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Manchester Family Child Development Center Dedication
April 6 Features Douglas and Betsy Manchester

Douglas and Betsy Manchester envision the new USD child development center that bears their name as becoming a model facility for the growing field of early childhood development.

Deborah Ferrin, the city's Child Care Coordinator and a former child development instructor, referred to the Manchester Family Child Development Center as one of the best she has seen. "It is truly exemplary."

Reggie Smith, a member of the center's Parent Advisory Board and chair of the YMCA Child Care Resource Service for the entire county, said the $630,000 facility is "the finest in San Diego County and among the finest on the West Coast."

On Friday, April 6, the center will be dedicated during ceremonies that begin at 2:15 p.m. directly in front of the building, located on the east end of campus.

Mr. and Mrs. Manchester, whose six-figure donation made construction of the center possible, will be the honored guests. Douglas Manchester, a leading San Diego developer, has been a member of the USD Board of Trustees since 1978.

Mrs. Manchester, active in a variety of civic and social affairs, has been a member of the advisory boards for the USD schools of Education and Nursing.

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The child development center has been in operation since Sept. 5, with an enrollment of 31 children between the ages of two-and-a-half and five. Next fall, plans call for the center to operate at maximum enrollment -- 60 children.

The 6,000 square-foot center is staffed by two master teachers, two assistant teachers, a teaching assistant and Dr. Steven Gelb, who is the center's director.

Gelb also teaches early childhood education at the USD School of Education. Earlier, he was a faculty member at York University in Ontario, Canada.

He said the mission of the center is to:
* Provide a model child development program in the education and child care arenas.
* Provide affordable child care.
* Integrate the University's academic community into the life of the center.

Dr. Edward F. DeRoche, School of Education dean, said the center "provides the opportunity to make campus child care an integral part of higher education and provides a quality program linking child care with early childhood education."

The building is being dedicated during the National Association for Education of Young Children's Week of the Young Child (April 1 - 7).

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