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For immediate release

Crittenton Women's Union is Named Finalist for \$250,000 Nonprofit Collaboration Prize

January 14, 2009. Boston — Crittenton Women's Union has been named one of eight finalists for The Collaboration Prize, a national cash award of \$250,000 presented to an outstanding model of nonprofit collaboration.

The Lodestar Foundation, in association with the Arizona-Indiana-Michigan (AIM) Alliance, created The Collaboration Prize in an effort to demonstrate how nonprofit resources can be used more effectively to create greater impact. Crittenton Women's Union was selected as a finalist from a competitive pool of over 644 U.S.-based nominations. The Collaboration Prize winner will be announced on March 5, 2009.

"We consider it an honor and a testament to the outstanding success of our merger to be a finalist for The Collaboration Prize," said Pamela A. Murray, chair of Crittenton Women's Union and principal, Bessemer Trust Company. "When we embarked on the merger of two historic Boston nonprofits—Crittenton and The Women's Union—our goal was to build on their complementary strengths to create an innovative organization that effects real change in the lives of low-income families, and we have."

Crittenton and The Women's Union merged operations in 2006 to form Crittenton Women's Union with the goal of furthering their shared commitment to helping low-income families attain economic self-sufficiency. Combining Crittenton's extensive programming with The Women's Union highly developed research and advocacy areas has positioned CWU to become a laboratory for social change. Today, CWU provides a continuum of services to foster a woman's journey from homelessness to a family-supporting job, conducts independent research into the obstacles the people it serves face, and advocates for policy changes to remove those obstacles.

"We went ahead with our merger because we were convinced that it would make us a stronger organization and allow us to create greater positive impact upon the lives of women struggling to be economically independent," said Elisabeth D. Babcock, president and CEO of Crittenton Women's Union. "Being chosen as a finalist for this wonderful award is terribly validating because it shows that others, like the Lodestar Foundation, can see this impact, and that we are actually starting to achieve our dreams for the organization and the women we serve."

The Collaboration Prize winner will be announced on March 5, 2009 at a seminar in Scottsdale, Arizona on nonprofit effectiveness hosted by Lodestar and the Association of Small Foundations. The winner – chosen by a Final Selection Panel of leaders from the nonprofit and business

worlds – will provide the most successful model of collaboration meeting the prize’s criteria (as described on the award’s Web site, www.thecollaborationprize.org). All eight finalists will be invited to attend the seminar and to participate in panel discussions to share their experiences.

The announcement of the winner will come at a time when many nonprofits are desperately seeking ways to remain viable in an increasingly harsh fundraising environment.

“The economic crisis has decreased charitable giving and that has dramatically increased interest in collaborations and mergers among nonprofits, particularly with respect to eliminating duplication and sharing resources,” says Lodestar board chairman, Jerry Hirsch. “Though such strategies can be an imperative during this economic crisis, collaborations and mergers are best practices that should be considered even in the best of economic times.”

To set up an interview with Pamela A. Murray or Elisabeth D. Babcock of Crittenton Women’s Union, contact Stephanie Nichols at 617.259.2946 or snichols@liveworkthrive.org.

To speak with someone from The Lodestar Foundation, the AIM Alliance or any of the other finalists, contact Claudia Gunter at cgunter@fenton.com or (212) 584-5000 x 226. For more information on The Collaboration Prize or for more details on the finalists, please visit www.thecollaborationprize.org.

The other seven Collaboration Prize Finalists are:
(*in alphabetical order*)

1. **Cancer Vaccine Collaborative**, New York, New York, Cancer research collaboration promoting learning over competition
2. **Chattanooga Museums Collaboration**, Chattanooga, Tennessee, Administrative collaboration among The Creative Discovery Museum, The Hunter Museum of American Art and the Tennessee Aquarium
3. **Museum of Nature and Science**, Dallas, Texas, Merger among the Dallas Children’s Museum, The Science Place and Dallas Museum of Natural History
4. **New York LawHelp Consortium**, New York, New York, Collaboration among legal services organizations providing on-line resources
5. **Ready, Set, Parent**, Buffalo and Lackawanna, New York, Collaboration between organizations supporting at-risk new parents
6. **ShoreBank Enterprise Cascadia**, Ilwaco, Washington, Merger of two community development financial institutions
7. **YMCA/JCC Integration**, Sylvania, Ohio (Greater Toledo), Merger of Jewish Community Center and Young Men’s Christian Association in Greater Toledo

About Crittenton Women’s Union

Crittenton Women’s Union, a Boston-based nonprofit organization, combines direct service programs, independent research and public policy advocacy in its mission to transform the course of low-income women’s lives so that they can attain economic independence and create better futures for themselves and their families. Each year CWU helps more than 1,600 people through its safe housing, education and training programs, and family support services. For more information, visit www.liveworkthrive.org.

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