

CFWNC Launches *Give from the Heart* Campaign

Raising Funds to Support Recession Relief in Western North Carolina

(February 9, 2009) — The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina (CFWNC) has launched an appeal to raise \$1 million for its Recession Response Fund that will help regional front-line nonprofit organizations meet increasing demands for help with food, shelter, medical bills and heating subsidies.

“Our goal is to act as quickly as we can to raise and deliver funds to nonprofits who are meeting immediate needs,” said Pat Smith, CFWNC president. “We are working with partnering agencies and other funders to build a region-wide safety network. But it will take all of us working together to make a difference for those who have been directly impacted by the recession.” Funds raised by the *Give from the Heart* campaign will support key nonprofits addressing housing, hunger, medical services, heating subsidies and economic stimulus in the 18-county mountain region of Western North Carolina.

CFWNC seeded the Recession Response Fund with \$250,000. Two grants from the Recession Response Fund totaling \$110,000 were announced on January 30 with \$50,000 going to MANNA FoodBank and \$60,000 to OnTrack Financial Education & Counseling. According to OnTrack’s Executive Director Celeste Collins, the agency was able to put the funds to work immediately and can see a measurable difference in the first week of the initiative: “We already have some awesome results to report. As of Monday, our free tax prep project, which we would not have done without the hope of Recession Response funding, has completed 34 returns for low-income households resulting in \$77,000 in refunds. This is especially significant because this year we began offering tax preparation two weeks earlier than last year to ‘catch’ people who might have been enticed by the rapid refund tax loans.”

As part of the overall Recession Response program, CFWNC has convened a Western North Carolina funders collaborative. More than a dozen funding organizations from across the region have come together to help nonprofits and communities during these challenging economic times. Another function of the WNC funders collaborative is to advocate for outside funding. There may be a coordinated effort to access support from the government stimulus package, for example, or other sources that are more appropriate for a larger region than for a single community.

Anyone wishing to help can make a tax-deductible contribution at www.cfwnc.org or by mailing a check to CFWNC, P.O. Box 1888, Asheville, NC 28802. Administrative fees are waived so that every dollar will go directly to help WNC citizens and nonprofits.

Since 1978, Western North Carolinians have relied on The Community Foundation to help them turn their charitable passions into meaningful and effective philanthropy. In partnership with area donors, CFWNC has awarded more than \$100 million in scholarships and grants to nonprofit organizations and public institutions across our 18-county mountain region and beyond.

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