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**MARY SCHWABAUER HONORED WITH NEW CHARITABLE FUND
Ventura County Community Foundation pays tribute to former board chair**

CAMARILLO, Calif. (April 7, 2009) – The Ventura County Community Foundation recently established a fund to honor philanthropist Mary Leavens Schwabauer. Schwabauer, of Moorpark, served as VCCF board chair from 2004 to 2008 and remains as a board member.

The Mary Schwabauer Leadership Fund was announced at a celebration for the long-time Ventura County rancher on March 26 at the Spanish Hills Country Club in Camarillo, attended by more than 150 local community leaders, foundation donors and present VCCF board members.

“We wanted to pay tribute to Mary’s leadership, generosity as a philanthropist and her commitment to sustaining all that is best in Ventura County,” said Pierre Tada, current board chair, in announcing the fund’s inception. He noted 100 percent of the board and the staff contributed to the fund, including a donation to establish an endowed core, which will ensure the fund in perpetuity.

The fund was established to ensure VCCF’s mission to address the needs of Ventura County and to help sustain a balanced budget through challenging economic times.

Schwabauer has long served Ventura County as a teacher and as an advocate of historical preservation. Her many passions include serving on the VCCF scholarship committee for over 15 years, whose advisory committee she still chairs; helping to establish the Heritage Fund to preserve our County's history and values; dedicating time and resources to the Workforce Education Task Force of the Ventura County Civic Alliance; and, participating as founding member of the Destino and Women's Legacy Funds.

"In all Mary has done at VCCF, she has set a standard for warmth and generosity, with a commitment to fiduciary responsibility. Mary is highly regarded by her board colleagues and with affection and respect by the entire VCCF staff," observed Hugh Ralston, President and CEO.

Schwabauer joined the VCCF board in 2002 and became its first woman chair two years later. Generous donations to funds established by her, her family and colleagues helped guide the organization through its most rapid period of growth in assets, staff, programs and community impact.

"The Community Foundation needs to continue in the direction it is going," said Schwabauer, noting VCCF's endowment has tripled in the past five years, from \$30 million to almost \$100 million.

"By supporting this fund, donors are showing the same faith in VCCF that VCCF has shown in the community it serves," she added.

For information on contributing to the Mary Schwabauer Leadership Fund, contact Lindsay Smith at (805) 988-0196, Ext. 115

The Ventura County Community Foundation is a family of 500 charitable funds with total assets of \$96 million, and distributed \$6.1 million grants and pledges in 2008. The Foundation's mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, building long-term charitable capital to benefit Ventura County. The Foundation has been confirmed in compliance with national standards by the Council on Foundations, a reflection of the highest peer review across the nations 700 community foundations. For more information, visit www.vccf.org.

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