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Southcentral Foundation's Ileen Sylvester to be Honored at National Leadership Forum

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA (Sept. 17, 2010) – Ileen Sylvester, Southcentral Foundation's vice president of executive and tribal services, will be presented with an Enduring Spirit Award by the Native Action Network on Sept. 28. The awards ceremony will take place on the closing day of the seventh annual Native Women's Leadership Forum in Tulalip, Wash.

The 2010 Enduring Spirit Award recognizes the lifetime achievements of four Native women who, through their commitment of time, energy, and volunteerism, contribute to healthy communities. Past Enduring Spirit award winners have championed a variety of causes, including environment, education, youth and family, health, continuation and retention of culture, preservation of treaty rights and economic empowerment.

Sylvester has served as a vice president of Southcentral Foundation since 1998, working closely with the rest of the Alaska Native nonprofit's executive leadership team in the management and direction of a complex health care delivery system. She currently manages and directs tribal relations and initiatives for health care delivery to 55 rural villages, as well as traditional healing, public relations, planning and grants, and youth and Elder programming.

“I have had the privilege and pleasure of working closely with Ileen, and have watched Southcentral Foundation's employees follow her lead in caring for and consulting with our Elders, mentoring the next generation, and honoring traditional Alaska Native approaches to health and wellness,” said Southcentral Foundation President/CEO Katherine Gottlieb.

Sylvester was selected for the award because of her contributions to the health and vitality of the Anchorage Native Community and her ability to inspire others to make an equally positive impact. To help bridge the generational gap between youth and Elders, Sylvester continually brings the Elder Program and youth internship program together in collaborative partnerships, promoting greater

understanding between the two groups and strengthening the Anchorage Native Community. She has also been a champion of self-determination and self-governance in tribal health care, and is a frequent speaker at meetings and conferences on the topic of health care solutions and innovations.

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Established in 1982, Southcentral Foundation's mission is to work together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services. The nonprofit health care affiliate of Cook Inlet Region, Inc., Southcentral Foundation has grown in its 26 years, from a single dental clinic to an internationally recognized, award-winning health care organization that employs more than 1,400 people and administers a budget of more than \$200 million annually to manage more than 60 health care programs and services.