

A GREAT HONOR: Billy "Mr. Billy" Rugh, left, is presented with the David Chow Humanitarian Award by Harry Wong during Creative Planet School of the Arts' winter production on Jan. 16. Rugh is founder of the private arts magnet school in Baldwin Park. PHOTOS BY GREG ANDERSEN AND WALT MANCINI / STAFF

Founder, teacher honored with award

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Staff Writer

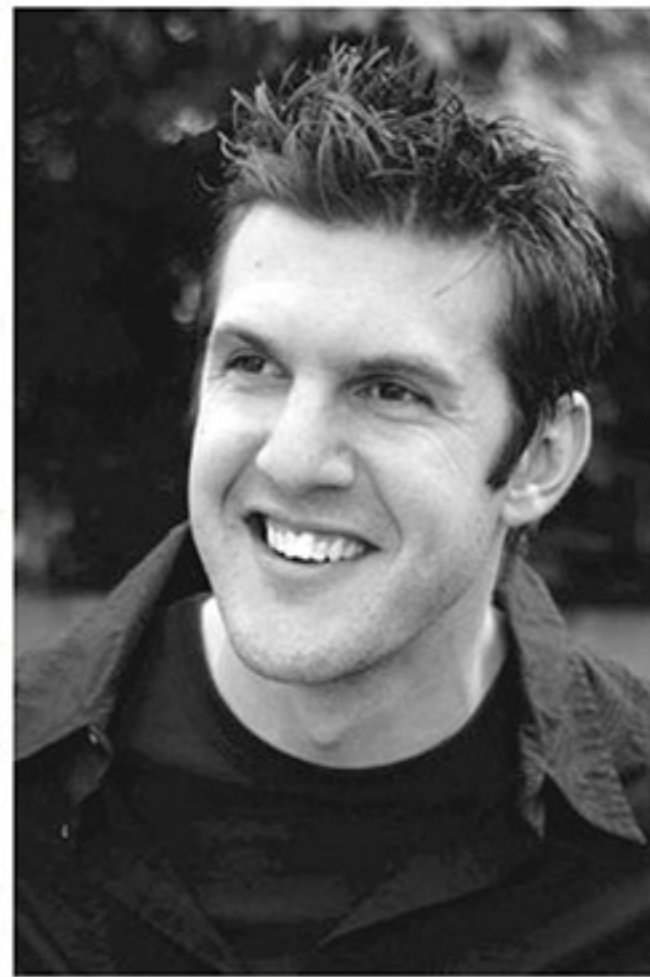
You can call him a "Jack of all trades."

Or you can just call him Mr. Billy, as he is popularly known.

Billy Rugh is the founder of Creative Planet School of the Arts in Baldwin Park.

He is also the school's principal, teacher, choreographer, set designer, nurse and more.

During a recent dress rehearsal at the K-8 private arts magnet school, the Duarte resident is being pulled in various directions: He is helping students with their costumes one minute and the next he is directing others where production sets should go.



For all his hard work and dedication to the school and students, the David Chow Foundation has honored him with a very prestigious award — the David Chow Humanitarian Award.

THE AWARD

The foundation was started by the late David Chow — a Chinese immigrant who came to the U.S. in his teens and became a successful entrepreneur, businessman, kung fu and judo champion, actor, choreographer and humanitarian.

The foundation honors Los Angeles-area residents who dedicate their lives to helping others in need.

On Jan. 16, hundreds of family and friends filled the modest auditorium at the Baldwin Park Performing Arts Center to take in the school's winter production, "Frozen."

Many were unaware of the

grand honor being bestowed that night to the heart and soul of the school — Mr. Billy.

Moments before the start of the production, Harry Wong, a trustee from the David Chow Foundation, presented Rugh with a \$10,000 check and a medallion for his achievement of the Humanitarian award.

The crowd cheered and gave Rugh a standing ovation.

West Hollywood Mayor John Duran was also on hand to present Rugh with a plaque in honor of his achievements and named Jan. 16 "Billy Rugh Day" in West Hollywood.

"We are proud of Billy. We want him to be a West Holly-

Please turn to MR. BILLY / 3