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Sonoma County Alliance for Arts Education Unites Local Leaders

The Wells Fargo Center for the Arts will open its doors extra early on Thursday, February 19th, to host a special meeting of the Sonoma County Alliance for Arts Education from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The event includes invited members of the local business, government, arts and education communities. It is organized by the California Alliance for Arts Education and the Arts Council of Sonoma County, in collaboration with philanthropist Henry Trione, Dr. Carl Wong, superintendent of Sonoma County Schools and Pam Chanter, vice president of Vantreo Insurance Brokerage.

The purpose of the gathering is to establish a core group of local leaders committed to the principle that arts education is an essential component of a quality education that every child deserves.

In the midst of California's current budget crisis and the consequences for public education, the Alliance is forming local grassroots networks to help ensure a complete education that includes instruction in the arts for every child in California.

"Keeping arts education in our schools should be the objective of every Sonoma County citizen," says Karin Demarest, Arts Education Consultant with the Arts Council of Sonoma County. "We know the arts are fundamental to a well-rounded education and help students develop vital 21st century workforce skills that will serve them for decades to come."

According to Demarest, "We hope the creation of an arts advocacy network will spread the message and encourage people to take action to make sure the arts are part of every student's education. Our community has a strong tradition and commitment to arts education, one that doesn't waver in challenging times, and our arts organizations have a history of working together with the schools. We hope to build on this strong foundation and reach out to business and community leaders to form a powerful alliance."

The local effort in Sonoma is one in a series of pilot projects the California Alliance for Arts Education is sponsoring throughout the state to build support for arts education. At the event, the Alliance will present evidence of the benefits students draw from arts education, including the development of skills required in the workforce of the 21st century.

More about the California Alliance for Arts Education: *The Alliance is the only statewide organization that brings together all primary constituencies for arts education, including arts organizations, K-12 teachers, professional teacher associations, state and local education departments, professional development providers, parents, PTAs and community leaders. Our shared mission is to promote, support and advocate visual and performing arts education for preschool through post-secondary students in California schools.*

Press contact:

Press interested in attending the event, obtaining photos or video footage, or seeking further information, contact:

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