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Recognizing and Celebrating the Impact of Community Foundations
Community Foundation Week is a national effort to highlight local impacts of philanthropy

Vancouver, Wash., November 12, 2011— During the week of November 12-18, the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington (CFSWW) will join more than 700 community foundations across America for Community Foundation Week. For nearly 30 years, the effort has raised awareness about the increasingly important role of Community Foundations in fostering local collaboration and innovation to address persistent civic and economic needs.

During the week, the CFSWW will announce the release of guidelines for two of their 2012 competitive grant programs. Combined, those programs awarded more than \$240,000 to local nonprofit organizations in 2011. They will also ramp up their fundraising campaign for the Community Foundation General Fund, which allows them to continue their leadership in shaping the future of southwest Washington through philanthropy. In addition, the CFSWW is also organizing a celebratory event for two of southwest Washington's most revered philanthropists, Ed and Dollie Lynch, which will also serve to celebrate the philanthropic strength in the region.

“Community foundations impact lives, solve problems, and improve futures,” said Richard Melching, President of the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington. “In a down economy, with limited resources and a growing need for services to help families in need, we are more determined than ever to bring our community partners together to find innovative and effective solutions to some of our most challenging social problems.”

Community foundations are independent, public entities that steward philanthropic resources from a variety of donors to help support local nonprofits that are the heart of strong, vibrant communities. This role is demonstrated by our efforts in facilitating high-dollar capital campaigns for the new Clark County Food Bank Distribution Warehouse, Fort Vancouver Regional Library and Congregation Kol Ami. Then there's the hidden impact we have on our community. This comes in the form of grants to programs such as LifeWorks in Longview, Wash. Alfred Alina made a major impact by designating a grant to support housing for adults with disabilities. Not only did it improve the capacity of LifeWorks to provide for those in need, but it also empowered the many individuals touched by his contribution.

Community foundations represent one of the fastest-growing forms of philanthropy. Every state in the U.S. houses at least one community foundation—large and small, urban and rural—that is advancing solutions to a wide range of social issues. The 2010 Columbus Survey found that despite the recession, giving by the nation's 100 largest community foundations increased slightly in 2010 to \$3.7 billion and exceeded pre-recession levels seen in 2006 and 2007.

Launched in 1989 through a proclamation by former president George H.W. Bush, the first Community Foundation Week included a congressional briefing about the work of community foundations throughout America and their collaborative approach to working with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to address community problems.

About the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington

Established in 1984, The Community Foundation for Southwest Washington helps a broad cross section of citizens build stronger communities through effective philanthropy. 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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