



Press Release

For Immediate Release:

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La Merced Intermediate Unveils Drought-Tolerant Garden with Ribbon-Cutting with State Sen. Mendoza, District Officials

MONTEBELLO – La Merced Intermediate Green Trojans, an after-school environmental awareness and garden club at the Montebello Unified school, celebrated the fruits of its labor by officially opening its Nature’s Garden of Survival – a drought-tolerant garden – at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 23.

“It’s been phenomenal to see our students work on this garden, which has served as an outdoor learning lab,” MUSD Board of Education President Edgar Cisneros said. “This is a great project that has provided an agricultural and environmental learning opportunity that will benefit students today and tomorrow.”

Board Vice President Benjamin Cárdenas and MUSD Superintendent of Schools Susana Contreras Smith were joined by state Sen. Tony Mendoza, D-Montebello, at the grand opening.

In December 2014, the club was awarded a \$4,985 grant from the Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation to create a drought-tolerant garden on the campus. The 30 students from the All Stars afterschool program, who make up the club, went to work and rallied support for their effort with other noteworthy accomplishments.

Club members have learned about various environmental topics and issues through hands-on activities/lessons, guest speakers and field trips. They’ve learned about sustainable gardens, gardening methods, different composting methods, water conservation, recycling, waste reduction and consumer economics creating and maintaining a garden and drought-tolerant landscape area on the school campus.

“By engaging in this hands-on project, students that make up the LMI Green Trojans have improved our campus, conducted stellar community service and built essential partnerships within our community,” Superintendent Contreras Smith said. “We are proud of the example they are setting for our entire District.”

Under faculty advisers Angelica Paz and Erika Remedios, the goal of the LMI Green Trojans, named after the school mascot, is to raise environmental awareness and engage students in service learning projects within the school and the community. It is also designed to go along with the new California state standards and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

“Our school and community greatly benefited from this grant and the support of the community,” LMI Principal Alice Jacquez said. “We would like to thank our friends at Lowe’s for generously supporting this important project.”

Future projects will center on organic gardening and preparing healthy meals using the vegetables grown. The garden, which was completed with assistance from MUSD personnel and volunteer faculty, is near the campus on Poplar Avenue, south of Avenida De la Merced.

Photo Captions:

LMI Garden: La Merced Intermediate Green Trojans, an after-school environmental awareness and garden club at the Montebello Unified school, celebrated the official opening its Nature’s Garden of Survival – a drought-tolerant garden – at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 23; pictured here: LMI Principal Alice Jacquez, LMI faculty advisors Angelica Paz and Erika Remedios, MUSD Vice President Benjamin Cárdenas, state Sen. Tony Mendoza, MUSD Superintendent of Schools Susanna Contreras Smith, Chief Financial and Operations Officer Cleve Pell, MTA President Lorraine Richards.

LMI Garden1: La Merced Intermediate Green Trojans, an after-school environmental awareness and garden club at the Montebello Unified school, celebrated the official opening its Nature’s Garden of Survival – a drought-tolerant garden – at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 23; pictured here: Cleve Pell, Chief Financial and Operations Officer, state Sen. Tony Mendoza, Superintendent of Schools Susanna Contreras Smith with LMI Green Trojans.

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Montebello Unified School District is a dynamic learning institution employing top-quality educators. It is the combined work of many that allows the District to continue educating more than 30,000 students every year using the 40 Developmental Assets at all of our school sites. It is through everyone’s efforts – students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators – that we are achieving the District’s number one goal of raising student achievement. Learn more online at www.montebello.k12.ca.us.