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***Community Foundation Success Leads to \$575,000 Grant***  
*San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation receives largest grant to date for operations*

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – In only six years, the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation (SLOCCF) has grown their assets to over \$18 million, holds more than 130 funds and has given out more than \$3 million in grants to assist nonprofit agencies. This success and the stability of the foundation has led The James Irvine Foundation to select the SLOCCF as the recipient of a \$575,000 grant to use towards enhancing the growth, visibility and services of the organization. This is the largest single grant the foundation has received since their formation in 1998.

“Our Board’s original goal was to reach \$20 million by 2008, which would be our 10 year anniversary,” says SLOCCF Executive Director Dave Edwards. “The community has been incredibly supportive and we’ve far outpaced that initial goal.” Edwards attributes much of the endowment and fund growth to a very involved, generous community. “People move here for a reason, and they want to give back to enhance this community. They live here, they want to give here.” Edwards adds that the Foundation enables donors to select any area of interest to support and provides asset management. The organization follows tight guidelines and adheres to the national standards established by the Council on Foundations.

The grant is part of The James Irvine Foundation’s new Community Foundations Initiative, which is designed to develop philanthropic resources in regions of California that have been traditionally underserved by organized philanthropy. “In other words,” Edwards explains, “smaller, rural communities within the state.” The SLOCCF will be able to use the funds to increase its visibility, improve technology, and plan for self-sufficiency. “It’s great to get a grant like this for operations,” Edwards adds. “That enables us to focus on growing the endowment, and that’s what helps local organizations and

individuals.” In addition, there are significant re-granting dollars available to assist low-income youth in the community. Aside from the Foundation’s general grant-making, which distributed over \$1 million in 2004, the Foundation holds scholarships and awards that benefit a wide audience, from groups and individuals that support the environment, to accessibility advocacy and progress for women and girls. “It’s safe to say that the Community Foundation touches almost every area of interest in the county,” Edwards concludes. “And if there’s an area we don’t currently support, donors are welcome to start a fund for that purpose.”

The Initiative was launched, according to The James Irvine Foundation President and CEO James E. Canales, because “community foundations are incredibly important institutions. They play a unique role in helping people, from all walks of life, give back to their communities. They build new – and permanent – charitable resources for their communities, they help individual donors realize their charitable dreams, and they help connect nonprofit organizations to new sources of funding. We are extremely pleased to support the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation with this grant, and look forward to working with Dave Edwards and the Foundation staff as we move forward with this initiative.” Of the nine community foundations funded in California, SLOCCF was one of two to receive the largest grants.

For more information on the SLOCCF or any funds, call 543-2323 or log onto [www.slocf.org](http://www.slocf.org).

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