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## **GRADES OF GREEN'S VERTE EVENT TO HONOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS JOHN PAUL DEJORIA AND MIKE SULLIVAN**

**El Segundo, CA** (May 16, 2016) Grades of Green, an environmental education nonprofit, is pleased to announce this year's Environmental Advocacy Honorees: billionaire philanthropist and co-founder of Patrón Spirits Company and Paul Mitchell, **John Paul DeJoria**, and owner of LAcarGUY and longtime Grades of Green supporter, **Mike Sullivan**. The honorees and environmental trailblazers will be recognized this Friday, May 20th at VERTE, Grades of Green's annual green evening that raises awareness and funds to make environmental protection second nature in young minds. VERTE will take place at The Ritz Carlton in Marina Del Rey, with emcee, **JD Roth**, the producer of "The Biggest Loser" and author of the new book *The Big Fat Truth*.

"We are so thrilled to honor John Paul DeJoria, co-founder of Paul Mitchell and Patrón Spirits Company as well as Mike Sullivan, owner of LAcarGUY, for their environmental stewardship," said Kim Martin, Co-Executive Director of Grades of Green. "These gentlemen are true pioneers in sustainable business practices and philanthropy, and Grades of Green has been so lucky to partner with them to inspire and empower students and the broader school community to care for the environment."

Mike Sullivan's LAcarGUY is a leader in the green automotive industry and integrates green methodology into the corporate culture. It is the first automotive dealer to install electric charging stations in Los Angeles and one of only eight California dealerships selected by Toyota USA to sell the all-new Mirai, Toyota's hydrogen fuel cell vehicle. Additionally, it is also the only dealership that has a "Manager of the Environment" position to educate employees about sustainability. Over the last five years LAcarGUY and Subaru Pacific have donated over \$111,000 to further Grades of Green's mission of inspiring and empowering kids to care for the environment. John Paul DeJoria's Patrón Spirits Company is equally green, with every single bottle of Patrón being made from recycled glass. In addition to Patrón and Paul Mitchell utilizing green business practices, DeJoria has personally committed to giving at least half of his wealth to philanthropy as part of The Giving Pledge.

VERTE 2016 raises much-needed funds to allow Grades of Green to inspire and empower 300,000+ Grades of Green students at 400+ Grades of Green schools to care for the environment. The VERTE gala will host more than 350 guests, including high profile community leaders, philanthropists and celebrities.

VERTE is an environmentally sustainable event. The eco-festivities include a:

- Showcase of the cutting-edge and eco-friendly Audi E-tron and Porsche Cayenne S E-Hybrid from LAcarGUY;
- Presentation from Grades of Green students, including Joshua, who recently received a prestigious Youth Leadership Award from the Environmental Protection Agency and President Obama for his efforts in water conservation, and Xanna, who will give a TedX-style talk on why and how to protect the environment;
- Jazz-filled cocktail hour at sunset from Soul on Tap and music from Zeal Levin at the After Party.

Event and program sponsors include: LAcarGUY, Patrón Spirits Company, MBS Media Campus, Audi, Barbara Franqui, City of Manhattan Beach, Debra Hockemeyer, Earth Friendly Products, Gelson's, Hirsch Wallerstein Hayum Matlof + Fishman, Manhattan Beach City Council, The MBS Group, Newmark Grubb Knight Frank, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles, South Coast Air Quality Management District, Subaru LAX Zone, Waste Management, AVProfessionals, Inc., Bristol Farms, Santa Monica, Camela Ott, CBRE, City of Hermosa Beach, Clean Energy / Renewable Fuels, Communicating with Clarity, Dealer.com, Elements Events, Grow Produce Shop, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles, DRV Public Relations, Lexus, Luxe Linen, Lynn McCormick, Manhattan Village, Mixt Studio, Murad, Nancy Silverman, Participant Media, Porsche, Steven McClintock, Town and Country, Toyota Motor Sales USA, Inc., Zeal Levin

To purchase tickets or learn more about VERTE 2016, visit: <http://www.gradesofgreen.org/verte-2016-home/>

### **ABOUT GRADES OF GREEN**

GRADES OF GREEN is an environmental education nonprofit dedicated to providing students, parents, and educators with free, fun and hands-on Grades of Green Activities to inspire and empower students to care for the environment. Anyone wanting to implement sustainability programs at their school can [register online](#)—at no cost—to gain access to step-by-step instructions, including downloadable lessons, resources, and artwork, and measure their environmental progress. Even better? Every Grades of Green school receives a one-on-one Grades of Green Advisor to mentor the school as they implement Grades of Green Activities. Join the 300,000+ students and 400+ schools in our green school movement and register at [gradesofgreen.org](http://gradesofgreen.org)!

For more information on Grades of Green visit [www.gradesofgreen.org](http://www.gradesofgreen.org) or contact [info@gradesofgreen.org](mailto:info@gradesofgreen.org) and 310.607.0175.

### **ABOUT MIKE SULLIVAN AND LACARGUY**

Mike Sullivan is the owner of the LAcARgUY family of dealerships, a group of 9 award-winning dealerships and a state-of-the-art body shop. Founded in 1964, LAcARgUY has been a leader in the Los Angeles auto industry and has earned a reputation for outstanding customer service, community involvement and environmental stewardship. Mike began his automotive career in 1976 at his father's Volkswagen dealership in Santa Monica, working his way up through the ranks to eventually lead the family business and expand it from one dealership to nine with over 800 employees. LAcARgUY continues to be a family-owned and operated business and recognized as a prominent supporter of community events, charitable organizations and environmental causes like Grades of Green. Mike's passion for the environment and sustainability spreads through each of his stores and he takes pride in offering the newest, greenest technology in transportation whether it's hybrid, electric, or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

### **ABOUT JOHN PAUL DEJORIA**

John Paul DeJoria's rags-to-riches biography exemplifies the American dream—he is a first-generation American turned entrepreneur, philanthropist, and pillar of the business community. Once homeless, he has struggled against the odds to achieve success, launching multiple global enterprises, while always supporting his motto, *"Success Unshared is Failure."* In 1980, John Paul and hairstylist Paul Mitchell converted a partially borrowed \$700 into what is perhaps today the largest privately held salon hair care line, producing more than 100 products, with a presence in over 95 countries. DeJoria and Mitchell had a vision to start a company that would provide tools of success for hair care professionals, their salons, and the entire beauty industry. This vision holds true today—despite lucrative offers from public corporations, John Paul refuses to sell because of the vow he took to stand by the professional beauty industry. John Paul's love of tequila brought him to Mexico—in 1989, he co-founded Patrón, the first ultra-premium tequila, and now the world's number one ultra-premium tequila. Patrón Spirits International produced 1,000 cases of Patrón in its first year, and has grown to approaching 3 million cases of all their products today. John Paul's charitable work expands worldwide through his work with global organizations, renowned world leaders, and A-list personalities. In addition to his support of Grades of Green, he has aligned with Nelson Mandela and 46664 to help raise awareness of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, supports Robert Kennedy, Jr. and his clean water efforts ongoing via Waterkeeper Alliance, and rainforest conservation and reforestation projects in Peru and Guatemala through a recent alliance with Reforest Action.

PICTURES FROM VERTE 2015:

