



First Lady Maria Shriver and CaliforniaVolunteers Launch Effort To Build Community Playspaces That Honor Cesar E. Chavez

In celebration of Cesar Chavez Day, 10 playspaces will be built across California in partnership with national nonprofit KaBOOM!

SACRAMENTO, March 20 /PRNewswire/ -- In celebration of Cesar Chavez Day 2007, California First Lady Maria Shriver and CaliforniaVolunteers have launched an effort to build community playspaces for more than 100,000 California children. Beginning on March 24, more than 2,500 volunteers will construct playgrounds and a skate park in ten different communities across California in partnership with national nonprofit KaBOOM!

"Playgrounds allow our children to stay active, inspire imaginations, connect communities and, more importantly, teach life lessons. I'm so excited that together with CaliforniaVolunteers and our many other partners, we are building 10 new playgrounds across our state," said First Lady Maria Shriver. "Our new California playgrounds are being built in honor of Cesar E. Chavez and his courageous life-long dedication to serving others -- and by building them, we continue his incredible legacy, teaching our children the valuable life lesson of service."

The Cesar Chavez Day holiday was established in 2000 to honor the life and legacy of labor leader Cesar E. Chavez. CaliforniaVolunteers administers the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning program which includes the playground initiative, as well as the formation of afterschool service clubs for middle school students and curriculum development to integrate lessons regarding Chavez's life into school day and afterschool activities. Key partners include KaBOOM!, Youth Service California and the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation which has taken a lead role in developing curriculum and other learning materials that will be utilized throughout the state.

"There is no better way to honor Cesar's legacy than to celebrate our youth by investing time and service in them," said Paul Chavez, son of Cesar and Cesar E. Chavez Foundation Chair. "If we show our future generations what Cesar taught us -- that strong character and education are most beneficial when given back to help communities thrive; we only build for a better tomorrow. As Cesar said, 'We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.'"

The ten playspace initiative will be launched by First Lady Maria Shriver at the Watts Labor Community Action Committee (South Los Angeles) on March 24. This initial build will be followed by Cordova Meadows Elementary School (Rancho Cordova) on March 30. The remaining eight builds will occur on the state holiday (March 31) at: Leonard R. Flynn Elementary School (San Francisco), Del Rey Boys and Girls Club (Del Rey), Romain Park - skate park (Fresno), Mecca Community Center (Mecca), Franklin Elementary School (Redlands), La Union del Pueblo Entero (Salinas), Mayfair Head Start (San Jose) and MAAC Project (San Diego).

In honor of Chavez's commitment to community building and service, planning committees made up of community members, including children, teachers and parents, have organized volunteer recruitment, site preparation and safety/logistics for each of the builds. Planning for the playgrounds began in February, when children from each community met with organizers from KaBOOM! and CaliforniaVolunteers to draw their "dream" playspaces. The children's drawings were used to create the final playspace

designs. Children have participated in a series of lessons regarding Chavez's life that will culminate the day of the build. A unique mural will be painted at each site to celebrate Cesar Chavez Day 2007. Community volunteers will also build picnic tables, benches, shade structures and take part in landscaping projects.

"Under First Lady Maria Shriver's leadership, we are not only building 10 great new places for children across California to play, but also a living legacy to Cesar E. Chavez and the principles he inspired a movement with," said Darell Hammond, CEO and co-founder, KaBOOM!. "KaBOOM! is thrilled to be partnering with First Lady Maria Shriver and CaliforniaVolunteers on these unique projects that will mobilize thousands of volunteers and impact countless children in California for years to come and ensure the legacy, work ethic and vision of Chavez lives on."

CaliforniaVolunteers

CaliforniaVolunteers is the state agency charged with increasing the number and impact of Californians engaged in service and volunteering. Through its programs and initiatives, Californians of all ages and abilities are provided with ongoing opportunities to volunteer, to become better prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters and ultimately, to embrace a lifetime ethic of service. First Lady Maria Shriver serves as the Honorary Chairperson of CaliforniaVolunteers. For more information, please visit the CaliforniaVolunteers website at

<http://www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org> .

KaBOOM!

KaBOOM! is a national nonprofit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America. Over the past decade, KaBOOM! has used its innovative community-build model to bring together business and community interests to construct more than 1,100 new playgrounds, skateparks, sports fields and ice rinks across North America. KaBOOM! also offers a variety of resources, including a website and online community, regional and national trainings, grants and publications for communities that wish to plan a new playspace on their own. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., KaBOOM! also has offices in Chicago, Atlanta and San Mateo, California. For more information, visit <http://www.kaboom.org> .

Cesar E. Chavez Foundation

In 1993, Cesar's family and friends established the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation to educate people about the life and work of this great American civil rights leader, and to inspire individuals and communities to carry on his values and timeless vision for a better world. The mission of the 501(c) (3) non-profit charitable organization is to maximize human potential to improve communities by preserving, promoting and applying the legacy and universal values of civil rights leader Cesar E. Chavez. For more information visit: <http://www.chavezfoundation.org> /

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