

For Immediate Release:
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Rehabilitated Historic Building Provides 80 New Childcare Spaces Empire Montessori Preschool is now open

Event: The San Jose Redevelopment Agency, City of San Jose, and the San Jose Public Library will celebrate the opening of the Empire Montessori Preschool.

When: Friday, October 2, 2009
11:30 a.m. Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
12:00 p.m. Open House

Where: **499 North 11th Street (at East Empire Street, across from the Joyce Ellington Library)**

Who: Councilmember Sam Liccardo, District 3
Harry S. Mavrogenes, Executive Director, San Jose Redevelopment Agency
Angelina Bowers, Director, Empire Montessori Preschool
Jane Light, Director, San Jose Public Library
Zhen Zhen Li, Owner and Developer, Empire California Investment Group LLC
Sal Caruso, Architect, Salvatore Caruso Design Corporation
Sara Karam Holtz, Parent Representative, Empire Montessori Preschool

Background:

The Empire Montessori Preschool building rehabilitation was a cooperative project between the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, City of San Jose, and the San Jose Public Library.

In 2008, the San Jose City Council approved the conversion of a former liquor store into the new home of the preschool. The 5,500-square-foot building, originally constructed in 1918, was seismically retrofitted and expanded to accommodate 80 childcare spaces. The two-story preschool now features four classrooms, staff offices, a large outdoor play area and public parking. The San Jose Redevelopment Agency contributed \$532,000 to complete the rehabilitation.

Empire Montessori Preschool, established in 2008, is one of more than 52 childcare sites operating under San Jose's Smart Start program, an early childcare initiative implemented by the City of San Jose and the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, and administered by San José Public Library to expand and improve the education experience for infants through preschool age children. Empire's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and serves children from age 12 months to 6 years old. Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information,

please call (408) 295-5900 or visit www.empiremontessoripreschool.com.

To date, the Redevelopment Agency has invested nearly \$4.5 million in childcare, leveraging more than \$10 million from the private sector to invest in childcare programs, and creating more than 458 childcare spaces. To learn more about the Redevelopment Agency, please visit www.sjredevelopment.org or call (408) 535-8549.

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