

NECC helps nonprofits weather bad economy

Courtesy of the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico

During a rough year of economic downturn, the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico (CFSNM) remained strong, and closed out 2009 with a list of accomplishments that benefitted both givers and receivers.

Throughout 2009, the CFSNM acquired and managed permanent assets of \$1.18 million and total invested assets of \$1.12 million through 74 endowments, 33 of which went to support local nonprofits.

"The mission of the community foundation is to build funds and serve as a resource to donors," said Jane Ann Day, immediate past president of the CFSNM Board of Directors. "Donors want to be able to give to those causes they hold near and dear. Under the umbrella of the community foundation, that can be accomplished."

The foundation sets up and manages endowments for nonprofit agencies that will help for years to come.

Through the 33 nonprofit agency endowments, organizations are able to build capacity for sustainability. An endowment is a permanent fund created through a legal agreement, and then professionally managed by the foundation.

The CFSNM also offers donor-advised funds to provide financial support to nonprofit agencies or individuals in the form of scholarships, serves as the fiscal agent for community programs such as Honor Flight and A Drug Free Doña Ana County and provides training for financial advisors through the annual Estate Planning Institute.

"There are organizations that have immediate needs, particularly during this economy. Businesses struggle and nonprofits struggle as well," Day said. "It is important for these organizations to grow their money so they can concentrate on their mission at hand."

The CFSNM also spent 2009 creating 10 new endowments and adding six new donor-advised funds. Through designated and unrestricted endowed funds, \$30,553 was awarded. In addition, 43 scholarships totaling \$29,541 were awarded; \$125,000 in federal grant money was established for a broader region coalition for A Drug Free Doña Ana County; the 17th Annual Estate Planning Institute was held; and \$70,000 was raised in emergency funds for local nonprofits.

"Nine grants were submitted and between \$1,000 and \$7,000 was awarded, and 50 percent was earmarked for agency endowments for the Nonprofit Economic Crises Campaign (NECC)," Day said.

The CFSNM awarded the \$33,000 in grants for the NECC with money raised following a kick-off in April 2009. The NECC was a response to the economic crisis, which affected many local nonprofits as they were experiencing a decrease in funding while also facing an increase in individuals and families requesting services.

"We would like these agencies to be able to cover their operational needs so they don't have to worry about keeping their doors open," Day said. "Any amount makes a difference. Even receiving \$10 makes such a difference to someone that really needs it."

For the CFSNM, the focus on sustainability and increasing funds will remain strong throughout 2010.

The Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico is dedicated to helping the Southern New Mexico community now, and in the future. Founded in 2000, the CFSNM offers opportunities for local people who want to give back locally. The beauty of the foundation is that you need not be wealthy to make a positive difference in the lives of people in our area. Through the establishment of permanent funds, you can sustain local charitable organizations, provide scholarships to area students and fulfill wishes that are close to your heart. Through our planned giving programs, you can honor loved ones or leave a legacy that benefits the people of southern New Mexico for generations to come. The CFSNM can advise you on how best to maximize contributions, no matter what size. For more information, visit www.cfsnm.org or call Luan Wagner Burn at 521-4794.

