



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **VCCF OFFICIAL JOINS NATIONAL BOARD CREATED TO OVERSEE STANDARDS OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS**

**CAMARILLO, Calif. (Sept. 16, 2009)** – Hugh J. Ralston, president and CEO of the Ventura County Community Foundation, has been named to the board of directors of a new national panel that sets standards for transparency and accountability among the nation’s more than 700 community foundations.

The 11-member Community Foundations National Standards Board, a support organization of the Council on Foundations, will oversee the accreditation program offered by the Council, based in Arlington, Va. To receive accreditation, community foundations must comply with criteria on the oversight responsibilities of its board of directors, the prudence and transparency with which it invests donor funds, auditing procedures as well as commitment to assessing and meeting the needs of the community its serves.

Considered the highest form of peer review in the nation, the program has accredited some 450 community foundations, including the Ventura County Community Foundation. VCCF was confirmed in compliance with these national standards in 2006 and spells them out on its Web site, [vccf.org](http://vccf.org).

“Hugh Ralston is a welcome addition to the Board of the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations,” said Steve Gunderson, president and CEO of the Council.

“He brings a wealth of knowledge about community foundations and is well respected within the communities which the Ventura County Community Foundation serves,” added

Gunderson, noting that the board of directors is a diverse group of field representatives who have oversight of the new panel's operations.

At VCCF since 2003, Ralston guided the Foundation's growth from \$32 million to \$90 million in total assets.

"The standards give donors and the communities we serve an accurate picture of what to expect from a community foundation," added Ralston, who has represented the League of California Community Foundations on the Council's National Standards Action Team.

Prior to joining VCCF, Ralston, 51, served as the executive director of the Catholic Education Foundation in Los Angeles and as a vice president for Security Pacific Merchant Bank in New York and at J.P. Morgan in Los Angeles. A Ventura resident, he is a third generation partner in a family business that started with significant investments in citrus properties in Oxnard.

Ralston also serves on the Workforce Investment Board of Ventura County, is vice chair of the Community Commission for Ventura County and is a board member of the Southern California Grantmakers. Long active in the nonprofit field, he serves on the board of Scripps College in Claremont and the Community Arts Music Association in Santa Barbara.

VCCF is a family of charitable funds with combined assets of \$90 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, please visit [vccf.org](http://vccf.org) or contact VCCF at (805) 988-0196.

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