



For Immediate Release

April 16, 2009

Contact: Marta Bortner
(916) 205-2836

CALIFORNIAVOLUNTEERS BRINGS CONFERENCE SERIES TO FRESNO AREA TO HELP NONPROFITS WEATHER THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

“Surviving and Thriving During Tough Economic Times” Provides Critical Tools to Strengthen Central Valley Nonprofits

CLOVIS, CA – Today, CaliforniaVolunteers hosted a free, one-day conference designed to provide nonprofit leaders access to key training and resources to help them effectively weather and thrive during the economic downturn. More than 50 nonprofit executive directors, board members and leaders in the Central Valley were scheduled to attend.

A pre-conference survey completed by registered attendees in the Central Valley sheds light on some of the specific struggles local nonprofits currently face. More than half of respondents indicated donations have decreased over the past six months; in contrast, 70 percent reported the demand for services increased over the same period. Nearly half of respondents indicated they could engage many more volunteers in addressing critical community challenges.

“I am approached daily by nonprofits and community-based organizations struggling to do more with less,” said Karen Baker, Secretary of Service and Volunteering. “These conferences are designed to strengthen our nonprofit sector by providing tools to address common challenges and better tap one of our greatest resources – our state’s volunteers.”

The Surviving and Thriving series is made possible through CaliforniaVolunteers’ public-private partnership with Bank of America and the Taproot Foundation. Sessions include how to effectively leverage volunteers, financial and operational tactics to weather the tough economic climate and how to better understand and communicate with nonprofit donors.

“Nonprofits are among the most important, and most vulnerable institutions in our communities,” said Janet Lamkin, California State President for Bank of America. “We are pleased to be able to partner with CaliforniaVolunteers in providing expertise to help them weather the current financial storm.”

Surviving and Thriving conferences have been held in the following communities:

- April 2 Sacramento
- April 8 Orange County (Lake Forest)
- April 9 Los Angeles
- April 15 Rancho Cucamonga

The final conference will be held on April 28 at UC Berkeley

For more information about the volunteering in California or the Surviving and Thriving Conference Series visit CaliforniaVolunteers.org.

CaliforniaVolunteers

CaliforniaVolunteers is the state office that manages programs and initiatives to increase the number of Californians involved with service and volunteering, including the state AmeriCorps program, California Citizen Corps and the Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning. Through the innovative Web site, CaliforniaVolunteers.org, individuals and families can find more than 45,000 volunteer opportunities throughout the state involving the arts, education, animals, disaster preparedness, the environment and other areas of interest. Karen Baker, the nation’s first state cabinet secretary of service and volunteering leads the organization and First Lady Maria Shriver serves as the honorary chairperson. For more information, please visit www.CaliforniaVolunteers.org.

###