

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo Credit: Joan Bowlen

San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus raises much-needed funds for Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy

SFGMC presents \$30,378.32 check to local Castro neighborhood public school

SAN FRANCISCO (January 15, 2016) – Today, **San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus (SFGMC)** and **Dr. Timothy Seelig, Artistic Director**, announced the final amount for its 2015 holiday fundraiser, benefiting the **Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy (HMCRA)**, a

The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus creates extraordinary musical experiences that inspire community, activism and compassion.

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DR. TIMOTHY SEELIG, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

local K-5 public school in the Castro neighborhood. Dr. Seelig, with members of SFGMC, presented a check to HMCRA Principal Ron Machado and members of the Parent Faculty Club in the amount of \$30,378.32.

“The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus sings to change the world around us,” writes **Dr. Timothy Seelig**. “There is no better way to do that than to invest in the children right in our own community.”

Seelig continues, “The Chorus has been inextricably connected to Supervisor Harvey Milk since the fourth week of its existence, when we sang at the candlelight vigil mourning his death. It is only right that we continue his legacy through the children at the Academy named for him. We are so very excited to see these beautiful young children as they learn about the world around them, guided by the tenets held by our common hero, Harvey Milk.”

Funds were raised at all six of the Chorus' holiday concerts in San Francisco. HMCRA parents and children met patrons as they left the Chorus concerts donning the trademark HMCRA “Peaceful Penguin” t-shirts and holding donation buckets. Seelig notes, “It was truly an amazing result of generosity and the holiday spirit.”

HMCRA Principal Ron Machado writes, “The support provided to Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy by Dr. Seelig, his amazing San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, and the entire chorus-going community has been tremendously gracious. It is a partnership that every principal dreams of creating within the local community! We are very fortunate to have had this opportunity.”

The Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy empowers student learning by teaching awareness, acceptance and non-violence, celebrates diversity, and achieves academic excellence while also fostering strong family-school-community connections. “As the parent of a second grader, I am overwhelmed with the generosity shown by the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus and their patrons. It was a giant Christmas present from the community, to our children,” writes **Jeff Fassnacht, HMCRA Parent Faculty Club President**.

These funds will directly assist the school in growing their programs and deepening their commitment to the student body, including new STEM supplies, literacy support staff, fresh fruit for classrooms, constructive play instructors at recess, staff enrichment, field trips, and much more.

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For more information about the Harvey Milk Civil Rights Academy and their Annual Giving Campaign, please visit www.harveymilksf.com. For more information about the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, please visit www.sfgmc.org.

About San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus

For nearly 40 years, the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus has courageously served as the international standard bearer for a powerful and accomplished mix of high-caliber performance, human rights, community activism, empowerment and inclusiveness, establishing it as an icon among LGBT organizations. Founded in 1978, it was the first organization of its kind and is credited with starting the LGBT choral movement, galvanizing and changing the course of LGBT history. It continues to rally and inspire other arts-based community organizations around the world. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Dr. Timothy Seelig, SFGMC has in recent seasons established a heightened level of performance standards receiving audience and choral acclaim, increased its touring and recording profile and broadened its impact and reputation in the community while maintaining its signature blend of humor, personality and high-voltage performances. For more information, visit www.sfgmc.org and @sfgmc (Facebook/Twitter/Instagram).

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