

Echo Horizon School

annual report / 2009 - 2010







we have two gifts to give our children...

one is roots, the other, wings.

mission statement

The mission of Echo Horizon School is to educate hearing and deaf and hard of hearing children in an inclusive environment in which self-reliance and mutual respect are valued and encouraged. The curriculum is designed to be challenging and developmentally appropriate for each learner.

goals

Students will develop the academic tools, social skills and moral integrity needed to be successful in their next phase of education.

Students will integrate themselves successfully, making contributions to a diverse society, while maintaining individuality and respect for others.

Students will generate a variety of solutions and approaches to situations requiring thoughtful and creative problem solving.

Students will develop the skills and positive attitude for engaging in learning as a life-long process.



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& Communications



from the head of school



Looking back on the challenges and successes of 2009-10, I feel overwhelming gratitude for and appreciation of the various constituents that come together to make Echo Horizon a unique school and community.

I am sincerely grateful to our families for their commitment to the vision and mission of our school. This attitude was clearly evident when we announced last year that, in recognition of economic challenges, the Board had determined not to raise tuition but encouraged families to increase their Annual Giving in return. As you will see in the Fund Development report, the results were impressive – our families, faculty and Board participation hit a new high at 98% and surpassed our Annual Giving goal by 32%

We have a generous community of volunteers at EHS who give freely and tirelessly of their time and talent to stage our Spring Event and Grandparent & Special Friends Day, host Open Houses, participate in community outreach, support our Hot Lunch program, and provide these and many other invaluable services in a true spirit of camaraderie. My feelings of respect, admiration and gratitude run deep for our volunteers and Parent Association.

We recently bade farewell to two outstanding educators. Pre-K teacher **Ellis Enlow** has left us after 7 years to become the director of her own preschool. And, our much-loved Kindergarten teacher **Avon Leekley** retired after 22 years of service to Echo Horizon School, with an outpouring of love and fond farewells from current and past students and their families. While sad to see them go, I am deeply grateful for their years of exemplary service to our school and students.

One unexpected source of joy for me last spring was reconnecting with many of our alumni and former families. Hearing of their varied pursuits and unique accomplishments reminded me of the diversity of our students. Yes, they all learn to read, write and compute, but the value added from an EHS education is considerably broader

than skill acquisition. By graduation day a typical EHS class will include students who can collaborate on the production of a multimedia presentation, someone who can compose and perform a unique musical piece, students who can design effective experiments to test scientific hypotheses and someone who writes poetry worth publishing. This is possible because of our fine faculty dedicated to an interactive, responsive and integrated approach that makes Echo Horizon School unique and its graduates so capable and accomplished.

Echo Horizon School is a wonderful school community. I am honored and delighted to work with such talented and committed trustees, faculty and staff, inquisitive and joyful students and an extended community whose heartfelt generosity and commitment support us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula R. Dashiell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula R. Dashiell
HEAD OF SCHOOL

from the board of trustees



The foundation on which Echo Horizon School is built is a strong one. For the past 28 years, our school has matured into one of the finest independent schools in Southern California. In addition to offering a strong and vibrant academic environment in which our students develop lifelong skills for success, our program integrates our nationally recognized Echo Center that successfully mainstreams our deaf and hard of hearing students with their hearing peers. On the following pages of this year's Annual Report, you will find interesting and exciting news of the past year's activities. Our students consistently matriculate to some of the most competitive independent high school programs in Southern California. We are proud to be able to maintain a diverse group of students and faculty, guided by our experienced administration and a strong Board of Trustees that supports our mission and our goals.

During this past year, the Board undertook a series of initiatives that allowed us to reflect on the current state of the school and will help to guide us as we plan for the future. We began to implement some of the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan developed the previous year. We also established a marketing committee to help guide EHS administration through this new era of communication via blogs and social networks, as well as the more traditional means of communication. We saw the launch of our new website, increased publicity and participated in community events. All of these efforts demonstrate our commitment to nurture and continually increase the level of excellence for which EHS stands.

