

**Iranian-American Artist-Teacher  
Kourosh Taghavi and His Students**  
(Center for World Music Persian  
Music in the Schools)



center for world music  
and Related Arts

## San Diego Students Learn About Persian Music and Culture

A new Persian music program, developed and implemented by the Center for World Music, is gaining momentum and becoming a model for arts education partnerships between nonprofit organizations and schools. Students at the King/Chavez Academies in Logan Heights near downtown San Diego are receiving weekly instruction in Persian music and culture from Kourosh Taghavi, a world-renowned professional setar player, and Center for World Music Artist-Teacher in Residence. The students are currently learning how to play Persian rhythms on the daf and are exposed to the cultural heritage of Iran and Iranian-Americans as they study with Mr. Taghavi in intimate classroom settings. The success of the program is illustrated by how much the students obviously enjoy playing their new instruments and how eager they are to demonstrate what they have learned to anyone who will listen.

Mr. Taghavi teaches about 250 K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students at King/Chavez Academies where he is on campus for two full days a week. As the students learn about Persian classical music, they are introduced to Persian culture as well. Mr. Taghavi comments on the program, “They have been learning about the different rhythmic patterns of “Kereshme,” “Baste-Negâr,” and “Khosravâni.” They are now familiar with the term “Dastgâh” and have learned the names of these “Dastgâhs”: Shur, Mâhour, Homâyoun, Navâ (they know it is my daughter’s name!), Segâh, Châhargâh, and Râst-Panjgâh. They know that the map of Iran looks like a cat and we speak Farsi in Iran.”

The program is primarily funded by the Center for World Music, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in San Diego, whose mission is to foster awareness and understanding of the world’s performing arts and cultures through programs of performance and teaching. The Center’s World Music in the Schools program is an example of the organization’s commitment to bring the

artistic resources, unique focus, and exceptional expertise of the Center directly to children—both to their schools and to their regional communities. The program is supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, San Diego County, and the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture. King/Chavez Academies has also been extremely supportive of the program by providing significant financial support, engaged teachers, and a supportive administrative staff. In the spring of 2010, the demand for the program increased beyond the resources that were immediately available, so the Center reached out to the Iranian-American community in California and members of the community responded generously, enabling the program to continue until the end of the school year. The Center is currently seeking support to expand the program to all schools that have expressed an interest in giving their students access to weekly hands-on Persian music instruction.

Please contact the Center’s Executive Director, John R. Gabriel, directly at (760) 845-9480 or at [johnRgabriel@gmail.com](mailto:johnRgabriel@gmail.com) with questions or comments about the program. To learn more about the Center’s programs please visit [www.centerforworldmusic.org](http://www.centerforworldmusic.org).

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Center’s Persian music program, please make your check payable to “Center for World Music,” write “Persian music program” on the memo line, and mail to:

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