



Press Release # 2/2006 dated June 10, 2006

SINGING PRODIGY, SUNIDHI CHAUHAN, POISED TO TAKE OVER THE SAN JOSE STAGE ALONG WITH INDIAN IDOL STAR

**Benefit Music Concert by Sunidhi Chauhan on Sunday, July 9 at 6:30 p.m.
at the San Jose Center for Performing Arts**

SANTA CLARA On Sunday, July 9, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. a phalanx of Indian music artists will descend on the local San Jose scene for a concert that is slated to be sensational and exciting. The concert is to benefit Foundation for Excellence, a non-profit with offices in Santa Clara providing college scholarships to bright students from the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder.

Sunidhi Chauhan's debut performance in front of an audience was at the age of four. At the ripe old age of eight she was discovered by Kalyanji, the popular and renowned Bollywood music director and composer, who recognizing her nascent talent, provided her opportunities to perform during stage shows. She burst onto the music world when she took part in a television competition (a la American Idol) where music maven, Lata Mangeshkar, presided as a judge. Curious, Lata queried Sunidhi on her musical background and training. Overwhelmed by the degree of success and approval, Sunidhi Chauhan shyly admitted that she had not undergone any voice training. Lata immediately offered to take her under her wing and provide her with the training necessary to survive in the music industry. Catapulted onto the Indian national stage with Lata's approval, Sunidhi laid low for a few years and then emerged onto the musical stage by singing for Bollywood films. Her voice graces most Bollywood films these days. There is a dusky, husky timbre to her voice that reaches out to listeners world-wide. Described by her fans as a singer who can weave magic, this versatile singer has a string of hits to her credit. From 'Kaise paheli' (Parineeta) and 'Aa bhi jaa' (Sur) to 'Behta hai man kahin' (Chameli), her renditions can only steal your heart. Her unique voice gives depth to dance hits such as "Dhoom Machale" (Dhoom), 'Aisa jadoo dale re' and 'Deedar de'(Dus).

Eighteen year old Rahul Vaidya became a household name when he reached the 'top five' level during the 2005 Indian Idol reality series. He finished as a second runner up and his life changed overnight. About his huge fan following of swooning girls, he excitedly claims he had to have security when the show was on!

The concert has been organized by Foundation for Excellence. All proceeds from the concert will go towards providing scholarships to talented and needy students in India. Since inception, the foundation has provided over \$3.7 million in over 18,500 scholarships to deserving students in 25 states in India. "Earlier this year, I spent a week in urban and rural parts of India, meeting a large number of our students," says Vikram Modak, President of FFE, "I continue to be amazed by the intelligence and sincerity of these kids. These students from economically backward backgrounds are really deserving and committed to do well for themselves, their families and the country. I truly believe that these young people will be a significant part of a socially and economically stronger India." The average yearly cost of supporting a student is \$550 for a medical or engineering degree. Other scholarships are for lesser amounts, averaging at \$120 per year. The FFE structure and base funding allows 100% of the money given by donors to go directly to students in India. "When FFE was founded, our original goal was to make a meaningful impact in the lives of 10,000 children in India. Poonam and I draw great satisfaction from the work FFE has done thus far," said Dr. Prabhu Goel, founder and trustee of FFE.

The San Jose Performing Arts concert on July 9 will feature famed playback singer Sunidhi Chauhan along with Rahul Vaidya of Indian Idol fame and Javed Ali, Manasi Parekh and Ayub Patel. Tickets are \$30, \$50 and \$100: VIP tickets are available. Tickets can be purchased at scs.tickets@ffe.org, or at a number of Indian grocery stores: please log on to www.ffe.org for more information.

ABOUT FFE

The Foundation for Excellence (www.ffe.org) is a non-profit organization incorporated in California. FFE was founded in 1994 by Poonam and Prabhu Goel, as a non-religious, non-sectarian foundation. The mission of the foundation is to give scholarships to students who are very bright but extremely poor in India. The program also provides mentors to these students until they graduate from college. Once they are employed, the graduates not only improve the financial position of themselves, but their extended families and the next generation. Investment in the education of these bright students has a considerable leveraging effect and the potential to transform the society at large.

FFE has two offices, one in Santa Clara, CA and the other in Mumbai, India.

#

**Foundation For Excellence, 1850 Warburton Ave., #201
Santa Clara, CA 95050
Phone (408) 985 2001 • Fax (408) 985 1877
www.ffe.org**