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PCC, PHEF team up to make Cinco de Mayo a special “Educational Partnership Day”

PUEBLO – While there will be several Cinco de Mayo activities taking place in Pueblo beginning this weekend, the Pueblo Hispanic Education Foundation and Pueblo Community College are pooling resources to dedicate May 5 as a special day for higher education. They have titled the day of celebration as “Educational Partnership Day.”

The two entities are partnering to bring 100 high school sophomores from the four Pueblo city schools to the PCC campus that day to introduce them to higher education in a Cinco de Mayo cultural atmosphere. They will arrive between 11 and 11:15 a.m. and will have lunch in the Fortino Ballroom, with the Dolores Huerta Preparatory High mariachi group providing music.

Following lunch at noon, there will be a presentation program that will include a welcome from Patty Erjavec, PCC’s president, and a Cinco de Mayo history address by Dr. Henry Roman, interim director of Cesar Chavez Academy and DPH. There also will be an official proclamation reading by Ray Aguilera, President of City Council, and John Cordova, who chairs the Board of Pueblo County Commissioners.

Then, the students will be given tours of the campus, including visits to academic programs, by PCC student leaders. That will be followed by a closing program in Hoag Theatre that will include music, words from a previous PHEF scholarship recipient, a short video and remarks from PHEF Deputy Director Dalton Sprouse. The students are scheduled to depart at approximately 1:30 p.m.

“We are very excited to have these students here that day and to have the opportunity to introduce them to our campus atmosphere,” said PCC President Patty Erjavec. “The fact that it is Cinco de Mayo makes it an especially significant day of celebration.”

In the evening, PCC’s Center for New Media will broadcast the PHEF Dollars & Scholars Telethon from 6 to 9 p.m. The headquarters for the 21st telethon will be the newly reopened “Studios at PCC” in the college’s Medical Arts & Technology Building.

It will be broadcast live on Comcast Channel 18 and also will be shown on a one-hour delay on Channel 19. The program will include local entertainment, appearances by city, business, PCC

and PHEF officials, and a telephone call-in bank to which community members can make donation pledges by calling 549.3373.

"We are so excited to be bringing the telethon back to our community of Pueblo," said Sprouse. "This has always been our most important fundraiser of the year, because the money we raise at the telethon directly impacts the number of scholarships we can award each year."

PHEF was founded by Aguilera in 1988 with the mission of removing financial as well as other barriers that might prevent students from securing an education, and gaining employment. It provides scholarships for higher education to Hispanics, other minorities, and low-to-moderate income students from Pueblo and Southern Colorado to help them achieve life-long success. To date, PHEF has raised over \$2 million and awarded more than 1,500 scholarships.

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