

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SILICON VALLEY OFFICIALS COLLABORATE TO PUT YOUTH FIRST

November 9, 2004 - San Jose - San Jose-based Project Cornerstone announced the appointment of Santa Clara County's Office of Education Superintendent Colleen Wilcox and San Jose Police Chief Rob Davis as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of its Advisory Board.

Project Cornerstone's outgoing Advisory Board Chair, former San Jose Mayor Susan Hammer, will pass the torch to Wilcox and Davis during a special Advisory Board and Leadership Network meeting on November 10 at 4:00 p.m. at United Way's Silicon Valley building in San Jose. Wilcox and Davis have both previously served as Advisory Board members for Project Cornerstone and are now continuing and expanding their roles as Chair and Vice Chair.

Speaking about her new appointment, Wilcox says, "The work Project Cornerstone does in our schools and in the community at large is critical in nurturing our youth. In order for them to thrive as individuals they must believe they are valued, and it is up to each of us to reinforce that. I am proud to have been involved with Project Cornerstone to this point and look forward to helping continue their good work." Adds Davis, "When kids feel they have a place in society they are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such a gang activities, violence and substance abuse. Project Cornerstone is making great strides in creating a positive community environment for our youth and I am so pleased to be a part of that movement."

The Advisory Board & Leadership Network meeting comes on the heels of Project Cornerstone's survey effort, which took place in late October. More than 15,000 fourth through twelfth graders at 94 schools in 12 districts throughout Silicon Valley participated in the survey, which measures how well the community is supporting and

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guiding today's youth. Based on extensive studies conducted by Search Institute, a national nonprofit organization, the survey assesses students' experiences, known as developmental assets, with key relationships, opportunities, values and skills they need to grow up to be caring, responsible adults.

States Akemi Flynn, Project Cornerstone's Executive Director, "We first conducted this survey in 1999 and found that Santa Clara County's youth possessed only 18.2 assets out of 40. Studies show that they actually need 31 or more assets in order to truly fulfill their potential. We look forward to seeing how far we have come over the last five years in creating an environment that helps our youth thrive, and we are absolutely thrilled that Colleen and Rob are leading by example. The fact that these highly-visible and well-respected figures are taking such an active role in this effort speaks to the importance of nurturing our youth for the benefit and vitality of the entire community."

In addition to Wilcox and Davis, Project Cornerstone's Advisory Board members include: Supervisor Blanca Alvarado, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors; Lauren Bruton, President, Gay Straight Alliance; Jennifer Ha, Girls for a Change; Bill Hahn, Senior Vice President, Communications & Marketing, Agilent Technologies; Peter Hero, President & CEO, Community Foundation Silicon Valley; Will Lightbourne, Director, Santa Clara County Social Services Agency; Mark Walker, President & CEO, United Way Silicon Valley.

Project Cornerstone

With more than 100 partners, Project Cornerstone mobilizes our entire community to shift from simply reacting to children and youth as problems to connecting with them so they thrive. Our mission is to mobilize a critical mass of asset builders for all so that asset building is a way of life in Santa Clara County. Our vision is to see that all individuals and organizations are motivated and empowered to come together to nurture and develop competent, caring, responsible children and youth.

www.projectcornerstone.org

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