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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inland Northwest Community Foundation Creates Partnerships to Help Families Get More Support in Difficult Economic Times

SPOKANE, WA, *October 29, 2009*—Inland Northwest Community Foundation (INWCF) announced today a \$150,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to increase local assistance for families facing economic challenges and other setbacks as a result of the recession. The goal of the Northeast Washington Family Resilience Grants Program is to create measurable, positive change relative to issues that adversely affect the stability of vulnerable children and families.

The Gates Foundation grant will allow the community foundation to provide grants to nonprofits in as many as four counties. Three grants of \$23,750 will be awarded to three nonprofits in Spokane who will raise matching funds to double the impact of the grant. In addition, as many as five grants totaling \$71,250 will be awarded to nonprofit organizations serving the tri-county region of Washington—Pend Oreille, Stevens and Ferry Counties.

“It is imperative for our region to understand that even the best families at times need guidance and support to encourage resiliency,” says Foundation President and CEO Mark Hurtubise. “Many families are faced with challenges that might appear to be insurmountable, but there are nonprofit organizations that can meet the increased demand for much-needed services. As your community foundation, we support the nonprofits that help provide this resiliency in families.

In today’s difficult economic times, hundreds of families in Northeast Washington are struggling with job losses, dwindling savings, and foreclosures or evictions. These conditions are placing significant pressures on families and the community. At the same time, many local nonprofit organizations in the region are experiencing a growing demand for their services.

The new funding for Inland Northwest Community Foundation’s Family Resiliency Grants is one of 12 grants announced today by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in response to the growing needs of communities throughout Washington state. Nine additional community foundations are receiving funding to increase support services in their communities, and grant funding will help the Washington State Library increase programs to connect patrons with job-seeking assistance. Additionally, the Legal Aid for Washington (LAW) Fund is receiving a grant to help provide critical legal services for low-income Washingtonians facing economic hardship or family crises.

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Founded in 1974, INWCF serves 10 Eastern Washington counties and 10 North Idaho counties to foster vibrant and sustainable communities in the Inland Northwest. The community foundation manages more than 265 funds valued at \$50 million and has awarded \$37 million in grants and scholarships since its inception, positively impacting thousands of lives in this region.

For more information on INWCF, please visit: www.inwcf.org. To learn more about the Gates Foundation's work in Washington state, visit www.gatesfoundation.org/washington.

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