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Media Contacts:

Kate Rapson, krapson@graham-associates.com
Melissa Hinderman, mhinderman@graham-associates.com
Graham & Associates, Inc.
(415) 986-7212

Passing the Buck...Back to Society

Social Fusion & Social Venture Network Join Forces to Host Event Helping Entrepreneurs Build Socially Conscious Businesses

SAN FRANCISCO, CA • February 17, 2005 — Two of the Bay Area's premiere organizations serving social ventures are partnering for the first time to provide local, socially conscious entrepreneurs with a top-rate learning experience. Social Fusion, an incubator that helps social entrepreneurs build the community, credibility and capital to develop early and transitional stage non-profit and for-profit social ventures into successful, sustainable organizations and Social Venture Network (SVN), a non-profit network of leaders committed to building a just and sustainable world through business, are co-producing a unique forum that serves first and second-stage entrepreneurs facing challenges in growing an enterprise while maintaining a social mission. The forum, Social Venture Institute (SVI) San Francisco (a sold-out event) will be held on **February 28th - March 1st in San Francisco, CA.**

SVI San Francisco is one in a series of four SVI events being held this year across the U.S. and Canada and marks the first to be run as a joint venture. Later in the year, Social Fusion will once again co-host the Boston event with SVN. SVI was created by Social Venture Network in 1996. More information is available at www.wtc-sf.org/svinstitute.html or www.svn.org.

The format of SVI is a highly interactive and experiential combination of business case studies. On February 28, SVI San Francisco will showcase the success story of local hospitality guru, Chip Conley, Founder and CEO of Joie de Vivre Hospitality. On March 1st, participants attend plenary sessions with emerging leaders, including John Sage of Pura Vida Coffee, a fair trade coffee company, who will discuss his real-life David & Goliath story; and David Green, Founder and Executive Director of Project Impact will introduce the first public presentation of a new commercial enterprise - The Hearing Company.

"Because social entrepreneurs are so pressed for time, it makes sense for us to combine our educational efforts to create an unparalleled, but convenient, experience for these dynamic individuals," states Deborah Nelson, Co-Executive Director of SVN.

Keynote speakers and mentors for SVI San Francisco include:

- Chip Conley, Founder and CEO, Joie de Vivre Hospitality
- Clara Miller, President, Nonprofit Finance Fund
- David Green, Founder, The Hearing Company
- Greg Steltenpohl, Founder, Odwalla Juice
- Jan Piercy, Advisor, ShoreBank Corporation
- John Sage, President and Co-Founder, Pura Vida Coffee

- Martha Jiménez, Vice President for Policy and Development, TransFair USA
- Pamela Hartigan, Managing Director of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship
- Paul Rice, Founder of TransFair USA
- Rev. Nic Francis, Founder, Easy Being Green

“While SVI has always featured a contingent of wonderful mentors, we’re particularly delighted with the caliber of speakers we’ve been able to assemble this year as a result of our combined efforts,” says Amber Nystrom, Executive Director of Social Fusion.

Founded by Gary Hirshberg, President and CEO of Stonyfield Farm, SVI was designed to provide an interactive and affordable way for entrepreneurs to explore ways to succeed in socially conscious ventures. The combination of high-quality mentors, a confidential and supportive environment, and a practical problem-solving format enables participants to acquire a rich portfolio of skills, a plan to grow their social purpose organization, and a network of contacts to further their enterprise.

About Social Fusion

Social Fusion, an incubator that helps social entrepreneurs build the community, credibility and capital to develop early and transitional stage non-profit and for-profit social ventures into successful, sustainable organizations. Social entrepreneurship is the use of business acumen and market-driven business models to achieve social change. The dynamic entrepreneurs in its portfolio are to the realm of accomplishing social change what Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin are to the world of technology. Social Fusion is a core reason behind the emergence of the Bay Area as a hub for social entrepreneurship.

About Social Venture Network (SVN)

Founded in 1987 by some of the nation’s most visionary leaders in socially responsible business and investment, SVN (www.svn.org) is a non-profit network of leaders committed to building a just and sustainable world through business. SVN promotes new models of leadership for socially and environmentally sustainable business through its network of nearly 400 business owners, investors and non-profit executives.

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