



NEWS RELEASE

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First Step of Sarasota Receives Grant from Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice

SARASOTA, FL – August 31, 2009 – First Step of Sarasota, Inc., the region's leading provider of substance abuse prevention and recovery programs, was awarded a grant for \$114,000 from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice.

The grant will help cover operational costs of the agency's Seasons program. Seasons treats those who battle mental illness and substance abuse issues in a residential setting. The program always runs at capacity, so any loss in funding that would result in cutting bed space would have a serious impact on the agency's ability to serve this specific population. This grant insures that there will be no need to cut the number served by the Seasons program.

"The infusion of hope and positive energy is much appreciated," said David Beesley, First Step's President and CEO. He added, "the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice recognizes the role non-profits play in the community and revised their standard giving guidelines to help meet the challenges we've all faced."

Last year, First Step served over 8,500 individuals with its prevention programs and nearly 6,000 clients in its residential and outpatient programs located in Sarasota, Manatee and DeSoto counties.

For more information about First Step of Sarasota, or to arrange an interview, contact Grapevine Communications at 941-351-0024 or email tlewis@grapeinc.com. Grapevine Communications is an award-winning advertising, marketing, and public relations firm based in Sarasota and serving clients nationwide.



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