

## **Foundation Celebrates 20 Years of Supporting Education**

*The State Superintendent and more than 600 guests attended Monday's gala event at McCormick & Schmick's*

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., - February 24, 2004 – More than 600 guests and California's State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O'Connell, attended the El Segundo Educational Foundation's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration Monday night at McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant in El Segundo. O'Connell made the Foundation's gala event his last stop on a day-long tour of the South Bay to promote his plan to improve high schools, reduce bureaucracy, and increase student achievement gains.

Superintendent O'Connell and other guests dined on a fabulous selection of food prepared by McCormick & Schmick's executive chef, Melba Rodriguez, at the Foundation's signature biennial event to raise money for El Segundo schools. Guests mingled among tables laden with seafood appetizers, oysters on the half shell, perfectly roasted barons of beef, fresh fruit, and cooked to order pasta. Superintendent O'Connell and other dignitaries cut the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake, a fabulous creation decorated with handmade white chocolate leaves, berries, and whipped cream frosting.

"The Foundation's event at McCormick & Schmick's is El Segundo's not to be missed social event," said Lynn James, who, with husband Dan, is a member of the Foundation's Superintendent's Roundtable of \$1,000 contributors. "It's an amazing opportunity for the community to get together in support of our schools."

El Segundo business owners, residents, and others 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. While final fundraising tallies weren't in at press time, a sampling of items that were 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.

-more-

## ESEF event at McCormick & Schmick's

2-2-2

Professional surfer and top board builder, Tyler Hatzikian, donated a prize package for two, including signed DVDs and posters from his latest film, *Singlefin: Yellow*; a tour of his El Segundo factory; Tyler apparel; and private lessons followed by breakfast with the El Segundo High School graduate and resident. Jerome Crannell of Southern Wine and Spirits donated a dozen different wine packages that were a hit with the crowd, including a VIP tour of Napa Valley's Opus One Vineyards, which is not open to the public.

Foundation chairman Richard Lundquist acknowledged with deep appreciation two very generous gifts recently given to the ESEF. Keith and Joy Schuldt, long-time residents and business owners who now reside in Iowa, recently donated to the Foundation the Richmond Street building that housed Schuldt Printing for more than 30 years. Lundquist announced at the event that Bill Bue, Jr. had donated \$50,000 to the Foundation. Bue, Jr. is a graduate of El Segundo High School and son of Foundation board member Bill Bue and his wife Jean.

Other highlights of the evening included the Foundation's presentation of a check 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 attend this incredible event to 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.

Monday's celebration was the Foundation's fourth event hosted by McCormick & Schmick's under the direction of Joe Garcia, general manager of the popular El Segundo eatery. 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.

###