

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Barbara Bishop,
BBPR, Inc.
310-656-4668**

**VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S
DESTINO: THE HISPANIC LEGACY FUND ANNOUNCES 2007 GRANTEES**

**\$87,000 Awarded with Focus on Family Strengthening and
Access to Higher Education**

Camarillo, CALIF. - (March 15, 2007) - The Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) has announced the recipients of eight grants totaling \$87,000 to programs serving the County's Latino community from the *Destino: The Hispanic Legacy Fund*. The grants were awarded to programs which focus on "family strengthening" and those related to the growing obesity epidemic and sexually transmitted diseases as well as access to higher education, priorities determined this year by Destino founders, or original contributors to the Fund.

In its 11th year, *Destino* is an endowed grantmaking fund which addresses the economic, educational, physical, emotional, social, artistic and personal growth of Latinos in Ventura County. A portion of this year's grants reflect a challenge grant provided by Kaiser Permanente with a priority focus on health care. This reflects Destino's commitment to ongoing local Latino health needs as highlighted by *Destino* in several groundbreaking studies focusing on the health needs of underserved Latinos in Ventura County. Over 35 percent of the 44,049 Ventura County residents living with diabetes today are Latino, as are one-third of 1,300 people with HIV/AIDS. Meanwhile, according to the 2000 Census, only about 11 percent of Latinos nationwide now have a college education, while the national average is over 25 percent; Destino has expanded its efforts with the newly established Destino Scholarship Fund, which will provide college scholarships to local Latinos, with a preference for first generation college students.

The following programs received Destino grants for 2007:

- **El Concilio del Condado de Ventura** - \$14,500 for the *Breakthrough Youth for Success Program* which educates youth about issues such as teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, youth violence, & academic success.

- MORE -

- **Future Leaders of America** - \$15,000 for the *Latino Youth and Family Leadership and Educational Enrichment* program, reaching out and educating families about higher education, healthy living, and community involvement.
- **Higgy Foundation** - \$5,000 to implement a pilot session of the *Healthy Family Program* in the Fillmore, Piru and Rancho Sepse areas.
- **Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project** - \$15,000 to support the *Breaking the Silence: HIV/AIDS in the Mixtec Community* project, providing HIV/AIDS/STD education, outreach, and increased access to services to the Mixtec community.
- **Parents of Murdered Children, Ventura County** - \$10,000 to organize the Ventura County Grief Conference and to assist Ventura local Latino families who have suffered the murder of a child to participate in the 2007 National Parents of Murdered Children Conference.
- **Segue Career Guidance Program, Inc.** - \$10,000 to expand the Segue Program into the Oxnard area, working to empower, inspire and motivate high school students about future career options.
- **Ventura County AIDS Partnership** - \$7,500 to leverage matching funds for the Ventura County AIDS Partnership's 2008 Grant Pool, funding HIV/AIDS prevention and education program in the local community.
- **Westminster Free Clinic** - \$3,317 for *Nuestra Familia: An Obesity Prevention and Diabetes Management Program*, providing Latino parents and children who are overweight, diabetic and/or at risk for these conditions with a variety of medical and health services.

The grants will be awarded at a Grants Reception on Thursday, April 19th at The Derby Club at Seaside Park in Ventura. The reception is being hosted by Ovations/FanFare and The Ventura County Fair. RSVP by Monday, April 9th to Gina Gomez at 805-988-0196 ext. 126 or ggomez@vccf.org.

Destino: The Hispanic Legacy Fund was established in 1996 by local residents in partnership with the VCCF and is dedicated to meeting the needs and creating philanthropic and leadership opportunities for Latinos in Ventura County. Since its founding, Destino has given 92 grants totaling over \$648,000, impacting over 39 community organizations and 32,000 Latino youth and adults in Ventura County.

For more information about *Destino: The Hispanic Legacy Fund*, please contact Hoa Tran, Program Officer at VCCF, 805-988-0196 ext. 121.

The Ventura County Community Foundation is a family of charitable funds

- MORE -

whose combined assets now exceed \$100 million, with 2006 grants and pledges of \$8.5 million. The Foundation's mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community and to build long-term capital to benefit Ventura County. For more information, visit www.vccf.org.

###