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The Junior League of Oakland-East Bay Inc.'s Award-Winning  
*Super Stars Literacy* Expanded to Second School in Oakland

***League's Signature Project Receives Sizeable Donations and Funding for Expansion***

**LAFAYETTE, CA. - April 10, 2007** - In conjunction with National Volunteer Week (April 15-21) which is an annual celebration of volunteering, the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay, Inc. (JLOEB) announced today that *Super Stars Literacy*, the League's award-winning, signature volunteer program, will expand to a second Oakland school. Aided by several sizeable financial contributions and Proposition 49, the League introduced the after-school program to Parker Elementary School in East Oakland less than two weeks ago on March 26, 2007.

**Stars in the West Now Shine in the East**

Literacy is key to success in school and in society. Studies indicate that children who do not read proficiently by the 3rd grade will not graduate from high school, leaving them with limited opportunities in life.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the crucial role of literacy in a child's future, the JLOEB partnered in 2002 with Hoover Elementary School in West Oakland and launched *Super Stars Literacy (SSL)* a comprehensive, after-school, literacy program designed to make reading fun, and foster the academic and social development of 55 of the lowest performing children in kindergarten through second grades. The program, which has won several awards including a Certificate of Recognition from the California State Assembly, has achieved the following success and more:

- Children in the program are moving from the bottom of their class to standing shoulder to shoulder with their peers. Based on statistical tracking, the League has seen this growth over the past two years.
- Beyond the statistics is daily evidence of the participants' personal growth -- the children are growing in terms of self-esteem, self-confidence, leadership, empathy, anger management, and improved behavior.
- Notably, in a school where parent or caregiver participation is very poor, SSL parents are now stepping up in support of their children and SSL.
- There is now a small but growing cadre of parent volunteers and increased involvement in SSL family-oriented field trips and workshops. Prior to SSL, there was little if any participation.
- Average attendance at a Saturday field trip is now 50 students and family members, and school-based events have between 100-150 attendees at one time.
- Tremendous community support.

"Without volunteers from the Junior League and the support of the community and state both in terms of time and money, programs such as *Super Stars Literacy* would not be possible, leaving many children without access to important educational enrichment opportunities," said Carla Koren, JLOEB Chair, *Super Stars Literacy*. "We are at the forefront of literacy initiatives and are thrilled by the level of backing and participation *Super*

*Stars Literacy* continues to receive. The League is leading the way in showing communities the importance of after-school literacy programs and the life-changing impact these opportunities have on our children and their future."

**Choosing Parker Elementary** - Due to the success of *SSL* at Hoover Elementary and with the advent of Proposition 49 (Prop. 49) dollars becoming available, the League was asked to bring *SSL* to more schools in the East Bay area. Parker was identified as it a) is a No Child Left Behind (NCLB) school (underperforming school for more than two years); b) is demographically very similar to Hoover; c) the school welcomes community partners, particularly those whose objectives complement the school's goals to achieve academic objectives for the school and for NCLB; and d) there are incredible partners at the school, particularly Girls Inc. of Alameda County, who are already there serving girls in a program similar to *SSL*. The boys, however, do not have such a program.

Parker Elementary School principal, Deborah Davis, indicated, "With the arrival of much-needed funding from Prop. 49, I was able to consider additional after-school programs for our primary male students, who were not being served. The program I determined as the best match was *Super Stars Literacy*, which was co-ed. Girls' Inc, already an incredible part of our school for four years, was serving K-4th girls, and I wanted something just like this for my Parker boys."

Davis added: "It is so amazing how this all came together, primarily from the boys themselves. Daily, as they saw our girls being guided to their after-school classrooms, they would ask me, 'Ms. Davis, where is our Girls' Inc program?' I wanted something exceptional for them, and now, we have it with *Super Stars Literacy* just for K-2nd grade boys."

**Impact of Prop. 49 on *SSL*** - By providing \$550 million in state funds for after-school programs to every elementary and middle school across California, Prop. 49 will make a difference for some of California's children, families and communities. When Prop. 49 funds are awarded this year, it is anticipated that 83 Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) elementary and middle schools, plus a large number of the charter schools throughout Oakland, will be affected. While the funds will not impact Hoover Elementary as the school is already participating in funding programs that will be replaced by Prop. 49, the release of these funds will impact the after-school *SSL* program offered at Parker Elementary. The biggest challenge, however, is that the money received from Prop. 49 funds is only about a third of what is truly necessary to deliver the high quality, intensive academic, after-school programs like Parker needs. The addition of *SSL* is a big plus for Parker as *SSL* has been successful at outside fundraising to give children the support they need.

**Super Stars Literacy** - An award-winning and signature program launched by the JLOEB in October 2002, *SSL* is designed to intervene early with children in kindergarten through second grades who exhibit significant delays in reading acquisition or reading skills development. Using an integrated school/community-based model, the program provides daily, intensive, after-school, small group reading instruction and individualized tutoring along with enrichment activities in coordination with the classroom curriculum. To learn more, visit [http://jloeb.org/project\\_sslp.htm](http://jloeb.org/project_sslp.htm).

#### **About Junior League of Oakland-East Bay, Inc. - *Women Building Better Communities***

Founded in 1935, the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay, Inc. is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. The JLOEB offers women the

opportunity to implement change in the community in three major ways: projects, grants, and outreach. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. To learn more, support League projects and/or become a member, please visit <http://www.jloeb.org>.

1. Preventing Reading Difficulty in Young Children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1998.