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WAL-MART FOUNDATION SUPPORTS ART AND SCIENCE

Middle School Students Find Fun during Gen M Summer Science Institute

Las Cruces, NM (June 21, 2011) — It was all science, all art and all fun during the first ever Gen M Summer Science and Art Institute, funded by the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFSNM) through a grant secured by the Wal-Mart Foundation.

The Gen M Summer Science and Art Institute, a two week hands-on exploration of the integration of art and science for 6th to 8th grade students, was a collaboration of the CFSNM, Boys and Girls Club of Las Cruces, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern New Mexico, Asombro Institute for Science Education and the Court Youth Center. The groups collaborated in an effort to hold a summer institute where each organization brought together resources and expertise. The integration of art and science for middle school students was the first of its kind in the area.

There were 50 middle-school age participants from schools throughout the district who participated in the program.

“Our main objective was to integrate science and art, and to dispel the stereotypical ideas of what is an artist and what is a scientist,” said Irene Oliver-Lewis, artistic producer/founder at Court Youth Center and Alma d’ arte Charter High School. “We did a visual assessment at the beginning of the two weeks and asked the participants to draw a scientist and an artist. Indeed we had kids who put the artist in a beret with paint brushes and a crazy ‘mad scientist’ person.”

The students participated in a morning pod group and reviewed some on-going science experiments then they traveled to their “lab” to participate in a number of science activities that were created by the Asombro Institute. Following snack time, the students moved to their “studio” to create an art activity that related to the science activity they had done earlier before heading back to their pod for reflection.

During the last week of the program, Curtis Rosemond, general manager at Wal-Mart and Wal-Mart Foundation member, presented the group with a check.

The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico is dedicated to helping the Southern New Mexico community now, and in the future. Founded in 2000, the Community Foundation offers opportunities for local people who want to give back locally. The beauty of the Foundation is that you need not be wealthy to make a positive difference in the lives of people throughout our area. Through the establishment of permanent funds you can sustain local charitable organizations, provide scholarships to area students and fulfill wishes that are close to your heart. Through our planned giving programs, you can honor loved ones or leave a legacy that benefits the people of Southern New Mexico for generations to come. The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico can advise you on how best to maximize contributions, no matter what size. For more information see our website at www.cfsnm.org or call Luan Wagner Burn, Ph.D., at 575.521.4794. To donate, mail your check to CFSNM, 301 South Church St., Suite H, Las Cruces, NM 88001.