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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**04/23/2010**

**THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION COLLABORATES WITH LOCO BLOCO  
TO SUSTAIN PROGRAMS FOR 550 YOUTH**

The San Francisco Foundation Issues a \$10,000 Challenge Grant  
to Support Mission Youth Development Nonprofit During Tough Economic Times

For 16 years Loco Bloco, a youth development 501(c) (3) in the San Francisco Mission has provided classes and performance opportunities to at-risk youth in the southeastern neighborhoods of San Francisco. Loco Bloco has felt the impact of the economic downturn as income from foundation grants, ensemble performances and community donors has decreased forcing them to cut programs for the first time in 16 years. This income loss has created a \$40,000 deficit affecting ongoing programs. John Killacky, Arts and Culture Program Officer of The San Francisco Foundation, extended a challenge grant to Loco Bloco and will match donations dollar for dollar up to \$10,000.

Loco Bloco reacted to the loss of funding by creating a grassroots \$40,000 fundraising campaign this spring to ensure that Loco Bloco youth will be able to perform as a contingent, "Spring From the Ashes", in the 2010 Carnival Parade. The fundraising campaign involves a fundraiser party at Roccapulco Supper Club in the Mission, Ensemble Performances, Phone Bank to Donors and San Francisco Challenge Grant, A pledge for their Board of Directors of \$5,000 and outreach to the San Francisco Business Community. Historically foundation grants and community donations made it possible for Loco Bloco to offer as many as 30 FREE after school classes each year and performance opportunities in dance, drumming, stilt walking and theater to over 550 underserved youth ages 5 to 18 in the BayView, Visitacion Valley, and Mission neighborhoods of San Francisco.

*"Loco Bloco has been a central force in the formation of my daughter and my son as caring community members in our Mission neighborhood and beyond. I, too, have felt a huge amount of support from this organization and will be forever grateful."* Betty Pazmiño, Parent and Educator

Loco Bloco was founded in 1994 by artists and activists of color, as a response to the ever-growing funding cuts of arts programs in schools. Most inner city public schools long ago lost funding to continue quality performing arts departments. Their programs address an enormous need in disadvantaged communities for culturally relevant arts education. Loco Bloco's growth from providing a few classes to over 30 after school and summer classes came about because of grants from the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, Grants for the Arts, The San Francisco Arts Commission, and the Hewlett Foundation.

*“Weekly we see the transformative difference Loco Bloco classes have on the lives of our students, especially teens,”* explains Aleks Zavaleta, Executive Director. *“These are vulnerable youth that without our training, guidance and performance opportunities would be out on the streets and at risk of being involved in gangs, drugs, and violence. Instead, Loco Bloco participants become leaders in their communities and frequently perform on stage and in the streets of San Francisco for the enjoyment of local residents and out of town visitors.”*  
www.locobloco.org

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If you would like more information or to schedule an interview with Aleks Zavaleta, Please call June LaBarre at 650-269-5827 or e-mail: [junelab@comcast.net](mailto:junelab@comcast.net)

### **The San Francisco Foundation**

The San Francisco Foundation (TSFF) is the community foundation serving the Bay Area since 1948, granting nearly \$776 million over the past ten years. Through the generosity and vision of our family of donors, TSFF awarded grants totaling more than \$96 million in fiscal year 2008. Bringing together donors and building on community assets through grantmaking, leveraging, public policy, advocacy, and leadership development, TSFF addresses community needs in the areas of community health, education, arts and culture, community development, and the environment. The San Francisco Foundation is a community foundation serving San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, and San Mateo Counties.

### **Loco Bloco**

Loco Bloco is a youth development organization with the mission of developing healthy youth in the San Francisco Bay Area by providing them with opportunities to build on their own unique skills and strengths and by engaging them in the creation and performance of music, dance, and theater traditions reflecting the cultural diversity of the Americas. Loco Bloco encourages its youth to use multicultural art forms as a tool for their own empowerment and as a catalyst to overcome social and structural injustice and bring about change in their communities

Central to the Loco Bloco's purpose and programming is the use of the arts as a tool for the empowerment of youth of color to overcome injustice; to adopt healthy, active lifestyles; to contribute positively to and serve as leaders in their communities; and to embrace ethnic and cultural diversity. Our programs incorporate social, artistic and physical goals, encouraging youth to perceive themselves as direct contributors to their neighborhood's cultural-wellness and social vitality.