

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Jordan Pierce

O: 510.550.8176

C: 510.593.5785



Oakland Youth Get Rare Opportunity to See Stars *Space & Science Center Opens its Doors to Underserved Oakland Youth*

OneCal Bank and Chabot Space & Science Center Collaborate to Offer Unique Opportunity for Oakland Fifth Graders

Oakland, CA - A group of 75 Oakland fifth graders will receive a special treat on Tuesday, March 11th, when the Chabot Space & Science Center opens up its doors just for them. The Center, normally closed on Tuesdays, will offer hands on workshops in astronomy and earth science as well as a trip to the center's planetarium. It's an uncommon opportunity for the students of Oakland's Lafayette Elementary, Lighthouse Community Charter School, and Think College Now.

OneCalifornia Bank, through its OneCal Community Connects program and philanthropic arm OneCalifornia Foundation, has collaborated with Chabot Space & Science Center to make this event possible. OneCalifornia is the brainchild of investment banker and philanthropists Tom Steyer and Kat Taylor. The couple provided the capital to achieve their vision of a sustainable full-service bank to stimulate economic development first in Oakland and later California. The Bank opened for business in 2007.

"This field trip is an extension of OneCal's mission: giving Oaklanders the tools they need to succeed," said Jeffrey Cheung, President of OneCalifornia Bank. "Opportunities such as this are critical to a child's education, and education is the catalyst for economic growth in our community."

In addition to OneCalifornia Bank and Chabot, several other local organizations are helping to make this trip possible. Students are in for a sweet ride up Skyline Boulevard on Dreyer's Ice Cream's "Rocky Road Community Bus." Local favorite, Merritt Bakery will be providing lunch for the hungry explorers. Once inside Chabot, the students will be greeted by a real-life role model: a scholarship recipient from the East Bay College Fund who will be on hand to speak with the children about career aspirations and the importance of higher education.

Success stories and visualizing all of the potential that education can bring will reach these children at a critical time. Research has shown that the 5th grade year is a pivotal moment in a

child's development – especially for the formation and the evolution of occupational aspirations.

“Our kids are over the moon about this field trip. They’ve been talking about it for weeks,” said Lafayette Elementary School Principal Benjamin Redmond. “We don’t often have the funds to make this sort of trip possible, which is why it’s such a delight. The students get truly excited about science and now we can do something special to channel that energy and show them a world of possibilities.”

A field trip like this one is especially important for children in the Bay Area, where, despite an economy built upon math and science, student achievement in science is poor and many schools face a challenge in delivering science education. A 2007 recent study by researchers from UC Berkeley revealed that 80% of elementary school teachers in the region devote less than an hour to science curriculum per week. Sixteen percent of responding teachers said they spent no time on the subject at all.

“We’re committed to seeing that every child has a chance to experience the education that Chabot Space & Science Center has to offer,” said Chabot’s Executive Director and CEO Alexander Zwissler. “It’s a special pleasure to be able to serve the children of Oakland, a population near and dear to our hearts.”

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Chabot Space & Science Center, a Smithsonian affiliate, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit interactive science center whose mission is to inspire and educate students of all ages about Planet Earth and the Universe. Founded in 1883 and currently celebrating its 125th anniversary, the Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. just off Highway 12 in the Oakland hills. For more information, visit www.chabotspace.org.

OneCalifornia Bank is a full-service bank conceived to stimulate economic development first in Oakland, and then California. The bank finances small to medium size businesses and non-profits and provides fair banking services to individuals and families, designed to free customers from predatory lending cycles and fees.

OneCalifornia Foundation engages in charitable and educational activities that primarily support OneCalifornia Bank’s community development mission and activities. Included are programs and grants to increase financial literacy, stimulate community development, help eliminate discrimination, encourage affordable housing, and alleviate economic distress. The Foundation will provide lending support, investments, and other services for disadvantaged communities and community service organizations in California. For more information, visit www.onecalif.com.

The East Bay College Fund helps resilient public high school seniors, under –represented in higher education, go to college and expand their life opportunities. East Bay College Fund aspires to involve the whole community in providing college scholarships, mentoring, and support networks to assist these young people in realizing their full potential.