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For Immediate Release

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Central Nassau Guidance and Counseling Services, Inc. Receives 2-Year Grant from Bank of America Charitable Foundation to Address Critical Community Needs on Long Island

LONG ISLAND, NY - Central Nassau Guidance and Counseling Services (CNGCS) announced that it received a 2-year grant in the amount of \$200,000 in funding from the Bank of America's *Neighborhood Excellence Initiative*® and was named as a 2009 Long Island Neighborhood Builder®. CNGCS will receive \$100,000 each year to help fund its programs and services including efforts to promote Health and Wellness among its clients and consumers.

"The Health and Wellness of those we serve is a top priority at Central Nassau Guidance," said Barbara Bartell, LCSW, and Chief Executive Officer.

"Research indicates the rates of mortality among people with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse is alarmingly high in comparison to the rest of the population. Some factors contributing to this disparity are preventable such as smoking, bad nutritional habits and infectious diseases. Additionally, the onset of obesity and diabetes is often the results of side effects of the very medications used to treat these illnesses. Intertwining health and wellness initiatives with mental health and substance abuse care will help our clients to have a chance to live healthy and long lives," Bartell further added.

The Bank of America's *Neighborhood Excellence Initiative*® is helping to sustain nonprofits during this challenging economic time and increase their long-term viability. The Bank has invested \$20 million globally this year in addition to the more than \$90 million committed over the last five years to the program.

"Bank of America is supporting the Long Island community through the *Neighborhood Excellence Initiative* and other lending, investing and community development programs that address critical social issues and align with our corporate social responsibility efforts," said Robert Isaksen, Long Island market president at Bank of America. "In our current economy, communities need our support more than ever, and this program is designed to give that support through the effective combination of partnership, leadership development and flexible funding."

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About the Neighborhood Excellence Initiative

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation's *Neighborhood Excellence Initiative* annually recognizes organizations, individuals and students who have shown a commitment to improving their communities. In its sixth year, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation has committed more than \$110 million globally to the NEI program since its inception.

By the end of 2009, more than 800 leaders from the nonprofit awardees will have participated in the Neighborhood Excellence Leadership Program®, which builds a network of community leaders across the country to share learning and insight in areas including strategic communications, financial management, succession planning, and long-term development. Through NEI, Bank of America has also encouraged community leadership at the grassroots level by recognizing more than 1,200 high school students and 1,200 community leaders over the last six years.

About Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling Services

Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling Services offers a lifeline of hope to those struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse issues. It has been responding to the call for help through a comprehensive network of community-based services since 1972. It is now serving Nassau and Suffolk County

Central Nassau Guidance and Counseling Services, Inc. is licensed and funded by the N.Y.S. Office of Mental Health, Nassau County Department of Mental Health, Chemical Dependency and Developmental Disabilities, N.Y.S. Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Services, Suffolk County Community Mental Health Services, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Member agency of the United Way of Long Island, Hicksville Chamber of Commerce, and the Long Island Association.