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## California State Senate

SENATOR  
CAROL LIU

TWENTY-FIFTH SENATE DISTRICT



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Native Garden at Pinewood Elementary Honors Senator Carol Liu Legacy**

#### ***GREEN21 Project Commemorates the Senator's Commitment to Children and the Environment***

**October 25, 2016, LOS ANGELES** – Dozens of school staff, students, parents and community partners turned out today for the dedication of a new 1500 square foot all-native garden at Pinewood Avenue Elementary School in the Northeast Los Angeles neighborhood of Tujunga. The garden honors [Senator Carol Liu](#) (SD-25), a champion for children and the environment.

“I am honored that my staff and constituents thought to commemorate my work in a way that creates ongoing value to the 25<sup>th</sup> District,” stated Senator Liu, who learned at the event that the gardens were created in her honor. The senator terms out of office November 30<sup>th</sup> after 14 years in the state legislature.

The Pinewood Legacy Garden transforms a highly visible, barren expanse of dirt at a transitional kindergarten through fifth grade (TK–5) school into vibrant garden space to learn, teach and enjoy. Bountiful native foliage and the birds and butterflies it attracts now greet students as they traverse the Pinewood campus. Two play-friendly, water-wise California native grasses border a walkway that leads to a seating area cooled by fruit-bearing pomegranate, fuji apple, and clementine trees.

“Beautiful space not only helps students learn and bounce back from stress, it gives communities a sense of value,” noted Patrizia Puccio, principal at Pinewood Avenue Elementary School. “We are very excited about this positive addition to our school and community.”

“School gardens have been shown to improve school-wide academic achievement and student health, and they are wonderful places to educate the community about the environmental impact of our landscapes,” added Vickere Murphy, Senator Liu’s GREEN21 program manager.

The gardens will host more than recess. Beyond the Bell/ LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program and teachers will use garden curricula designed by the Theodore Payne Foundation.

"These gardens are a vivid example of the value of expanded learning, a concept championed by both LA's BEST and Senator Liu," said Debe Loxton, chief operating officer, LA's BEST. "In addition to traditional classroom instruction, Pinewood students learn about math, science, biology, geology and nutrition in an experiential, hands-on environment."

"It's so important that all students have access to beauty in their learning environment," noted Mónica Ratliff, board member, L.A. Unified School District. "I am grateful to have been able to help make this garden a reality for our students, and I thank Senator Liu for her leadership and guidance in bringing the partners together."

In addition to water-wise native foliage, the garden contains water-saving infrastructure, including a bioswale designed to direct and infiltrate water and a low-flow, subsurface drip irrigation system. Due to these climate-wise approaches, the new garden is expected to reduce school water and operational expenses.

During the event, parents also re-dedicated a pomegranate tree that moved to the garden's new orchard. The national tree of Armenia, the pomegranate commemorates the Armenian genocide.

"Landscapes can be powerful tools for social change, and it is an honor to provide Tujunga's kids with the kind of space that facilitates learning and resilience," stated Cassy Aoyagi, president of FormLA Landscaping and the Theodore Payne Foundation. "The legacy garden also gives the community experience with a lush landscape that saves water, time and money."

The Pinewood Legacy Garden is a joint effort between Pinewood Elementary, [LA's BEST/Beyond the Bell](#) after-school enrichment program, L.A. Unified School District, Northeast (LAUSD), [FormLA Landscaping](#) and the Senator's [GREEN21](#) program. The project received material donations from [Ewing Irrigation](#) of Glendale, [Netafim](#), and funding from [Maria Mehranian](#) and SoCalGas. Learn more at [LASchoolgardens.com](#).

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### ***About Senator Carol Liu***

*Sen. Liu represents about 930,000 people in the 25th Senate District, which includes Burbank, Glendale, Sunland-Tujunga, Atwater Village, Shadow Hills, La Cañada Flintridge, La Crescenta, Montrose, Pasadena, Altadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Bradbury, Duarte, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and Upland.*

### ***About the GREEN21 Program***

*Senator Carol Liu initiated her "Greening for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (GREEN21) program to promote initiatives that protect and conserve natural resources and reduce overall environmental impacts in the 25th Senate District. GREEN21 initiated and managed the project.*

### ***About Beyond the Bell/ LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program***

*The mission of LA's BEST is to provide a safe and supervised after school education, enrichment and recreation program for children ages 5 to 12 in the city of Los Angeles. In addition to programming, LA's BEST purchased \$2000 in native foliage for the garden.*

***About FormLA Landscaping***

*FormLA Landscaping is improving LA's resilience, one optimally sustainable landscape at a time. Its gardens feature lush, leafy foliage authentic to LA. The firm provided optimally sustainable garden design+build services and additional pro bono services.*

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