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OMA SHOWCASE HONORS TUSD SUPT. ROGER PFEUFFER, DEPUTY SUPT. PATTI LOPEZ

The OMA Foundation enthusiastically invites the community to attend the 4th Annual OMA Showcase that will honor TUSD Superintendents Roger Pfeuffer and Patti Lopez. The Showcase celebrates OMA's award-winning program and the children, teachers and professional teaching artists who participate in it.

Mindy Blake, KOLD TV #13 anchor, will be mistress of ceremonies, and the program will feature over **120 OMA students and their teaching artists**. The artists will demonstrate how integrating the arts into the core curriculum helps to improve students' academic performance and contributes to their overall enjoyment of school and success in the classroom. The Showcase will be held on March 8 at 3:00 P.M. at Rincon/University High Schools' auditorium.

Throughout their long careers in top positions in TUSD, Pfeuffer and Lopez consistently have shown vision, leadership, integrity and courage. And they have overseen the growth of the OMA Program from three elementary schools in 1999 to 42 elementary and

middle-schools in the 2007-2008 school year. Their service to TUSD and to the OMA Program has been invaluable. Pfeuffer will retire this June.

A reception for Pfeuffer and Lopez, OMA artists and ticket holders immediately follows the program. The Blue House Catering Company, known widely for its excellence, is underwriting the reception.

Tickets are \$25, of which \$15 is tax-deductible, and may be purchased by calling **225-4900**. We hope to see you on March 8. ■



Top: Roger F. Pfeuffer
Bottom: Dr. Patti Lopez

Wakefield Middle School Students Create & Perform Original Bilingual Opera

In just one semester, 70 OMA ESL students at Wakefield Middle School, under the direction of the Arizona Opera Company, created and performed an original bilingual opera titled, "Jose the Bully's Time Machine." The production debuted February 1 and played to a packed crowd in Wakefield's auditorium. It was the inaugural effort of the Arizona Opera's "Opera in the Schools" program, a collaboration of opera staffers, artists and Wakefield students, school administrators, OMA Arts Integration Specialist R. Darden Bradshaw and Wakefield teachers.

The project originated with Laura Baldasano, Arizona Opera's education and outreach director and a member of the OMA Foundation's board of directors. Baldasano presented her idea to Dr. Joan Ashcraft, TUSD's Director of Fine & Performing Arts/OMA Program, when another production of the Arizona Opera company fell through. "That created a little extra time for the opera company's production crew to take on another production," Baldasano said.

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Sewell Arts Integration Specialist Takes Pride in OMA Program

By Michele Tuchek, OMA Arts Integration Specialist, Sewell Elementary School

(Editor's note: This story was sent in an e-mail to OMA Foundation President-Elect Carolyn Kemmeries when Ms. Tuchek learned that members of The West, Inc. would be visiting the OMA Program at Sewell.)

I was so excited to hear you will be visiting. There are many exciting learning activities going on, and our artists are all outstanding this year. The Sewell community is so proud to be a fully implemented OMA school, and everyone is very supportive. The students love OMA and can hardly wait for their turn. A day doesn't go by without several students stopping me to ask if this is their day for OMA, or they remind me that it IS their day. I know I have the best job ever!

I have seen so much growth in the students through the years and am so proud of them. This may sound silly, but there are

many "goosebumps" moments when I am in awe of all they can do. They are so creative. Days of yesteryear, when students were merely inactive participants are gone. Instead, I have entire classes begging for an opportunity to participate in everything. Their confidence has been boosted to the level that they are willing to try anything, knowing they will be successful in their own way. That self-esteem colors everything they do in the classroom. I know I am preaching to the choir, but isn't this so exciting?! ■

Rincon/University's Ranger Band to Perform at Carnegie Hall in April

by Carla Pothier, president & parent, Rincon/University Marching Band Association

With a long history of strongly supporting the Ranger Band, the Rincon/University Marching Band Association (RUMBA) has taken their support to a new level. The Ranger Band with 170 + members is the largest high school band in TUSD. The band earned "superior" ratings in all three of their marching competitions last fall, including the first in 31 years at U of A Band Day. The band has been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall this April and to march in the Fiesta Bowl Parade in December.

However, in order to provide the caliber of instruction necessary to keep the band thriving, Director Brian Wolfe is in need

of an assistant. But with limited district funding available, RUMBA has made the commitment to contribute \$5,000 toward hiring an assistant band director. It is the Association's hope that additional funds can be found so that the assistant director can be retained for the rest of the school year and for the 2008-2009 school year. With a combination of dedicated instruction, the hard work of devoted parents and community support, the Ranger Band will continue to make Tucson proud! ■

115 Individuals And Businesses Support the OMA Foundation in First Six Months of Fiscal Year

The OMA Foundation sends its great thanks and gratitude for the outpouring of **115** contributions it received from the Tucson community between July 1 – Dec. 31, 2007. **The OMA Foundation exists solely to support the OMA Program.** Funds received by the foundation are immediately "passed through" to TUSD's Fine & Performing Arts Department/OMA Program, with approximately 12% of the funds retained by the foundation for operating expenses.

The following individuals have given permission to print their names as contributors. If other contributors would like their names listed in our May newsletter, we will be pleased to include them. Just e-mail or call Shirley Kiser, executive director, OMA Foundation at: shirley.kiser@tusd1.org or **225-4656**.

