

COMMUNITY

Editor: Kelly Hancock, 463-3520

The Ukiah Daily Journal

Arts Education Advocacy Network launches in Ukiah

UKIAH, CA -- The Mendocino County Alliance for Arts Education has partnered with the Arts Council of Mendocino County (ACMC) to help ensure that student art programs and professional training for teachers becomes an important component of every school's curriculum throughout the county.

Hosts for this kick-off meeting in downtown Ukiah on Friday, Nov. 30 will include: Trudy McCreanor, Director of Mendocino Ballet and ACMC board member; Megan Barber-Allende, Community Foundation of Mendocino County Director of Grants and Programs; and Paul Tichinin, County Superintendent of Schools. North State Café will provide a warm welcome to at least 40 people at this morning meeting scheduled from 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Key people who have been invited to attend this meeting to lend their voices in support of arts education for children

are: musician and songwriter Spencer Brewer; Sherric Smith-Ferri Grace Hudson Museum Director; Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro; local business owner Jim Mayfield; Willow Anderson and Cathy McKeon parent volunteers at Pomolita School; and Alyssum Wier Executive Director of the Arts Council of Mendocino County.

Paul Tichinin will present an expanded report about the status of arts education in Mendocino County schools. He will define efforts teachers make to provide quality art programs with little money available for supplies, and highlight areas for improvement which will give students a chance to reach their full creative potential.

This discussion will revolve around how arts education can play a role in addressing community issues and help to improve conditions that negatively impact youth. Like many other school districts

around the state, Mendocino County schools have been forced to make budget cuts as a result of the current fiscal crisis in California.

Paul states, "Arts education is crucial at every level - classroom, school district and countywide. We know that involvement in the arts helps students increase test scores and promotes academic achievement."

Attendees will also learn more about the ACMC's GASP program (Get Arts in School), which provides grants to professional artists to bring arts enrichment to schools throughout Mendocino County. Expansion of GASP, its satellite professional development program, and related advocacy efforts are made possible by a three-year grant from the Community Foundation of Mendocino County.

It is hoped that a core group of inspired advocates will

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emerge to convene several meetings during the coming year to create an arts education action plan for Mendocino County.

This committee will look at how to keep suc-

cessful art programs from the chopping block, increase arts-integrated curriculum, and look at how community resources can be leveraged to better serve our youth for cultural enrichment.

If you would like to assist with these efforts please contact Jane Covella or Alyssum

Wier, through the Arts Council of Mendocino County at (707) 463-2727 or view the link about the Mendocino County Alliance for Arts Education at www.arts-mendocino.org. You may also be interested in reading more about arts education efforts statewide at www.artsed411.org.