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Media Contacts:

Kim Wright
The Seattle Foundation
(206) 515-2136
K.Wright@seattlefoundation.org

Susan Sullivan
Social Venture Partners
(425) 941-1268
susan@ramblingclan.com

Teen Philanthropists Come Together for Seattle Youth Summit

(February 28, 2009 – SEATTLE) On February 28, Social Venture Partners and The Seattle Foundation hosted the Seattle Youth Philanthropy Summit. Two teen philanthropy groups, Social Venture Kids (SVK) and The Seattle Foundation's Youth Grantmaking Alumni Board (YGAB) convened for the first time at this year's summit.

"In challenging economic times our community needs are greater than ever," says Susan Sullivan, SVK's facilitator. And the call for help is being answered by our next generation of philanthropists. "This summit was about more than simply cultivating generosity," says Sullivan, "participants learned how to be more strategic and effective in their giving."

From lectures, to networking, to hands-on activities, the young philanthropists at this summit geared up for the work ahead. "I learned...how to read financial statements, and what makes a good, viable not-for-profit," said one participant. "This will be useful in the coming months, when we receive our grant-requests and have to make the tough decisions about which organization(s) to grant our money to."

For many of the youth involved this was the first time they had met with other teen philanthropists. "We saw this as a great opportunity to combine our efforts and grow the teen philanthropy movement here in Seattle," says Kim Wright, from The Seattle Foundation. Sullivan and Wright hope that this meeting will become an annual event, which will grow to include more teens from the Puget Sound region.

Teens in both SVK and YGAB came to the Summit with their own wealth of philanthropic experiences. Members of each group conduct research in the areas that they fund, they learn to identify a well-written grant-proposal, get to know nonprofits in their community, and in the case of SVK, they do all of their own fundraising. But SVK and YGAB participants benefit most from seeing their grantees in action.

"We get to go in and see exactly who the money goes to," says YGAB member Jennifer Reeve, remembering a visit to Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets. Danielle Vellon, an SVK member recalls visiting a school focused on juvenile justice. "It was touching to see the program in progress...to hear the personal stories from the teachers...I

thought: 'Yes! I'm actually making a difference!'" Danielle appreciates being able to have a more "holistic impact, affecting entire organizations rather than just one individual."

"The support of Social Venture Kids is especially important to Youth Eastside Services because YES strives to guide and empower young people. The fact that a group of youth chose our programs for a grant means a lot to us," says Patti Skelton-McGougan, Executive Director of the YES, one of SVK's 2008 grantees.

Both SVK and YGAB have funded nonprofit organizations for years, making grants that total between \$10,000 and \$25,000 annually. They primarily focus on issues affecting other teens such as: drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, depression and suicide, domestic and dating violence, the juvenile justice system, and homelessness.

***The Seattle Foundation** provides a number of youth philanthropy programs including the introductory Youth Grantmaking Board, the Youth Grantmaking Alumni Board, and two summer camp opportunities that are open to the public. The 2009 Youth Philanthropy Camps will take place August 3-6 for the high school camp, and August 10-12 for the middle school camp. For more information contact: Kim Wright at K.Wright@seattlefoundation.org.*

***Social Venture Kids** is a part of Social Venture Partners Seattle, a network of engaged donors that pool their financial resources, time, and professional skills to strengthen local nonprofits. This year SVK has nine members from private and public schools in the Seattle and Bellevue area.*

***For Grant Seekers:** This year Social Venture Kids is focused on its first non-teen issue: the environment. Proposals are due March 18. For more information visit: www.svpseattle.org/grantmaking*

Press Note: Photos for this article are available upon request. You can view samples at: <http://www.vothphoto.com/files/client/svp/Youth%20Philanthropy%20Summit/index.html>