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Contact: Heather Herndon, 310-689-7538

Susan Bringas, 310-633-9439

CITY OF VERNON PRESENTS MOBILE TECHNOLOGY CENTER TO THE SOUTHEAST CITIES
New High-Tech Mobile Center to Help Bridge the Digital Divide in the Southeast Cities

HUNTINGTON PARK, CA (January 30, 2010) – With a goal of improving the quality of life for residents in the Southeast cities by providing computer access and training for low income youth and adults, the City of Vernon today presented a Mobile Technology Center to the Southeast Community Development Corporation (SCDC) and the Southeast Cities. Vernon’s donation of almost \$500,000 for the Mobile Technology Center will mean that people living in the Southeast Cities will have access to the internet and technology like never before.

The brightly-colored, 37-foot RV will house 15 laptops and a projector, and will be staffed by a IT instructor who will provide instruction for organizations that want to offer classes but are unable to accommodate a learning center. In addition to computer literacy, classes will include academic instruction, adult educational training, ESL education, financial literacy, math and reading tutoring and occupational training. SCDC will partner with HUB Cities, Humans Service Association, Maywood PAL, Gage Middle School, Salvation Army, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, HP-Bell Adult School, and East Los Angeles College, among other organizations, and will refer students for more advanced classes.

“The Mobile Technology Center, donated by the City of Vernon, will have a significant impact on our community, where the lack of public access to the internet and computers is extreme,” said Ronald Garcia, Board Chair of the Southeast Community Development Corporation. “SCDC has a goal of transforming the region into a computer-literate community and providing education and access to close the Digital Divide. This Mobile Technology Center is an important step towards realizing that goal.”

A recent study conducted by the University of California at Berkeley showed that residents of the Southeast cities are largely disconnected from the Internet due to the lack of broad access to computers, technical assistance and computer literacy education. This reality, referred to as the “Digital Divide” is a concern for the region and the state’s future global competitiveness.

“We are proud to present this new tool to the Southeast Cities, which will open up a world of opportunities – improving access to education and health information, building literacy, assisting with employment searches, and helping residents to acquire housing, community and health care services,” said City of Vernon Mayor Hilario “Larry” Gonzales. “We look forward to seeing the Digital Divide close in the next few years.”

The presentation took place in conjunction with the ***Get Connected!*** Community Connect & Safety Fair, a free, family-friendly event targeting the residents of the Southeast cities who do not have a broadband connection in their homes. The Community Connect and Safety Fair is a hands-on, interactive

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2-2-2 Mobile Technology Center

event to demonstrate the benefits of using broadband, as well as address the key factors that prevent people from using it. Featuring educational exhibits, entertainment and opportunities to learn about the instant access to communication, information and services that broadband can offer, the fair included booths from the US Census Bureau, Youth Policy Institute, Centro Latino for Literacy and AT&T. A brand new laptop computer was given away every hour during the four-hour event.

“In Los Angeles County, 42 percent of households do not have broadband connections because of disabilities, language barriers, poverty and, in some cases, a simple fear or misunderstanding of technology,” said Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO of California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF). “**Get Connected!** provides guidance and assistance for all Californians in accessing vital high-speed services at a time when they are needed most, and aims to close a Digital Divide that puts residents – and the state – at a competitive disadvantage.”

Get Connected! is part of a new public awareness program launched by the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) with a goal of closing the Digital Divide by breaking down barriers to high-speed internet access, and encouraging all Californians to **Get Connected!** The goal is to educate residents that with access to broadband high-speed internet, they can save time by securing instant access to communication, information and services, stretch their dollars, and get ahead in their life and careers.

The new Mobile Technology Center and the **Get Connected!** initiatives share a goal of widespread adoption of broadband connectivity in order to help residents take advantage of the educational, economic development and citizenship opportunities.

About the Southeast Community Development Corporation(SCDC)

The Southeast Community Development Corporation is a community and economic development nonprofit focused on improve the living standards of children and adults in the Southeast area of Los Angeles County. For more information, please visit www.scdcorp.org or call (323) 585-4579.

About The City of Vernon

For more than 100 years, the City of Vernon has served as an industrial and economic resource for surrounding communities in Southern California. Vernon’s businesses provide jobs for nearly 50,000 people, many who live in diverse adjacent communities including Bell, Bell Gardens, Boyle Heights, Commerce, Huntington Park and Maywood.

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