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Long Beach Community Foundation Awards Grant to Long Beach Bar Foundation to begin new SHORTSTOP ArtStart program

Long Beach, CA – The Board of Directors of Long Beach Community Foundation (LBCF) has named Long Beach Bar Foundation as a recipient of one of their annual strategic grants. The LBCF strategic focus for 2008 addresses juvenile delinquency with an emphasis on the arts. With a \$25,000 grant, Long Beach Bar Foundation has designed and implemented a new program called ArtStart that works in conjunction with the popular SHORTSTOP program.

SHORTSTOP diverts non-violent juvenile offenders ages 10-17 away from the juvenile justice system through legal education for juveniles and their parents. Some of these criminal offenses are related to defacing property with graffiti or tagging. Eager to build on the success of SHORTSTOP and continue its life-changing impact on the graduates, Carolyn Bell, Executive Director at Long Beach Bar Foundation, seized the opportunity for this grant to create a program that would partner with local artists who were also interested in contributing to the positive development of these youth.

“I was so pleased to discover the artists at Gallery Eleven/Seven had such an interest and passion to help the youth of our community,” states Carolyn, as she describes the

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response she received when she approached them about teaching art classes. “Their expertise in jewelry-making, mosaics, drawing, and painting is just what we needed to make this program happen.”

Gallery Eleven/Seven is located on Linden Avenue in Long Beach’s East Village art district. ArtStart classes are held there on Saturdays in six-week sessions for SHORTSTOP graduates to attend.

Designing and creating a 3’ x 5’ nature-themed mosaic is the project in **Robin Bott’s** mosaic class and the finished pieces will be installed in the East Village Organic Garden to create a mural wall. **Maria McCloud** (drawing) will alternate class sessions with **Thea Robertshaw** (painting) in teaching the youth how to capture what they see on paper or canvas. Jewelry design and creation, taught by **Josephine Marie**, results in wearable art for personal use or for sale. Students will receive additional training from Josephine on marketing and selling their jewelry creations.

One additional class, which held just one session in October, related directly to graffiti. **Jose Martinez**, a visual artist with expertise in cutting edge graphics and aerosol art, provided training to 9 SHORTSTOP graduates on capturing their graffiti ideas on canvas. This class session is now complete, and the students’ art pieces were displayed in a show held in early November. (picture attached)

“Our goal with this grant was to identify ways to harness the youth and imagination of these young people and provide opportunities for them to apply their artistic talents in productive and positive ways,” says Jim Worsham, President & CEO of LBCF.

“Involving them in art classes now to receive training from professional artists may spark an interest and give them direction in pursuing it as a career.”

To maximize enrollment in the classes, the Bar Foundation has also collaborated with local youth-serving agencies to offer the opportunity for class participation to their constituents. Interested agencies may contact Carolyn Bell at (562) 981-7525.

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If you are interested in seeing the art pieces created during the first few sessions of these classes, you can attend the monthly 2nd *Saturday Art Walk* in the East Village in January (Saturday, January 10) from 4:00 – 10:00 pm. Art pieces, mosaics, and jewelry will be on display at Gallery Eleven/Seven located at 117 Linden Avenue in Long Beach.

Long Beach Community Foundation has operated since July 2007 as an independent charitable organization, breaking away from its 11-year affiliate status with the California Community Foundation. Its mission *to initiate positive change for Long Beach through charitable giving, stewardship and strategic grant-making* is carried out through its management of donor-advised funds, endowments, planned giving assistance and community benefit funds. LBCF currently administers more than 40 charitable funds. (Web site: www.longbeachcf.org)

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