This commitment to academic excellence and growth requires significant financial commitment from our community, and the families and friends of EHS continue to generously support our efforts. This year's Annual Giving Campaign was not an exception. Thoughtfully led by the Ayeni and the Lurie families, the 2009-2010 campaign raised over \$460,000 with 94% parent participation.

All of the wonderful things that happen at EHS do so with the ongoing support of our families, our faculty and staff,

our administration, a dedicated group of parent volunteers and a fully-engaged Board of Trustees.

We thank each and every one of you for your continued support. Working together, we will ensure a strong and vibrant future for Echo Horizon School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nora Wendell".

Nora Wendell
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Parent of Preston (Class of 2002)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Brussell".

Mary Brussell
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
*Parent of Katie (6th Grade), Robbie (Class of 2006),
and Matthew (Class of 2008)*



from the head of echo center



Every day we read about the pressures of schools to meet academic standards in situations where budgets are tight or are being reduced. In this environment it is gratifying to lead a program that not only continues to set high standards but is also looked upon by others as a benchmark. Our staff continues to demonstrate a high teaching level, and they are sharing their lessons learned and teaching methods with other oral education professionals.

This year, our Echo Center teachers attended the Alexander Graham Bell 2010 Biennial Convention. They enhanced their teaching skills by participating in the continuing education offered at the convention. They also presented to their colleagues their innovative use of the latest computer technology and applications to promote language and aural development. This is yet another example of the imaginative, cutting-edge teaching methods employed by our creative and motivated staff. Our teachers also collaborated with their EHS classroom teachers and students to create student videos. Those videos were submitted and won California Student Media awards.

Our proven-successful program fields many requests for professional visits. We host both teaching professionals and students from oral education programs around the country as well as internationally. Last year we hosted a teaching professional from Japan.

Echo Program enrollment continues at capacity, and we added a new Echo Teacher last year. She joins an established resource teaching staff who, together with the classroom teachers, provide a unique and supportive environment conducive to academic achievement and student growth. It is because of our talented and dedicated faculty, parent involvement, and supportive environment that our students are able to thrive and learn. For school year 2010-2011, we look forward to continued student achievement in a unique and unparalleled learning environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki C. Ishida".

Vicki C. Ishida
DIRECTOR, ECHO CENTER







financial report 2009-2010



The Board of Trustees is happy to report that Echo Horizon completed the 2009-10 fiscal year on a strong note, despite the still-struggling economy. We owe much of this to the tremendous support received from our EHS families and friends. We are truly grateful for your ongoing commitment to our school.

The Trustees held off on a tuition increase for the 2009-10 fiscal year for the first in our school's history. This was the right thing to do when many families faced economic uncertainties. However, this decision raised a financial challenge for the school as our operating costs continue to increase each year. The EHS community stepped up to this challenge. The school raised over \$460,000 through Annual Giving, an almost \$50,000 increase compared to the previous year. This is a significant accomplishment under any circumstance but particularly so considering the tough budget decisions many EHS parents had to make this last year. Combined with other fundraising efforts, we surpassed our goal of fund raising by over \$170,000*. Because of our community's support, together with prudent financial management by our administration, Echo Horizon remains on a very strong financial footing.

Additionally, as of June 30, 2010, we had achieved approximately \$2,090,000 toward the \$3.2 million construction costs of the last facility renovation, with our goal of retiring the internal debt within the next several years.

With a slow economic recovery, financial challenges still remain for the school. However, with the ongoing support and commitment of EHS families and friends, the Trustees strongly believe EHS will continue to thrive and provide quality education in a nurturing environment.

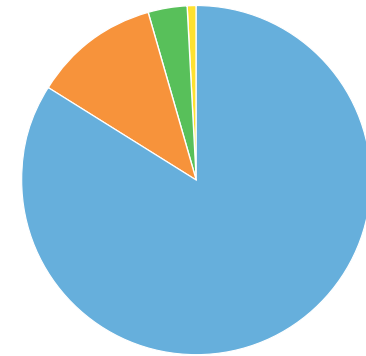
On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all EHS families and friends for their continued support and dedication.

