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## **Cal Poly Faculty, Students to Bring Arts Education to K-8 Students In After-School Program at Santa Maria Housing Project**

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- The Central Coast Center for Arts Education (CCCAE) at Cal Poly recently received a grant from the Orfalea Fund to support an after-school art education program for children living in a Santa Maria housing project.

During the year-long Education Enhancement Program, the CCCAE will place professional artists in all disciplines in two-week rotations at the Peoples' Self-Help Housing's (PSHH) Los Adobes de Maria II affordable rental apartments.

"Research shows that the arts are essential in supporting and developing academic achievement, especially for students considered at risk," said Susan Duffy, CCCAE director and chair of Cal Poly's Liberal Studies Department. "Completed CCCAE projects in area schools have shown that school attendance improves and students are able to make cultural, mathematical and scientific connections in meaningful, interesting, and sophisticated ways when the arts are viewed as important in elementary classrooms. We appreciate the Orfalea Fund's support and Peoples' Self-Help Housing's willingness to work with us on this project," Duffy said.

Cal Poly liberal studies and modern languages students who are working toward a bi-lingual teaching credential will serve as interns, assisting the artists and helping with program development. Cal Poly liberal studies faculty will help deliver the lessons to the K-8 students attending the after-school program.

The Orfalea Fund supports organizations and projects that "enhance young people's lives by contributing to projects that promote academic excellence and innovative educational opportunities; improve and enrich education and services through community programs; encourage family values and bring together generations; and provide opportunities to those less privileged and those facing learning challenges."

"This important collaboration with Cal Poly, made possible by the generosity of the Orfalea Fund, brings our Education Enhancement Program to the next level," said Jeanette Duncan, executive director of Peoples' Self-Help Housing. "With the formal addition of art education at Peoples' Self-Help Housing's Los Adobes de Maria II, approximately 80 students in grades K-8 will have access to top-notch art education and dedicated future bilingual teachers. We strongly believe that art is a fundamental component of learning, and education is deficient without it."

The program will run from February through December. The project will also include three "family nights" at the site, where parents and students can participate in professional arts events.

About the People's Self Help Housing:

The mission of Peoples' Self-Help Housing is to provide affordable housing and health care, education, and community service programs leading to self-sufficiency for low-income families, seniors and other special needs groups on California's Central Coast.

Central Coast Center for Arts Education (CCCAE) at Cal Poly:

The mission of the CCCAE at Cal Poly is to provide professional development for teachers and provide a center for innovative research in comprehensive arts education and school reform that allows educators to discover new resources through collaborative interdisciplinary research and education.

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