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NEWS RELEASE

COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT COMMEMORATES 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF MENDEZ V. WESTMINSTER: THE HISTORIC CLASS ACTION CASE THAT DESEGREGATED CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS

A Class Action Exhibit: The Grassroots Struggle for School Desegregation in California

COSTA MESA, CALIF., Aug. 24, 2016 – The Coast Community College District (CCCD) Board of Trustees, Chancellor and Foundation Board of Directors join the Museum of Teaching and Learning (MOTAL), to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the 1947 Mendez v. Westminster case that desegregated California schools. The celebration will lead with a three-month exhibit scheduled to be on display at the CCCD Office located at 1370 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626, from September 22 – December 9 and will encompass other commemorative events.

The Coast Community College District’s boundaries include the City of Westminster, the backdrop of the 1947 Mendez v. Westminster case—a class-action lawsuit filed on behalf of more than 5,000 Mexican American students in Orange County. This landmark case made California the first state in the nation to end school segregation, paving the way for the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling that desegregated all U.S. schools in 1954. The rest is history and *The Class Action* exhibit is a story worth sharing.

The exhibit will be free and open to the public, immediately following an opening breakfast reception to be held on Thursday, September 22, 2016 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the CCCD Board Room (1370 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626). The opening reception will feature remarks from an original plaintiff of the case, Sylvia Mendez and class action historian, David James “DJ” Gonzales. The reception will also feature the unveiling of a Coast Community College District Foundation commemorative lapel pin, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the historic case.

The three-month exhibit will also include the following commemorative activities:

Documentary Screening and Panel Discussion

Mendez vs. Westminster: For All the Children / Para Todos los Ninos

Featuring: Emmy-Award winning writer/producer and Random Act of Mendez Founder Sandra Robbie and CCCD Faculty/Students Panel

Wednesday, October 12, 2016

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

CCCD Board Room (1370 Adams Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92626)

*Sandra Robbie is the writer/producer of the Emmy Award-winning PBS documentary **Mendez vs. Westminster: For All the Children / Para Todos los Ninos**. Mendez tells the story of the Orange County school desegregation case that ended legal school segregation in California seven years before *Brown v. Board of Education*. Sandra has spoken across the country about the Mendez case including at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. In 2004, Sandra saw one of her dreams come true when she was with the Mendez family at the White House to see their family honored by the President for their contribution to American civil rights.*

Legislative Roundtable

A Discussion about Access and Equity in California Education

Featuring: Local elected officials and education professionals

Friday, December 2, 2016

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

CCCD Board Room (1370 Adams Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626)

The California education system supports high-quality educational programs for California's diverse student population through its educational leadership role and emphasis on cultivating a diverse staff that understands and promotes the intellectual, ethical, cultural, emotional, and physical growth of each student. The legislative roundtable will feature a discussion about the California education system; acknowledging our past and recognizing the progression made over the years for a better future for students throughout California.

To book a tour, RSVP for an event, or for more information, please contact the CCCD Foundation Office at (714) 438-4606 or foundation-info@ccd.edu.

ABOUT COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

The Coast Community College District, headquartered in Costa Mesa, is the ninth largest district in the country. The District's three colleges—Coastline Community College in Fountain Valley, Golden West College in Huntington Beach and Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa—serve nearly 50,000 students annually, providing traditional degree and transfer opportunities, career and technical training, basic skills, English as a Second Language and other community programs.

ABOUT THE MENDEZ V. WESTMINSTER CASE EXHIBIT

Before *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), there was *Mendez v. Westminster* (1947). This exhibit explores this case's origin in Orange County and its impact throughout California and ultimately the nation. Using historic photographs, documents, and interview excerpts, it recounts the story of five Mexican American families who challenged four segregated school districts and won in district court and in the Ninth Circuit.

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