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The Annie E. Casey Foundation

DOUGLAS NELSON TO RETIRE IN 2010 AS PRESIDENT OF ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

*Departure will mark 20 years as head of nation's leading advocacy
philanthropy for at-risk children and families*

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BALTIMORE – Douglas W. Nelson, president and chief executive officer of The Annie E. Casey Foundation, will step down in April 2010 after two decades as head of the leading American philanthropy serving the nation's disadvantaged children and their families.

"Doug Nelson enlarged the Casey Foundation's mission from a narrow service focus into a broad-based reform portfolio that has transformed the way this nation understands the needs of our most vulnerable children and families," said Michael L. Eskew, chair of the Foundation's Board of Trustees. "His path breaking vision and creativity – and his insistence on tangible results – have become core values of the Foundation he built. I am confident that the deep and purpose-driven team he has assembled will help us make a thoughtful and seamless transition to new leadership. Above all, we will remain committed to Jim Casey and Doug Nelson's mission of improving opportunities and outcomes for America's most disadvantaged children and families."

Nelson, one of the longest-serving presidents among major American foundations, presided over grant disbursements totaling more than \$3 billion during his tenure.

"For 20 years, I have had the privilege of working with an engaged and supportive Board and a remarkable staff – a group of the most thoughtful, most committed, and hardest-working individuals imaginable," Nelson said upon announcing his decision. "Because of these people, the Foundation is today a strong and principled organization, and it is gratifying to know that Casey is in the hands of such resourceful and talented professionals."

"My appreciation and my gratitude for those of you on the front lines of our work knows no bounds," Nelson wrote in a letter to the Foundation's grant recipients. "If there is an overarching legacy to our work together, it is that we have placed an indelible imprint on future American social policy. You have not only changed the conversation about the services and supports needed by vulnerable children and families, but you have changed the priorities that will shape public policies for years to come."

Eskew said that a search process would begin immediately to ensure a considered and orderly transition. The Casey Board has established a search committee to review a diverse pool of candidates who understand and appreciate the core values and mission of the Foundation. It is expected that there

will be candidates from within the Foundation itself as well as external prospects. The firm of Isaacson, Miller has been retained to manage the search.

“Speaking for myself and the entire Senior Leadership Team, it has been a privilege and an honor to work with and for a leader with Doug Nelson’s intelligence, courage and selflessness,” said Ralph Smith, executive vice president at Casey and chair of the Board of the Council on Foundations. “I look forward to working with our Board to find and support a worthy successor - an extraordinary leader committed and prepared to lead the next generation of our work on behalf of this nation’s most vulnerable children, families and communities.”

The Nelson Legacy – and Casey’s Future

During his 20-year tenure, Nelson shaped and scaled up many of Casey’s most influential initiatives that have touched millions of American children, among them KIDS COUNT, the Annie Casey Fellowship, Family to Family, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, permanency-focused foster care services, and *Making Connections* – a decade-long effort to help low-income communities forge stronger links to economic opportunity, positive social networks, and effective services and supports.

Kent C. “Oz” Nelson, who chaired the Casey Board for years said “Doug’s deep commitment to social justice, his passion for this nation’s discounted and underserved populations, and his great personal integrity had set the highest standards for all Casey work. From his first day on the job, Doug insisted on using Casey dollars to leverage and stimulate additional resources from the public and private sectors, and that has extended the Foundation’s influence and impact far beyond its grant-making and direct service activities.”

Jim Kelly, also a former chair of the Board, added: “As I think back over the Foundation’s evolution, it was often Doug’s courage that got us into our most fertile learning projects – such initiatives as the East Baltimore Redevelopment Initiative, Atlanta’s neighborhood revitalization, the commitment to significant mission-related investments out of our endowment, the encouragement of powerful sector collaborations like Living Cities, our big investments in strategic consulting as a way of supporting deep public system reform, and the movement of our direct service work from long-term foster care to a focused commitment to permanence for children. This thoughtful approach sets the stage for future innovation and experimentation. And we are delighted that we can count on Doug’s continuing advice and guidance as we grapple with new challenges in the years ahead.”

Twenty Years of Progress

When Nelson was named to lead the Casey Foundation in 1990, the institution was headquartered in a small office in Greenwich, Connecticut, and had a grant-making staff of six and a service staff of 40 social workers. Today, the Foundation occupies three buildings in Baltimore, with regional service operations around the country, and encompasses a staff of more than 500. Since Nelson assumed the helm, the Foundation’s assets have grown from \$590 million to nearly \$3 billion. This growth occurred despite Nelson’s and the Board’s longstanding policy of routinely authorizing an annual pay-out rate of more than seven percent, well above the philanthropic sector’s five-percent norm. Casey’s annual spending has increased from \$35 million in Nelson’s first year to more than \$240 million in 2008, allocated among more than 900 grantees.

From the start of his tenure, Nelson emphasized that Casey’s brand of philanthropy must be informed by credible, data-driven analysis. Along with colleagues at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, he helped fashion and expanded the annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* on the comparative well-being of children in each state – first published in 1990 – which became a reliable benchmark of the education, health, and economic status of U.S. children and their families, as well as a standard measurement

reference for policymakers, the media, advocates, and public officials at all levels of government. It also led other grant-makers to incorporate evidence-based strategies into their funding decisions.

Focus: Results-Oriented Social Policies

Recognized as one of the country's foremost experts on community-based responses to improve the lives of at-risk children and families, Nelson has frequently advised national political leaders and child advocates on a range of issues, including foster care services, human service reform, neighborhood and community development, and economic security, among many others.

Constance Horner, a former director of the Office of Personnel Management in the Reagan Administration and a former longtime Casey Trustee, said Nelson sought to make the Foundation a nonpartisan advocate of results-oriented social policies at federal, state, and local levels. "Doug has unmatched personal qualities that allowed him to put forward insightful policy prescriptions that came across as non-adversarial. As a result, Casey was regarded as an honest broker that could enable conflicting views to be refocused toward measurable and positive results," Horner said.

From 1998 to 2002, Nelson chaired the New York City Special Advisory Panel on Child Welfare, which worked with city agencies and local courts to implement reform strategies for more effective child welfare practices. The results have been credited with helping to extend services to a wider range of recipients and reducing foster care and congregate placements in New York – and providing a model of reform for other jurisdictions.

He also is co-chair of the Board of Trustees of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative; former chair of Living Cities: The National Community Development Initiative; and former vice chair of the Board of Trustees of The Foundation Center. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the East Baltimore Development Initiative; chair of Safe and Sound – Baltimore's Campaign for Children and Youth; and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Baltimore Community Foundation and the CDC Foundation in Atlanta.

In addition to frequent lectures and addresses, Nelson has written widely on a range of domestic social policy issues. His social history of the World War II relocation of Japanese Americans entitled *Heart Mountain* earned a Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1976. He maintains close ties with individuals affected by this experience and currently serves on the board of the Heart Mountain, Wyoming Foundation. His other published works include studies and essays on children and youth, aging, long-term care, and low-income housing. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for his and the Foundation's contributions to public service.

Prior to coming to Casey, Nelson taught history at the University of Wisconsin, served as Assistant Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services and later as Deputy Director of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, under the late Tom Joe.

The Casey Foundation was founded in 1948 in Seattle by United Parcel Service co-founder Jim Casey and his siblings in honor of their mother. It is today among the top 20 U.S. foundations in asset size.

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