



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
November 4, 2014

Contact: Edward Padilla  
(323) 646-8344  
Edward@lalopad.com

## **THE 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MARIACHI FESTIVAL CELEBRATES THE DIVERSE MARIACHI COMMUNITY AT MARIACHI PLAZA IN BOYLE HEIGHTS ON NOVEMBER 23, 2014**

**Los Angeles, CA**—Produced by Edward Padilla on behalf of the Mariachi Plaza Festival Foundation, through its Festival organizing committee, the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Mariachi Festival will celebrate the diversity of the Los Angeles mariachi community with a stellar line-up of musical ensembles that truly reflect the rainbow kaleidoscope of cultures, histories, ethnicities, and more. This year's Festival takes place on Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and is proudly sponsored by lead sponsors Southern California Gas company and HealthNet.

The Mariachi Plaza Festival Foundation continues the tradition started in 1990. Formed in 2010, the Mariachi Plaza Festival Foundation is comprised of local organizations that have been involved with the Mariachi Festival for the past 24 years. The mission of the Mariachi Plaza Festival Foundation is "To celebrate the heritage of Mariachi Culture, nurture its presence in our community and invite new audiences to experience its intricate magnificence." Organizers have made a special effort to include an amazing array of mariachi youth orchestras, all-women ensemble, traditional mariachis and even the world's first-ever LGBT mariachi.

"We're very excited about the amazing cultural renaissance happening in Boyle Heights and feel proud to have been part this growing awareness with regard to our music, art, history and heritage in Boyle Heights," says Edward Padilla, a long-time cultural arts advocate and administrator as well as a performing artist in his own right. "The Mariachi Festival has become one of our community's signature events and we are thrilled with the response from both within and beyond the neighborhood."

The festival, the oldest and still the only free mariachi extravaganza in Los Angeles, opens with a very special reception to welcome community seniors and elder, and is followed by a non-stop, day-long spectacle of mariachi merriment which includes special performances by the High Desert Mariachi Juvenil, Plaza de la Raza Youth Mariachi Ensemble, students from the Mariachi Conservatory, the CSULA Golden Eagle Mariachi, Mariachi Corazón de Mexico, Mariachi Arcoiris, Mariachi Voz de America, Mariachi Los Toros and Mariachi Sol de Mexico. The afternoon will also feature a special appearance by the internationally renowned folkloric dance company Grandeza Mexicana.

### **ABOUT THE MARIACHIS**

**High Desert Mariachi Juvenil** is comprised of youth who participate in a non-profit program that offers free afterschool musical instruction and activity in Hysperia, California. The group has gained a loyal following throughout the Southern California region with performances and at competitions. The **Plaza de la Raza Youth Mariachi Ensemble** draws its members from a similar program at Plaza de la Raza, a cultural arts center in the LA neighborhood of Lincoln Heights. Established in July of 1995, **The Mariachi Conservatory**, based in Boyle Heights, was established in 2007 by Ricardo Mata, and his wife Esperanza Juarez to develop an academic mariachi studies program and has performed at the Historical La Fonda Restaurant, the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Mariachi Festival held at the Mariachi Plaza and Mariachi USA's pre-showcase held at the Hollywood Bowl.

**Mariachi Voz de America**, featuring the Conservatory's Ricardo Mata, has had the privilege of entertaining audiences both locally and internationally. They have accompanied a number of international recording artists in recording sessions and they represented the City of Los Angeles in a two-week tour of Jalisco, Mexico in the annual Encuentro del Mariachi International Festival in Jalisco.

**Mariachi Los Toros** was started by Carlos Parra in 2001. This group of talented young professionals recently opened for the rock band Faith No More at the Hollywood Palladium, a stage with which Los Toros are very familiar.

They regularly play the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion as part of the annual KCET "Holiday Celebration." They have also recorded a Mariachi version of "Amor Clandestino" for the Group Maná and have been invited for six consecutive years to El Encuentro Internacional del Mariachi in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

**Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles** captivates audiences with an enduringly vivacious spirit. Enriching the Mariachi forum as America's first all-female mariachi ensemble, Reyna de Los Angeles brings sensitivity, beauty, warmth and a feminine perspective to the realm of Mexico's musical heritage with mesmerizing, energetic and irresistible performances, blazing a trail for female mariachi musicians. In a musical landscape where songs are often written by men, from male perspectives, Reyna has created its own history. Established in 1994, the group had a strong beginning thanks to the mentorship of Lola Bertran, La Reina de La Musica Ranchera. In these early days, Maestro José Hernández saw the potential in this all-female ensemble, and fostered the development of the group. The group has since gone on to record three albums, share the stage with world-renowned musicians like Vicki Carr, Guadalupe Pineda and Lucha Villa, and performed for some of the world's highest profile celebrities including Tom Cruise, Oprah Winfrey, and Barack and Michelle Obama

Founded in 1981 by Maestro Jose Hernandez, the platinum selling mariachi band **Sol de México** have broken countless barriers in mariachi music, including becoming the first mariachi ensemble to be nominated for a Grammy. Their original rhythms, fresh sounds and inspiring ideas have energized the world of mariachi for over 30 years. A true mariachi institution, the band continues to travel the world as ambassadors of mariachi music, having performed to sold-out audiences throughout the world including Spain, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, México, China, and North Korea. Mariachi Sol de México® is truly a traveling cultural icon that symbolizes extraordinary musicianship and communal cross-generational joy.

