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**Women for Women Giving Circle
Awards New Grant of \$10,000**

SPRINGFIELD – The *Women for Women* initiative at the Sangamon County Community Foundation (SCCF) has announced the recipient of its inaugural grant award for 2008. Sangamon County nonprofit organizations were invited to submit grant proposals in June of this year for the competitive grant to support programs for women and girls.

The 2008 recipient is the University of Illinois at Springfield-Volunteer & Civic Engagement Center and UIS Athletics. The grant will be used for a mentoring program that will be a partnership between the Volunteer & Civic Engagement Center and the Athletic Department.

The “**Girl to Girl DreamSpeakers**” mentoring program will match UIS female athletes with local girls in grades 8-10 for the 2008-2009 school year. The UIS women athlete-mentors will work with approximately 120 female students from Springfield public schools through events and activities designed to:

- educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living;
- empower them to make informed decisions about their future;
- enhance the possibility that they will attend college.

In addition to the ongoing mentoring relationship, there will be two larger group events in the fall and spring which will be open to any Springfield females in grades 8-10. These group events will feature speakers who can encourage young girls to set high personal and professional goals and standards.

Women for Women announced the grant award at a reception held Wednesday evening. "The Volunteer & Civic Engagement Center, in partnership with UIS Athletics, is very pleased to be the recipient of the first ever *Women for Women* grant. We are grateful to the Sangamon

County Community Foundation for providing this opportunity to impact lives and create unique experiences for the children and women in our local community,” stated Kelly Thompson, Director of the Volunteer & Civic Engagement Center at UIS.

"This important grant gives our female athletes an opportunity to touch the lives of girls by creating possibilities for their future," said UIS Chancellor Richard Ringeisen. "And this award highlights UIS' commitment to volunteerism and civic engagement."

In addition to the grant announcement, *Women for Women* also presented three awards to local women who go above and beyond to foster positive change in the lives of others through their involvement, action, and dedication. The inaugural **“Women Helping Women” Award** recipients are: **Debbie Huffman - Lanphier High School; Barbara Rochelle - Lawrence Education Center; and Eydee Schultz - Camp Care-A-Lot.**

Women for Women is a special initiative at the Sangamon County Community Foundation formed in 2007. The members create a “giving circle” where annual contributions are pooled to create a permanent resource for grantmaking in Sangamon County for issues effecting women and girls. The Chair of the *Women for Women* Steering Committee is Mayor Karen Hasara. Other members of the Steering Committee are: Virginia Conlee, Dr. Mary F. Loken, Dr. Anne Morgan, Judith G. Stephens, and Lisa W. Stone.

Local nonprofits can apply for the competitive grant award from Women for Women in the summer of each year. Local nonprofit organizations should watch the Sangamon County Community Foundation website for the next round of applications, or sign up online to receive alerts when funding opportunities are available throughout the year. The website is www.sccf.us.

The Sangamon County Community Foundation is a resource for charities and donors in Sangamon County whose mission statement is “*Connecting people who care with causes that matter*”.

The Volunteer & Civic Engagement Center at the University of Illinois at Springfield was established to provide volunteer opportunities to students, faculty and staff, support campus-community partnerships, and build character and shape future leaders. For more information about volunteer opportunities in Sangamon County, please contact 206-7716 or e-mail volunteer@uis.edu or www.uis.edu/volunteer.

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