



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Hidden Villa Celebrating 100 Years of
Nurturing Hearts, Nourishing Minds and Fostering Friendships**

(Los Altos Hills, Calif.) – Hidden Villa today announced the launch of a yearlong celebration to commemorate its centennial and mark 100 years of nurturing hearts, nourishing minds and fostering friendships. Since 1924, the 1,600-acre outdoor refuge at the foothills of the Santa Cruz mountains has been advancing programs centered on food, nature and outdoor education.

A series of special centennial events will be held over the next 12 months, including a farm-to-table feast on Sept. 28, 2024, featuring a keynote address from esteemed writer and scientist Robin Wall Kimmerer, Ph.D., author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

“For 100 years, Hidden Villa has served as a magical outdoor refuge that has provided opportunities for people to put aside the challenges and stresses of daily life and connect with each other while discovering the wonders of our natural world,” said Elliott Wright, executive director of Hidden Villa. “As we look toward the future, we need all hands on Earth. At Hidden Villa we are committed to providing deep outdoor educational experiences that ignite a passion for science, environmental stewardship and sustainable food systems.”

Hidden Villa is home to whimsical gardens, miles of wooded hiking trails, and a regenerative farm with fruits, vegetables and animals, including pigs, chickens and goats. There are also several historic buildings at Hidden Villa, including an 1860s era barn and blacksmith forge.

With 30 full-time staff members, 40 summer staff members and more than 300 volunteers, the nonprofit organization offers robust environmental education programs, a community supported agriculture program, and popular summer camp programs for students in grades Kindergarten through 12th.

In addition, Hidden Villa offers eight miles of hiking trails that connect to 57 miles of open space trails, and protects critical habitat including the riparian corridors of the headwaters of Adobe Creek. As a nonprofit, Hidden Villa relies on generous investments from individual donors as well as corporations and foundations to support its mission.

“Hidden Villa offers a place for kids and adults to slow down and find wonder in the natural world by taking a hike or playing in the garden,” said Sally Falkenhagen, chair of the Hidden Villa Board of



Trustees. “There is nothing like pulling a carrot out of the ground or watching a baby goat frolic to make the virtual real and to connect people to our place in the universe, this beautiful earth.”

The legacy of Hidden Villa began in 1924 when Frank and Josephine Duveneck first opened their family ranch as an informal gathering place for discussion, reflection and the incubation of social reform.

Thirteen years later in 1937 Hidden Villa became the site of the first hostel on the Pacific Coast. In 1944, Japanese Americans returning from internment camps found housing and re-settlement support at Hidden Villa, and in 1945 the Duvenecks opened the first multi-racial, residential summer camp in the country at Hidden Villa.

The Trust for Hidden Villa was officially established as a nonprofit organization in 1960. In 1965, the Duvenecks opened Hidden Villa to the National Farm Workers Movement (which later became the United Farm Workers union, UFW), providing a safe space for Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta to organize their first strike of California grape pickers and the American boycott of table grapes.

Over the next several decades, the organization grew to offer a community supported agriculture program, environmental education programs, and an expanded summer camp.

Today, more than 30,000 people participate in Hidden Villa’s programs each year, including 10,000 students in grades pre-K through 12th. Another 20,000 people visit to hike the trails, explore the organic farm and garden, meet the farm animals, and learn about regenerative agriculture.

“My grandparents understood the profound importance of honoring our indigenous ancestors, preserving the land, protecting the water and advancing issues of social justice,” said David Duveneck, who is a member of the Hidden Villa Board of Trustees. “I am so pleased that with dedicated volunteers, interns and staff and our generous supporters, we are honoring their deep roots while continuing to build a sustainable future.”

Additional details about Hidden Villa’s centennial will be shared on social media (@hiddenvilla) and on the website <https://www.hiddenvilla.org> throughout the year. In addition to the Sept. 28 farm-to-table feast, other special activities will include a peony planting, sharing Hidden Villa stories throughout the years, Project Bloom – a community competition aimed to inspire and highlight the good work taking place in our neighborhoods, photo contest, and a volunteer appreciation event, and more.

Sponsorship opportunities and tickets for the farm-to-table feast are available at <https://www.hiddenvilla.org/centennial-sponsorship/>. The event will include a keynote address from Dr. Kimmerer, a garden reception and a dinner prepared with local, sustainable ingredients by acclaimed chef and restaurateur Jesse Z. Cool from Flea Street in collaboration with roving restaurant, Outstanding in the Field, the Hidden Villa farm team, music, dancing and special activities for children.

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