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Mi Casa Expands Career Development Services for Disadvantaged Workers with \$350,000 Grant from W.K. Kellogg Foundation

May 10, 2012 (DENVER): Mi Casa Resource Center has received a two-year, \$350,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) to support Mi Casa’s career training programs that help workers with limited skills, education and income – many of them single parents – for career path employment in growth industries.

“We are absolutely thrilled to have received this grant from the Kellogg Foundation, which will enable Mi Casa to expand our sector-focused career training programs to more deserving workers in the Denver area who need support and training to upgrade their skills in order to compete in the job market,” says Christine Marquez-Hudson, Mi Casa’s CEO/Executive Director.

Mi Casa’s career training programs include technical training focused on healthcare, customer services and banking. To help workers who face barriers to employment success overcome their challenges, Mi Casa’s career programs are comprehensive in their approach and include life skills training, individual case management, career coaching, job placement assistance, and follow-up support to ensure employment success. Mi Casa also focused on forming strong partnerships with employers to inform the program curricula, ensure graduates are prepared for the demands of the job, and to facilitate employment opportunities for workers upon graduation.

Mi Casa’s career training programs will be funded through WKKF’s Family Economic Security initiative, which focuses on addressing the primary needs of the family in order to create pathways out of poverty for children. The Family Economic Security initiative supports programs which increase family stability, foster quality careers, and promote financial independence.

Individuals who complete Mi Casa’s career programs and enter employment earn a starting wage of roughly \$11/hour plus benefits - an earnings increase of 50% for incumbent workers. Mi Casa targets training to industries that offer workers a career path and advancement opportunities so that workers can increase their earnings and responsibilities over time.

“Mi Casa’s career programs not only have a profound impact on the lives of individuals whose families benefit from increased wages, benefits and quality of life,” says Marquez-Hudson. “The program also has the potential to help employers and businesses more effectively interface with the emergent Hispanic population. Mi Casa’s

graduates are largely bilingual, bicultural and uniquely capable of helping the burgeoning Latino population more fully participate in the social, commercial and civic life of our community.”

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.

The WKKF grant will be spent over a period of two years to support Mi Casa’s career development programs for workers in the Denver area.

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About Mi Casa Resource Center: Mi Casa is among the oldest and largest Latino-serving organizations in Colorado, founded in 1976 by eight mothers in west Denver. Mi Casa creates new opportunities through career education to help workers launch promising careers; business education to help entrepreneurs and emerging businesses find success through self-employment; and out-of-school enrichment programs for middle and high school youth focused on positive academic, emotional and social development. For 36 years, Mi Casa has been committed to advancing the economic success of Latino and other working families.