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Community Foundation Awards Over \$273K in Grants to Local Nonprofits

Fort Myers, FL (February 8, 2010) – The Southwest Florida Community Foundation (SWFLCF), through its annual Designated Endowment Fund granting cycle, has awarded forty-seven grants totaling over \$273,000 to nonprofits in its five-county service area.

Julia East, SWFLCF's President and CEO, was happy to see an increase. "We're very pleased, because this represents a thirty-three percent increase over last year in the total amount awarded. So, despite problems in the economy, the Community Foundation, through the generosity of those who have set up Designated Endowment Funds with us, has been able to continue its support of our nonprofits, most of which are on the front lines every day meeting needs in our communities."

Grants were made in five program areas: 40% of the funds were specified for social services, 25% for animal welfare, 18% for health services, 10% for education, and 7% for the arts. "What is immediately noticeable," Julia East notes, "is that the arts received a pretty small amount, and that there were no awards going to support the environment." The Community Foundation does support these areas through other types of grants. However, there have been very few Designated Endowment Funds set up by people to support them.

Julia East continues, "A Designated Fund directs support to a specific nonprofit and a specific cause through an endowed fund, which guarantees that support long into the future. We'd especially like to encourage people to consider this if they have a passion for the arts and the environment."

Many potential fund holders ask what would happen if, in the future, an organization closed operations or ceased to offer the programs that the donor intended to support. Julia east replies, "In that case, the Community Foundation would identify another nonprofit organization that would meet the donor's charitable goals. We call that donor intent, and we protect it very strongly."

Setting up Designated Endowment Funds through the Southwest Florida Community Foundation is simple and straightforward. The Community Foundation's expert staff is in constant communication with nonprofits throughout its five-county service area of Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Glades, and Hendry counties and beyond, and can easily assist in connecting a donor with a specific cause or organization. Those considering endowed funds are encouraged to call SWFLCF at 239-274-5900 for more information.

The Southwest Florida Community Foundation has been supporting the communities of Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Glade,s and Hendry counties through endowed funds for over 33 years. With 331 endowed funds, the Community Foundation has provided more than \$45 million in grants and scholarships to the communities it serves. For more information, please call 239-274-5900, or visit their web site at www.floridacommunity.com.

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