



News Release

For Immediate Release

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The L.A. Trust Welcomes the Tooth Fairy

LOS ANGELES — More than 600 students, families, community members, over 25 community partner organizations, and even the Tooth Fairy herself, were brought together by The L.A. Trust for Children's Health at Exposition Park on Sunday, October 11, for its inaugural Tooth Fairy Convention, an oral health fair celebration with music and entertainment.

The purpose of the event was two-fold — to bring attention to the tremendous need for access to oral health care throughout parts of Los Angeles, and also, through a variety of short educational messages, to empower community members to become advocates for their own oral health. Additionally, guests were offered free dental screenings, insurance enrollment navigation, and links to a permanent “dental home,” like a family dentist.

Conceived by The L.A. Trust Executive Director, Maryjane Puffer, the Tooth Fairy Convention was born out of a desire to affect broad change. “The impact of poor oral health is physically, mentally, financially, and academically devastating. And it is nearly epidemic in our communities. Why would we let our children suffer through this when we know it is absolutely preventable?” Puffer said.

Backed by the support of companies like Patterson Dental and Kaiser Permanente, and organizations like Black Women for Wellness, and Vision y Compromiso, the event gave a variety of groups a chance to maximize their impact.

“We were so pleased to support this effort,” said Roberta Tinajero, community benefit manager, Kaiser Permanente Southern California Community Benefit. “Oral health is an integral component of overall health and unfortunately too many families lack access to quality dental care for a number of reasons including gaps in medical coverage, income, and awareness of available services. We salute The L.A. Trust for their work to overcome these barriers and we share their commitment to improving the health of families in our communities.”

In addition to oral health education, the event featured a designated children's play area and a special celebrity guest, actor, producer and dancer Dante Basco.

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Throughout the event, parents from LAUSD schools, as well as community members were recognized on stage for the work they do to support The L.A. Trust.

Puffer summed up the event. "Our intention with the Tooth Fairy Convention was to have fun, raise awareness, and honor the students and parents who are willing to 'take the Tooth Fairy pledge' to become an advocate in their schools, families and communities. That pledge ends with the words, 'I am informed. I am important. I am a Tooth Fairy.'"



LAUSD Board Vice President George J. McKenna III with "Tooth Fairies" at The L.A. Trust Oral Health Event. Access to dental services is a constant challenge for many LAUSD students.

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