

## **BACKGROUND ON THE ANDRE AGASSI FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION\***

Founded in 1994, the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education is dedicated to transforming U.S. public education for underserved youth. The Foundation drives reform by engaging in practice, policy and partnerships that provide quality education and enrichment opportunities. Through its public charter school, the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy, the Foundation strives to provide underserved youth in Las Vegas with a quality K-12 education to prepare for excellence in college and beyond. Through state and national advocacy, the Foundation also works to increase investment and accountability in public schools.

The Foundation's work began with much more general outreach to children in need before Andre Agassi had the realization that education holds the key to opportunity. Having dropped out of school after the eighth grade in order to pursue his tennis career, he recognized what he missed and that others lacked the opportunities he had once they dropped out of school.

At the heart of the Foundation are the following core beliefs:

- Every child deserves an outstanding academic experience
- Investment in resources and accountability for public schools is essential
- Teachers, administrators and parents all have a responsibility to help kids succeed.

### **The Education Landscape**

The Foundation sees a pressing need to improve public education and deliver better outcomes for U.S. students who have fallen behind compared to other countries. The performance of Nevada students is poor compared with the rest of the United States, as well as the amount the state spends on each student's education.

The Foundation started a public charter school because of the increased flexibility and autonomy they afford communities to impact a fundamental and immediate need. The impact on students and the support network surrounding them has been extraordinary.

"When children are placed in an environment where expectations are high and excellence is the standard, they don't resent it," Andre Agassi says. "They say, 'It's about time somebody believed in me.'"

### **Financial Support**

To date, the Andre Agassi Foundation for Education has raised more than \$75 million Grand Slam for Children benefit concert. Over the past 15 years, we have provided in excess of \$55 million to support ongoing programming at Agassi Prep and the Andre Agassi Boys & Girls Club, as well as other causes that help children in Southern Nevada. Currently, the money we raise helps underwrite Agassi Prep's operating budget and sustain the Foundation's work to impact education and educational policy on a local and national level.

The 2009 Grand Slam for Children will be held Saturday, September 26 at Wynn Las Vegas. The evening includes a cocktail reception; gourmet dinner; live auction; and concert featuring Lionel Richie, Tim McGraw, Dane Cook, Macy Gray, Brian McKnight and Daughtry, Lionel Richie (if we are using him elsewhere, should use him here) who have donated their time and talents.

Along with the Grand Slam, there are many ways to help – from supporting our advocacy to increase investment and accountability in public schools; to making a donation; to sponsoring a class, student or school activity.

\*September 2009