

## **Philanthropic Ventures Foundation Awards \$150,000 in Year End Giving To Peninsula Programs Serving the Poor**

Funds Dispersed within 24 Hours of Anonymous Donation Are Part of Philanthropic Ventures Foundation's Innovative "Immediate Response Grant Program"

**Oakland, CA (December 26, 2007)** Four Peninsula non-profits received a surprise end of the year gift last Friday, courtesy of Oakland based **Philanthropic Ventures Foundation (PVF)** and their pioneering Immediate Response Grant program – the only program of its kind in the country. PVF founder and CEO Bill Somerville announced that the \$150,000 gift, provided by an anonymous donor, was received and distributed within 24 hours to The Saint Francis Center in Redwood City, The Rosalie Rendu Center in East Palo Alto, The Catholic Worker House in Redwood City and Hospitality House in San Bruno. A portion of the donation was also designated by the donor to fund future PVF Immediate Response Grants.

### **About Immediate Response Grants**

The Immediate Response Grant program is the brainchild of PVF founder, Somerville, a 48 year non profit veteran, best known for pioneering innovative approaches to more responsive grantmaking. In his new book, [Grassroots Philanthropy: Notes of a Maverick Grantmaker](#) due out in February from Heyday Press, Somerville outlines what he calls the need for "bolder, braver philanthropy" including programs like Immediate Response Grants that favor responsiveness over bureaucracy. "As far as we know, there are no other philanthropic foundations in the United States, private or community, that fund grant requests within 24 hours" explains Somerville, "we're able to do it because of the time we spend in the field, working side by side with the non profits to build awareness and trust. That commitment enables us to make immediate funding decisions based upon experience and relationships rather than reams of unnecessary paperwork."

Through the support of donors, such as this anonymous donor, PVF makes grants annually of \$5 million. Donors are drawn to PVF precisely for their expertise with local non-profits and their ability – as in the case with this \$150,000 gift – to make recipient recommendations when none are designated by the donor.

### **About the Recipients**

”Compassion, not judgment” is the motto of the **St. Francis Center**, where dedicated volunteers distribute free food and clothing to more than 500 families each month. The center also manages the 24-unit St. Clare apartments a community garden where residents grow organic produce and the Holy Family School, a model K-5 school for low-income, immigrant children, which was initiated and funded by a PVF program grant.

The **Rosalie Rendu Center** strives to break the cycle of poverty through education, mentoring, and raising the self-esteem of the entire family. Adults are assisted educationally with English, parenting and computer classes while children are prepared for kindergarten in a supervised play group in the Tot Spot and older children are assisted in an after school Homework Club.

Larry Purcell founded the **Catholic Worker House** in 1975 to serve the needs of the homeless, the hungry and the very poor in Redwood City. The Catholic Worker House also runs a home for troubled teens, a breakfast program for day laborers and an English language school for immigrant women.

The **Hospitality House of San Bruno** was opened in 1996 by Kate Chatfield and Peter Stiehler, offering shelter and food to area homeless. Over the years, the Hospitality House has expanded its programs and services to include a biweekly produce distribution, after school tutoring for neighborhood youth and health screening provided by volunteer nurses.

### **About PVF**

Since its inception in 1991, Oakland-based Philanthropic Ventures Foundation (PVF) has distributed over \$50 million in grants to those who need it most; gaining national recognition for pioneering innovative approaches to grassroots philanthropy. Under the stewardship of Bill Somerville, PVF has operated as a “living lab,” incubating first-of-their-kind funding programs including: Immediate Response Grants delivered in less than 48 hours of request; Paperless Grants, requiring a single page request; First Response Disaster Relief, which guarantees \$25,000 to ten designated agencies addressing emergency food and shelter needs for the needy during a natural disaster; and the Juvenile Judges Program, which provides immediate grants to youth in the foster care system as identified by Juvenile Court Judges. The PVF model champions people and ideas over paper trails and risk aversion in order to maximize the social

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impact of every donated dollar. In addition to their own programs, PVF works with donors and private foundations to customize their giving to specific areas or programs of interest. Additionally, PVF is called upon regularly to lend expertise to private and community foundations as well as to philanthropic departments of major universities and colleges across the United States. PVF is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity. Philanthropic Ventures Foundation. 1222 Preservation Park Way, Oakland, CA 94612. [www.venturesfoundation.org](http://www.venturesfoundation.org)

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