

University Advancement

Public Relations and Strategic Communications

Contact: John Chandler

O.(818) 677-5674 or c. (818) 822-07825

john.chandler@csun.edu[News Release Archives](#)

NEWS RELEASE

Cal State Northridge Gala Celebrates Newly Named Mike Curb College *Community and Entertainment Industry Leaders Mark Music Icon's \$10 Million Gift*

The university's Mike Curb Web site is located at www.csun.edu/pubrels/MikeCurb/

(NORTHRIDGE, Calif., Nov. 9, 2006) -- Capping a gala evening celebration, California State University, Northridge President Jolene Koester on Wednesday formally dedicated the university's newly named **Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication**, paying tribute to the campus' distinguished alumnus and largest donor.

Community leaders and entertainment industry figures joined Cal State Northridge students, faculty, staff and alumni in honoring Curb Records Founder/Chairman and former California Lt. Gov. Mike Curb. The college named in his honor includes CSUN's **music, cinema and television, theatre, art, journalism, and communication studies programs, and radio station KCSN 88.5 FM.**

Earlier this year, the university presented a distinguished alumnus award to Curb, who began his 40-year-plus career in the music industry as a freshman on the Cal State Northridge campus in 1962-63. The music industry icon also made a record \$10 million gift to the university, half endowing the arts college and the other half for CSUN's planned regional Performing Arts Center.

"Today we celebrate a Convergence of Greatness," said President Koester, echoing the theme for the evening. "With this gift, a man of great achievement forms a union with a college--one that has renowned programs, celebrated alumni and boundless potential--to provide resources that will benefit students and the community for generations to come."

The president added, "He has made this gift not only because he is a generous man who wants to leave a legacy for future generations, but also because he has a fundamental understanding of the value of education. It is only fitting that his great career and his commitment to education would converge with the outstanding programs and abundant talent and potential of this college."

Curb, who heads one of the nation's largest and longest-running independent record labels, founded the Mike Curb Congregation vocal group in his teens, and went on to compose more than 400 songs and produce 25 gold- or platinum-selling records. He has helped launch and guide the careers of scores of hit artists, and was named *Billboard* magazine's 1972 Producer of the Year.

"Wow! I never dreamed you were going to do something like this," Curb told a cheering audience of more than 400 people. "Thank you so much for coming tonight. I had no idea we were going to be a part of a ceremony like this. I thought when I left politics, that was it!" he joked.

Then, paying tribute to the university that he attended, Curb added, "California State University, Northridge has to succeed.... The pride in this Valley that Cal State Northridge has is beyond words.... All the different areas the university is touching. This is essential to the Valley. And I'm hoping my gift will lead to many others."

Guests for the gala included Curb friends such as Michael Reagan, the eldest son of former President Ronald Reagan, and legendary disc jockey/broadcaster Casey Kasem. Political figures from around California also sent congratulations, including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, City Councilman Greig Smith, U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman, state Senators George Runner and Tom McClintock, and state Assemblyman Lloyd Levine.

Roberta Achtenberg, chair of the California State University Board of Trustees, joined President Koester on the stage to present Curb with the trustees' resolution authorizing the college naming. Achtenberg called Curb "an individual with such incredible accomplishments, extraordinary vision and exceptional generosity."

The evening included special performances by various student groups from the newly named Curb College, which has more than 4,000 students. The college's award-winning Jazz "A" Band performed a rousing medley of Curb songs. Music industry studies students also performed a tribute to Curb, adapting the lyrics of a song he penned at CSUN that helped launch his career: "You Meet the Nicest People on a Honda," which was used for a national advertising campaign.

Curb took a special interest in CSUN's 12-year-old **Music Industry Studies Program**, the first degree program of its kind in California and now the largest program within CSUN's nationally recognized Music Department. One million dollars of his \$5 million endowment for the college will support an endowed faculty chair in music industry studies.

The other \$5 million of his gift provides a lead donation for the university's "Imagine the Arts" fundraising campaign to build a 1,700-seat Performing Arts Center for the San Fernando Valley region. The complex, slated to begin construction next year on the Cal State Northridge campus, will provide the university's students with a hands-on "learning laboratory."

Dave Moon, the interim dean of the college, said Curb's support "is acknowledging and highlighting the success that our faculty, staff and students have enjoyed through the years." Moon added, "It also means that it is our responsibility not only to maintain the success we have enjoyed, but we must also work hard to build upon that success."

With its prime location and strong reputation, Cal State Northridge has produced many alumni who have achieved great success in the entertainment and media industries. They include Alex Yemenidjian, former chairman/CEO of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., CNBC cable anchors Bill Griffeth, Sue Herera and Ron Insana, actors "Cheech" Marin and Debra Winger, composer Diane Warren, musicians Tom Scott and Grant Geissmann, and opera stars Carol Vaness and Michelle De Young.