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(EVENT PHOTOS AVAILABLE TO MEDIA)

11th For The Arts Concert raises funds for SMMUSD school arts programs

*Colin Hay, Stephen Bishop and Venice teamed with student musicians to deliver
inspiring show benefiting Santa Monica-Malibu public schools*

SANTA MONICA, CA, February 9, 2015 – Colin Hay, front man of Men at Work, and Stephen Bishop headlined the For The Arts Benefit Concert this past Saturday at Santa Monica High School’s historic Barnum Hall, playing along with outstanding student musicians who stole the spotlight.

Rock band Venice, a local favorite with more than 20 years playing with the biggest names in music, joined the headliners and student musicians. All musicians were joined by student orchestra and choir members from Santa Monica, Malibu, and Olympic High Schools.

Emceed by longtime radio personality Cynthia Fox of 100.3 The Sound, the show also featured an exciting live auction featuring signed guitars, an extraordinary drum kit, tickets to the 2016 Grammys, a Las Vegas VIP weekend experience and more, with all funds going to the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation (SMMEF).

Among the many highlights of the evening was a rousing rendition of the Beatles’ classic “With A Little Help from My Friends” featuring all the artists and students on stage together. Another crowd favorite was Black Eyed Peas hit “Where is the Love?” with Walker Davidson and Anna Pack from Santa Monica High School on lead vocals.

Proceeds from the event benefit arts programs in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. Art programs funded by SMMEF include recorders for all third graders, dance classes, additional musical instruction and instruments for students in need of financial support, guitar classes, middle and high school theater, and visual arts grants for teachers.

Since 2004, the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation has been the beneficiary of annual benefit concerts that bring featured artists onstage with student musicians for a truly magical evening of music and philanthropy. Produced by the Artists for the Arts Foundation, these concerts have now raised over \$900,000 for arts programs in Santa Monica and Malibu public schools. Featuring Venice every year as the house band, past concerts have included David Crosby, Jackson Browne, Billy Idol, America, and many other music icons, all of whom have donated their time and talents to perform.

“Our annual collaboration with Artists for the Arts Foundation creates truly unique opportunities for our students and faculty to work hand-in-hand with amazing professional musical talents to create once-in-a-lifetime experiences while raising funds to ensure our arts programs can continue to benefit future generations of students,” says Kathleen Rawson, President of the SMMEF Board of Directors. “We’re so thankful for the support of Artists for the Arts, Colin Hay, Stephen Bishop, the members of Venice, and the community members and parents who support this event every year.”

About Artists for The Arts Foundation

Artists for The Arts Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping public school districts sustain and create arts programs. With the help of the community and corporate and private sponsorships, AFTA produces unforgettable and inspiring concerts featuring well known, professional musicians performing with local student musicians from public schools. At every event, 100% of ticket sales go directly to fund arts education programs in public schools.

To learn more about Artists for The Arts Foundation, visit www.aftafoundation.org.

About the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation

Established in 1982, the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation (SMMEF) was organized by a dedicated group of parents, community leaders, and local business owners to enhance and supplement the curriculum of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. The Foundation’s mission is to ensure equity and access to a vibrant educational experience for all students. Dollars raised by the Foundation are distributed equitably throughout the entire District. The Foundation supports programs in academics, the arts, and athletics throughout the 16-school Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

To learn more about Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation, visit www.smmeff.org.

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