



Social Venture Partners Cincinnati Awards Civic Garden Center Second \$25,000 Grant

Provides Second Year of Financial Investment and Capacity Building Support

September 21, 2009 - CINCINNATI - Social Venture Partners (SVP) Cincinnati awarded the Civic Garden Center a second \$25,000 grant to continue the capacity building efforts of the Civic Garden Center and its proposed Green Learning Station.

In June 2008, the Civic Garden Center received SVP's inaugural \$25,000 investment. In addition to this second \$25,000 grant, the Civic Garden Center will continue to receive direct support in the form of hundreds of hours of pro bono professional and business expertise and expanded connections from the networks of partners of SVP. SVP's model of engaged philanthropy (financial support leveraged with intellectual capital) encourages a 2 - 5 year relationship between SVP and the nonprofits in which they invest.

Vickie Ciotti, Executive Director of the Civic Garden Center, noted that the relationship with SVP in the first year has been "exhilarating, productive, eye-opening, and fun." SVP Cincinnati formed a team of partners to provide support and counsel to the Civic Garden Center staff and board. In preparation for building the new Green Learning Station, the Civic Garden Center, with the support of the SVP team, undertook a strategic planning process and wrote a business plan. The process brought to light several issues that threatened to derail the project. As Ms. Ciotti said,

"The timing couldn't have been better – to [learn of these issues] during the strategic planning process and with the support of SVP, we were able to turn what could have been the end of the project into a very exciting opportunity. With a more clearly defined mission and vision, GLS was adjusted to more closely reflect our mission and the original intent of the project. There clearly would have been a much different outcome had it not been for our partners."

The SVP team also helped the Civic Garden Center develop a marketing plan and materials, strengthen its board membership, and manage the planning and construction process of a newly envisioned and sustainable Green Learning Station.

Year Two funding was approved by SVP Cincinnati to continue support of the Civic Garden Center as it moves into construction of the Green Learning Station and implementation of its new strategic, fundraising, and marketing plans.

In June 2009, two other local nonprofits, Imago for the Earth and Gorman Heritage Farm, were selected as SVP's newest investees. In addition to financial support granted, SVP has created teams of partners who will work with each organization to determine and help meet the capacity building needs of the nonprofits.

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SVP was formed in Cincinnati in August 2007. SVP Cincinnati Partners have expertise in several categories valuable to non-profit organizations, including business management and strategic planning, project management, marketing and public relations, law, technology, financial and investment management, board governance and development, and senior management coaching. The Partners' broad spectrum of experience and backgrounds is leveraged to assist organizations with talent and time, as well as financial resources.

SVP welcomes new partners to join at any time. Prospective partners are invited to attend casual monthly Third Thursday Happy Hours to learn more about SVP's model of philanthropy. A calendar of events is located on SVP's website at www.svpcincinnati.org.

ABOUT SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS CINCINNATI

Using a "hands on" approach, SVP combines the power of business with the passion of philanthropy. People who join SVP are called partners. Partners bring their collective expertise, financial resources, professional skills, life experience and creativity to work in partnership with area nonprofits and their leaders. By pooling resources, partners produce synergistic results while learning to be better philanthropists.

SVP Cincinnati is one of 24 cities affiliated with SVP International, based in Seattle. SVP's overarching goals are to find solutions to some of society's most intractable problems and to create a better community and world. SVP Cincinnati operates as a program of InterAct for Change and covers a 20-county area in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. For further information, contact SVP Coordinator Lisa Davis-Roberts at (513) 458-6715 or lisa@svpcincinnati.org.