



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Noted Photographer Receives Eminence Teaching Credential**

SACRAMENTO –The Commission on Teacher Credentialing unanimously voted to grant an Eminence Credential in Photography to former freelance photographer and Palisades Charter High School teacher Rick Steil, at its June 4, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Steil’s experience spans twenty-five years in the field of photography. He opened his own commercial lifestyle photography studio in Los Angeles in 1989 and has worked in major metropolitan cities like New York, Paris, and Sydney. Mr. Steil worked with renowned photographers Michael Reinhardt and Patrick Demarchelier and photographed for prominent magazines such as Men’s Fitness, German Vogue, and MODE, where he was awarded six cover shoots. Rick Steil also served as the lead photographer in many successful major company advertising campaigns such as Bugle Boy and has been the principal photographer for well known catalogs such as Pendleton and Eddie Bauer. Mr. Steil’s client list includes many major actors and actresses and such companies as Nordstrom’s and Dillard’s.

In his presentation to the Commission Mr. Steil stated, “I’ve had an extraordinary career and now it’s time to give back.”

While serving on a Provisional Internship Credential at Palisades Charter High School in Los Angeles, Mr. Steil brought his students to new levels of technical and artistic skill. His work with the school garnered donations of camera equipment and funds to create a state-of-the-art photo studio in his classroom. Because Mr. Steil emphasizes location-based natural lifestyle photography, each student is provided with a camera to encourage a creative eye and sense of natural composition and lighting. Now all students have the opportunity to take cameras home with them and photograph their world. Recently, one of Mr. Steil’s students won a full scholarship to the Tisch School of the Arts Summer High School at New York University based on the submission of images photographed using techniques learned in his classroom. Two of the sixteen students selected for the prestigious summer program come from Rick Steil’s class.

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During the Commission's interview of Mr. Steil, Commissioner Ting Sun asked him why he chose to teach in public high school since the caliber of his work would place him on the faculty of any university. Mr. Steil responded that his neighbor, one of the founders of Palisades Charter High and her husband the editor of a local paper, got him involved in the school. He saw first-hand the impact that individuals could have in the small community. "My heart's in it," he continued, "I want to live there for the rest of my life. I'm hoping that I can be someone they can look up to and be a role model."

Eminence credentials are granted to individuals who have achieved distinction in a field or endeavor, are recognized beyond their local communities, and have advanced and contributed to their field. The Commission grants Eminence Credentials to strengthen the educational pursuits of students who can learn from individuals who are expert in their field and have been deemed eminent and knowledgeable by their peers. Individuals applying for the Eminence Credential must be recommended by their governing school board.

Mr. Steil's power point presentation featuring his work and the work of his students can be accessed at: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2009-06/2009-06-5a-insert.pdf>

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