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**CAMINO NUEVO CHARTER ACADEMY INAUGURATES
JANE B. EISNER SCHOOL CAMPUS
IN RENOVATED TELEPHONE COMPANY BUILDING**

The New Campus, Designed by Frederick Fisher and Partners, in an L.A. Cultural Monument
Expands Camino Nuevo's Mission of Place-Based Learning

Los Angeles, CA - In a public school where compassion is as important as the classics and science goes hand in hand with social services, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy (CNCA) has achieved remarkable academic success since opening its doors in August 2000. Through its place-based approach and comprehensive program model, emphasis on experiential learning, a college preparatory focus, rigorous professional development for teachers, and rich partnerships that provide wrap-around services to address the whole child, CNCA's average API scores across all of its K-12 campuses consistently exceed 800, and 100 percent of the school's seniors graduate college ready.

Camino Nuevo's schools, located in the greater MacArthur Park neighborhood, serve a significantly higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students and English-learners than the District or State, yet rank among the higher achieving schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). MacArthur Park is one of the poorest and most densely populated neighborhoods in Los Angeles. With a large immigrant population, mostly from Mexico and Central America, and a high poverty rate, residents face challenging socioeconomic, cultural and educational barriers.

One of the charter network's primary keys to success is its place-based philosophy, in which students are educated close to home, in the context of their life circumstances. "Education does not happen in a vacuum, but rather it is influenced by the cultural and environmental context of where students are situated," says Ana Ponce, chief executive officer of Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. "Our campuses are deliberately located in this neighborhood. We serve the families who live here and have a deep and personal understanding of the challenges they face."

Today the charter organization inaugurated its most recent addition to the Camino Nuevo Charter Academy network – the Jane B. Eisner School, in Historic West Adams. Made possible through a major grant from The Eisner Foundation, the Jane B. Eisner School is located in a former

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telephone company building, now designated as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. Spearheaded by architects Frederick Fisher and Partners, the exterior was meticulously restored and the interior was transformed to create a school for 270 students and 20 faculty and staff. (See the accompanying architectural press release for details on this adaptive reuse project).

This campus operates under the same charter as Camino Nuevo's Jose A. Castellanos Elementary School; students from Castellanos move to Eisner when they enter 6th grade. The Eisner school, CNCA's most recent manifestation of its commitment to a place-based approach to education, opened its doors in late November 2012 with 150 Camino Nuevo 6th and 7th graders from Castellanos who were previously located at a temporary facility.

"With their generous donation, the Eisner Foundation made this project possible. We are incredibly grateful for their investment in Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. They share our vision that providing children who live in difficult circumstances with an exceptional education and extra support can transform their lives and the neighborhood," says Ponce.

"Camino Nuevo has a proven track record of producing not only great students, but great people," said Jane B. Eisner, president of The Eisner Foundation. "Our family, and our foundation, are proud to play a small part in supporting their efforts to provide access and opportunity for the children of Los Angeles."

Another key to success is CNCA's focus on offering psychosocial support services to the students and their families. CNCA partners with multiple community-based organizations that provide a wide array of services from mental health counseling; to health and nutrition classes; to art, music and dance classes. "It is not enough to provide our students with an excellent academic education," continues Ponce. "If we are going to succeed in not only graduating them, but making them college ready, then we need to support the whole child, including his physical, emotional and mental well-being. Supporting the whole child really means supporting the whole family. We offer extensive parenting workshops, life skills training, healthcare case management, and behavioral health interventions for families - all free of charge. We believe that children's success in school should not depend on their parents' level of education, income, language or citizenship."

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy opened in 2000 with two bilingual (Spanish and English) K-5 campuses. The network has undergone a gradual expansion since then, and now includes one bilingual preschool, four K-8 campuses, and one high school. A second high school, in partnership with LAUSD, will open in

2013-2014. Once the new high school is open, CNCA will serve nearly 3800 students. Enrollment is based on a lottery system; the waiting list is more than 1200 students for all Camino Nuevo schools.

Ponce adds, “With almost 500 Camino Nuevo graduates to date, 80 percent of whom have been accepted to 4-year colleges across the country, we are finding that we don’t ever really say goodbye to them. If a Camino Nuevo graduate struggles with being away from home, or living in a big city, or adjusting to college life, they still come back to us for support, and we welcome them with open arms.”

During the inaugural ribbon cutting ceremony today, many of the students spoke about Jane and Michael Eisner. “It’s important that our students understand and appreciate the rich history of this neighborhood structure, and how it went from an empty building to a beautiful learning space, designed with them in mind,” says Yvonne Carrillo, principal of Jane B. Eisner School. “We also want our students to know about the people who made this transformation possible.” Sixth grader Cecelia C. summed up the experience of being a Camino Nuevo student and attending school in the new facility: “The students in this school are so respectful. ...If I would have to rate this school 1-10, I would give the school a 10... I really like the brick walls. It is really unique.”

Adds Carrillo, “Now that this building has been brought back to life, not only are our current students benefitting, but the facility will continue to serve our students and the community for decades to come.”

All of the K-12 schools in Camino Nuevo Charter Academy are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In addition, CNCA has been recognized for providing outstanding educational opportunities for children in the Greater MacArthur Park area with a number of prestigious awards, such as:

- California Title 1 Academic Achievement Award
- California Distinguished Elementary School Award
- California Association of Bilingual Education Seal of Excellence Award
- U.S. News Top High Schools – Gold Award
- Gold Effective Practice Incentive Community (EPIC) Award
- 2008 Richard Riley Award for Schools as Centers of Community by the American Architectural Foundation
- 2003 Rudy Bruner Gold Medal for Urban Placemaking

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For more information on Camino Nuevo Charter Academy, visit www.caminonuevo.org.

About The Eisner Foundation

The Eisner Foundation exists to provide access and opportunity for disadvantaged children and the aging of Los Angeles County. The Eisner Foundation has been funding innovative and effective non-profit organizations that improve and enrich the lives of underserved children in Southern California since 1996. For more information visit www.eisnerfoundation.org.

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