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Washington Women's Foundation Awards \$475,000 in Pooled Grants to Five Local Nonprofits

Foundation membership, participation levels at all-time high

SEATTLE—(June 18, 2009)—[Washington Women's Foundation](#) has awarded grants to five local nonprofit organizations totaling \$475,000. Grant winners include Northwest African American Museum, College Access Now, Cascade Land Conservancy, King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, and The Mockingbird Society.

“These five organizations are doing vital work in our community, and they are poised and ready to do more,” said Carla Lewis, president of Washington Women's Foundation. “We are honored to support their future endeavors with large impact grants funded by our members.”

Interest in the foundation's [collective giving model](#) – where members pool their resources to make a major impact – is at an all-time high, according to Lewis. “Our [membership](#) ranks recently topped 500 for the first time in our 13-year history, and member participation in foundation activities has never been stronger,” she said. “During these tough economic times, more women are coming together to build and strengthen our community.”

A record number of nonprofits submitted letters of inquiry for foundation grants this year – a 63 percent increase over 2008 levels. Grant winners were selected through a rigorous research and review process and voted on by the entire membership of Washington Women's Foundation.

Pooled grants of \$87,500 or \$100,000 were awarded in each of the foundation's five giving areas – arts and culture, education, environment, health and human services. Here's a closer look at the award-winning organizations and how they intend to use the grant dollars:

[Northwest African American Museum](#) documents and exhibits the unique historical and cultural experience of African Americans in Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. The \$87,500 foundation grant will provide general operating support for the museum, including funding for educational programming, exhibits and lectures.

[College Access Now](#) helps talented, motivated and economically disadvantaged students prepare for and earn admission to college. The \$100,000 grant will support the expansion of this program to a third Seattle public high school.

[Cascade Land Conservancy](#) is an independent land conservation and stewardship organization. The \$87,500 grant will support the launch of the Community Stewards program to train volunteer citizen leaders to help create vibrant communities that better serve families and protect farms, forests and open space.

[King County Sexual Assault Resource Center](#) provides crisis lines, advocacy, therapy and education for victims of sexual assault, their families and the community. The \$100,000 grant will support expansion of the *Dando Voz* (Give Voice) program, a childhood sexual abuse prevention and intervention program for Spanish-speaking children and their families in South King County.

[The Mockingbird Society](#) is dedicated to improving the lives of youth in state foster care. The \$100,000 grant will provide general operating support for the organization, including the *Mockingbird Family Model*, a nationally recognized and replicated program that seeks the health, safety and personal development of foster children and assists them to attain stability and permanency.

The foundation's pooled grants are among the largest in the Northwest. Only five percent of grants awarded in this region are \$100,000 or more (*Source: "Trends in Northwest Giving," published by Philanthropy Northwest, May 2008*).

In addition to combining their giving dollars for the large impact grants, Washington Women's Foundation members will distribute another \$475,000 this year in individual grants to the local nonprofits of their choice as part of their annual membership contribution. Total foundation giving for 2009 will be \$950,000.

About Washington Women's Foundation

The mission of 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 more than 500 strong, have invested \$9.3 million of their own resources in nonprofit organizations across Washington State since 1996 (\$4.7 million in pooled grants; \$4.6 million in individual grants). Membership is open to all women interested in philanthropy. For more information, visit www.wawomensfoundation.org.

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