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MOUNTAIN SKY GUEST RANCH FUND REACHES \$1 MILLION MILESTONE IN GIVING

Emigrant, Montana, November 9th, 2005 – The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund today announced it has awarded \$300,000 in grants to non-profit organizations this year, bringing total grants awarded since the fund was established in 2002 to \$1 million.

The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund is comprised of ranch staff members who share a commitment to giving back to the communities where they live and work. As part of this commitment, the fund was established in 2002 primarily to support nonprofit organizations that serve youth and environmental causes in Park and Gallatin Counties.

Since then, the fund has become one of the most active in Montana and a leader in encouraging collaboration among local non-profit community partners.

“We are so proud to have the opportunity to support non-profit partners that offer positive opportunities for youth in Park and Gallatin counties,” said Shirley Arsenault, general manager of Mountain Sky Guest Ranch. “This year has been a pivotal point for the fund, not only in terms of our reaching the \$1 million mark, but also in the way we’ve used our ranch facilities and resources to gather the community for events and dialog around important issues.”

Grants awarded in 2005 include:

- Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits, Park - \$25,000 to support the development of the Park County Community Foundation.
- Big Sky Youth Empowerment, Gallatin and Park - \$20,000 to support and expand an enriched youth mentoring program.
- Children’s Museum of Bozeman, Gallatin and Park - \$26,000 to support school programming and enhance exhibits.
- Crazy Mountain Productions, Park - \$19,000 to support a children’s theater workshop.
- Equinox Theatre Company, Gallatin - \$10,000 to support a teen theater program.
- Horse Medicine, Park - \$3,000 to expand a youth day camp.

- Prevent Child Abuse, Gallatin - \$30,000 to support projects that strengthen families.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Park County, Livingston - \$24,500 to support a youth mentoring program.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Gallatin County, Bozeman - \$19,500 to support a youth mentoring program.
- Bozeman Symphony Society, Gallatin and Park - \$9,700 to expand community outreach programs.
- Burns Telecom Center at Montana State University, Gallatin - \$2,800 to provide scholarships that support summer programs for middle-school students.
- Child Care Connections, Gallatin and Park - \$9,500 to support expansion of the School Age Technical Support Assistance and Resources (START) program into Livingston.
- Community Mediation Center, Gallatin - \$4,700 to support a mediation program in the Bozeman school district.
- Corporation for the Northern Rockies, Gallatin and Park - \$5,700 to support a “sustainable choices” program.
- Federation of Fly Fishers, Park - \$8,500 to support after-school programming for middle-school students.
- Gallatin Valley Agriculture Committee, Bozeman - \$4,800 to support the “Farm Fair” agriculture education program for children.
- Gallatin Valley Land Trust, Bozeman - \$4,900 to support environmental education programming for children.
- United Way of Gallatin County, Bozeman - \$34,500 to support after-school programs.
- Montana Conservation Corps, Gallatin and Park - \$9,500 to support and enhance youth community service programming.
- Montana Outdoor Science School, Gallatin and Park - \$12,500 to support an out-of-school youth science program.

The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund also said it is contributing five percent of the money it would normally award to local community groups toward Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

Beyond the grant dollars the Fund is investing in local non-profits, it is emerging as a leader in strengthening capacity. The staff has a special interest in supporting collaborations among non-profits in Park and Gallatin counties.

To strengthen the capacity of local non-profits, the Fund in 2005 began to more actively use the ranch as a setting for collaboration. In May, a workshop on evaluation and organizational effectiveness was held there, drawing more than 50 participants from 40 non-profit groups throughout Park and Gallatin counties. On October 13-14, the Fund hosted a collaboration workshop that drew 65 individuals from 41 organizations. The workshop was designed to build relationships and increase trust between individuals from different organizations.

"We feel that it is vital to foster collaborations within the community to help maximize local resources," said Tawnya Rupe, director of the fund, representing the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch fund advisory committee.

About The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund

The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund makes grants to non-profit organizations in three categories:

- Children and Youth: to support out-of-school activities and programs that create opportunity, enhance self-esteem and increase cultural awareness among young people.
- Environment and Outdoor Activities: to support programs that increase awareness around or advocate for preservation of natural resources, sustainable growth or outdoor recreation.
- Fostering Understanding: to support organizations that promote intercultural understanding, perform conflict resolution or prevent bullying and violence.

Non-profit organizations can obtain more information about the ranch's commitment to community partnership, guidelines and application process on the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch web site at www.mtnsky.com. The Mountain Sky Guest Ranch Fund is an affiliated fund of The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation.

Located in Emigrant, Montana, Mountain Sky Guest Ranch is nestled within more than 6,000 acres of beautiful, rugged countryside in Paradise Valley. Known for its rustic elegance, majestic scenery, peaceful atmosphere and outdoor adventure activities, the ranch has served as a working and guest ranch since 1929. It offers authentic Montana

adventure and superb guest services to families, couples, singles, groups and corporate teams seeking to “reconnect with the land ... and each other.”

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