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The Evanston Community Foundation announces \$200,000 in grants to twenty-seven organizations and programs for the benefit of Evanston residents. This year's spring responsive grants cycle sets records for the most grants awarded in one round of funding and for the largest amount of funding ECF has ever made in a single grants cycle. Foundation grants in 2010 are expected to exceed \$650,000.

"We know that uncertainty at the state level and cuts already made in the City's funding pose huge challenges for organizations that provide important services in Evanston. It's great for this community to have one source of funding that is actually larger this year, and we're grateful to all our partners in grantmaking for helping us achieve these results," said Sara Schastok, President and CEO of Evanston Community Foundation. This year's spring grants increased over last year's record-high levels by ten percent.

Recipients are: Access Community Health Network, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metropolitan Chicago, Center for Independent Futures, Warren W. Cherry Preschool, Connections, Erika's Lighthouse, Evanston Community Defender Office, Inc., Evanston Public Library, Evanston School Children's Clothing Association, Evanston Symphony Orchestra, Evanston Township High School – District 202, Family Focus Evanston, Grandmother Park Initiative, The Harbour, Inc., Have Dreams, The Infant Welfare Society of Evanston, Interfaith Action of Evanston, LIFT-Evanston, The Musical Offering, Music Institute of Chicago, Next Theatre Company, North Shore Senior Center, Open Studio Project, PEER Services, Youth Job Center of Evanston, and YWCA Evanston/North Shore.

These spring awards also include funds for the fourth year of the Foundation's Communityworks initiative, Every child ready for kindergarten, Every youth ready for work. Grantee partners include Infant Welfare Society of Evanston, Child Care Center of Evanston, Evanston Public Library, District 65 Family Center, the Family Room, and Childcare Network of Evanston.

"Anyone working or living in Evanston quickly learns that there is no shortage of ideas or engaged people," said Rick Kinnebrew of the Evanston Public Library. "We're delighted to have the support of Evanston Community Foundation so that we can share the best local practices in early literacy, and offer them as fun and educational programs for Evanston preschoolers."

"We wouldn't have a garden without the support of the Evanston Community Foundation!" said Shelley Gates of Evanston Township High School about the school's Edible Acre Pilot Project. "This grant will enable us to focus on employing high school students to maintain the garden, harvest vegetables and sell them at the West End Market. And, it will make it possible for us to introduce our own organic vegetables into the school cafeteria."

Grantmaking Partners, local private foundations and donor advisors contributed more than \$82,000 of the total.

For the 13th consecutive year, Dance Marathon at Northwestern University added significantly to the Foundation's grant budget with a \$41,000 contribution and an additional \$14,000 to support the Foundation's program operations. Dance Marathon has given nearly \$500,000 since 1998 to support the full range of the Foundation's grantmaking. Dance Marathon 2010 executive board co-chairs, Ryan Farrell and Lauren Troy, participated on the Foundation's grants committee along with other community representatives and Evanston Community Foundation board members.

The Evanston Community Foundation's general endowment is the permanent source of its grant funds. The Foundation was established in 1986 as a publicly supported philanthropic organization dedicated to enriching Evanston and the lives of its people, now and in the future. The Foundation builds community endowments, addresses Evanston's changing needs through innovative grant-making, and provides leadership in bringing people together around issues of community concern. Through all three of its competitive grants program, the Foundation has made more than \$3M in grants to nearly 200 organizations.

For more information on the Evanston Community Foundation, contact Sara Schastok, President and CEO, at 847/492-0990 or info@evanstonforever.org

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