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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH NBC TODAY SHOW, LOCAL WAL-MART STORE TO SUPPORT HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

DARTMOUTH, MA, November 15, 2005 -- The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts today launched the 12<sup>th</sup> annual NBC Today Holiday Toy and Gift Drive, having been chosen to participate for the fourth year. This drive provides gifts for children – from infants to 18 year-olds – who otherwise might not receive holiday gifts.

“It is an honor to be one of the more than two hundred non-profit organizations from across the country to partner with the NBC Today Show to make this holiday season a happier one for children in Southeastern Massachusetts,” said Craig J. Dutra, president of the Community Foundation. “We asked local youth organizations to identify the neediest children in our area, and the NBC Today Show’s generosity will help each of these groups brighten the lives of the children they serve.”

The Community Foundation has partnered again this year with Wal-Mart of North Dartmouth and, for the first time, Child & Family Services, Inc., for the Toy Drive. Wal-Mart will collect toys and other gifts from customers with collection boxes around the store, and today presented the Community Foundation with a \$1,000 cash contribution for the toy drive.

Unwrapped toys and gifts will be collected at Wal-Mart until December 15. They are being stored at and distributed from the AT&T building in Fairhaven, space that has been donated for the toy drive by Sakonnet Properties, Inc.

Local organizations working with the Community Foundation to distribute gifts include: Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Bedford, Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth, Brockton Day Nursery, Child & Family Services of New Bedford, Department of Social Services (Fall River office), Family Service Association of Greater Fall River, Handi Kids (Bridgewater), May Institute (Fall River), New Bedford Community Connections Coalition, New Hope, Inc. (Attleboro and Taunton), North Star Learning Centers (New Bedford), Schwartz Center for Children (New Bedford), Thomas Chew Memorial Boys & Girls Club (Fall River), YMCA Southcoast, and YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts.

Last year, more than 750,000 children around the country received \$13.5 million worth of toys, books, games, clothing, electronics and cash that was donated by generous corporate partners and distributed by 210 non-profit organizations nationwide, including the Community Foundation. Locally, the Foundation distributed nearly 5,000 toys and gifts valued at \$83,000 through 14 nonprofit organizations.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for the Community Foundation to bring the Southeastern Massachusetts community together to help brighten the season for many children,” Mr. Dutra said.

### **About the Community Foundation**

Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. CFSEMA is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

To date, the Community Foundation has assets of more than \$14 million and has distributed over \$3 million from 59 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region.