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Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors opens Chicago office; Offers new assessment tool for family foundations

Detroit and Chicago – Feb. 25, 2010 -- Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors LLC has opened a Chicago office to service a growing base of clients throughout the Midwest. The firm is also one of just a few firms nationwide offering a **new assessment tool for family foundations, many of which are struggling with reduced assets and grantmaking budgets.**

Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors (formerly Neithercut Advisors) creates strategies for effective, rewarding philanthropy for foundations, charitable individuals and professional advisors.

With its new Chicago office in the John Hancock Center at 875 N. Michigan Ave., **Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors** will be more accessible and in closer proximity to the growing number of foundations and individuals the firm serves throughout the Midwest. Principal and founder **Mark E. Neithercut**, who has spent nearly two decades as a senior foundation executive and philanthropy advisor, says he is seeing demand for his services grow as foundations and the communities they serve face greater economic challenges. He will split his time between Chicago and his long-time office in Detroit.

“Many foundations have seen assets plummet 30 percent or more,” **Neithercut** said. “With less money to spend, foundations face serious issues about strategy and resource allocation. Many are reexamining their grantmaking strategies to determine how to achieve maximum impact from a reduced grantmaking budget.”

Neithercut is one of only 20 philanthropy advisors nationwide, and one of only a few such advisors in the Great Lakes region, to complete the training necessary to be able to offer the **National Center for Family Philanthropy’s** Pursuit of Excellence assessment tool to family foundations.

The Pursuit of Excellence assessment process builds on a major national survey by NCFP that allows a foundation to compare its operations with those of the field in five important areas: **1) mission and legacy, 2) governance, 3) family roles/ dynamics, 4) grantmaking and 5) financial /administrative accountability.**

Sample survey questions include:

- How well does the foundation’s mission statement serve the foundation?
- How does the board plan for its development and renewal?
- Does the foundation include the next generation of family members?
- How does the foundation monitor its grantmaking?
- How does the foundation make itself accountable?

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Neithercut says that most foundations are likely to survive the current financial upheaval, but many will be forced to reconsider their grantmaking and staffing strategies. As a result, he believes that many foundations will emerge as more efficient and more effective organizations.

“For foundations, the long-term benefit of this difficult period will be more focused strategies and a greater interest in leveraging limited resources,” **Neithercut** says. “Those foundations that will have the greatest success will be those that are already reexamining their missions and developing strategies for boosting efficiencies while increasing their impact with diminished resources.”

For more information on the Pursuit of Excellence assessment process go to **Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors’** new and expanded website at www.neithercutphilanthropy.com, or contact the National Center for Family Philanthropy at www.ncfp.org.

Neithercut has more than 20 years of hands-on leadership experience with family, community and private foundations including serving as a senior executive at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and The Kresge Foundation. He has worked with hundreds of charitable individuals and their families. Recent clients of Neithercut Philanthropy Advisors include the **Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation**, the **Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan**, **The Kresge Foundation**, the **Colorado Health Foundation**, the **Kansas Health Foundation** and the **Ruth Mott Foundation**.

Neithercut serves on the Public Policy Committee of the Council of Michigan Foundations, the steering committee of the National Network of Consultants to Grantmakers; and on the board of trustees of the Detroit Institute of Arts, Cranbrook Schools (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.), and Anna Paulina Foundation. He has served on the Community Foundation Leadership Team and the Membership Committee of the Council on Foundations. He has also served as chair of both the Detroit Area Grantmakers and Aspen Institute’s Michigan Nonprofit Research Program. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of British Columbia.

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