



Catholic Social Services

3710 E. 20th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99508
(907) 222-7300 • Fax (907) 258-1091
cssalaska.org

News Release

For Immediate Release

March 26, 2010

Contact:

- Karen Ferguson, RAIS Program Director and State Refugee Coordinator, **222-7376, cell 764-1145**
- Susan Bomalaski, Executive Director, **222-7351, cell 230-8559**

Catholic Social Services Announces Grants for Capacity Building to Ethnic Community Groups

Funds will be used to strengthen local grassroots organizations.

Anchorage — Catholic Social Services' Refugee Assistance & Immigration Services (RAIS) program recently awarded \$64,000 worth of sub-grants to the following organizations to become agents of change for the communities they serve through the Emerging Communities Project.

Polynesian Association of Alaska - \$14,000

Nepali Speaking Bhutanese Community Anchorage - \$12,000

Alaska Hmong Community, Inc. - \$11,500

Alaska Hmong Community Center, Inc. - \$11,500

Sobermiut, Reviving Our Spirit, Inc. - \$8,500

Somali Community of Alaska - \$6,500

Funds distributed to the sub-grantees listed above are from the Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program administered by the Department of Health & Human Services. The six organizations chosen will use the funds to build capacity, foster leadership development, strengthen organizational development and program development and encourage community engagement. Through the provision of training, technical assistance and the sub-awards, Catholic Social Services will enhance each group's ability to provide social services and to increase organizational capacity and sustainability.

CSS' RAIS program successfully provides newly arrived refugee families with the supportive services necessary for self-sufficiency. For example, with assistance from the RAIS program, 75% of Refugee clients arriving in Alaska with no support from relatives obtain employment within six months and 78% are still employed three months later. But many, especially from ethnic communities, still struggle and are not connected to services at established agencies. They seek help first from their fellow community members.

The goal of the Emerging Communities Project at CSS is for the sub-grantees to build stronger organizations better equipped to serve their neighbors. The sub-grantees identified are at a point where they can provide the best leadership for their community members. These grants will provide the ethnic community groups with many of the resources needed to accomplish their goals.

— End —