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*For Immediate Release*

**Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman, CPAs, Announces**

**2008 EXCEL Award Winners and Honorable Mentions**

***Nonprofit leaders recognized for outstanding service and vision***

Bethesda, MD, November 20, 2008 – The Center for Nonprofit Advancement has chosen the winners of the 2008 Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman Excellence in Chief Executive Leadership (EXCEL) Awards. The award recognizes exemplary leadership for nonprofits in the Washington Metropolitan area.

The 2008 GRF EXCEL Award Recipients are:

**Karen Cleveland, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia.**

In 2008, Karen continued to lead the effort to build and renovate housing for those in need. In an area known for high real estate costs, she must work all the harder as an advocate for affordable housing. Additionally, Karen spearheaded the ReStore, a retail home improvement store that benefits her chapter, as well as providing a “green” outlet for reusable supplies.

**Linda Dunphy, Executive Director of Doorways for Women and Families.**

Linda’s organization provides care and safety for women and children facing homelessness or domestic violence. Her leadership has given the organization direction and an ambitious vision, and has made Doorways a very popular place to work.

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**Layli Miller-Muro, Executive Director of Tahirih Justice Center.** Layli has maintained a clear vision and strategy for her organization's work to eliminate gender-based crimes against immigrant women, even in the face of difficulties, financial and otherwise. It is a testament to her leadership abilities that she can motivate and coordinate her team of 560 volunteer lawyers, doctors, and marketers.

Receiving Honorable Mentions this year were **Brenda Rhodes Miller, Executive Director of DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy**, for excelling at "one of the toughest jobs on the planet," that is, fostering frank, collaborative communication about sex and politics; and **Deborah Simpson Taylor, President and CEO of Vanguard Services Unlimited**, for establishing a substance abuse treatment house in Arlington that faced major opposition (going all the way to the US Supreme Court) and continuing her inclusive, caring leadership style after 20 years service.

Beginning in 2006, GRF chose to sponsor the EXCEL awards because of its long-time support for Washington-area nonprofits and its close relationship with the Center for Nonprofit Advancement. Each awardee receives a \$5,000 professional development account for their continued growth as leaders, and their organizations each receive a \$2,000 cash grant to support their missions. Honorable Mentions will each receive \$500 to support professional development programs for their staff. The awards were presented at a breakfast on November 18, 2008 hosted by the Center for Nonprofit advancement at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center.

Bethesda, Maryland-based Gelman, Rosenberg & Freedman, CPAs ([www.grfcpa.com](http://www.grfcpa.com)) has been part of the Washington, DC metropolitan community for over 25 years. The firm provides accounting, auditing and consulting services to an extensive client base of nonprofit organizations, for-profit corporations including government contractors, research and development firms, retail, professional service firms, partnerships, trusts, and individual clients. GRF is a full-service accounting firm with national and international affiliations.

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