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CONTACT:

Kevin B. Lewis, CEO
SWFAS
(239) 278-7595, Ext. 700
k_lewis@swfas.org

Susan Bennett, APR, CPRC
Susan Bennett Marketing & Media
(239) 277-5255
sbennett@susanbennett.biz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SWFAS RECEIVES \$100,000 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PLEDGE

Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) has received a pledge of \$100,000 from David and Linda Lucas in support of its capital campaign to build a new Detoxification Center and Outpatient Treatment Facility.

The gift is made in honor of Peter and Eleanore Kleist, who are well known for their philanthropic support of local charities as well as colleges and universities throughout the world. The funds will be used for the Public Education Room of the new building, which will be named in honor of the Kleists.

The new Detoxification Center and Outpatient Treatment Center is under construction on Evans Avenue in Fort Myers adjacent to Southwest Florida Regional Medical Center.

“We are very grateful to David and Linda Lucas for recognizing the importance of providing treatment for residents with the chronic disease of addiction, which impacts one in five people in our community,” said SWFAS CEO Kevin B. Lewis.

“Eleanore brought the SWFAS campaign to our attention and asked us to participate,” Lucas said about the gift. “It is an honor to acknowledge the great work Peter and Eleanore have done over the years for SWFAS and the greater community by naming this room for them. They have been instrumental in the improvement of the area for decades, having committed a great deal of time and money to many worthy causes asking no fanfare or recognition in return.”

SWFAS now has raised more than \$6.1 million toward the \$9.5 million cost of the new facility. Other major gifts have been received from the Lee County Commission, State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP), U. S. Department of Health & Human Services, Southwest Florida Community Foundation, Lee Memorial Health System, Claiborne and Ned Foulds Foundation and Gannett Foundation as well as individual gifts.

“There isn’t a day that passes that we aren’t forced to turn away people in need of

immediate detoxification because there are no beds available,” Lewis said. “Each day the headlines tell the stories of tragedies associated with untreated substance use disorders, and these consequences will continue until we can respond to this unmet need.”

While the population at risk has nearly tripled in the past 20 years, Lewis said the number of detox beds has decreased from 28 beds in 1984 to 25 beds in 2008, due to the lack of funding support.

“Families need a place to turn in times of crisis,” Lewis said. “The Board of Directors and these donors are acutely aware of this need and are committed to raising the money needed to build a new facility.”

The new 40-bed Detoxification Center is located on land donated by the City of Fort Myers under a long-term lease. The 44,000 square foot facility also will include a wing for outpatient counseling and prevention offices now located on McGregor Boulevard as well as administrative staff.

Construction is expected to be completed next spring.

SWFAS is Southwest Florida’s most comprehensive substance abuse treatment and prevention program, serving 6,000 people per year from ages 9 to 90. SWFAS offers outpatient and residential programs for both adults and youngsters from nine locations throughout Lee and Hendry counties. In addition, SWFAS provides detoxification services for adults, prevention programming for all ages, and an Employee Assistance Program for about 60 Southwest Florida businesses. Fees are charged on a sliding scale, based on family income. In many cases, private insurance is accepted. SWFAS is a United Way agency.

For more information about the SWFAS capital campaign or to make a gift to SWFAS, call Lewis at 278-7595, ext. 700.