Masako Carpenter

Masako Carpenter
BOARD TREASURER
Parent of Elina (Class of 2001)

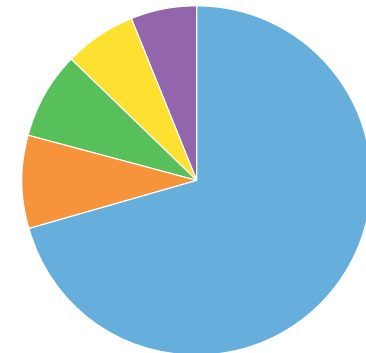
Robin M. Snyder

Robin Snyder
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS



income

Tuition	84.02%
Fundraising	11.6%
Fees & Programs	3.55%
Investment	.83%



expense

Salary & Benefits	72.05%
Financial Aid	9.06%
Plant Operation	8.17%
Administration	5.50%
Program	5.22%

*Excludes contributions for the capital campaign.

from the parent association



As a result of the participation of an incredible group of devoted parents, the Echo Horizon School Parent Association experienced an amazing 2009-2010 school year! More than 100 parents served as committee chairs or room parents. Many more volunteered their time working with committees or helping out in the library or classrooms. It is my pleasure to provide a brief recap of last year's many Parent Association successes.

Fall is the busiest time for the Parent Association. We kicked off the year welcoming new and returning families in a variety of ways – the Pre-K/K picnic, Welcome Coffees, dinners at two Back-to-School nights, and grade-level parent potlucks. As in the past, reading was celebrated at our annual Book Fair and Celebration of Books. Throughout the Celebration of Books, students in Pre-K - 2nd grade read a total of 4,906 books and students in 3rd – 6th grades read for an aggregate of 203,535 minutes. Students in all grades helped decorate the auditorium with illustrations of their favorite stories and donated approximately 1,000 books to a local literacy program! We also brought parents together in a book discussion of Greg Mortenson's *Three Cups of Tea*, while students read the children's versions of that inspirational book and helped to raise money for Mortenson's "Pennies for Peace" project.

The Hot Lunch Committee expanded the Hot Lunch Program to five days a week! Big smiles were abundant on Picture Day and the Halloween Carnival was full of treats for all. Families participated in various outreach projects. We came together for the Ballona Creek Clean-up, Thanksgiving Project, Project Celebration holiday drive, an Earth Day hike and Big Sunday. In addition, parents and students continued to focus on "going green," with efforts ranging from reducing paper use in favor of electronic communications and using environmentally-friendly products at school functions, to hosting our first ever Reuse and Recycle Sale, to instituting a battery recycling program. The Open House Committee wowed hundreds of prospective families with inspiring and informative school tours, this year featuring

student and faculty panels, and on Thanksgiving Eve our school came alive with excitement as students shared their classrooms with their special guests on Grandparents & Special Friends Day.

Throughout the year we hosted periodic "Coffee & Conversations," giving parents an opportunity to connect with one another, as well as to hear guest speakers in the Fall and Spring. The Caring Community Committee thoughtfully reached out to our families in good times and times of need. On Alumni Day graduates revisited their old stomping grounds and reminisced about their time at EHS. We finished the year with a dazzling "Viva Las Echo" Teacher and Staff Appreciation Luncheon and an end of year "Softy Social" at the park.

The strength of the EHS community was most evident in our annual spring fundraiser, "California! Land of Dreams." Parents put in countless hours to organize live and silent auctions, opportunity and teacher adventure drawings, a program and dedication book, and an amazing party! Guests enjoyed socializing, bidding, dining and dancing through the night. Our Fall and Spring "Great Gatherings" books gave families another way to enjoy each other's company and simultaneously raise money for EHS.

It was a joy to work this past year with such an amazing group of passionate parents who were so generous with their time and talent. I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you." Each and every one of you helped make my job as President a fun and rewarding experience, and I truly appreciate your dedication to Echo Horizon School and our children.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darcy".

