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**For Immediate Release**

## **Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts in Top Philanthropic Tier Nationally**

*Local Organization Meets Rigorous Standards for Quality and Accountability*

**New Bedford, MA** – The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts (CFSEMA) has met the nation’s highest philanthropic standards for operational quality, integrity and accountability. CFSEMA was recently awarded this prestigious accreditation by the Council on Foundations, a national professional association based in Washington, D.C.



“This is similar to the Good Housekeeping Seal for community foundations,” said Steve Gunderson, Council on Foundations president and chief executive officer. “It says that the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts has demonstrated a commitment to operational quality, integrity and accountability.”

CFSEMA is one of only 7 out of 17 Community Foundations in Massachusetts to have achieved this distinction.

“This is critically important to our donors,” said CFSEMA Board Chair Liz Isherwood. “When people make a charitable bequest, establish a fund or set up an annuity, they are putting their trust in us. They are counting on us to manage the investment wisely, honor their charitable wishes or, in some cases, provide lifetime income to a loved one. The National Standards confirmation says our house is in order.”

The National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations Program requires community foundations to document their policies for donor services, investments, grantmaking and administration in order to meet the 43 standards. Established in 2000, the program is the first of its kind for charitable foundations in the United States. With over 200 community foundations already confirmed in compliance nationwide, the program is designed to provide quality assurance to donors, as well as to their legal and financial advisors.

The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts offers a range of charitable funds, allowing donors to advance a cause such as education or the environment, support an individual organization, provide flexible support for community needs or recommend individual grants. In addition to affirming the organization’s philanthropic services, the confirmation validates CFSEMA’s grantmaking practices for the nonprofit community.

“Grantmaking is a lot like investing” Ms. Isherwood added. “We need to assess risks, weigh potential gains, diversify assets, monitor performance and operate fairly. The National Standards Seal is recognition that The Community Foundation is committed to meeting the highest standards for grantmaking as well.”

The Council on Foundations is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit membership association of more than 2,000 grantmaking foundations and corporations, with assets totaling more than \$280 billion. The Council provides the opportunity, leadership and tools needed by philanthropic organizations to expand, enhance and sustain their ability to advance the common good. For more information on the Council, visit its website at [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org)

***More about the CFSEMA***

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 \$16 million and has distributed over \$4.8 million from 84 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. More information about the Foundation can be found at [www.cfsema.org](http://www.cfsema.org).

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