



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Walter Wright
216-575-0920 (days)
216-459-9142 (eves)

CLEVELAND-BASED GIVING CIRCLE ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR INNOVATIVE PROJECTS IN CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOODS

The Cleveland Colectivo, a new Cleveland-based “giving circle” whose members make collective contributions to innovative projects in Cleveland, announces the four projects selected for inaugural grants: The Building Bridges Mural Project, The Westside Refugee Family Center, City Wheels, and The Tremont Urban Learning Garden. Reflecting the group’s determination to transform Cleveland, these projects, selected from more than forty applications, focus on creativity, social justice, economic development and environmental sustainability.

“The Cleveland Colectivo is a group of people committed to effecting positive change in Cleveland,” said Walter Wright, one of the founding members of the group. “We believe that philanthropy is something that anyone can participate in – not just Peter Lewis or Bill Gates. We want to celebrate the grassroots projects happening in Cleveland and help them to grow. These grants are meant to be catalytic in nature; and in some cases, they’re given to groups that might not qualify for traditional funding.”

The four groups selected for funding are:

- **The Building Bridges Mural Program:** awarded \$3,000 for artist Katherine Chilcote’s effort to create a youth internship program in partnership with Doug Horner at St. Paul’s Community Church that will result in a mural installation at the intersection of West 25th and Detroit Avenue;
- **The Westside Refugee Family Center:** awarded \$2,500 to implement a six-month pilot “Mommy and Me” program, enhancing offerings already available to a growing number of refugee families on Cleveland’s near west side;
- **City Wheels:** awarded \$1,000 for grant-writing assistance to support this innovative Northeast Ohio car sharing service designed to provide a creative cooperative transportation alternative to car ownership;
- **The Tremont Urban Learning Garden:** awarded \$750 for materials to this project in which Lucky’s Coffee Shop/Sweet Mosaic Bakery will work with neighborhood youth to build a garden in a vacant lot adjacent to the coffee shop and use the locally-grown produce in food and baked goods sold at the bakery.

The Cleveland Colectivo was formed in January of 2005 and has spent the past year recruiting members, creating an organization, and soliciting proposals. Unlike traditional foundations, The Cleveland Colectivo has created a giving circle model with no formal executive director, board of trustees or overhead – except for occasional purchases of pizza and drinks. Decisions are made by consensus at monthly meetings and membership is open. Voting members contribute at least \$100 per quarter and non-voting “associate” members contribute by attending meetings and volunteering. For more information about The Cleveland Colectivo, visit www.clevelandcolectivo.org.

The Cleveland Colectivo mission statement is: “Clevelanders coming together to strengthen our community through collective investments that identify and nurture innovative projects.”

#