The Community Foundation
BOULDER COUNTY

**For Immediate Release**

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# Community Foundation Reaches $4 Million Fundraising Goal

### Grants to local nonprofits double as foundation deepens commitment to closing achievement gap through early learning

**Boulder County (Sept. 10, 2012)** – Grants from a community fund to Boulder County nonprofits have doubled permanently and early learning for children in poverty has become a community-wide priority thanks to the success of a four-year fundraising initiative that came to a close over the weekend.

More than 2,000 donors contributed and pledged $4,040,000 between Sept. 8, 2008 and Sept. 8, 2012 to The Community Trust Initiative, The Community Foundation Serving Boulder County announced today. The goal was to raise $4 million in four years.

"The Community Trust was an audacious goal, launched at one of the worst possible times for fundraising, but the most critical time for non-profits," said Jane McConnell, Former Board Chair and Co-Chair of The Community Foundation's Early Childhood Education Committee.

"Four years later we're proud to say we've not only doubled our gifts to the community, now and forever, but have raised $1 million to address one of the most troubling issues facing our community, the achievement gap between low-income students and their higher-income peers."

The successful campaign put The Community Foundation on track to permanently double the unrestricted grant-making fund's support for Boulder County nonprofits, from $175,000 in February 2008, to $329,000 in February of 2012. That annual grant number will grow as donor pledges mature and the fund continues to grow.

Worthy nonprofits that have benefitted from these funds include Sister Carmen Community Center, Blue Sky Bridge, Intercambio, The Boulder County Latino Taskforce, The Colorado Participation Project, BMOCA, Veterans Helping Veterans Now, Frequent Flyers Productions Inc., Dental Aid, Community Food Share, Nederland Area Seniors, and hundreds more.

Gifts to The Community Trust impact both the current and future needs of Boulder County and are a statement of confidence in current and future residents to look after the community. Our community-driven grant making is unique because county residents serve on committees to review proposals from local non-profit organizations, make site visits, and recommend grants to the Foundation's Board of Trustees. This process not only engages the voices of numerous community members, but also educates them about trends and need, while introducing many of the cutting edge programs non-profits provide right here in Boulder County.

The Community Trust campaign also raised funding for The Community Foundation to make progress in closing Boulder County's significant achievement gap between kids growing up in poverty and their peers.

Examples of progress within this School Readiness Initiative to date include:

- Financial support for Providers Advancing School Outcomes (PASO), whose purpose is to ensure the success of Latino children ages birth to five years by training their informal daycare providers. The funding brought PASO from nearly closing in 2009, to expanding in Boulder County and two other counties
- Financial and community leadership support for BVSD's 2010 Ballot Issue 3A, which brought $22.5 million more annually in funding for the schools, including $5 million per year earmarked specifically for early learning opportunities at low-income elementary schools
- Financial support for the current mill levy override question this fall in the St. Vrain Schools, which would take some fiscal pressure off a district that is our county's highest performer in terms of providing preschool and full-day Kindergarten opportunities for low-income students.
- Financial support of capital campaigns for the Acorn School's Wilderness Early Learning Center and the Family Learning Center.

Finally, this campaign has deepened our commitment as an organization to helping our community close the achievement gap. We call this work the School Readiness Initiative. We have hired a new Director, Chris Barge, to help lead these efforts with our board and the greater Boulder County community.

The work ahead for the School Readiness Initiative is to encourage a sustained, county-wide effort towards ensuring that all kids in poverty show up to Kindergarten ready to learn.

"We've seen such momentum build in Boulder County these last four years around ensuring all children show up to Kindergarten ready to learn at grade level. I look forward to helping to further that energy in the county, in the years ahead," said Helen Gemmill, Former Board Chair and Co-Chair of The Community Foundation's Early Childhood Education Committee.

For more information about The School Readiness Initiative, please visit: http://www.commfound.org/communityleadership/schoolreadiness.

Please contact Gretchen Minekime if you are interested in contacting leaders in our nonprofit community or at The Community Foundation for interviews.

The Community Foundation is the recognized leader in preparing Boulder County for its future challenges, expanding the culture of giving, and galvanizing diverse resources to improve the quality of life for all. Through donor-advised funds and a number of grant cycles, the **Community Foundation connects resources to non-profit organizations** in Boulder County and beyond. Groups working in the arts, civic life, education, the environment, and health and human services all benefit from grants, as well as numerous programs designed to build organizational capacity.

*Please visit* www.commfound.org *for more information.*

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