



## news release

**For immediate release**

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### **CO-CHAIRS NAMED FOR SIXTH ANNUAL NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM BENEFIT**

*Fundraiser to Highlight Opening Weekend Festivities Surrounding New Exhibition*

#### **NCM 6<sup>th</sup> Annual BENEFIT**

**Saturday October 12, 2013**

**6:00 pm – 12:00 am**

The New Children's Museum  
200 West Island Avenue  
San Diego, California 92101

January 30, 2013 — **San Diego** — In October, The New Children's Museum (NCM) will present its next major exhibition, **FEAST! The Art of Playing with Your Food**. Even as the Museum is putting the finishing touches on its fourth Museum-wide exhibition, volunteers are in place to begin planning a weekend of opening festivities. The exhibition will launch on October 10 with an exclusive VIP exhibition preview and dinner, followed by their annual benefit event on Saturday, October 12. The community will be invited to a public grand opening on Sunday, October 13. Details about the exhibition will be released in early March.

NCM's annual benefits are like no other and this one promises to be an extremely stylish, inspiring and adventurous evening of food, art and fun. "Our committee is fired up and ready to go," explained executive director Julianne Markow. "I've rarely seen such energy, enthusiasm and creativity from a team of volunteers. Much of that is due to the leadership of our co-chairs, **Yolanda S. Walther-Meade** and **Michelle Alexander**, and the cadre of community leaders they have assembled." Also on board and already cooking up "playful flights of food fancy" are culinary chair **Dawn Parks**, The Wild Thyme Company| Catering and Events, visionary and event stylist **Andrew Spurgin** and beverage experience designer **Michael Esposito**, Snake Oil Cocktail Company.

Walther-Meade and Alexander bring their unique blend of experience, passion and connections to NCM to spearhead these upcoming events. **Yolanda S. Walther-Meade** is a media maven specializing in public relations, social media, marketing, community outreach, events and branding campaigns, collaborating and serves as chief marketing officer for The Gomez Law Firm. In her role as Voice of the Border, she interpreted for Presidents, Pulitzer Prize winners and Nobel Laureates. She is Host and Special Events Producer for the San Diego Latino Film Festival, which in 2013 celebrates its 20th Anniversary. Yolanda spearheads signature events or serves as current or past board member for organizations such as the San Diego Museum of Art, inSITE, Malashock Dance, the San Diego Master Chorale, La Cuna, the Boys and Girls Club in Tijuana, the Fundacion Internacional de la Comunidad, LEAD San Diego, and the San Diego Natural History Museum. She is one of the Ambassadors for the San Diego

Foundation's Our Greater San Diego Vision Initiative and is on the Malin Burnham Center for Civic Engagement Executive Leadership Council. After creating and chairing the San Diego Natural History Museum's signature gala for nine years, she went on to design and chair the two March of Dimes Signature Chefs and Master Mixologist events. She has been recognized as one of the *Women Who Move the City* by *San Diego Magazine*, one of 20 *Women Who Impact San Diego* by *San Diego Metro Magazine*; the Emerging Star Award from the San Diego Performing Arts League; Project Concern International's International Community Leadership Award and the National Association of Fundraising Professionals Outstanding Development Volunteer of the Year. KPBS and Union Bank recognized her with the Hispanic Heritage Heroes Award. She lives in Point Loma with her 15 year old son Carlos and 13 year old daughter Andie.

**Michelle Alexander** recently returned to her hometown of La Jolla and has immediately immersed herself back in the community. Her commitment to philanthropic work in Tucson, New York, San Francisco and Chicago provided her with extensive experience in ensuring the success of fundraising events. In Tucson, she helped raise over \$110,000 in direct donations and ticket sales for Tucson's 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Silver and Turquoise Ball for over 500 guests. As Foundation Board Member of the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, she successfully solicited donations from local businesses and community members in support of the Annual *Puttin' on the Dog* fundraiser for over 1,200 guests. She has served on the boards of the Junior League, Esperero Canyon Middle School Family Faculty Organization, the Silver & Turquoise Board of Hostesses, and the National Charity League.

Professionally, she served as Director of Corporate Funding: American Auto Funding Corporation (Chicago) responsible for a 60 person, multi level, multi divisional staff, setting short and long term projections for departmental staff, inventory, budget and space planning. Currently Michelle is a nutrition and lifestyle consultant, creating personalized menus and custom meals, and specializing in special needs diets.

Michelle lives in the Del Mar area with her husband Steve and their children, Ryan, age 14 and Cathlyn, age 12.

#### **ABOUT THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**

The New Children's Museum is a new model of children's museum whose mission is to stimulate imagination, creativity and critical thinking in children and families through inventive and engaging experiences with contemporary art. NCM brings families together in a rich educational environment that fosters creativity — blending elements of children's museums and art museums.

A non-profit institution funded by admissions, memberships, and community support, the Museum stimulates imagination, inquisitiveness and innovative thinking by exhibiting participatory works of art by contemporary artists and providing a venue for art making and play. Serving all ages, from toddler to teen, NCM inspires new ways to see the world through the language of art. To learn more, visit [thinkplaycreate.org/pressroom](http://thinkplaycreate.org/pressroom).

#### **Photo Credit:**

Michelle Alexander and Yolanda S. Walther-Meade at The New Children's Museum  
Photo by Esteban Villanueva