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## **Education Innovator Dr. Milton Chen to Receive 20<sup>th</sup> Legacy for Children Award from Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose**

### ***Chen honored for a lifetime of transforming pre K-12 learning***

San Jose, CA – April 26, 2019 - Milton Chen, PhD strongly believes in education. Just not in the traditional sense. Author, innovator, and big thinker, [Chen](#) has spent four decades disrupting the status quo of pre K–12 learning. His deep commitment to innovative and culturally-competent education has long paralleled the mission of Children's Discovery Museum to inspire children's curiosity and creativity. The museum will honor Milton Chen with the 20<sup>th</sup> [Legacy for Children Award 2019](#) at the annual fundraising gala on May 10, at 6 p.m., at the McEnery Convention Center in San Jose.

"I'm honored to recognize Milton's remarkable dedication to children's education," said Marilee Jennings, executive director of Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose. "His leadership in research, practical applications for teachers and the integration of technology have fostered systemic change in how we teach. Milton's passion for interactive learning matches the museum's core value that hands-on learning with ideas, materials, the environment, and technology promotes creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and growth," added Jennings.

Chen champions moving away from the "educational oligarchy," where a small group of adults decide what, where and how millions of children will learn, to a system that builds upon children's strengths, passions, and interests. A national speaker and author of more than 30 books, chapter and articles, Chen speaks with authority on how technology and the media are rapidly changing children's lives and how teaching should adjust to these changes.

"It's time to democratize the system with more student choice," said Milton Chen. "Today students have so much knowledge at their fingertips whenever and wherever they want. It's time to rethink how we teach. We need to move beyond the 'deficit model' where teachers impart knowledge into children like blank slates - to inspiring children's innate curiosity and igniting a passion for lifelong learning."

Chen is a senior fellow and executive director emeritus at the George Lucas Educational Foundation (GLEF). During his tenure, the foundation's media arm, *Edutopia*, grew into a powerhouse brand that advocated a new vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century education. This game-changing idea shifts the power from top-down classroom teaching towards student-led, project and location-based, hands-on learning.

His book, "Education Nation: The Six Leading Edges of Innovation In Our Schools," challenges society to make education a priority on par with a strong economy, high unemployment, and national security. The book was named one of the year's 10 best education books by the American School Board Journal.

### [Background on Milton Chen](#)

Prior to joining GLEF, Chen served as founding director of KQED's Center for Education, a PBS affiliate in San Francisco. In the 1980s, he was an assistant professor at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. Prior to that, Chen was director of research at the Sesame Workshop where he helped develop Sesame Street, The Electric Company, and 3-2-1 Contact.

Chen has been awarded the Elmo Award from Sesame Workshop, Fred Rogers Award from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Robin Winks Award for Enhancing Public Education Understanding of the National Parks. He's also been honored by the Congressional Black Caucus and the Exploratorium and Lawrence Hall of Science. He currently serves on several boards of directors, including the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Panasonic Foundation, and the Sesame Workshop. Chen received his master's degree in communication and his doctorate in communication research from Stanford University, and holds a bachelor's degree in social studies from Harvard University.

### **Live at Legacy!**

**Andy Vargas, lead vocalist of legendary rock band *Santana* and his band *Souleros***

In honor of the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Legacy for Children Award, Andy Vargas, the lead vocalist of the legendary rock band ***Santana***, will perform with his band ***Souleros***. Vargas is celebrating his 20<sup>th</sup> year performing with Santana!

### **20<sup>th</sup> Annual Legacy for Children Award**

Each year the [Legacy for Children Award](#) honors an individual who has made a tremendous difference in the lives of children. Some of the past recipients include Steve Smith, Sonia Manzano, Ruby Bridges, Steve Wozniak, Kristi Yamaguchi, Mister Fred Rogers, Dr. Sally Ride, and Ronnie Lott. The event supports the museum's mission of providing hands-on educational exhibits, in-depth programming, and cultural events designed to give our community's children the tools that will help them grow into the talented, creative, and diverse workforce of tomorrow. [The Museums for All](#) program supported by Legacy for Children sponsorships ensures that all families can visit the museum regardless of ability to pay. Last year's 19<sup>th</sup> annual event raised \$1.5 million.

### [About Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose](#)

With over 150 interactive exhibits and programs, **Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose** is one of the largest museums of its kind in the nation. Since opening its doors in 1990, the award-winning museum has welcomed over 9 million visitors and offers new exhibits each year that respond to children's diverse educational needs. In 2017, *Bill's Backyard: Bridge to Nature* opened, doubling the museum's exhibit space with a half-acre of nature exploration and science and environmental education. The striking 52,000 square foot purple building was designed by Mexico City-based architect Ricardo Legorreta. Encompassing the broad themes of community, connections and creativity, hands-on exhibits invite self-directed, open-ended explorations. For more information about the museum, visit [www.cdm.org](http://www.cdm.org).