood Park near Morro Bay, donated by Alex and Pat Benson; and two dinners for four at the Second City Bistro, donated by owner Scott Reed. Professional surfer and top board builder, Tyler Hatzikian, has donated a prize package including two signed DVDs and posters from his latest film, *Singlefin: Yellow*; a factory tour; Tyler apparel; and private lessons

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El Segundo Educational Foundation Event

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for two followed by breakfast with the El Segundo resident. Holder of the lucky number in the opportunity drawing could win tickets to a Lakers game or a Geyser Peak Wine Dinner for six at Chef Hannes Restaurant.

The Foundation will present a check at the event to the El Segundo Unified School District (ESUSD) for \$140,000 to complete its Pledge to the Arts campaign to maintain the specialized elementary art and music programs for the 2003-'04 school year.

"It's quite an honor to have superintendent O'Connell acknowledge the good work being done by the El Segundo Educational Foundation," said ESUSD superintendent Bruce Auld. He said with the community's enthusiastic support, the Foundation has become a reliable benefactor to the schools. "The Foundation's fundraising efforts have elevated the quality of education in El Segundo schools. The campaign asking the community to save the elementary arts programs is an excellent example of the difference this Foundation makes. I'm convinced this town has placed education at the top of its priority list. The Educational Foundation is the conduit that has turned that priority into reality. It's truly amazing," Auld said.

Proceeds raised by the El Segundo Educational Foundation at this event and through other fundraising activities are donated to the ESUSD to pay for programs, equipment, and supplies for elementary, middle, and high school students. The Foundation has contributed more than \$1.3 million to the ESUSD since it was founded in 1983.

The celebration on February 23 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. will be the Foundation's fourth event hosted by McCormick & Schmick's under the direction of Joe Garcia, general manager of the popular El Segundo eatery. Admission is \$50 per person. Reservations can be made at El Segundo school offices, by calling 310-615-2650, ext. 229, or paid for at the door. McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant is located at 2101 Rosecrans Avenue at Nash Street in El Segundo. Event attendees are asked to enter through the building's courtyard; the valet parking entrance will not be open during the Foundation's event.

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