

For Immediate Release

Contact: Gretchen Heinze Hardman  
Executive Director  
Community Foundation of Charles Co.  
301-885-0108

**STUDENTS PICKING UP THE SLACK  
BY ADDING MORE “BLING” TO THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

**Waldorf, Maryland, DECEMBER 4, 2008** – A youth philanthropy program has formed to aid youth-related charities located in Charles County. The program named by its committee members is called BLING, Business Leaders Interested ‘N’ Giving. Their mission: Young Future Business Leaders of America developing awareness in order to improve themselves and give back to the Charles County community. BLING is an offshoot of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapters from each of the high schools located in Charles County.

The two student representatives from each of the participating high schools meet regularly under the guidance of the Community Foundation of Charles County and the Charles County Board of Education. In addition, to creating their name, mission statement and voting on officers, the students have set fundraising goals, plan to host fundraisers, and award grants to youth-related nonprofits located in Charles County. The grants will be based on (but not limited to) *The Priority Needs Assessment for Charles County*, a study recently completed through a collaboration of three key organizations in Charles County - the Community Foundation of Charles County, the United Way of Charles County and the Charles County Commissioners.

“Our goal is to empower the students with leadership skills, teach them how the act of giving can positively change a person’s life, and to encourage them to live responsibly because their actions can influence many more,” stated Gretchen Heinze Hardman, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Charles County. “In addition, we want the teens to have fun.”

The Community Foundation of Charles County’s mission is to improve the quality of life for the community of Charles County by aligning philanthropic interests with community needs through stewardship and collaboration.

“We are looking forward to the start of something great for Charles County public schools,” says Kevin Wedding, VP of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation of Charles County.

To find out more information about the Youth Philanthropy Program, please call the Foundation office at 301-885-0108 or send an email to [gretchen.heinze@charlescommunityfoundation.org](mailto:gretchen.heinze@charlescommunityfoundation.org).