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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Councilmember Huizar Celebrates Mural's Healing Power with Ramona Gardens' Community

Celebration highlights 'Art Heals' mural, funded by Huizar, and created by local artists with community's help

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 20, 2008) – Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar joined community members and local artists Monday to celebrate the completion of “Art Heals,” a mural dedicated to the mothers, grandmothers, sisters, wives and daughters of Ramona Gardens.

“Women are the lifeblood of our community,” said Councilmember José Huizar, who allocated \$20,000 to hire three prominent, local artists to work on the piece. “‘Art Heals’ is a mural that honors the strength and dignity of women of past generations, while celebrating the possibilities awaiting women in our community in the future. It is a fitting and inspiring tribute to and for the people of Ramona Gardens.”

Painted by renowned local artists, Joseph Montalvo, Raul Gonzalez and Ricardo Estrada, with the help of community members, the mural depicts a large Tongva Native American woman as its center piece, with other indigenous figures mixed with modern positive female images surrounding her.

While Los Angeles is considered the “Mural Capital of the World,” with a long and rich history and with the most murals by far of any area in the City, Council District 14’s eastern and northeastern geographic part of the City is the “Mural Capital of Los Angeles,” experts say.

Ramona Gardens has a rich history as well, still some of the young people living there struggle with lower than normal academic drop-out rates and living in an active gang zone.

(more)

Huizar and community celebrate new mural in Ramona Gardens

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Councilmember Huizar and the City of Los Angeles are doing more to get resources to the young people of Ramona Gardens, with the area set to receive money for programs through the mayor's Gang Reduction and Youth Development Zone funds.

At nearby Hazard Park, plans are underway for Legacy L.A., a burgeoning non-profit, to help facilitate new and extensive youth programs at the park's former federal armory building.

Legacy L.A. recently came to an agreement with the City's Recreation and Parks Department to operate the facility. Earlier in the year, Councilmember Huizar announced that Legacy L.A. received \$200,000 from The California Endowment to do research in the Ramona Gardens community to see what resources are needed to improve the community's wellbeing.

This summer, 10 teenagers from local schools were selected to serve one-year "Dream Big Youth Fellowships" to help research the Ramona Gardens assessment project. The teenagers recently interviewed Councilmember Huizar as part of that study.

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