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Jewish Community Action Named One of North America's Most Innovative Jewish Nonprofits

Seventh Annual "Slingshot" Guidebook Names 50 Most Innovative Jewish Nonprofits in America

(Saint Paul, MN) – October 18, 2011 – Jewish Community Action (JCA) has been named one of the nation's 50 most innovative Jewish nonprofits in ***Slingshot '11-'12***, a resource guide for Jewish innovation. Jewish Community Action was selected for this list because its foreclosure prevention project is unique and innovative in demonstrating how the Jewish community can use community organizing and coalition-building to address an economic and racial justice issue.

Slingshot is used by philanthropists, volunteers, not-for-profit executives, and program participants to identify path-finding and trailblazing organizations grappling with concerns in Jewish life such as identity, community, and tradition. Jewish Community Action was chosen for the seventh edition by a panel of 36 foundation professionals from across North America.

In order to be listed in *Slingshot*, organizations are selected from among hundreds of nominees. Finalists are chosen based on their strength in four areas: innovation, impact, leadership, and organizational efficiency.

"Jewish Community Action has involved Jews in alliance with members of communities of color to take action against foreclosures and hold banks more accountable. This alliance work has helped many families escape foreclosure while building new resident leadership and diverse alliances. We are using community organizing strategies that motivate Jews of all ages to put their values into action, said Vic Rosenthal, executive director of JCA. "We are honored to be included in *Slingshot '11/'12* and believe it underscores the very important social justice work being done in a smaller, Midwest Jewish community by a local Jewish social justice organization, Jewish Community Action. Through *Slingshot*, JCA can continue to grow our individual donor base. Participation in *Slingshot* helps to sustain JCA as we expand the depth and breadth of our work for social and economic justice."

According to Will Schneider, Executive Director of *Slingshot*, "*Slingshot* celebrates the relative peace and prosperity that Jews enjoy in the United States and Canada while highlighting those organizations that work to ensure that Jewish life isn't left behind as the world moves forward.

Slingshot '11-'12 is an inspirational look at a Jewish community that is adapting to changing needs in Jewish life. We had more applications than ever this year, with a wider variety of missions. In order to be selected by our evaluators, innovations and their impact had to resonate more than ever.”

Inspired five years ago by *Slingshot*, a group of next-generation philanthropists launched the Slingshot Fund, a collective giving mechanism to support innovative Jewish life. In just five cycles, 55 members of the Slingshot Fund have contributed more than \$1.8 million to innovative Jewish not-for-profits.

Jonathan Raiffe, the Chairman of Slingshot shared, “The Slingshot guide makes a statement to the Jewish community and beyond that next gen funders embrace change, innovation, and evaluation when meeting the needs of our community. Slingshot promotes organizations that hold themselves accountable to all their stakeholders and up to the same scrutiny as for-profit organizations, while pushing the boundaries of how to solve the most pressing issues. Slingshot is about making a statement as to what we believe are the greatest needs and what organizations are doing the best job to fulfill those needs. Organizations that receive grants from Slingshot clearly identify an unmet need and offer proven models and solutions that can have a far-reaching impact.”

Slingshot '11/'12 was released on October 18, 2011. The community will meet on March 14 in New York City at the annual Slingshot Day, where over 250 not-for-profit leaders, foundation professionals, and funders of all ages will engage in candid conversations about philanthropy and innovation.

About *Slingshot*

Slingshot was created by a team of young funders as a guidebook to help funders of all ages diversify their giving portfolios with the most innovative and effective organizations and programs in North America. This guide contains information about each organization’s origin, mission, strategy, impact and budget, as well as details about its unique character. Now in its seventh edition, *Slingshot* has proven to be a catalyst for next generation funding and offers a telling snapshot of shifting trends in North America's Jewish community. The book, published annually, is available in hard copy and as a free download at www.slingshotfund.org.

About Jewish Community Action

JEWISH COMMUNITY ACTION BRINGS JEWISH PEOPLE TOGETHER FROM DIVERSE TRADITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT AND ACTION TO INFLUENCE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE ISSUES, PRIMARILY IN MINNESOTA. THROUGH JEWISH COMMUNITY ACTION, JEWISH CONGREGATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL COALITIONS, INTERFAITH INITIATIVES, NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS, AND OTHERS TO SOLVE TOUGH PROBLEMS BY ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES OF SYSTEMIC RACISM, POVERTY, AND OTHER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE ISSUES.

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