



NEWS RELEASE

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

SARASOTA, FL – April 28, 2009 – First Step of Sarasota, Inc., the region's leading provider of substance abuse prevention and recovery programs, was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice.

The grant will help cover operational costs of the agency's Venice Outpatient office. Prior to receiving the grant, the Venice office was scheduled to close on May 1st due to budget shortfalls. On average, First Step sees over 500 clients per year in this outpatient facility.

"We are grateful for the support we have received from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, not only for this grant, but for their support in prior years. It is crucial for the clients we serve in Venice that they will be able to continue with their treatment plans without having to travel to Sarasota or Charlotte County for services," stated First Step President and CEO David Beesley. He added, "As we face these tough economic times, it is good to know that human services are still receiving support from the local foundations."

Last year, First Step served nearly 14,000 clients in its residential and outpatient programs located in Sarasota, Venice, Arcadia and Bradenton.

For more information about First Step of Sarasota, or to arrange an interview, contact Grapevine Communications at 941-351-0024 or email amassarofain@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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