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For Immediate Release

**CoSA Educators Kris McClung, Linda Benning Inducted into San Diego Educational Theatre Association's Hall of Fame; Kim Strassburger Also Honored**

(May 2011) Coronado School of the Arts congratulates educators Linda Benning, Kris McClung, and Kim Strassburger for their recognition at the San Diego Educational Theatre Association's Bravissimo Awards for Excellence in Theatre Education.

Now in its ninth year, the Bravissimo Awards program strives to commend exemplary theatre educators in San Diego. Through a nomination and voting process, the San Diego Educational Theatre Association (SDETA) awards local educators in a host of categories. Strassburger received a Bravissimo Choice Award, and Benning and McClung were inducted into the Hall of Fame, the highest honor awarded by the SDETA.

The dual-honor was perfect for McClung and Benning, who worked closely together for 15 years following the inception of Coronado School of the Arts (CoSA) in 1995. "We used to joke that we shared a brain," says Benning. "We were always so in tune with each other." Both educators retired from the Coronado Unified School District in 2010. During her time with CoSA, Benning taught drama classes and served as a drama coach, and she ran CoSA's Repertory Theatre Company, in which student actors write their own scenes, until 2010.

The founding director of CoSA, McClung began her career at Coronado High School in 1974. Her dedication to students is evidenced not only by her 36 years of teaching but also by the growth of CoSA's student enrollment over the years. What started in 1995 with approximately 40 students now welcomes a student body of 180. Though she retired a year ago, McClung continues to be involved in the school through the CoSA Foundation, for which she writes grants and supports Coronado High School's involvement in Career Technical Education (CTE). In 2010, CoSA's performing arts center and digital media studios received a \$3 million upgrade from a CTE facilities grant McClung wrote.

Bravissimo Choice Award Winner Kim Strassburger has taught at CoSA since 2006, and in 2009 she began teaching classes at Coronado High School and Palm Academy. This past year she directed CoSA's production of *The Laramie Project*, which performed its closing night to a sold-out crowd. The cast continues to be involved in the show; in March they did a reading of *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*, and on June 25 they will perform a reading at Cygnet Theatre. Strassburger is also an active artist in San Diego, serving as director, dramaturg, and actor for a number of regional theatre companies, including Ion Theatre, Cygnet Theatre, North Coast Repertory Theatre, and New Village Arts, among others.

**About Coronado School of the Arts:**

CoSA is a public arts conservatory for high school students that embraces and encourages artistic creativity and academic excellence. This pre-professional arts program reaches out to talented students from all over San Diego County and offers a nurturing environment focused on individual growth, opportunity, and diversity.

CoSA is supported by Coronado School of the Arts Foundation, a non-profit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation whose stakeholders are passionate about supporting Coronado School of the Arts (CoSA), improving community awareness of CoSA, and securing funds to perpetuate, improve and expand the school's programs.

For more information on CoSA or the Foundation, call 619.522.4050 or visit [www.cosafoundation.org](http://www.cosafoundation.org).

**About San Diego Educational Theatre Association**

San Diego Educational Theatre Association (SDETA) celebrates the work of Theatre Educators from Kindergarten to college. Through networking, workshops and performance festivals, SDETA offers the theatre educator an opportunity to grow and collaborate.