



For Immediate Release

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GLIMMER OF HOPE: NONPROFITS TAKE CONTROL OVER THEIR FINANCIAL FUTURE

New Orleans, LA – America’s social sector organizations are increasingly investing in their future by starting social enterprises despite the economic downturn, according to a survey released today at the Annual Social Enterprise Summit in New Orleans, LA by **Community Wealth Ventures, Inc.** and the **Social Enterprise Alliance**. This first-of-its-kind nationwide survey of 848 social sector organizations documented this encouraging trend. This data provides the most current snapshot of social enterprises in the United States and Canada.

According to the survey, 54% of social sector organizations today operate a social enterprise. As proof that many social sector organizations are finding that social enterprises are a path to longer-term sustainability, 60% indicate that they plan to launch another social enterprise in the next 3-5 years. “This survey reveals that it is even more important during uncertain economic times that nonprofits embrace social enterprise as a strategy to produce unrestricted income to increase financial self-sufficiency and mission impact,” said Bill Shore, Chairman of Community Wealth Ventures.

Ana Zorrilla, CEO of the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (LA/SPCA), is building a second phase to their facility where animals can take obedience classes and get preventative check-ups at their veterinary clinic. “We need to be in a position where we can be strategic and have a steady stream of income to support our work,” said Ms. Zorrilla. She is not alone – according to the survey, 57% of social sector organizations who do not currently operate a social enterprise are considering launching their first social enterprise. Like LA/SPCA, many of these organizations (48%) are equally motivated by the chance to increase revenue as well as extend the mission of their organization.

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Pine Street Inn, an organization that provides a range of services to homeless men and women in Boston, MA, has been operating an institutional food service business, Abundant Table, since 2000. "Social enterprise is not only a way to generate revenue, but it also provides our clients with employment opportunities," explained Anne Wunderli, Director of Social Enterprise. Many of Abundant Table's customers include Boston-area nonprofit organizations. In light of Abundant Table's recent success, Pine Street Inn is currently expanding the food service business in addition to launching new social enterprises, including a handyman service. Almost half of organizations that operate social enterprises – like Pine Street Inn – operate two or more social enterprises.

Over 350 organizations like LA/SPCA and Pine Street Inn are gathering this week in New Orleans, LA for the Annual Social Enterprise Summit. They are encouraged by the recent news that the Obama Administration plans to launch an Office of Social Innovation and the recent passage of the Edward M. Kennedy Service America Act and the National Capacity Building Act/Amendment. When asked to identify actions that would stimulate social enterprise: 32% identified improved access to capital, 15% identified additional training, and 10% identified policy efforts. "The challenges of the economy are prompting many nonprofits to develop a more entrepreneurial approach to their work and we're encouraged by increasing interest from government at all levels in stimulating social enterprise as a way of tackling persistent social challenges." said Kris Prendergast, President and CEO of the Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA).

In summer 2008, the Social Enterprise Alliance, with support from REDF, partnered with Community Wealth Ventures and Duke University's Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship to survey organizations that operate a social enterprise, are considering operating a social enterprise, and are unfamiliar with social enterprise. The Social Enterprise Alliance defines a social enterprise as "organizations that are pursuing a social or environmental mission using business methods."

Community Wealth Ventures (CWV) is a management consulting firm that offers strategy and implementation services to nonprofit organizations and philanthropic foundations. It is a subsidiary of a nonprofit anti-hunger and anti-poverty organization, Share Our Strength. Since its launch, CWV has worked with hundreds of nonprofit organizations across the country, representing a variety of nonprofit missions and organization sizes. CWV has become the nation's leading consulting firm in applying entrepreneurial strategies to nonprofit missions.

Social Enterprise Alliance (SEA) is the only member organization in North America to bring together the diverse field of social enterprise. It serves as advocate for the field, hub of information and education, and builder of a vibrant and growing community of social enterprises.