**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT:**
**Rene Castro**
**(562) 435-8184**
**Rcastro@cacej.org**

**Building Healthy Communities: Long Beach Looking for Local Leaders**

**Long Beach** - Building Healthy Communities: Long Beach announced today that applications will be available for youth, adults and local community-based organizations to take a seat on the initiative's Steering Committee. *Building Healthy Communities* is a 10-year, $1 billion plan of The California Endowment. In connection with staff-led statewide policy initiatives, 14 communities, including Long Beach, are taking action to make where they live healthier. They're doing this by improving employment opportunities, education, housing, neighborhood safety, unhealthy environmental conditions, access to healthy food and more. The goal: to create places where children are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for supporting the effective implementation of the Building Healthy Communities Long Beach Community Action Plan and for ensuring that its implementation is accountable to community constituents. This will include aligning strategies and outcomes with community needs and opportunities; providing a forum for collaboration; and looking for opportunities to link and leverage the work of Building Healthy Communities. The Steering Committee will be an inclusive space where the voices of youth, community members, and service providers are equally valued.

"The Steering Committee serves an extremely important role in determining the direction and success of this enormous project. We are looking for people who are passionate about building healthy communities in central and west Long Beach," stated Rene Castro, co-Hub Manager for the effort. "The Steering Committee is responsible for the effective implementation of the community's vision and ensuring that the work is accountable to local constituencies," stated Juan Benitez, Director for The Center for Community Engagement at California State University, Long Beach and co-Hub Manager for the effort.

Applications will be available in hard copy in English, Spanish and Khmer (and other languages by request) at the Building Healthy Communities: Long Beach "Hub" meeting to be held June 2, 2011 at Martin Luther King Jr. Park from 4:00 - 6:30pm. Nominations will be open through June 23, 2011. Interested applicants may also get a copy of the application online at: http://www.mycalconnect.org/longbeach/

The California Endowment, a private, statewide health foundation, was established in 1996 to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians. Headquartered in downtown Los Angeles, The Endowment has regional offices in San Francisco, Sacramento, Fresno and San Diego, with program staff working throughout the state. From 2010-2020, The Endowment will focus the majority of its resources on its 10-year strategic plan

*Building Healthy Communities*. For more information, visit The Endowment's Web site at www.calendow.org.

###