Darcy Simon
EHS PARENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT
(Logan, Class of 2008 and Juliana, Class of 2010)





fund development at EHS



This past year, the Echo Horizon School community demonstrated tremendous dedication and support for our school through their participation in the Spring Event and Annual Giving Campaign, as well as through contributions to Tuition Assistance, Building and other funds with record-breaking levels of generosity. Our community's commitment in all of these efforts realized over \$920,000 for EHS in 2009-10.

Despite continuing economic realities and challenges, Annual Giving surpassed established goals and secured over \$462,000. Equally important, family participation reached an impressive 94%. Our Board and faculty were at 100%, with significant support from our grandparents, alumni families and friends as well. Philanthropic energy at this level allows Echo Horizon School to maintain its high educational standards and practices and to continue to offer academic excellence in a nurturing environment to a richly diverse group of students.

The success of last year's Annual Giving campaign reflects strong leadership from the school's administration and the solid investment of parent volunteers. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I wish to thank the Annual Giving Co-Chairs Jonathan and Nancy Lurie and Tracey and Akeem Ayeni, Alumni Chairs Steve and Linda Brown, and Grandparent & Special Friends Chairs Mimi and Werner Wolfen. Their hard work and wise counsel, along with input from the Board's Fund Development Committee, built and executed this essential campaign with insight and communion towards the pragmatic needs of the school in concert with the Echo Horizon School culture. Our outstanding volunteers led the campaign to bridge the very real gap between tuition and excellent educational programming.

The dedication of all of our constituents involved in this year's dramatic fundraising success reflects the special qualities of our community who help make Echo Horizon School a truly special place for our children to grow and flourish.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Nordman".

Deborah Nordman
CHAIR, FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Delarosa".

Linda Delarosa
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
AND COMMUNICATIONS



annual giving 2009 - 2010

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annual giving 2009 - 2010

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annual giving 2009 - 2010

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many thanks to each special fund donor listed below

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Ralph & Starr Johnson and Shari J. White
Rebecca, Elizabeth, Sam & Jake Kelly
The Burlingham Kenyon Family
Sasha & Mickey Kreisman

BUILDING FUND

In 2004, Echo Horizon significantly renovated its physical plant to meet the needs of our programs in the future. We expanded the school's footprint to include the Science Room, the Performing Arts Room, an expanded Library, Art Studio, Math Room, Tech Center with audio/visual space, and an enlarged Pre-K space, as well as the well-loved and much-used Play Yard redesign. To date, approximately \$2 million of the original \$3 million construction loan debt has been retired.

Anonymous (2)
Rachael & Navy Banvard
Hillarie & Steven Dietz
Jennifer Galloway & Daniel Ediger
Wendy Hoffman & David Ginsberg
Karina Sterman & Joshua Goode
Brian & Maria Hoye
Minda & Doug Johnstone
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Barry, Rachel & Delaney O'Brien
Norma Roberts
The Ryu Family – Youngjae & Youngsang
The Simon Family
The Smith-Nichols Family – Martin, Dorothy, Molly & Meg
The Spoor Family
The Dubow-Ulin Family
The Wendel Family
The Wimmer Family
Enid Wizig
Elaine Wrenn

Jennifer & Rodger Landau
Ana & Robert Mitchell
Lori Shiotani & Kenneth Nakayama
Donna & Jorge Raphael
Monica & Joseph Rice
Lori & Jeff Serber
Megan Ward & Michael Shore
Mine & David Struhl

FINANCIAL AID FUND

Bolstered by our recent grant of \$400,000 from an anonymous Southern California foundation and subsequent gifts from Echo Horizon families totaling an additional \$100,000, our goal to build a \$1million Financial Aid Fund is off to a strong start. This fund assists current and prospective families who are in need of tuition assistance.

Anonymous Foundation
Lisa & Chris Downey
Paula Dashiell
Larry Title

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUND

Echo Horizon School has a very fine and loyal faculty, some of whom have been with EHS for over 20 years. The Faculty Development Fund provides continuing education opportunities and other benefits that allow us to retain our current teachers and seek out the best when additions or replacements must be made.

