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**Diana Mejia, Wind of the Spirit Co-Founder,
Receives Bank of America 2006 Local Hero Award**

MORRISTOWN, November 7, 2006 – The Bank of America Foundation recognized Diana Mejia, Co-founder of Wind of the Spirit the Morristown-based Immigrant Resource Center, with their 2006 Local Hero Award in honor of her commitment to and work in her community.

This distinguished award, which provides the opportunity to designate a non-profit organization to receive a \$5,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc., was presented to Ms. Mejia on November 6, 2006, in recognition of her tireless dedication to confronting the injustices experienced by local immigrants in search of a life with dignity. Ms. Mejia will direct her grant to the Wind of the Spirit Immigrant Resource Center.

At the same ceremony, Susanna Van Order-Barblan, the daughter of Tanya Van Order and Beat Barblan, received the Bank of America Foundation Student Leaders Award. A Morristown High School senior, Ms. Van Order-Barblan was recognized for her volunteer contributions to Wind of the Spirit and Habitat for Humanity.

The Bank of America Student Leaders Award supports the development of the next generation of neighborhood leaders and recognizes outstanding student role models in the community. Through internships and leadership training, the program will also give students first hand opportunities to discover how they can help shape their communities.

Ms. Mejia, herself an immigrant from Columbia, co-founded Wind of the Spirit, a grassroots organization recognized on local, state, and national levels for championing immigrant rights. Her vision for the organization included creating a conduit between immigrants and their communities that would help immigrants and non-immigrants come to know each other and be enriched by one another. She also envisioned Wind of the Spirit as a place where immigrants could learn about their rights and responsibilities and find solutions to problems.

Under Ms. Mejia's leadership, Wind of the Spirit has succeeded in accomplishing its goal of raising community awareness of the social, cultural, and economic reality of immigrants. Since its inception six years ago, Wind of the Spirit has worked with churches, local governments, businesses, and non-profits to form a community of mutual help and support.

Through its sponsorship of various educational and cultural programs, including ESL and citizenship classes, immigrant rights workshops, and self-esteem building cultural activities, Wind of the Spirit continues to make great strides toward integrating new immigrants into their communities and advocating for their rights.

The Bank of America Local Hero Award recognizes neighborhood heroes, who make a remarkable difference in their communities by serving neighborhood needs. Bank of America's goal is to honor the contributions of these heroes, celebrate them as role models for others. Local Heroes recognizes and honors five community heroes per year in each whose achievements and leadership on local issues contributes significantly to neighborhood vitality. For more information about Bank of America and their corporate philanthropy programs, please visit: www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/.

For more information about Wind of the Spirit, please visit www.windofthespirit.net.

Photo Caption: Ann M. Limberg, (c) President, Bank of America New Jersey is flanked by Neighborhood Excellence Initiative award recipients: Susanna Van Order-Barblan (l), Morristown High School Senior and Diana Mejia (r), Co-founder of Wind of the Spirit.

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