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Please Join Us On March 24 For Our Spectacular 2007 OMA Showcase

The OMA Program and OMA Foundation enthusiastically invite you to attend **OMA's 3rd Annual Showcase** at Rincon/University High Schools' auditorium, Saturday, March 24, from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M.

The Showcase celebrates OMA's highly successful, award-winning program and the children, teachers and artists who participate in it. *Arizona Daily Star* political cartoonist **David Fitzsimmons** will MC the program, and **Governor Janet Napolitano** is expected to attend, schedule permitting.

This year's Showcase will honor **Dr. Carroll Rinehart** for his outstanding contribution to the arts in our community.



Dr. Rinehart has richly served the music profession for more than half a century – as a music teacher and administrator, school principal, college instructor, author and composer. In 2000, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tucson Pima Arts Council.

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Southwest Strings: A Model Partnership

Just last year, Southwest Strings, a Tucson-based company that imports and distributes orchestral stringed instruments and related products learned about the OMA Program. And according to the company's owners, Celta and Steve Sheppard, they asked themselves, "How could we, a music company, be in the same town and not know about a program of such importance and magnitude – a program designed to bring back the arts (music) into the lives of our schools and children?"



So in the summer of 2006, they made an appointment to meet TUSD's Director of Fine &

Performing Arts/OMA Program, Dr. Joan Ashcraft, to learn more about the program. Besides explaining how the program operates and what it's achieving, Dr. Ashcraft also told the Sheppards that additional funding was essential for the program to grow and be successful.

Southwest Strings told Dr. Ashcraft they would like to help, so she proposed they donate a classroom set of 30 violins, which they quickly agreed to do. That gift is valued at \$9,000. Celta said they chose to donate the Klaus Mueller Prelude line because of their consistent quality and playability. "Growing children are able to move through the different sizes of these instruments without having to struggle or adjust to structural differences."

Blenman Elementary School was selected to be the beneficiary of Southwest Strings'

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Southwest Strings: A Model Partnership

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violins, which proved to be a happy, surprising coincidence. Steve Sheppard had been a student teacher at Blenman in 1973, working alongside teacher Yvonne Tate. "Providing the violins to Blenman provided a wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to a remarkable educator," Steve said.



Like their generosity to Blenman, during Southwest Strings' twenty years in business, they also have contributed to other music programs in need.

Just one example is that in 2002 the Sheppards' instruments were chosen by the string section of the Utah Symphony Orchestra to be played in the opening and closing ceremonies of the Winter Olympic Games. After the performance, the Sheppard's chose to donate the instruments to

young musicians in local area schools.

Celta Sheppard clearly sums up her belief in her business and in OMA: "Our business is selling orchestral stringed instruments, and our gratification comes from believing our products make a positive difference in the lives of our customers. Through our own children we have seen first hand that music does make a difference in every aspect of a child's development. Because we believe in our product (music), and because we believe in the positive effect that music has in the everyday lives of people, we look forward to sponsoring James McWhorter for this year's TUSD Fine Arts Summer Institute and to continue our support of the OMA Project in the years to come."

The OMA Foundation's Board of Directors is thankful and deeply appreciative to Southwest Strings – not only for their generous gifts but also for its becoming a model business partnership that will enrich and help expand the OMA Program. ■

OMA Launches New Website

OMA has a new website that is receiving enthusiastic reviews for being "user-friendly," "inviting" and a source of helpful information.

"I can't tell you how much it meant to me to view your website," said Dr. Edward Asmus, associate dean of graduate studies at the Frost School of Music, University of Miami. ***"Got the juices flowing again about the value of total arts within the foundation of the school fabric. Thank you, thank you!"***

Constructing and financing the website was a major project for the OMA Foundation throughout the fall. It went "live" in December. Its new address is: www.omaprogramaz.org

In the three months the website has been posted 1,426 different people have visited the site. Vilocity Interactive, Inc. of Scottsdale designed and developed the website.

The web pages provide information about the OMA program, the OMA Foundation, professional development, the Fine Arts Summer Institute (FASI) and the Teaching Artist Summer Institute (TASI). It also features many vibrant photos of the children and teaching artists in the program, along with biographical sketches of the teaching artists.

