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VCCF TO PRESENT INAUGURAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AWARDS

April 15 event honors those who advance philanthropy in Ventura County

CAMARILLO, Calif. (March 30, 2010) – Two individuals and three organizations will be honored with the first Community Leadership Awards at noon April 15 at the Los Robles Greens in Thousand Oaks. Given by the Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF), the awards honor exemplary service to the people of Ventura County.

VCCF also will use the occasion to release its 2009 Report to the Community.

“In times good and bad, community leadership is critical,” said Hugh Ralston, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. “VCCF started these awards to salute the efforts of community leaders in Ventura County and to highlight the importance of leadership in our nonprofit sector.”

Cal Johnston, founding chairman of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes, will receive the Individual Award. Chairman of The Johnston Group real-estate investment firm, he has been instrumental in founding five clubs that serve 1,000 youngsters in eastern Ventura and western Los Angeles counties.

SAGE Publications, the Newbury Park-based publisher of journals, books and electronic media, has earned the Organization Award for outstanding leadership to the community that extends beyond financial contributions. Much of SAGE’s civic efforts are focused on increasing educational opportunities, and the company’s employees established a scholarship fund at VCCF to help Ventura County students afford to attend college.

Ventura County Together and the Amgen Foundation share the Special Award, which honors leadership in special circumstances by a local nonprofit, funder and/or local leader. Last year, the Amgen Foundation matched dollar for dollar all donations given to Ventura County Together, raising more than \$225,000 to meet the basic needs of local residents struggling with unemployment and foreclosures. This collaborative was established by First 5 Ventura County, United Way Ventura County and VCCF.

Alan Teague, chairman of the board of Limoneira Co. in Santa Paula and VCCF’s founding board chair, will be honored with the Founders Award for his leadership and commitment to VCCF and the wider community.

VCCF also will present its 2009 Report to the Community. The 16-page report recaps the foundation's investment returns along with its efforts as a grantmaker to sustain community priorities and strengthen nonprofits trying to survive the down economy. Also included is a list of donations made to VCCF funds last year.

All proceeds from the event will go to the Mary Schwabauer Leadership Fund, which benefits VCCF's operating budget. The fund was created in 2009 to honor VCCF's fourth board chair whose leadership, example and commitment have helped expand the impact of community leadership in our region.

The event is open to the public and begins at noon for lunch. The Report to the Community will be showcased at 12:30 p.m., with the award presentation starting at 12:45 p.m.

Tickets, which include the lunch, are \$40 for individuals and \$320 for a table of eight. For reservations or sponsorship information, contact Heather Short, Philanthropic Services associate, at (805) 988-0196, Ext. 132.

VCCF is a family of charitable funds with combined assets of \$98.1 million. Its mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, which it does through grantmaking, scholarships and leadership training programs through the Center for Nonprofit Leadership. VCCF has been certified in compliance with national standards by the Council on Foundations, the highest form of peer review in the United States. For more information, visit vccf.org or contact VCCF at (805) 988-0196.

