



Amgen Foundation Awards \$4.5 Million Grant to MLA Partner Schools to Invest in LA's Promise

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LOS ANGELES and THOUSAND OAKS, Calif., Nov. 3, 2010 /PRNewswire/ -- The Amgen Foundation will grant \$4.5 million over the next three years to MLA Partner Schools (MLA) to invest in "LA's Promise" – an endeavor to prepare thousands of children from one South Los Angeles community for college and a healthier, more successful life.

"The goal is to go deep, not wide - to see an entire community's children ready for college and life," said Mike McGalliard, president and chief executive officer of MLA. "The schools are the anchor – a K-12 pipeline of public schools that provide all neighborhood kids the education they deserve as well as the health and social services to meet all of their needs."

The community of LA's Promise (also known as LA's Promise Neighborhood) is an area of South LA encompassing the enrollment zones of two large public high schools, West Adams Prep and Manual Arts. These two schools, operated by MLA on a performance contract with LAUSD, are already becoming community hubs with 56 partners providing over 200 wraparound services to students and families. Partners include St. John's Family Well Child and Family Center, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, WestEd, and the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic. By transforming these two schools, their feeder elementary and middle schools, and expanding comprehensive support services to all students and families, MLA and its partners have built the foundation for a "neighborhood turnaround".

"It is particularly gratifying that a leading global company like Amgen recognizes the potential of MLA's model and the promise of the community we serve," said Megan Chernin, chair of MLA Partner Schools. "With Amgen's extraordinarily generous investment we can demonstrate that our model is a scalable answer to an overwhelming need."

The Amgen Foundation first funded MLA in 2007 to advance MLA's model for supporting underperforming public schools. Since then, Amgen staff and executives have also helped by providing countless hours of organizational development in areas including human resources, strategic planning and management training to MLA and its schools.

"MLA is a young, dynamic organization with a bold vision," said Kevin Sharer, chairman and chief executive officer of Amgen. "Amgen is proud of the great strides MLA has made over the past three years. We look forward to continuing our financial support and the engagement of Amgen staff willing to volunteer their time and talents to assist the students, faculty, staff and families in this community."

As a result of Amgen's support, MLA's schools are outpacing the district in key metrics including attendance, academic growth and student retention. West Adams Prep's 2-year Academic Performance Index (API) growth, at 62 points, is larger than any other high school in the same geographic region and more than double the gains of the district as a whole. Manual Arts High School, which just finished its first year as an MLA school, has made dramatic strides in student behavior and overall school culture. The attendance rate has increased to 90 percent and suspensions and fights have reduced by 52 percent.

About MLA Partner Schools

MLA Partner Schools is a nonprofit organization working to radically shift the education, health and social outcomes for thousands of youth in one South Los Angeles community. This will accomplish a "neighborhood turnaround" in an area called LA's Promise Neighborhood.

LA's Promise Neighborhood is an enrollment zone that encircles two large South LA high schools operated by MLA on a first-of-its-kind performance contract with LAUSD. Within this zone, MLA transforms chronically failing public schools, opens new schools and remakes schools into community hubs that offer comprehensive support services for students and families. By doing this, MLA aims to prepare every child in LA's Promise Neighborhood to be college-ready, healthy and successful in life. MLA also screens and manages more than 50 partners who support these school communities by providing over 200 wraparound services.

Over the coming years, MLA will work to adopt the feeder schools to build a K-12 educational pipeline serving over 20,000 children.

To learn more about MLA Partner Schools, visit www.mlapartnerschools.org

About the Amgen Foundation

The Amgen Foundation (www.amgen.com/citizenship/overview.html) seeks to advance science education; improve patient access to quality care; and strengthen the communities where Amgen staff members live and work. Since 1991, the Foundation has made \$140 million in grants to nonprofit organizations throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and Europe that impact society in inspiring and innovative ways, and those that provide disaster relief efforts both domestically and internationally.

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