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Washington Women's Foundation to Award \$475,000 in Large Impact Community Grants in 2010

Foundation maintains funding and membership levels despite challenging economy

SEATTLE—(Feb. 2, 2010)—The Washington Women's Foundation announced it will again award \$475,000 in large impact grants to local nonprofit organizations in 2010, validating the significance of its collective giving model of philanthropy.

In addition to combining their resources for large impact grants, foundation members will make individual grants totaling approximately \$475,000 this year to the nonprofits of their choice as part of their annual membership contribution. Combined, the Foundation will award grants totaling nearly \$1 million in 2010. Washington Women's Foundation President Carla Lewis announced the organization's giving levels last night at its annual event, *Philanthropy Through a New Lens*, at the Seattle Art Museum (SAM).

“Now entering our 15th year of operation, and approaching the \$10 million threshold in cumulative support to the community, the Washington Women's Foundation is well-positioned to further our mission of strengthening community and demonstrating the impact of collective giving during this new decade.” said Lewis. “We are dedicated to advancing women's leadership in philanthropy by providing engaging educational and hands-on grant making opportunities to maximize the impact of our dollars.”

Large impact grants of up to \$100,000 each will be awarded in five giving areas: arts and culture, education, environment, health, and human services. Grantees will be selected through a rigorous review process and voted on by the entire membership of the Washington Women's Foundation. Award winners will be announced in June 2010. These major grants are among the largest in the region. Only five percent of grants awarded in the Northwest are \$100,000 or more. (*Source: "Trends in Northwest Giving," published by Philanthropy Northwest, May 2008*).

“Given this challenging economic climate, our sustained membership and funding levels for 2010 speak volumes about the commitment of our members and the staying power of our collective giving model,” Lewis said. “As public funding for essential services declines, the foundation's ability to provide meaningful support to community programs has never been more important.”

Last night's event at SAM featured a keynote presentation by Killian Noe, Founding Director of Recovery Café, a supportive community for those recovering from homelessness, addiction and mental illness. Noe delivered a stirring account of her personal experiences as an activist working with people

suffering at the fringes of society. She offered inspired insights and encouragement for each individual to engage in helping the marginalized – and illustrated the power of women to address critical social needs and build community together.

Following the keynote, SAM Assistant Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art Marisa Sanchez provided an overview of iconic photographer Imogen Cunningham’s work in an exhibition entitled *Everything Under the Sun*. During the reception that followed, attendees had the opportunity to view this and the other museum exhibitions on display throughout the galleries. The event was made possible through the generosity of presenting sponsor Laird Norton Tyee and support from Brookdale Senior Living, The Seattle Foundation and Seattle Art Museum.

About the Washington Women’s Foundation

The mission of the Washington Women’s Foundation is to educate and expand the number of women engaged in philanthropy, and to build and strengthen community through individual and large impact grants. The foundation’s members, now 500 strong, have invested \$9.5 million of their own resources in nonprofit organizations across Washington State since 1996 (\$4.7 million in pooled grants; \$4.8 million in individual grants). Membership is open to any woman interested in philanthropy. For more information, visit www.wawomensfoundation.org.

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In the photo (L-R): Carla E. Lewis, President, Washington Women’s Foundation; Maggie Walker, President, Seattle Art Museum Board of Directors, Board Member, Washington Women’s Foundation; Anne V. Farrell, Chair, Washington Women’s Foundation Board of Directors; Kaycee Krysty, CEO Laird Norton Tyee; Killian Noe, Founding Director, Recovery Café; Marisa C. Sanchez, Assistant Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seattle Art Museum