



**PRESS RELEASE** *for immediate release*

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**Foundation Celebrates 15 Years of Grantmaking**

(COLUMBIA, S.C., AUGUST 30, 2011) - The Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina, a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System, celebrates 15 years in philanthropy this fall. The Foundation, formed out of the sale of fifty percent of Providence Hospitals in 1996, is the only statewide grantmaker having awarded grants to nonprofit and faith-based organizations in all 46 South Carolina counties.

“The work of this Foundation has been inspiring, rewarding and challenging,” said Tom Keith, president of the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina. “We have learned a lot about ourselves and the communities we serve. While we have adapted to change over the past 15 years, we have always remained steady to our mission to reduce poverty in the state.”

Since its beginning, the Sisters of Charity Foundation has awarded more than 1,400 grants and over \$42 million to faith-based and nonprofit organizations throughout the state. “It is one thing to understand the disparity of the poor, but it is quite another to invest tremendous energy and resources to affect change in their lives,” said Yvonne Orr, a Charleston native and board chair. “We have supported organizations at all levels and have witnessed many triumphs and change.”

The Foundation’s Fatherhood Initiative is an example of recognizing a need and continuing to support it. Since 1998, the Foundation has invested more than \$19 million in the Fatherhood Initiative, a statewide initiative working to strengthen relationships between low-income fathers and their families in South Carolina. The Fatherhood Initiative has received national recognition for its innovative approach and is viewed as a best practice. In 2002, the Foundation established the South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families, a nonprofit organization which develops and supports a statewide infrastructure that strengthens relationships between fathers and families throughout South Carolina. The Center currently oversees six fatherhood programs through 11 sites across the state.

The Sisters of Charity Foundation has impacted nonprofits and South Carolina beyond grantmaking. Through its Carolina Academy for Nonprofits, created in 2008, the Foundation has provided training and technical assistance to hundreds of nonprofit staff and volunteers at no cost. A partnership was even formed with Columbia College to give nonprofit leaders an opportunity for formal, graduate-level education and the potential to earn certificate in Nonprofit Leadership Training from Columbia College’s Organizational Change Management graduate program. This certificate program is now in its third year, and nonprofits—and the communities they serve—reap the benefits.

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# SISTERS *of* CHARITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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“We look for ways to build the capacity of organizations in which we invest. Many of the groups have an inspiring mission but lack the necessary skills to implement programs effectively,” said Orr. “Our job is to help bring them to a level where they can make their program successful, and ultimately impact their community and the people they serve.”

Additionally, the Foundation has spearheaded the start of several new organizations to meet targeted needs and foster collaboration. The Foundation was instrumental in the creation of the South Carolina Grantmakers Network, formed in 1997. The South Carolina Grantmakers Network is a group of more than 40 philanthropic grantmaking organizations across the state who come together to discuss current issues and common concerns. The Foundation aided in forming the South Carolina Center for Grassroots and Non-Profit Leadership at Clemson University, the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance and the Fatherhood Policy Project Office.

The Foundation finds itself in the position as one of the largest South Carolina-based foundations with assets of \$82 million. “It is not about our size. It is about our role as a funder, a convener, an advocate and change maker. It is about seeing the state as a whole, and finding ways to reduce poverty and be a voice for the underserved,” said Keith. “We have never attempted to do this on our own; any success the Foundation has witnessed has been the result of working with others at multiple levels.”

## **About the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina**

The Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina, established in 1996, is a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System. The Foundation is committed to addressing the needs of the poor and underserved in all 46 South Carolina counties, and strategically uses resources to reduce poverty through action, advocacy and leadership.

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