THE JUDITH KATES MEMORIAL FUND

This fund was established by her family and the Board of Trustees in memory of Mrs. Kates. Mrs. Kates joined the Echo Center faculty in 2000, working with students for six years. She brought a wealth of experience stemming from her 25 years in the field of DHH education. The fund established by her family and the Board of Trustees in memory Mrs. Kates provides financial assistance to the children of Echo Center.

Tami Rubin
Enid Wizig

LIBRARY FUND

Echo Horizon's renovated library houses over 15,000 fiction and non-fiction books and periodicals. Students use the space as a resource for both research projects and leisure reading. Gifts add new books to our library and can be made in honor or memory of a friend, relative, teacher or other special person.

Altieri Family
Ayeni Family
Debbie Briggs
Claudette Brown
Cotsen Family
Schuyler Dietz
Yvonne Arvanitis Fossati

Jonathan Friedman
Avon Leekley
Thom Macias
Donna Raphael
Hope Anita Smith
Caroline Teele
The Whelans

THE SAMANTHA NICOLE SACKS FUND

The earnings from this fund provide opportunities for students to participate in the school's outdoor education programs. It was established by the Board of Trustees in memory of Samantha Sacks who was part of the Class of 2001.

Tami Rubin
Class of 2010

THE ENID WIZIG SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Established by Enid and Bernard Wizig, this fund provides financial assistance to our deaf and hard of hearing students. Mrs. Wizig is well known and loved within Echo Horizon School for her many years of working tirelessly as a volunteer.

Enid & Bernard Wizig

DORENE TAWA MEMORIAL FUND

This fund was established by the Board of Trustees in memory of Dorene Tawa. Starting as curriculum coordinator for EHS in 1990, Mrs. Tawa became a much-loved admissions director with strong ties to the entire community. The gated garden area at the front of the school is dedicated in her memory. Donations to this fund maintain a memorial tribute garden planted in her honor that is used by today's EHS students as an outdoor classroom.

Tami Rubin

class of 2010



OUR THANKS TO THE CLASS OF 2010 FOR THEIR GIFT TO EHS

Early in the history of Echo Horizon School, one of the first graduating classes decided to join together as a class to leave a legacy gift to their school – and a tradition was born. Throughout the years, our graduating classes have honored EHS with commemorative benches, our sport court, donations to the Faculty Development Fund, technology additions to the math room and other gifts that have benefited both the school and our student body.

The Class of 2010 made an especially thoughtful decision to make their 6th grade gift a donation to the Samantha Nicole Sacks Fund for outdoor education. This is a gift that will benefit Echo Horizon School students for years to come.

Thank you from the Administration, Faculty and Staff at EHS!



We sincerely thank our Board of Trustees, our Parent Association, and our dedicated volunteers for their hard work and commitment in 2009-2010. We also want to introduce our Board of Trustees and Parent Association Officers for 2010-2011.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2010-2011

Nora Wendel, Chairperson
Mary Brussell, President
Jonathan Glaser, Vice President
Richard Hull, Vice President
Masako Carpenter, Treasurer
David Oliver, Secretary
Eileen Holmes, Trustee
Charlotte Hughes, Trustee
Pamela Kelly, Trustee
Jonathan Lurie, Trustee
William Luxford, M.D., Trustee
Deborah Nordman, Trustee
Carla Pittman, Trustee
Donna Raphael, Trustee
Lance Rosenzweig, Trustee
Ivonne Silver, Trustee
Andrew Simon, Trustee

Thom Macias,
Parent Association Co-President
Fred A. Fern, *Emeritus*

PARENT ASSOCIATION 2010-2011

Thom Macias, Co-President
Mary Presser, Co-President
Monique Kagan, Vice President
Gina Powell, Secretary
Chris Combs, Treasurer

STAFF

Paula R. Dashiell, Head of School
Vicki C. Ishida, Head of Echo Center
Robin Snyder, Director of Business Operations
Linda Delarosa, Director of Development
and Communications

All listings in this report reflect contributions received as of June 30, 2010. Thank you to the parents, alumni, grandparents, friends, faculty and staff who contributed money, time and effort to Echo Horizon School during the 2009-2010 school years. We have made every effort to list all contributions accurately. If we have made an error, please accept our apologies and notify us of the mistake.

