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MISSION SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO TO RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CA. -- Sept. 6, 2011 – Mission San Juan Capistrano will be recognized as Orange County’s most important heritage site when it is honored with a Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award for lifetime achievement at Arts Orange County’s 12th Annual Orange County Arts Awards.

The award will be presented on September 20 at the Samueli Theater, Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa.

Mission San Juan Capistrano Executive Director Mechelle Lawrence-Adams will receive the award as presented by Wylie Aitken, one of 11 members of the California Arts Council as appointed by the governor and state legislature.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the Mission,” said Aitken, a Mission Preservation member and a founding partner of Orange County law firm Aitken, Aitken and Cohn. “As a legacy, Arts Orange County recognition is significant not only as it relates to individual artists, but also as it relates to institutions, institutions that promote historical culture. This jewel of the missions has never sparkled so bright as it has in recent years.

“The Mission is a spiritual place, but it’s not exclusive in a religious sense. It’s relevant to the histories of Spain, of Mexico, and of the U.S. It brings us back to where we come from, where we are and where we can go.”

In addition to the Mission’s honor, two other Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Awards will be bestowed for lifetime achievement: Longtime Artistic Visionary Leader to Dean Corey, and Opera Superstar to Rod Gilfry. These honorees were selected by Arts Orange County’s executive committee.

The Arts Awards are open to the public. Arts Orange County is the county’s official arts council and local partner for the California Arts Council.

About Mission San Juan Capistrano:

Known as the “Jewel of the Missions,” Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres’ quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County’s only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County’s only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675. Open Daily 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday afternoon. Admission is \$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$5 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission. For more information, call (949) 234-1300 or visit www.missionsjc.com.