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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Dr. H. A. “Hal” Dengerink named Clark County’s First Citizen for 2011**

**Vancouver, Wash., April 22, 2011**—The Community Foundation for Southwest Washington announced that Dr. H.A. “Hal” Dengerink, chancellor of Washington State University Vancouver (WSUV), has been selected as Clark County’s First Citizen for 2011. The First Citizen Award recognizes a Clark County resident who has modeled exemplary citizenship through their actions and service to the community. The honor will be awarded on Wednesday, June 1 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Hilton Vancouver Washington.

Since 1989, when “Hal” Dengerink arrived in Vancouver, the region has greatly benefited from his keen ability to envision and accomplish projects of immense proportion. Most notable is Dengerink’s lead role in establishing Washington State University Vancouver, where he has now served as chancellor for 22 years. During his tenure, the institution has expanded to occupy a 351-acre campus with eight academic buildings and offer more than 37 fields of study.

“I have been fortunate to sit on the campus Advisory Committee and have had a front row seat to watch Hal’s mastery of strategy take that campus from a grassy, open cow field to a first-class facility,” John White, Vice President at Berger ABAM, said.

Dengerink’s real impact came in education. In 2004, statistics showed an 85 percent increase in southwest Washington students pursuing higher education degrees. This increase is further evidenced in the more than 8,600 WSUV alumni—of which 75 percent remain in southwest

Washington. Thanks to Dengerink's high standards, WSUV students are privy to a staff boasting 130 Ph.D. professors whose talents are continually engaged in the local community.

Dengerink is known for doing the same. His contributions to southwest Washington have been substantial. His involvement with the Chamber of Commerce spawned Leadership Clark County—a successful professional development program. While serving on the Board of Directors of the Southwest Washington Medical Center, Dengerink championed for patient safety and quality initiatives at the hospital. Working to establish the Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve, he helped instill a strong sense of pride and place in Vancouver. Most recently, he was appointed by Governor Chris Gregoire to co-chair the Project Sponsors Council for the Columbia River Crossing—one of the most important and complex issues facing our community.

“He has made our community a better place through his leadership and collaboration, helping forge community identity and civic pride,” Lynn Valenter, Interim Chancellor of WSUV, said. “Hal's long-term vision has helped the community bring to life what could be, rather than what is.”

His role as a broad-based community advocate is reflected in WSUV's campus culture. An esteemed community resource, WSUV indirectly sparks community awareness, involvement and collaboration. Local industries benefit from research partnerships, residents are pursuing continued education and diverse groups are collaborating on community initiatives.

“There's a symbiotic relationship between the community and the college,” Dengerink said. “When one thrives, both prosper.”

He has cultivated this relationship, because he knows it increases prosperity in southwest Washington. Since his arrival, Dengerink's personal projects and involvement have always revolved around a common theme—quality of life. The cumulative impact of his dedicated efforts is hard to quantify, but is undoubtedly as transformative as the journey that WSUV has taken since its meager beginnings at Bauer Hall on the Clark College Campus.

Dengerink's investments, interests and leadership have established a more secure future for southwest Washington residents by progressing our region's educational, occupational and economic prosperity both now, and for generations to come.

### **About the First Citizen Award**

Recipients of the First Citizen Award, presented since 1939, are selected by a volunteer committee of community leaders and past award recipients. Recipients are chosen for their accomplishments and contributions to the community in a number of areas, including effectiveness in leadership roles, raising community standards and expectations, strengthening community identity and civic pride, and exemplary giving of time, self and resources. For a full listing of criteria or to view past recipients, visit our website at [www.cfsww.org/events/firstcitizenaward/](http://www.cfsww.org/events/firstcitizenaward/).

### **About the First Citizen Awards Event:**

A reception in Dengerink's honor will commence at 4 p.m., while the formal awards program will be held at 5 p.m. Regents Bank is the presenting sponsor in partnership with The Community Foundation for Southwest Washington and *The Columbian*. Hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and beverages will be served. Tickets are \$35 per person and can be reserved by contacting the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce at 360-694-2588 or online at [www.vancouverusa.com](http://www.vancouverusa.com).

### **About the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington**

Established in 1984, The Community Foundation helps a broad cross section of citizens build stronger communities through effective philanthropy. One of the nation's 700 community foundations, it is a tax-exempt, public charity that primarily serves southwest Washington. The Foundation holds more than 270 distinct Funds, ranging in size from \$10,000 to nearly \$6 million, which are pooled, managed and invested to generate growth and income for granting purposes. Governed by a volunteer Board of local leaders, the Foundation offers services to donors and nonprofit organizations, as well as a wide range of benefits to the community.

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