

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jack Webb**

## **New Border Voices TV shows = great television!!**

Tears, laughter and famous poets appearing on TV with San Diego students – that was the scene May 10 at the studios of the San Diego County Office of Education.

First, the tears:

Jashell Smith of Point Loma High School read her award-winning poem *Empty Chairs*, about her brother who died in an auto accident. As she read, a painting of two empty chairs flashed on the screen. It was the painting her Border Voices poet had brought to her classroom, the painting that triggered this powerful elegy to her brother:

*Two empty chairs, a plain room.  
I'm left with what could have been ...*

*... The empty  
Chair, which is no longer yours, I add  
to my losses.*

Steve Kowit, the famous poet who had appeared on an earlier show, was sitting in the green room with Jashell's parents:

“I was sitting with the parents of that African American girl when the picture of the empty chair came on and she read her poem & of course both her parents teared up at that homage to their lost son. It was very moving. They and the other parents were all such bright, lovely people – & all so proud to be there watching their kid. A very very memorable day in their lives! Many thanks for having me on your show. (Border Voices) is a superb achievement ... a real gift to those kids and the whole community.”

And then there was the joy and the laughter. And it wasn't just joy at the cash prizes and other recognition the students received for their poems.

Luis Adan of Lincoln Acres School sped into the parking lot just in time to make his show, escorted by his hard-working principal (who had pulled out all the stops to get him there). His entrance was greeted with relieved laughter and smiles all around, plus a brief burst of spontaneous clapping.

Later, he won praise from Alberto Blanco, one of Mexico's foremost poets, and from Border Voices director Jack Webb for his powerful poem *Notice Him*.

Blanco said portions of the poem reminded him of T.S. Eliot's famous poem "The Waste Land."

Webb agreed, adding that the poem scared him with its vivid portrait of a man of "selfishness and vanity/ that encircle him / that stain his heart."

"Back when I was a newspaper editor, I met a lot of people like that – politicians and newscasters and criminals, people with black hearts. But I'm amazed that a 6<sup>th</sup> grader could have such insight."

For more information about Border Voices, visit [bordervoices.com](http://bordervoices.com)

Listed below are the scheduled airtimes for the ITV shows filmed May 10. Each show will be aired at 11:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. on the day indicated. ITV is channel 16 on Cox and Time Warner. It is channel 4 on USA Julian cable. It is also available on AT&T U-verse, channel 99 (the local government and education channel).

All airdates are Tuesdays:

**6/1/2010 11:30 AM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Steve Kowit

**6/1/2010 7:00 PM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Steve Kowit

**6/8/2010 11:30 AM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Ilya Kaminsky

**6/8/2010 7:00 PM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Ilya Kaminsky

**6/15/2010 11:30 AM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – David Tomas Martinez

**6/15/2010 7:00 PM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – David Tomas Martinez

**6/22/2010 11:30 AM / BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Alberto Blanco

**6/22/2010 7:00 PM BORDER VOICES**

What We Dreamed Of – Alberto Blanco