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## **Collaboration allows Nevada Public Education Foundation to thrive, even during struggling economy**

*Nonprofit partners with likeminded organizations to leverage resources, help as many as possible*

**LAS VEGAS** – Nevada Public Education Foundation has awarded more than \$100,000 in grants to organizations and entities throughout Nevada in 2008 despite the economic downturn. With the help of partnerships with organizations including America’s Promise Alliance, Wells Fargo, Redfield, Alcoa Foundation, USA Funds, USAA Savings Bank, State Farm, United Way and others the organization continues to not only survive, but thrive in the tightening market.

“In society there are those who do well for themselves, and those who need help,” said Bonnie Cook, founder and president of NorthStar Consulting Services, which is dedicated to helping nonprofit organizations identify and implement practices that build organizational capacity and enhance their ability to serve their communities. “Nonprofits are the cornerstone of any community – helping those who cannot help themselves and thus, creating a more productive society and a strengthened economy. When those nonprofits cannot efficiently fulfill their missions, the result is a loss for the entire community.”

The current state of the economy is negatively affecting budgets in most industries, and the nonprofit and education sectors aren’t any different. As budgets continue to be cut, nonprofit Nevada Public Education Foundation will continue to increase its efforts to leverage funding and resources to make the largest impact on education in Nevada. To do this, it has partnered with likeminded organizations from throughout the state.

“By teaming up with other organizations to achieve one unified goal, we are able to combine our resources and avoid duplicating efforts,” said Debbie Carroll, director of development & communications for Nevada Public Education Foundation. “Each organization brings unique ideas and resources to the table, and together we will help many more young people than we could individually.”

For example, Nevada Public Education Foundation teams with Wells Fargo to host the “Wells Fargo Grant a Wish for Your School” grant program. In its fourth year, the statewide program offers teachers the opportunity to apply for grant money for their innovative classroom ideas, or “wishes,” in the areas of financial literacy, math, technology and careers.

The organization also joined efforts with the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) when its Committee on Youth adopted the values and theory of Nevada Public Education Foundation’s Ready for Life movement last September.

Ready for Life is not a program or specific intervention, but rather, a collaborative process through which youth-serving agencies and organizations partner to improve outcomes for youth. Recognizing that the barriers to success are often non-academic, the Ready for Life movement brings together resources from non-profits throughout Nevada that provide services to meet the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of youth and their families.

SNRPC's Committee on Youth was established to focus on eliminating duplication of services for youth and build a community ethic that values a high school diploma – directly in line with Ready for Life's mission to establish a community ethic that values education. Nevada Public Education Foundation, Clark County, the Cities of Boulder City, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and Henderson, the Clark County School District and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department are just some of the entities and organizations that have partnered together in support of the effort.

Having successfully launched the Ready for Life movement more than two years ago in Clark County, the foundation expanded its work to Washoe County in 2007. The organization hosted one of the state's largest gatherings aimed at addressing the needs of Washoe County's at-risk youth May 22.

Along with expanding the Ready for Life movement, Nevada Public Education Foundation received a grant from America's Promise Alliance, the nation's largest partnership alliance working on behalf of children and youth, to host a statewide Dropout Prevention summit. The Ready for Life Nevada Dropout Prevention Summit will be held in North Las Vegas Wednesday, Nov. 12, and will be one of at least 100 the Alliance is sponsoring across the country over the next two years as part of its Dropout Prevention Campaign. The movement aims to reduce the nation's alarming high school dropout rate and better prepare young people for college, work and life.

Through the joint efforts of several organizations, Nevada Public Education Foundation has continued to offer grants and to support the "Ready for Life" movement. Ready for Life is more relevant now than ever before, as, according to findings released in October 2007 by the Associated Press, one in 10 U.S. high schools are considered a "dropout factory" – a high school where fewer than 60 percent of the students who start as freshmen make it to their senior year. And Nevada is ranked third on the list.

Known primarily for the establishment of its "Ready for Life" movement, Nevada Public Education Foundation is a statewide organization that leverages resources and partnerships to help Nevada's youth become "ready for life." Established in 1991, the organization convenes local, regional and statewide organizations doing similar work to maximize resources and effort; seeks to consistently measure and improve programs and services; and organizes public and private support to sustain the work and ensure that young people receive the education and resources they need to become productive, contributing members of society.

For more information on Nevada Public Education Foundation, call 702-486-6492 for Southern Nevada, 775-687-9203 for Northern Nevada, or visit [readyforlifenv.org](http://readyforlifenv.org).

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