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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Oscar E. Cruz
(213) 484-2870 ext. 236

Community Based Organizations Selected to Improve Educational Attainment in the Central Valley and Inland Empire

SACRAMENTO, CA – Families In Schools, through the Families Improving Education Initiative (FIE), awarded grants to eleven community-based organizations throughout the Central Valley and Inland Empire. FIE is a \$5 million 4-year initiative supported by The James Irvine Foundation that aims to improve the capacity of grantee organizations to engage underserved families in advocacy and educational decision-making at the state and local levels. The Initiative is designed to foster more responsive and appropriate educational policies and practices that ultimately yield better academic outcomes for children and youth in these regions. As the Foundation's intermediary institution, Families In Schools will support these organizations in the planning and implementation of their advocacy plans and help develop their capacity to engage disenfranchised families in the public policy process.

These organizations will focus their work in the Central Valley and Inland Empire, two areas disproportionately hit by the economic slump and home to a high number of individuals with low educational attainment and low-income status. Despite the fact that these regional economies demand an educated workforce, data shows that children are not receiving a quality education. The grantees engaged multiple stakeholders in the development of their advocacy plans that will address problems such as low parental engagement levels, high school drop-out rates, and low academic achievement levels by English Language Learners.

“Communities in the Central Valley and Inland Empire have been struggling for a long time to improve their schools and the educational opportunities available for their children. The Initiative promises to increase the capacity of educational advocacy organizations and foster community and family engagement that will improve student outcomes,” said Maria Casillas, President of Families In Schools.

Recipients of these grants are:

Organization	Impact Areas
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF)	Yolo & San Joaquin Counties
Californians for Justice (CFJ)	Fresno Unified School District
Community, Services, Employment Training (CSET)	Earlimart Elementary School District
Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE)	San Bernardino City Unified School District
Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norte America (COFEM)	Coachella Valley Unified School District
Faith in Action (FIA)	City of Bakersfield
Fresno Center for New Americans (FCNA)	Fresno Unified School District
Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC)	San Bernardino City Unified School District
Lao Family Community of Stockton (LFCS)	Lodi and Stockton Unified School Districts
People and Congregations Together (PACT)	Stockton Unified School District
Reading and Beyond (R&B)	Fresno Unified School District

Families In Schools is a non-profit organization based in Los Angeles whose mission is to involve parents and communities in their children's education to achieve lifelong success. More information is available at www.familiesinschools.org

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