



## **Amgen Foundation Awards Grant to Mentor LA to Help Improve Public High School Education in Los Angeles**

September 5, 2007

**LOS ANGELES and THOUSAND OAKS, Calif.** - September 5, 2007 - Mentor LA (MLA) and the Amgen Foundation today announced the launch of a three-year partnership to improve education in South Los Angeles. The Amgen Foundation grant of \$4 million over three years will assist MLA in advancing a new model of high performance public schooling, one where the public and private sector work together through a shared leadership structure to create successful high schools.

"We believe that we can leverage and sustain dramatic change in education by building entrepreneurial teachers and visionary school leadership, redesigning program and infrastructures to sustain innovative reform, and strategically managing resources," said Mike McGalliard, president of MLA. "The commitment of the Amgen Foundation demonstrates the importance of a strong collaboration between the public and private sector to help set a new standard for urban public schools."

Today, West Adams Prep High School, a MLA partner school with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), opened to serve 2,500 students in South Los Angeles. This new high school represents MLA's pioneering approach to school reform, and a major investment by the Amgen Foundation in leveraging dramatic change in our public schools.

MLA aims to provide a first-rate education to students and create an infrastructure that supports and breeds innovation. Central to MLA's current approach is the idea of a "hybrid model of shared leadership" in which the private sector (MLA and industry partners) and the public sector (LAUSD) work as strategic partners to run the operations of a school. MLA seeks to be a vehicle for private sector intervention in improving public school education and is already engaged at LAUSD's Manual Arts High School with evidence of success in elevating the performance of students, teachers, school leadership and the engagement of community stakeholders.

"As one of the largest corporate foundations in Southern California, the Amgen Foundation seeks to improve education in the areas of greatest need in our surrounding communities," said Phyllis J. Piano, vice president of corporate communications and philanthropy at Amgen and Amgen Foundation board member. "We look forward to partnering with Mentor LA to advance their innovative reform program, share their model with the broader community, and help to provide high quality education to the students of South Los Angeles."

### **About Mentor LA**

MLA is a nonprofit organization working to improve schools and empower neighborhoods in some of the most disenfranchised communities in Los Angeles. Through the collective resources of an immense network, MLA facilitates effective solutions to significant social problems.

### **About the Amgen Foundation**

The Amgen Foundation ([www.amgen.com/citizenship/overview.html](http://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 more than \$85 million in grants to local, regional, and national nonprofit organizations that impact society in inspiring and innovative ways. It has also supported disaster relief efforts both domestically and internationally.

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