



**SONORA AREA FOUNDATION**  
For **good.** For **ever.**

## News Release

For immediate release

December 22, 2009

From: Sonora Area Foundation

Contact: Lin Freer, Sonora Area Foundation, 533-2596

### **Interfaith wins \$10,000 Elaine Symons Baker Award**

Volunteers and staff at Interfaith Social Services received a holiday surprise from the Sonora Area Foundation today, when they were presented with a \$10,000 gift as recipients of the 2009 Elaine Symons Baker Community Impact Award. The gift is presented each year to a local nonprofit.

“It was an absolutely wonderful surprise,” said Sally Scott, a volunteer with Interfaith for more than 22 years. “We really appreciate it – this will buy a lot of food for local families.”

Scott is a food purchaser for Interfaith, and said the extra funds will be a huge boost in a hard year. “We’re serving about 860 families a month right now,” she said. “And we’re seeing so many families who have never had to ask for help before.”

Interfaith Deputy Director and Treasurer Phil Sandoval said the award couldn’t have come at a more critical time.

“Our caseload has taken such a big jump this year,” he said. “With so many people out of work, it really has climbed.”

Sonora Area Foundation Director Robert Ozbirn presented the award at the foundation office this morning.

“It’s always fun to present this,” Ozbirn said. “We give it to an agency that’s doing an exemplary job and Interfaith certainly qualifies.”

The annual award is named in memory of Sonora native Elaine Symons Baker, who with her brother, Irving J. Symons, were founding donors to the Sonora Area Foundation.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Sonora Area Foundation was established in 1990, and is a Community Foundation that channels donors’ charitable contributions to worthy projects in Tuolumne

County. Its mission is to strengthen its community by promoting philanthropy through assisting donors, making grants and providing leadership.

The Foundation, along with two supporting organizations, The Irving J. Symons Foundation and the Symons Family Fund, now have assets of more than \$24 million. The governing boards regularly award grants that fulfill needs in Tuolumne County. Those grants totaled over \$1,700,000 in 2009, and exceed \$13 million since inception. The Sonora Area Foundation also administers more than 180 charitable funds set up for scholarships and other charitable causes.

The Sonora Area Foundation is certified as having achieved the National Standards of Excellence for U.S. Community Foundations by the Council on Foundations and is a member of the League of California Community Foundations.

For more information on grant applications or the establishment of a donor fund, contact the Foundation at 209-533-2596 or the website [www.sonora-area.org](http://www.sonora-area.org).