

For immediate release – For additional information, contact Denise Unruh, SCCF, 620-672-7929.

Give me an S! Give me a C! Give me another C! Give me an F! What's that spell? It's the acronym for South Central Community Foundation, and SCCF has reason to cheer. SCCF will celebrate its 2009 grant recipients and donors at the annual awards night Wednesday, March 25. The theme for the evening is "Championship," and the celebration will kick off with a tailgate party at 5 PM at the Pratt County Fairgrounds. Participants are encouraged to wear their favorite team's colors or attire. Music by the Pratt High School Pep Band will precede guest speaker Steve Coen, CEO of the Kansas Health Foundation. Coen, a native of St. John, served as an aide to Sen. Bob Dole before joining the Kansas Health Foundation in 1987. He will share his insights and inspiration regarding community teamwork.

Following Coen's remarks, the evening will conclude with the presentation of SCCF's 2009 grants to recipients from the foundation's seven-county area, including Barber, Comanche, Kingman, Kiowa, Pratt, Rice and Stafford Counties. This year, nearly \$43,000 in grant funds will be distributed.

Grants wouldn't be possible without donors, said Denise Unruh, SCCF Executive Director. SCCF has designated several "All Stars" to honor during the awards celebration March 25. These donors helped meet a challenge from the Kansas Health Foundation, and as a result, donors' gifts were doubled through a grant from KHF.

Prior to this year's grant cycle, SCCF conducted a Listening Tour in all the communities in the foundation's seven-county area, Unruh said.

"As we listened to the community members, we found significant commonalities, as well as characteristics unique to each community," Unruh said. "What people like most about their community is the rural lifestyle that encompasses safety, friendliness and caring neighbors. All of us struggle with the economic development issues of retaining youth, maintaining and growing the population and creating jobs with livable wages. One of the barriers to solving our challenges includes having the financial resources to address infrastructure needs. Another barrier is a lack of local volunteers or burnout among volunteers."

In response to feedback from the communities, SCCF and the Youth Making A Difference board set two grant funding priorities for 2009. These included cleaning up and beautifying the community, as well as promoting and strengthening volunteerism in organizations and the community.

SCCF awarded 30 grants chosen from the 40 applicants with a total of \$42,960 granted. The awards are listed below by county:

In **Barber County**, each of the two grant applicants received funding. The City of Kiowa was awarded \$2,850 to buy materials for house repair and clean-up to help beautify the community. The Gyp Hills Pilot Club of Medicine Lodge received \$1,000 toward the purchase of two child transport seats for the county's ambulances.

There was only one grant applicant in **Comanche County**. The Pioneer Lodge in Coldwater received \$1,400 for construction of a patio area.

Kingman County had the most grant applications, with 14 submitted. Of those, eight entities received grant funding totaling \$9,640. The Kingman 5th Quarter program was awarded \$2,000. This interdenominational program hosts after-game parties and inspirational speakers for local teens. An \$1,800 grant was awarded to Kingman United

Methodist Church for purchasing tables used for both church and community events. An award of \$1,500 was made to Norwich High School's greenhouse project in which special education students get hands-on learning through gardening projects. Receiving \$1,250 was Kingman Boy Scout Troop No. 740, who will use the funds to purchase four kayaks and 16 life jackets. The Kingman Area Ministries Inc. received a \$1,000 to support its food bank and utilities program for the community's disadvantaged. St. Patrick's School in Kingman received \$890 for a landscaping project to beautify the school grounds. The Kingman Garden Club was awarded two \$600 grants, one to purchase shrubs for Champlin Park and the other to buy shade trees for a park in northwest Kingman.

Kiowa County's only grant applicant was awarded \$2,000. Kiowa County's Youth for Christ will use the funds to purchase tent toppers and sides for its fireworks stand, proceeds which go to youth programs.

Pratt County had nine grant applicants, and the seven recipients received a total of \$9,160. Pratt Community College's Rotaract, a community service group, was awarded two grants, one of \$2,500 to finish landscaping and fencing at the Pratt Humane Society and a \$2,000 grant to purchase a trailer for tool storage and transportation to service projects. The Pratt Senior Center received \$2,000 for repairs and repainting. The Pratt Teen Center received \$1,000 for supplies that student volunteers will use to clean up and clean out in Pratt and communities within a 15-mile radius. St. Francis Community and Family Inc. was awarded \$720 to fund open house parties designed to recruit foster families in Pratt County. Youth for Christ in Pratt received \$675 to refurbish its meeting room. A grant of \$265 was given to Southwest Elementary School teacher Brenda Riffey for her fourth grade class' intergenerational outreach to Pratt Regional Living Center and Hospice House.

Three of **Rice County's** four grant applicants received funds. The City of Sterling was awarded \$5,000 for a Home Sweet Home Through Volunteerism program designed to repair homes for the community's needy. The Sterling Main Street Association received \$1,960 to cleanup a Main Street lot that will be used for community events. The Little River Learning Center was awarded \$830 for classroom supplies.

In **Stafford County**, there were eight grant applicants, and seven of those received a total of \$8,120 in funding. Macksville High School's Student Council was awarded \$3,255 for a town beautification project. The Stafford Elementary School Site Council received \$1,600 for several volunteer programs, including a daddy/daughter dance, Positive Police in the lunchroom and Bring Your Momma to the Bowl-A-Rama. The Macksville City Library received \$1,030 for a message board and picnic tables. The Kansas Child Service League's Headstart program at Stafford Schools received \$900 to replace trees destroyed by the 2007 ice storm at the program's playground. The Stafford Main Street Association received \$695 to patch broken windows and prevent further deterioration in the downtown area. The Stafford County Historical and Genealogical Society was awarded \$340 to replace one window in its facility, part of an on-going window replacement project. The St. John First Baptist Church received \$300 for its Awana program for children.

There was one multi-county grant awarded for \$1,000 to the Quivira Council of the Boy Scouts of America for its Good Turn for America projects.

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