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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Village Books and Sehome High School Grads to be honored with Outstanding Philanthropist Awards.

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Village Books' owners Chuck and Dee Robinson will spend the afternoon of November 20th with Sehome High School graduates Anders Crabo and Colin Flynn. All four will be accepting awards for their exceptional good works at the National Philanthropy Day awards luncheon at the Sheraton Seattle Hotel. The annual event, celebrating its 20th year, is sponsored by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Washington Chapter. The Robinsons will be accepting the award for the Outstanding Small Business category, and Crabo and Flynn in the Outstanding Youth category.

Last year's event, the largest in the nation, drew 1,200 people to celebrate the 2007 award winners. Among last year's honorees was Whatcom County's own David and Joyce Morse family. Four generations of the Morse family were present along with supporters from many of the organizations which have benefitted from their decades of community involvement, leadership and generosity. Attendance at the 2008 event is anticipated to exceed last year's.

Much more than an independent book store, Village Books is a community leader through philanthropy, education, and activism. Owners Chuck and Dee Robinson have made the Bellingham book store part of the fabric of the community, connecting individuals and causes through the store's newsletter, book signings and fundraising events in support of numerous nonprofit organizations. In addition to traditional fundraising activities and donations by Village Books owners, the small business routinely plays a leadership role in efforts to strengthen and enhance the Whatcom County community. Village Books was nominated by Sustainable Connections, a nonprofit network of locally owned, independent businesses. Michelle Long, executive director of the organization, noted, "Chuck and Dee helped lead the way for Bellingham to become the number one "Green Power" city in the country and to become a national leader in the area of sustainable living. We were proud to nominate them for this much deserved recognition." In addition, Village Books helped lead the way in establishing the Fairhaven Village Green. The Robinsons also maintain the public trails near their store and contribute financially to numerous community non-profit organizations that preserve salmon habitat, wetlands, working farms and clean water.

Colin Flynn and Anders Crabo went beyond mere fundraising for their senior year culminating project to literally leave a legacy for the future. The Sehome High School students, who graduated in June 2008, spent 15 days during the summer of 2007 biking 1,200 miles throughout the state to raise money for an endowment fund they established at the Whatcom Community Foundation. With a goal to strengthen the bond between high school students and their community through charitable giving, the pair created the Bellingham Youth Philanthropy Project. They contacted businesses to pledge money per mile of their bike trip. After raising \$14,000, they worked to establish a committee of Sehome High School students and faculty advisors to advise the community foundation on how to disperse the funds for environmental projects in future years. The first year, thanks to a discretionary fund at the Foundation, they were able to recommend a \$550 grant to support Woodstock Farm Conservancy, a nonprofit working to restore a unique bayside farm property acquired by the city of Bellingham. Mauri Ingram, president and CEO of the Whatcom Community Foundation which nominated Crabo and Flynn, remarked, "It's inspiring to see two young men adopt such a thoughtful, long term view of the world at their age. Many of our donors are awed by it." With their endowment fund, Flynn, a freshman at Pitzer College, and Crabo, a freshman at Pomona College, transcended the norm of youth philanthropy by integrating two fundamental components in their creative effort – true commitment and the traction of legacy.

"We are very fortunate to work with such an outstanding group of philanthropists," said Ray Li, president of AFP Washington and development director of Neighborhood House in Seattle. "Day by day they strive to create a stronger, richer and healthier community for us all." Ingram added, "Having Whatcom County represented by two such exceptional honorees is fantastic. It says a lot about the role philanthropy plays in our community. It's truly becoming second nature to more and more people of all ages, and that is a positive indicator for the long term health of the community."

Luncheon tickets may be purchased through Whatcom Community Foundation. Tickets for the event are \$65 before November 1, 2008 and \$75 afterwards. Transportation via charter bus is also being arranged by the Foundation; an additional charge will apply. For more information, contact the Foundation at (360) 671-6463.