Academy of Special Dreams Foundation awards Micro Business Grant, serves less fortunate community in Mexico

Academy of Special Dreams Foundation announced its global project of serving a less fortunate community in Mexico and the launch of a micro business for artists with disabilities in Alhambra.

“As a result of the generosity of Helen Woo, of the Woo Educational Foundation, and many other supporters of the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation, we were able to provide our micro business sponsorship to a local transition group in the City of Alhambra,” said Michael Dergar, president and CEO of the Academy of Special Dreams.

“We again supported the annual Christmas Posada in the small town of Escuinapa, Sinaloa, where a warm dinner, desert, goody bags, and games were provided to more than 250 underprivileged children and elderly. I must give special thanks to our yearly supporters and friends, in particular our volunteers in Mexico, for their yearly dedication, generosity, and passion.”

About the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation

The Academy of Special Dreams Foundation believes that all persons, regardless of their disabilities, should have equal opportunities to express their talents and to be successful in the arts. As a tax-exempt IRC 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation, the primary mission of the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation is to bring awareness to artists with disabilities by showcasing their artistic talents on its website, www.specialdreams.org. With more than 200 artists in residence, the foundation continues to increase its on-line collection of visual art, paintings, short films, photography, creative writing, and other works of art by artists with disabilities.

Cal State LA receives $525,000 grant from Weingart Foundation to boost STEM student achievement

Cal State LA has been awarded a $525,000 grant from the Weingart Foundation to accelerate the achievement of students pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The three-year grant will allow Cal State LA to establish the Acceleration Initiative, which will prepare students from groups who are underrepresented to succeed in STEM. The goal is to produce more diverse STEM graduates who are prepared for the workforce and ready to contribute locally and globally.

A generous grant from the Weingart Foundation for the Acceleration Initiative will allow the college to provide the best possible two-year experience program for our students, strengthening students’ commitment to excellence, engagement with their community, and accelerating their academic success and career prospects,” said Emily Allen, the grant’s principal investigator and the dean for the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology (ECST) at Cal State LA.

Through the Weingart grant, Cal State LA will hire a director who will integrate the university’s already existing STEM programs for middle school, high school, and two-year college students. The university will also leverage the funding to expand and improve the programs and to attract individual donors and private funders.

The Acceleration Initiative will bring together four programs: MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement), LAUNCH Pad, STEP (Summer Transition to ECST Program), and FYE@ECST (First-Year Experience at ECST).

“Cal State LA transforms lives — of students, their families, and our community. We appreciate the commitment of the Weingart Foundation to help us in this work,” Ms. Allen said.