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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 6, 2008

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Knight Foundation Once Again Names Long Beach Community Foundation as its Local Granting Agent

Long Beach, CA – In 2007 the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation began a pilot project by asking the Long Beach Community Foundation (LBCF) to serve as its local funding agent and focus on local civic leadership. In the past year, the partners have funded the Change Agent Productions youth development project at the YMCA Youth Institute, established a resource database developed by ReThinking Greater Long Beach, and created collaborative partnerships through the Atlantic Avenue Corridor Project.

Building on these accomplishments, Knight Foundation has committed a total of \$1.3 million for 2008 and 2009 to the community foundation asking it to look for opportunities that are consistent with Knight's priorities.

"Seeing the great progress made last year, we are honored to again receive this funding from the Knight Foundation. Applying our expertise and knowledge of the community to carry out Knight's priorities and vision are directly aligned with our mission as a community foundation," says Jim Worsham, President & CEO of LBCF.

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Long Beach is one of 26 U.S. communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Their national foundation, based in Miami, focuses on ideas and projects that create transformational change.

Bringing about transformation in a community takes time, but with Knight funding, **Leadership Long Beach** has made strides in the Atlantic Avenue Corridor. Also known as the **Connected Corridor**, this project focuses on creating connectivity and empowering stakeholders to bring about positive change in their neighborhoods. Efforts began last fall in North Long Beach and will progress from the “Top of the Town to Downtown” along this corridor that bisects the city from north to south. Eight community partners were recently awarded grants totaling \$80,000 to build capacity in areas of work-force development, arts and culture, media and technology, and education connections. Leadership Long Beach envisions creating a blueprint for future expansion to other corridors within the city.

Another funded project was developed through the **YMCA’s Youth Institute** which has reached hundreds of middle and high school students since it began in 2001. With after-school and summer training sites at local schools, the institute teaches skills for media and digital arts. With the vision to provide real-life work experience along with the training, institute leaders created a community media studio in October 2007. Known as **Change Agent Productions**, this social enterprise provides financial support for the institute, as well as work experience opportunities for institute participants.

“Community foundations were created to meet the most basic needs of local geographies – needs like education, housing, services,” said Trabian Shorters, Knight’s vice president/communities. “At Knight Foundation, we believe information is one of those core needs. The best community foundations in the country are working to ensure they’re plugged in to filling those needs, and with projects like the Youth Institute, our partners in Long Beach are on their way.”

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Since July 2007, LBCF has operated 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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