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**DONATION FROM VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
TO REOPEN ABUSED-WOMEN'S SHELTER**

*Facility shut down by state budget crisis receives \$15,000 grant
from VCCF Community Response Fund*

CAMARILLO, Calif. (Sept. 16, 2009) – A shuttered shelter for battered women will reopen in the next few weeks, thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the Ventura County Community Foundation.

The VCCF board of directors voted earlier this month to donate the money after Gov. Schwarzenegger struck funding from the budget for all five longer-term shelters serving abused women and their children in Ventura County. The county's two emergency shelters remain open but are often full or over-capacity.

After Interface Children Family Services –which operates the havens for victims of domestic violence –was forced to close them, community organizations and individuals contributed enough to reopen two of the five shelters.

“Without VCCF’s pledge we would not be able to open the third shelter,” said Erik Sternad, Interface executive director. “Without this pledge, 12 Ventura County women and their children would be forced to return to violent homes or go homeless,” he said.

“It is difficult to imagine a more urgent need than providing shelter and hope for women and children living under the daily threat of violence,” said VCCF President & CEO Hugh Ralston in announcing the grant from the Foundation’s unrestricted community grants pool. “While every nonprofit’s budget is strained this year, including ours, the Foundation’s board believed we had to help. It’s unacceptable for some of our community’s most vulnerable residents to have no place to turn when violence endangers them in their own homes,” Ralston continued.

With this donation from VCCF’s Community Response Fund – which makes grants based on community priorities – the shelter will be open until June 2010 to provide a safe place for abuse victims to live for three months while they receive therapy, job counseling and legal aid. VCCF has provided support for victims of domestic violence, especially through its Women’s Legacy Fund, whose competitive grants are being announced this week at a luncheon in Saticoy.

VCCF is a family of charitable funds whose combined assets are \$90 million. Its mission is promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, which is 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 Foundation, the highest form of peer review in the United States. For more information, please visit www.vccf.org. or contact VCCF at (805) 988-0196.

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