



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CREATING A COUNTY OF READERS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD MARCH 13 **The Literacy Campaign for Monterey County Offers Free Professional Development** **for Adult Literacy Instructors and Tutors**

Salinas, CA. . Literacy professionals in Monterey County help individuals pursue an education and find better employment opportunities. Local educators are asked to meet the growing need for literacy programs with less money and state budget cuts have left many local adult education and literacy programs stretching their dollars even more.

On Saturday, March 13, the Literacy Campaign for Monterey County, coordinated by the Community Foundation for Monterey County, is sponsoring the **Creating a County of Readers Conference** for over 100 adult literacy professionals at Hartnell College in Salinas. Local teachers, tutors and administrators will be thanked and recognized, hear inspiring speakers, gain tips and resources from practical workshops, and network with their peers.

Speakers include Sandra McBrayer and Bruce Wolpert. Ms. McBrayer is CEO of the Children's Initiative and an adjunct professor in the College of Education at San Diego State University. Ms. McBrayer is known internationally as an advocate for children, youth, families, and education. President Clinton named Ms. McBrayer the 1994 National Teacher of the Year. Bruce Wolpert, President and CEO of Graniterock will speak about his company's literacy program and commitment to lifelong learning.

The all-day conference is free to adult literacy instructors and tutors with attendees representing over ten public institutions and community-based organizations. Ten workshops will be offered on topics such as using technology as a teaching tool and integrating family, financial, and health literacy into current programs. First 5 Monterey County is donating children's books to the conference and has partnered with the Literacy Campaign to distribute the books to families. For questions, please contact Janet Shing, Program Officer at the Community Foundation at (831) 375-9712 x137.

(more)

Creating a County of Readers Conference, March 13, 2010 (cont.)

Explaining the importance of ongoing professional development, Todd Lueders, Community Foundation for Monterey County President/CEO said, "We are proud to sponsor this conference. These educators make life-long learning possible for others; it is important that the educators themselves are recognized for their work and get rejuvenated."

The Literacy Campaign for Monterey County is a multi-million dollar campaign designed to increase adult literacy levels in our community through grantmaking, raising awareness about the community benefits of literacy, encouraging volunteerism, and supporting literacy service providers through networking and the kind of professional development this conference provides. The Community Foundation launched the five-year effort in 2006 after health and social service providers identified literacy as a main barrier for direct service providers. The Community Foundation gathered research which found that 25% of County adults read at the fourth grade level or below.

Partnering with the Community Foundation, other major funders of the Literacy Campaign include the Monterey Peninsula Foundation, First 5 Monterey County, the James Irvine Foundation, the Dunspaugh-Dalton Foundation, the Grover Hermann Foundation, and the Mervyn L. Brenner Foundation. Over \$1.1 million has been awarded to date.

In Fall of 2009, the Foundation announced \$402,000 in grants to be awarded to: Alisal Healthy Start Family Resource Center (\$50,000 for a community-based literacy program in Salinas); Chartwell School (\$10,000, to provide professional development training for adult literacy teachers and tutors Countywide); CHISPA (Community Housing Improvement System Planning Assoc.) (\$80,000 for basic literacy classes in Greenfield); Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development (\$42,000 for literacy classes in Greenfield); Housing Resource Center (\$10,000 for financial literacy workshops and teacher training Countywide); King City Family Resource Center (\$30,000 to pilot a basic literacy program in King City); Literacy Campaign (\$13,000 to provide professional development activities for adult literacy teachers and tutors such as workshops and trainings); Monterey Adult School (\$5,000, to pilot a new reading program curriculum targeted towards low-literate adults in Monterey and Seaside); Monterey County Free Libraries (\$60,000 to continue tutor recruiting, training, and support in Castroville, Marina, Seaside, Soledad, and King City); Salinas Adult School (\$32,000, to pilot and develop new curriculum for lowest-scoring students in Salinas); Salinas Valley Community Church (\$30,000 to pilot and develop a new literacy program in Salinas); and Soledad Adult School (\$40,000 for basic literacy classes in Soledad and King City).

The mission of the Community Foundation for Monterey County is to improve the quality of life in Monterey County by raising, managing, and distributing charitable funds to qualified organizations and by creating positive connections between donors and their interests. For more information about the Community Foundation of the Literacy Campaign, please visit www.cfmco.org or www.literacycampaignmc.org.