

## **Fundraiser for Schools Surpasses Expectations**

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Tireless volunteers Patience Shutts, left, and Lynn Gregory, El Morro's PTA president, helped organize SchoolPower's annual dinner dance. School supporters who attended SchoolPower's 25th annual dinner dance last Saturday were responsible for fundraising numbers that far surpassed expectations. The event grossed approximately \$255,000, surprising many and putting SchoolPower in a position to meet its LBUSD funding commitments as well as bolster its \$2.2 million endowment fund.

Event chairs, Lynn Gregory and Mitchellene Channels, along with a multitude of dedicated volunteers, carried out a Parisian theme with can-can dancers, a strolling accordion player, a mime and art by local artists as well as silent and live auctions.

SchoolPower president, Robin Rounaghi made sure Laguna Beach public schools stayed in the spotlight, recognizing the contributions of outgoing Superintendent Robert Fraisse, who received a standing ovation. Hearts of Montage Board member Chris Loidolt also presented a \$15,000 check to SchoolPower, an educational foundation supporting Laguna Beach's public schools.

District leaders were also on hand to introduce this year's special Fund-A-Need initiative, eggshaped, hand-held learning devices known as Student Response Systems, which were passed around for demonstrations. It proved successful. Thanks to a room full of generous bidders, a surprise \$20,000 pledge from a future LBUSD family, Chantal and Stephen J. Cloobek, and an additional \$10,000 bid from Hearts of Montage, the kick-off for this initiative raised \$50,000 in about 10 minutes.

Fraisse expressed his gratitude to SchoolPower for the show of support. "Our three year vision for fully implementing this educational innovation has been reduced by a full year based upon the dinner dance results," he said. "Within weeks we will be able to have as many as 40 district classrooms fully equipped with Student Response Systems and to provide teacher training to maximize the effectiveness of this new learning tool."

"This is a special partnership in a very special community," he said. SchoolPower website. The 2011 SuccessMaker Fund-a-Need was unanimously recommended by district leaders and approved by SchoolPower's Board of Trustees this fall.

Laguna teachers and students discuss the benefits of SuccessMaker in a video created by LBUSD Director of Technology Victor Guthrie and Thurston teacher Andy Crisp, which can be viewed on the SchoolPower website. Donations to the SuccessMaker Fund-a-Need may be made by contacting SchoolPower (949-494-6811 / [www.lbschoolpower.org](http://www.lbschoolpower.org)) or at the SchoolPower Dinner Dance on January 29.