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## **United Way of Santa Barbara County Helps Students Create Games That Create Opportunity**

**“Jeopardy”-style game project develops learning and job skills for high school and middle school students**

**April 1, 2009**—United Way of Santa Barbara County is working with students from Dos Pueblos High School to create “Jeopardy”-style buzzers for middle school classrooms to increase participation and stimulation for students. Building the game apparatus from scratch also gives the Santa Barbara County Education Office Regional Occupational Program (ROP) students at Dos Pueblos the opportunity to learn electronics skills as they assemble the devices – and self-esteem and confidence as they see their work being put to use right in their own community. The younger students experience a new excitement and learning opportunity in the classroom, as they play the games in friendly academic competition.

**The first ‘game show’ using the devices will be held at a 7<sup>th</sup> grade math class at La Cumbre Middle School on Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at La Cumbre Middle School.**

**WHO:** **Marilyn Lake**, Santa Barbara County Education Office Regional Occupation Office; **JoAnn Caines**, La Cumbre Junior High School principal; **Al Soenke**; United Way Volunteer, Production Developer and Dos Pueblos High School Teacher; **Bob Uradnicek**, United Way Volunteer and Developer; **Paul Didier**; CEO United Way of Santa Barbara County; **Students from La Cumbre 7<sup>th</sup> grade class and Dos Pueblos High School.**

**WHAT:** A demonstration of the devices and how they work in the classroom; comments from students and school officials about increasing participation in the classroom and making learning more fun.

**WHEN:** **Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m.**

**WHERE:** La Cumbre Middle School, 2255 Modoc Rd., Santa Barbara  
Press must sign in as visitors at the front office.

The idea for the devices came from La Cumbre Junior High School principal, JoAnn Caines as a way to make learning fun and leverage kids’ natural sense of competition in the classroom. United Way staff approached longtime volunteer, retired engineer Bob Uradnicek, with the concept. Uradnicek brought his engineering approach to the table - he designed and created a prototype device, a master control connecting a network of lights and buzzer for eight-student rounds, as they vie to show they have the correct answer first.

After Uradnicek’s original design was completed, United Way enlisted the help of Al Soenke, Regional Occupational Program teacher at Dos Pueblos High School to expand the project to include high school students – this time on the engineering side. Soenke taught his students

soldering and other valuable skills needed to assemble the devices. Many of the students came in on Saturdays to complete the devices. Currently, United Way has 25 devices to deliver throughout the school district.

United Way is supporting this program by providing the components for the students to build the devices and bringing together the team of school leadership, staff and especially United Way volunteer Bob Uradnicek to start up and continue this unique program.

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