Other sections viewers may find particularly helpful are those that address donation opportunities, a calendar of events and current news bulletins about

OMA activities. With the advancement of website technology, people may now sign up for in-service opportunities and make financial contributions in a secure online environment. Features still to be added are video clips and OMA lesson plans.

The OMA Program website is a work in progress that continually will be refreshed to bring viewers up-to-date information. We would welcome your reactions and comments. E-mail: shirley.kiser@tusd1.org

The new OMA website address again is: www.omaprogramaz.org. ■

OMA Quote of the Month:

"OMA is making a difference in both students' and artists' lives and will continue to do so for many years to come, as these inspired students, as adults, provide our community support for the arts and arts organizations."

TUSD Superintendent Roger F. Pfeuffer

OMA Foundation Moves Out on Many Fronts

Determined to make 2006-2007 a monumental year for meeting its new mission, the OMA Board of Directors has made rapid and sweeping changes. The Foundation's mission, unanimously adopted by the board November 1, 2006, is **to support, sustain and encourage the expansion of the Opening Minds Through the Arts Program through fundraising, public awareness and advocacy.**

Here's some of what the foundation has accomplished in just four months:

- Recruited and installed four new members for the Foundation's board of directors: **Damien Alameda**, KOLD-TV 13 CBS; **Julie Barwell**, NAU faculty; **Norma Patrick**, retired educator; **Jason Zeider**, marketing director, Tucson Federal Credit Union.
- Added two new members to the Foundation's advisory board of directors: **Augie Romero**, TUSD's coordinator, Mexican-American/Raza Studies; **Gus Hulkower**, representative, Active Volunteers for the Arts (AVA).
- Created an Honorary Board and recruited 24 community leaders: **Dr. Jean-Paul Bierny; Michael Chihak; Dorothy Finley; David Fitzsimmons; Rodney Glassman; George Hanson; Ellen Hargis; Kasey Havas; Chuck Huckleberry; Robert Knight; Cress Lander; Nancy Ledeboer; Harman Lomawaima; Dr. Patti Lopez; Dr. Ron Marx; Dr. Peter McCallister; Roger Pfeuffer; Tom Philabaum; Joel Revzen; Dr. Helen Schaefer; Dr. John Schaefer; Dr. Maurice Sevigny; Ruth Solomon; Mayor Bob Walkup.**
- Began developing a 37-member Parent Council: The board thinks it is important to have direct parent representation, one from each OMA school. So far, we've recruited 11 parents. When we've recruited all members, we'll report them in the *Outlook*.
- Created strategic development and marketing plans to more efficiently and effectively engage in fundraising.
- Helped effect a 13% increase in tax credit contributions to OMA schools by publishing and widely distributing tax credit brochures and flyers and developing a pilot tax credit program initiated in four schools.
- Launched a new website that has three distinct parts: 1) The OMA Program; 2) Professional Development; 3) The Foundation. *(See story on p. 2)*
- Designed, printed and distributed 20,000 bumper stickers – enough for all **17,000** students in the OMA program in all **37** OMA elementary and middle schools – and for teachers, administrators and others.
- Designed – and at press time – are in the process of printing a new foundation brochure.
- Requested funds from several local businesses, individuals, foundations and arts groups and received significant awards from the Marshall Foundation, Tucson Federal Credit Union and Southwest Strings. Currently preparing four grant proposals to submit this month.
- Underwrote the OMA Showcase and provided administrative and business support for it.

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**
2025 E. Winsett Street, Tucson, AZ 85719



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200 students and several professional artists who teach the students will be featured in the program, which includes:

- An 80-children honor choir
- An original opera presentation by the students
- A mime performance featuring OMA's program coordinator
- Students' and artists' dance groups
- A 4th grade violin orchestra
- An all-teacher violin orchestra
- Community presentations and awards

Tickets are \$40 and are fully tax-deductible. Businesses and individuals who contribute to the Showcase will be recognized in the Showcase program.

To buy tickets, be a Showcase sponsor or place an ad in the program, please call **225-4907 or 225-4656**. *We hope to see you on March 24.* ■



PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING THE 2007 OMA SHOWCASE

We will appreciate contributions in any amount.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Contribution Amount \$ _____

Send donation to: **OMA Foundation, 2025 E. Winsett Street, Tucson, AZ 85719**