### **ABOUT MARIACHI PLAZA**

The City of Los Angeles is a port of entry and melting pot for people all over the world. The community of Boyle Heights has been a residential destination for multi-generational Mexican families and many others since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It has been and remains a cultural kaleidoscope, historically including large Jewish and Japanese communities. The large Mexican-American presence in the area has influenced facets of countless social and economic enterprises. Much of the rich Mexican culture permeates throughout the area in the architecture, restaurants, religious institutions, cultural centers, and especially within the realm of music.

One of the most popular destinations in Boyle Heights, Mariachi Plaza is located at First and Boyle Street. The location draws its name from the mariachis that live in the surrounding areas. The intersection is also home to the Boyle Hotel, which offered mariachis an affordable place to live and was nicknamed Mariachi Hotel for many years. For decades the musicians have congregated there at the intersection, enjoying the openness of the courtyard formed by the architectural landmarks located there.

The Mariachi has long been venerated as an icon of Mexican culture, but has also been used as a symbol of community and social justice in Boyle Heights. Beginning in 1985, the Community of East Los Angeles organized an environmental justice movement, to prevent a State Prison from being built in East Los Angeles. During the protests, mariachis from First and Boyle marched alongside the Mothers of East Los Angeles. The Mariachi became an iconic organizing tool. Mariachis would be hired to play in each victory after legislative hearings in the Senate and the Assembly. Boyle Heights and East LA residents have long been accustomed visiting the Plaza in order to hire musicians for private family parties and events. Located at the Boyle and 1<sup>st</sup> St intersection in the heart of Boyle Heights, the community space serves as an emblem of cultural identity and encourages traditions that have transcended borders and generations since as early as 1933.

### **ACTIVITIES, FOOD AND ART**

In addition to the mariachi performances, the Festival also offers a broad spectrum of arts activities, photo opportunities, art exhibitions, delicious food, and information booths about health access and local organizations that service the local community.

Great Minds in STEM™ through its STEM-Up™ Initiative will be on hand to provide information on college and careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, its scholarship program and conduct hands-on activities. Face painting, games and other youth activities will also be available. White Memorial Hospital hosts a reception for local and visiting seniors with a welcome by Abuelitos de Boyle Heights.

### **OUR MASTERS OF CEREMONY**

**Joanna Zanella** is currently on-camera host for Univision Deportes on the largest Latino television network nationwide, and has become the New Host of UFC Español, which will be seen in all of the United States and Latin America, born in West Hollywood California, she and her family moved to Guadalajara Jalisco, Mexico when she was an Infant and moved back to Southern California when she was 10. A former "Miss Fox Sports," a pageant where she represented Mexico, she is busy as both an on-air sports announcer/host and as an increasingly successful and in-demand actor on television and in feature films.

**Elva Saray** is a host of Telemundo 52's "Acceso Total." She joined Telemundo after a work with Estrella TV, where she was co-host of "En Vivo con Elva y Chris," "Los Angeles en Vivo" and "Alarma TV." Since the launch of her TV career more than six years ago, Elva has gained great popularity within the Los Angeles Hispanic community thanks to her charisma and her personality. In 2008 she was named Grand Marshal of the Ensenada Carnival Parade in Mexico.

**Dunia Elvir** is the host of "Noticiero Telemundo 52 a las 5am & 6am." With more than 10 years in television at Telemundo 52, Elvir is one of the most recognized and respected Hispanic journalists in Los Angeles. Her reports and stories have been very well received by audiences and the industry, which has awarded her the "Golden Mike" for "Best Investigative Reporting" and the 2008 Journalism Award from the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) for Best Investigative Reporting. In 2004, she was selected by the National Association of Latina Leaders (NALL) as one of the 13 most outstanding Latinas in the United States. Some of her most relevant interviewees include Antonio Saca (former president of El Salvador), Ricardo Maduro (former President of Honduras), Manuel Zelaya (former president of Honduras) and Vicente Fox (former president of Mexico)

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Mariachi Plaza Festival is sponsored by Telemundo/NBC, Southern California Gas Company, HealthNet, LA City Councilman 14th District José Huizar, LA City Department of Cultural Affairs, LA County Supervisor Gloria Molina, USC Civic Engagement & USC Keck Medicine, White Memorial Medical Center, Metro, Boyle Heights Chamber of Commerce, VEDC Boyle Heights Capital Access Center, Great Minds in STEM, STEM Up, Barrio Planners Incorporated, Organización de Mariachis Unidos de Los Angeles (OMULA) and Mothers of East Los Angeles

###