



The Community Foundation of South Alabama Receives National Recognition

(Mobile) – **The Community Foundation of South Alabama** is being recognized for having organizational and financial practices that are in accordance with the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations. The Council on Foundations and leaders of the community foundation field created the National Standards in 2000 to aid community foundations in establishing legal, ethical and effective operational practices that would show the foundations’ transparency and financial responsibility in light of the increased public scrutiny of foundation practices. In addition, National Standards were developed to distinguish community foundations from other philanthropic vehicles, build the capacity of community foundations to carry out their missions, and assist the field with self-regulation in a manner viewed positively by the Internal Revenue Service.

The National Standards seal, pictured here, was developed for community foundations to signify that they have been confirmed in compliance with National Standards. Professional advisors and prospective donors will recognize the seal as an indication of the integrity and demonstrated excellence of the compliant foundation.



“Adopting and adhering to high standards is the best way we can demonstrate our ongoing commitment to maintaining the trust of our donors and the entire community,” said Porter Brock, Jr., president of The Community Foundation of South Alabama. “We are committed to reaffirming the honesty and integrity that are a hallmark of our foundation.”

Intended both as a blueprint for internal organizational development and as a tangible set of benchmarks for external assessment of performance, the 43 National Standards address six key areas of community foundation operations:

- *Mission, Structure and Governance*, including standards defining board accountability, compensation, independence, fiduciary responsibility and representation of the community.

- *Resource Development*, including parameters for administration of funds, disclosures to donors and commitment to building long-term resources for varied community issues and causes.
- *Stewardship and Accountability*, covering prudent investment and management of funds, transparent record-keeping, use of funds for their intended purpose, annual audits, and public availability of financial information, including standards related to due diligence and community responsiveness.
- *Grantmaking and Community Leadership*, including standards related to broad and open grantmaking programs, due diligence, and responsiveness to changing community needs.
- *Donor Relations*, encompassing guidelines for informing, educating and involving donors in responding to community needs.
- *Communications*, including openness to public scrutiny and frequent communications about activities and finances.

In order to achieve Confirmation of Compliance with the National Standards, community foundations must undergo an extensive review of their organizational and financial policies and procedures. The review is performed by trained, experienced community foundation practitioners.

U.S. community foundations serve tens of thousands of donors and administer more than \$39 billion in charitable funds. Of the nearly 700 community foundations in the United States, over 500 have pledged to comply with the National Standards. To date, over 150 community foundations have been found in compliance with National Standards. These community foundations represent foundations from across the nation and the size of their assets range from the smallest to the largest in the field. Currently, compliant community foundations represent over \$9 billion in assets, or about 28% of the field.

Established in 1975 as the Mobile Community Foundation, the nonprofit corporation has grown from its first gift of \$50 to over \$4 million in assets, having awarded over \$4 million within the past 30 years to nonprofit organizations across the country. The Community Foundation has adopted eight counties (Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington) on which to focus its grant making from their Undesignated Community Endowment. A wide variety of funds and investment vehicles promote The Community Foundation as a pre-eminent vessel for perpetual, permanent giving.

The Council on Foundations is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit membership association of more than 2,000 grantmaking foundations and corporations. The Council provides the

opportunity, leadership and tools needed by philanthropic organizations to expand, enhance and sustain their ability to advance the common good. For more information on the Council, visit the organization's website at www.cof.org.

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