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PRESS RELEASE

Manhattan Beach, June 5, 2017 – The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation reached new heights this year, netting nearly \$1.8M at the 23rd Annual Manhattan Wine Auction.

On Saturday, June 3, the Manhattan Country Club hosted 2,000 guests for the 23rd Annual Manhattan Wine Auction, one of the South Bay's most celebrated fundraisers for our local schools. For the past two decades, the event has provided an opportunity for the community to come together to raise critical funding for Manhattan Beach public schools while enjoying culinary delights from 40 local restaurants and beverages served by more than 70 wineries, breweries and distilleries. Top sponsors included Chevron, Manhattan Country Club, Belkin, Moss Adams, Wells Fargo, and SKECHERS.

This year the online auction opened to the community prior to the event, leading to a new Silent Auction high of over \$200,000. The Live Auction raised \$332,000, and included spectacular packages including a weekend in New York with a VIP Saturday Night Live experience, a trip to The Masters, and an exclusive Napa Valley culinary weekend hosted by famed local Chef David LeFevre and Robert Allen of Sherry-Lehmann.

Community generosity was exemplified with the fund-a-need Paddle Raise to help kick-off MBEF's campaign to grow the Endowment to \$20M by the year 2020. When the Endowment hits the \$20M mark it will distribute \$1M each year to support Manhattan Beach schools. "This consistent funding source will relieve some of the pressure on our Annual Appeal fundraising. It is challenging to grow the Annual Appeal to meet the increasing costs of enrichment programs. A stronger Endowment is tremendously helpful," shared MBEF Board President Remco Waller.

MBEF began the Paddle Raise with an informative video that depicted the district's funding challenge. It explained that (1) only a small portion of local property taxes goes to education, (2) MBUSD receives the lowest level of funding in the state through Local Control Funding Formula, and (3) unlike other high performing districts, Manhattan Beach does not have a parcel tax to supplement state funding.

Endowment President, Mike Duckworth invited the founders and key supporters of the Endowment on the stage as they rallied the crowd. Duckworth explained, "It took us 27 years to build the Endowment to \$10M, the point at which we made our first disbursement. In the last four years, the Endowment has grown from \$10M to \$15M, and distributed almost \$1M to our schools. Now we are experiencing the power of the Endowment. It is our responsibility as a community to carry on the vision started 30 year ago".

With that the auctioneer kicked off the Paddle Raise, and a total of 130 donors raised their paddles to support the Endowment campaign. Guests at the Wine Auction donated over \$830,000 toward the effort, including generous \$100,000 gifts from Joanne and Jim Hunter, and Michelle and Cyrus Hadidi. \$50,000 donations were received from Chevron, the DeWitt Wilson Family, and Laurie and Tom McCarthy. MBUSD Board members and City Council representatives raised their paddles, as did 100% of MBEF's 35-member Board of Directors. The incredible show of support reflects how passionate the Manhattan Beach community is about the schools, and the impact MBEF has on the caliber of teaching and learning in the district.

Wine Auction Chair Roger Spencer celebrated the success of an altogether inspiring evening, “we cannot express the depth of our gratitude for our generous and engaged community. This was an evening filled with great food and wine, good times with friends and neighbors, and a spirit of community and generosity that is awe-inspiring.”

The event proceeds increased by over 35% – much of which can be attributed to the outstanding response to the Paddle Raise which garnered more support than ever before. MBEF Executive Director, Farnaz Flechner explained, “I think our community is starting to develop a better understanding of our significant school funding challenge, and the importance of MBEF in overcoming that challenge. At this time, MBEF is the only mechanism we have to increase district-wide funding for our schools. This takes more than money. This takes a commitment of time, a passion for education, and a willingness to step up and pitch in however one can. This is why we love Manhattan Beach. We are surrounded by likeminded individuals who prioritize our children, our local public schools, and a sense of community.”

ABOUT MANHATTAN BEACH EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation is a community driven fundraising organization, which supplements state funding for programs that inspire learning, enrich teaching, and promote innovation and academic excellence in the public schools of Manhattan Beach. MBEF funds programs that engage students in learning, spark their creativity, and help them discover their passions. In the 2016/17 school year, MBEF funded over \$5.8 million to MBUSD.

MBEF helps fill the gap between what the state provides to our District, and what it costs to provide a well-rounded, high quality education. State funding for education in California is inadequate for many basic programs, and certainly insufficient to fund enrichment programs, electives, and counseling services. California is 44th in the country in per pupil funding and 50th in student-to-teacher ratio and student-to-counselor ratio. MBUSD receives about \$9,600 per pupil from the state, while states like New York, Alaska and New Jersey spend more than \$20,000 per pupil. Other top ranked districts in California have both an Education Foundation and a local Parcel Tax. So, for example, Palo Alto spends \$16,369 per pupil, and Piedmont spends \$13,088. A large part of why our schools continue to thrive and succeed is because of the community’s support of MBEF.

For more information, please visit www.mbef.org and <http://endowment.mbef.org/>
For more information about the Manhattan Wine Auction, please visit manhattanwineauction.com.

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