To Equity and Access Committee Members

From: Common Experience Team 2006-07

Re: Justification for Expenditure of Funds

1. Equity and Access provided $15,000 to the Common Experience for the Edward James Olmos speech. Approximately 2500 people attended the outdoor event on the LBJ mall, with another 300-400 participating in the receptions prior to and after the event, and also in the viewing of the Olmos’ film, *Walkout*. An article written by Stephanie Silvas for the University Star (10.4.07) explains the impact of Olmos’ visit to Texas State:

   This story was one of many the activist, actor and director recalled in his speech that was a part of the Common Experience theme “Protest and Dissent: Listening to the Voices of America.” Not only did Olmos keep the audience entertained with his animation and Spanish anecdotes, students, teachers and faculty left the LBJ Mall enlightened. He stressed that we put too much emphasis on race. “There’s only one race, and it’s the human race,” Olmos said. Inside the human race there are many cultures, he said. Olmos said his roots are African, Asian, Indigenous American Indian and European. His story is our story. Most people can trace their cultures back to several different continents and we will only continue to diversify. The color of your skin is only one gene. It is about as significant as the size of your feet. Olmos was a prime example of what the book says. He is humbled and appreciative of what he has and the influence he provides. If you’re looking for a role model, look to Olmos. He will teach you how to stop and look at the beauty around you so that you will appreciate it and want more of it.

2. Equity and Access provided $8,500 to the Common Experience for the Isabel Allende presentation. Allende visited campus as part of the LBJ Distinguished Lecture Series and addressed the Common Experience theme of “Protest and Dissent.” Approximately 1,500 people were in attendance at the outside venue on the LBJ mall, while another 200 attended the receptions before and after her speech. The University Star Opinion page (4.26.07) reflects on the author’s message and we use this to demonstrate the impact of Allende’s visit to Texas State:

   Chilean author Isabel Allende was this year’s LBJ Distinguished Lecturer. In her Common Experience-themed address Wednesday, she spoke on feminism in today’s society...

   Paris Hilton and other scantily clad women don’t make covers of magazines for their opinions on environmentalism or the changing tide of a Republican-dominated executive branch with a Democrat-dominated legislative branch. These women have made covers by being silent beauties. We’ve all met them, the women who spend time thinking about what the man next to her in class might think of her rather than focusing on her education. The fact of the matter is being a strong, assured woman does not mean behaving like a man or compromising beauty. Some of the most powerful people leading our country walk into the office wearing three-inch pumps, a power suit and color-coordinated accessories. These women did not make it to Washington feigning ignorance.

Without the funding from Equity and Access, we would not have been able to bring Edward James Olmos and Isabel Allende to Texas State. We sincerely thank you for your generosity, interest and support of the Common Experience.