

## Campo Musical Goes to the Prairie with Oklahoma!

By Andrea A. Firth



Lauren Zampa as Laurey Williams and Harry Thomas as Curly McLain

Oh what a beautiful morning—not the typical first words from a teenager when they awaken, but Campolindo High School students will soon be singing this phrase as they perform in the school's upcoming Spring Musical *Oklahoma!* Always a popular event, the Campo musical has morphed to become an institution at the High School. Dave Pinkham will once again stage direct the production that will include close to 80 cast members, with the principal roles double cast, and an orchestra of about 25 musicians.

When choosing the musical for Campo's production, Dave has to find a show that can support a large cast and *Oklahoma!* fits the bill

"I find it very difficult to do a show [at Campo] with this much talent floating around unless I can have a cast of 60 or 70 people." He adds, "We haven't gone back to the 40's or done Rodgers and Hammerstein in the 11 years that I have been involved. So it just seemed time to do a real classic." Influenced by the London revival of *Oklahoma!* in the late 1990's, Dave has tried to present a realistic portrayal of the Midwestern prairie in 1906 by employing an earthy color palette and simplicity in the set and costumes.

Senior Susan Brinckerhoff landed the leading role of Laurey in the Territory cast. Although she has been a member of the school choir for four years, her previous experi-

ence with performing in a musical consisted singing in the ensemble for only one year. "It was kind of a surprise for me, but it has been really amazing working with people who are a lot more experienced," says Susan. "Everyone has been really nice and supportive." Probably like many students at Campo, Susan had never seen the musical *Oklahoma!*, and like a teen of the 21st century she fixed that by renting the DVD version of Shirley Jones and friends singing on the plains. And although she is a little nervous for opening night, Susan feels all the rehearsal will leave her well prepared.

Ryan Chiles, who has performed in the musical in all four years of high school, will play the part of Curley in the production. "What I like about the story is that it feels real. It's grounded in good morals," states Ryan. Although he is looking forward to putting all the practice and rehearsal behind him as opening night approaches, Ryan notes, "You develop an attachment to [the show], so it's kind of bitter sweet when it ends."

*Oklahoma!* will be performed at the Campolindo Performing Arts Center over two weekends in March. Evening performances start at 7:30 pm on Thursdays (3/13/ and 3/20), Fridays (3/14 and 3/21) and Saturdays (3/15 and 3/22) and matinees start at 2:00 pm on Saturdays (3/15 and 3/22). Tickets can be order through the Campolindo Choir website [www.campochoir.com](http://www.campochoir.com).