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Bank of America Names Neighborhood Excellence Initiative Awardees

PORTLAND, Ore., Nov. 10 /PRNewswire/ --

PORTLAND, Ore., Nov. 10 /PRNewswire/ -- Bank of America market president Roger Hinshaw today named the first Portland area Neighborhood Excellence Initiative award winners. Recipients were chosen based on their commitment to build and strengthen their communities.

The Bank of America Neighborhood Excellence Initiative is a two-year program that recognizes, nurtures and rewards organizations, local heroes and student leaders in the Portland/Vancouver area.

"The Bank of America Neighborhood Excellence Initiative is about celebrating local leaders," said Hinshaw. "We want to help build organizational and community capacity by recognizing, supporting and developing the individuals and organizations that make a difference in our neighborhoods. Our award recipients, through their dedication and commitment have created positive change within our neighborhoods and throughout the Portland/Vancouver area."

Through the Neighborhood Excellence Initiative, Bank of America will help meet the challenges facing the Portland area by providing operating support and capacity building for nonprofit organizations, recognition for local leaders, and opportunities for young people to serve their neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood Excellence Initiative is composed of three programs: * Neighborhood Builders provides \$200,000 in grant funding and leadership training over the course of two years to two neighborhood nonprofit organizations working to promote vibrant neighborhoods in 30 markets across the country. The combination of operating support and leadership training helps strengthen the capacity and infrastructure of the selected organizations and promotes the professional development of their leaders. The two Neighborhood Builder award winners are Open Meadow School and Hacienda Community Development Corporation, both based in Portland. Open Meadow School is an accredited education organization that transforms the lives of youth who are at risk of disconnecting from school or who have already dropped out. Open Meadow's programs integrate education, workforce development and support services to ensure successful outcomes for youth. Hacienda Community Development Corporation addresses affordable housing needs and revitalizes neighborhoods by creating permanent resources of affordable housing, educational and economic development and related activities, including resident service and after-school programs, for Portland's low-income Latino population. * Local Heroes recognizes and honors five community heroes per year in the Portland area whose achievements and leadership on local issues contribute significantly to neighborhood vitality. Recipients will be able to direct a \$5,000 contribution to an eligible nonprofit of their choice and will be celebrated at a public ceremony. The 2004 Portland Local Heroes award winners are Dan Blaufus, creator of Marathon Education Partners, long-term mentoring and college

scholarship fund for low-income youth; Jay Chandler, a eight-year volunteer for SOLV; Kevin Fuller, volunteer leader of Bridge Builders, a Portland area organization dedicated to the educational and life success of African American youth; Cherry Hendrix, senior citizen volunteer with Experience Corps, an organization where older adults provide mentoring, tutoring, community and family involvement services; and David Johnson, an ex-Intel executive who is responsible for raising \$1.3 million to an entire class of "Dreamers" for I Have a Dream Oregon. * Student Leaders recognizes five local high school students in their junior or senior years who are identified as exemplary young people with an interest in improving their neighborhoods. To further their personal and educational growth, each student will participate in an eight-week paid summer internship with Habitat for Humanity, as well as a mentorship program arranged by Bank of America. Local Student Leader award winners are Demetric Sanders, Benson High School; Paul Janzan, Home School Diploma Program; Ngoc (Rosa) Nguyen, Reynolds High School; Nadia Gekelman, Reynolds High School; and Kayla Drozd, Centennial High School.

A local selection committee comprised of key members of the Portland community assisted in the selection of winning organizations and individuals. Committee members included:

- * Senator Mark O. Hatfield (retired) * Doug Stamm, Executive Director, Meyer Memorial Trust * Gale Castillo; Executive Director, Metropolitan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce * Gwyneth Gamble Booth, President, PGE Foundation Bank of America Charitable Investments

With a \$1.5 billion philanthropic goal over the next 10 years, Bank of America Charitable Investments is one of the largest corporate charitable organizations in the country. The mission of Bank of America Charitable Investments group is to deploy a targeted array of philanthropic resources that help neighborhoods grow and prosper, thereby creating thriving environments where the bank's customers, associates and shareholders live, work and invest. For more information about Bank of America Charitable Investments, please visit the Foundation's website at <http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation>.

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