OMA FOUNDATION CONTRIBUTORS: JULY 1 – DEC. 31, 2007

• Mrs. Mary Lou Criss Barker*	• Robert Michael Hersch	• Theodora M. McMillan
• Eastbourne Investments, Ltd.	• John Hildebrand	• Judith & Dr. Richard Meyer
• Evelyn Gerzetic	• Helen & Preston Jones	• Joan A. Morris
• Elise B. Gilden	• Carolyn W. Kemmeries	• Robert & Donna Reed
• Mary A. Goodman	• Russell & Michelle Klawunn	• Dr. & Mrs. Andrew Smith
• Julia B. Gordon	• Richard & Mary Belle McCorkle	• Lillian R. Stephenson
• Ellen Hargis		• Robert Waldren
• Marilyn Heins		

*Mrs. Barker noted that she made her donation to honor the following people for their contributions to music education: Joan & Dave Ashcraft, Max Erwin, Gene Jones, Norma Patrick, Carroll Rinehart, Mary & Rex Woods and in memory of Nancy Ferguson & Bruce Patrick.

NEWS BRIEFS

- OMA BOARD ELECTS NEW MEMBERS:** The foundation unanimously elected **Dr. Leslie Tolbert** and **Dr. George Garcia** to join the foundation’s board of directors. Dr. Tolbert is the U/A’s Vice President of Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development. Dr. Garcia was Superintendent of TUSD from 1991 to 2000 and Boulder, Colorado, from 2000-2007, when he retired and returned to Tucson.
- OMA PROGRAM DEVELOPS NEW STRATEGIC PLAN:** The foundation voted to engage the consulting firm of New North Strategies headed by Donn Poll to help the OMA Program conduct a year-long assessment of the program and to create a 5-year strategic plan.
- NEW OMA PROGRAM BROCHURE PUBLISHED WITH HELP FROM CORBETT STUDENTS & STAFF:** The foundation assisted the OMA Program in producing an updated program brochure, now available for distribution to OMA schools and the Tucson community. Gracing the front cover is a photo of Corbett Elementary School students taken by Dr. David Ashcraft. Dr. Ashcraft spent the better part of two days at Corbett to capture the spirit of the students in the OMA Program. He was assisted by band director Karl Broberg and Principal Joyce Dillon.
- OMA DECOUPAGE BEING CREATED FOR AUCTION. WILL BENEFIT OMA FOUNDATION & PROGRAM:** **Gus Hulkower**, talented local artist, OMA Foundation Advisory Board Member and Active Volunteers for the Arts (AVA) member is currently designing, producing and donating to the OMA Foundation a 40”x72” decoupage depicting the history and activities of the OMA Program. Hulkower has produced decoupages for businesses, industries and individuals for the past four decades that have sold for thousands of dollars. When completed next fall, the decoupage will be auctioned at an OMA fundraising event. Hulkower says his belief in and passion for the OMA Program – and everyone associated with it – led him to offer to create a piece for OMA.
- TUSD OVERRIDE EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE FORMED:** Last fall Superintendent Roger Pfeuffer formed an Override Exploratory Committee to research and decide whether to recommend to the TUSD Governing Board that the district should hold an override in November 2008. The committee continues the work of last year’s Override Exploratory Committee. Comprised of a diverse group of 25 members and headed by Dr. Mary Belle McCorkle, the committee on January 29, in a Study Session with the Governing Board, made a strong plea for holding an override. They further recommended that only two initiatives be included in the override: **1) reduction of class size; 2) expansion of the OMA Program.**



Photo by Dr. David Ashcraft

NOTEWORTHY is that all four of TUSD’s bargaining units, the Tucson Education Association (TEA), the American Federal, State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Communication Workers of America (CWA), and Educational Leaders, Inc. (ELI) are strongly supporting the proposed override and have pledged “our best efforts to getting it approved by the voters.” A decision by the Governing Board could come as early as this month. ■

YES, I WANT MY TAX CREDIT CONTRIBUTION TO GO TO AN OMA SCHOOL

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Contribution Amount \$ _____

Name of School _____

Please clip this form, make out your check to an OMA school of your choice, write “OMA” in the memo and return it to: **Dr. Joan Ashcraft, 2025 E. Winsett Street, Tucson, AZ 85719.** When we receive your check, we’ll quickly mail you a tax receipt.



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THROUGH THE
ARTS

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Wakefield Middle School Students Create & Perform Original Bilingual Opera

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Ashcraft seized the moment. "I saw such incredible potential with those young people," Ashcraft said. "And this semester, students at Lawrence Intermediate School have already begun working on a trilingual opera in Spanish, English and Yaqui." Ashcraft hopes the Wakefield and Lawrence operas will be models that can be used in other TUSD middle schools.

Students have been excited and engaged from the onset of the project, from its anti-bullying theme to the chance for them to perform. Pleased and proud, too, was the West, Inc., a local non-profit agency that awarded the OMA Foundation a grant last spring to help expand the OMA Program. Part of the grant was used to expand the OMA Program at Wakefield. Three members of the West, Inc., attended the performance, including one member who herself had been a Wakefield student.

"This production was excellent for many reasons," said OMA Foundation President Dr. Mary Belle McCorkle. "The main reason of course is the students' academic growth and accomplishment, but it also clearly demonstrates what can be achieved when our schools collaborate and are supported by the community. All of us involved with OMA are deeply appreciative of our partnerships with the Arizona Opera and the West, Inc. and hope they will continue a long, long time." ■

Please Consider a Tax Deductible Contribution to the OMA Foundation

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____ Phone Number _____

Please make check out to: Opening Minds Through The Arts Foundation

We will send you a receipt acknowledging your donation.

Send donation to: **Opening Minds Through The Arts Foundation**
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