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CATHOLIC VOLUNTEER NETWORK (CVN) RECEIVES MAJOR GRANT

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Selects CVN for Program Funding

Takoma Park, MD – James Lindsay, Executive Director of the Catholic Volunteer Network (CVN) announced today that the organization has received a major grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The award, which totals \$1.7 million over the next three years, will enhance CVN’s mission of providing young women with the opportunity to work directly with religious congregations of women as well as offer opportunities for volunteers to discern a potential call to religious life.

“We are deeply honored to have been selected by the Hilton Foundation for this critical grant,” Mr. Lindsay said. “This project will encourage the development of new volunteer programs sponsored by communities of women religious, foster greater collaboration among these congregations regarding volunteer placement sites and community living, encourage more individuals to take part in the work being done by Catholic sisters, and offer current and former volunteers the opportunity to consider a religious vocation,” he added.

CVN has an established relationship with religious congregations of women across the country. Currently, 49 of CVN’s 215 member programs (23%) are sponsored by communities of women religious. These 49 programs last year placed more than 1,000 volunteers in full-time service in the U.S. and around the world. This grant will allow CVN to further sustain these programs and to assist religious congregations that do not have the resources to launch and maintain such programs in their own communities.

“The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation’s Catholic Sisters global strategy has as one of its prime objectives to increase the number of women who enter religious life in the United States,” said Sister Rosemarie Nassif, Director of the Hilton Foundation’s Catholic Sisters Initiative. “Recent research indicates that 37% of faith-based volunteers considered a vocation to religious life or priesthood. We want to test the hypothesis that volunteering with sisters is a fertile, yet untilled, soil for vocations. Providing more

volunteers the opportunity to serve and live with sisters as well as to discern a potential call to religious life can be catalytic in impacting the number of those who hear and respond to that call. The Catholic Volunteer Network is an ideal organization to test this hypothesis.”

As it commemorates its 50th anniversary, Catholic Volunteer Network is recognized as the leading non-profit association for faith-based domestic and international volunteer programs. Currently, more than 20,000 volunteers serve in its 215 member programs throughout the United States and in more than 100 countries worldwide. The CVN annual directory, *RESPONSE*, and website, www.catholicvolunteernetwork.org, provide a comprehensive list of domestic and international faith-based volunteer opportunities.

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation was created in 1944 by international business pioneer Conrad N. Hilton, who founded Hilton Hotels and left his fortune to help the world’s disadvantaged and vulnerable people. The Foundation currently conducts strategic initiatives in six priority areas: providing safe water, ending chronic homelessness, preventing substance abuse, helping children affected by HIV and AIDS, supporting transition-age youth in foster care and extending Conrad Hilton’s support for the mission and work of Catholic Sisters worldwide.

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