



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Packard Foundation and Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley Partner to Provide Countywide Arts Education

San José, CA - Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley, a nonprofit grant making arts organization, recently announced a partnership with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to increase arts education funding to public elementary schools in Santa Clara County.

Since 1999, Cultural Initiatives has provided \$1M in school arts grants to 42% of local public elementary schools districts. With an additional \$2.2M from the Packard Foundation, Cultural Initiatives is now able to reach all eligible elementary schools applying for arts education funding. So far, 78 additional schools have signed for funding, increasing the scope of the program to 74% of all public elementary school districts. In 2002, Cultural Initiatives will extend the program to all qualified public elementary schools not yet participating. The organization will then begin funding middle schools in the region.

“Although this region is known for technological and business innovation, we know the residents of Silicon Valley believe restoring arts education in the schools is vital for well balanced youth and vibrant communities,” says John Kreidler, Executive Director of Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley. Kreidler is referring to a 1997 poll conducted by the City of San José that found 95% of local residents wanted to see arts education restored to the school curriculum.

Cultural Initiatives’ Creative Education program is unique because of its commitment to provide customized technical assistance in addition to monetary support to its grant recipients. Each qualifying site receives an experienced arts education mentor for up to 20 hours per month during the school year to assist each school with program implementation.

“The Packard Foundation recognizes arts education as a critical component in creating healthy, thriving communities,” says Nancy Glaze, Director of the Packard Foundation Arts Program. “Because of Cultural Initiatives’ demonstrated success of their existing programming, we realized they would be the perfect organization for our School Arts Program expansion into Santa Clara County.”



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“The school arts grants are used to achieve a wide variety of arts education objectives that are set individually by each site,” says Dana Powell, Director of the Cultural Initiatives Arts Education Program. “For example, one site may train classroom teachers to integrate the visual arts with the curriculum, while another may hire a music specialist at the district level. All of the sites share the common goal of at least one hour per week of arts instruction for every student throughout the school year.”

According to Powell, this second round of grants has enabled Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley to double the number of students receiving arts education in Santa Clara County, up 61% from 31%. In addition, participating schools will double their per student spending on arts instruction by the end of five years. The grants consist of four years of funding, with grant recipients assuming increased financial responsibility over the course of the period, making the program self-sustaining in its fifth year.

Cultural Initiatives will use the funds from the Packard Foundation to enhance the existing program by adding arts education training for veteran teachers and graduate students working on teaching credentials, and mentoring programs between schools with strong arts programs and others seeking improvement. Finally, funding is also included for a detailed evaluation of the program’s results.

In addition to funds from the Packard Foundation, Cultural Initiatives has received funds for this program from Adobe Systems, Cisco Foundation, The City of San José, Santa Clara County, The William and Charlene Glikbarg Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Steven and Michele Kirsch Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and The Sobrato Family Foundation.

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