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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**\$16,000 Available for Scholarships, Grants**

CLEARWATER – Feb. 22, 2006 – The GFWC Clearwater Junior Woman's Club is accepting applications for the Mary Clark and Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarships and Helping Hands Community Grants. The club will present the awards, totalling \$16,000, at its annual banquet in May. Applications are available on the club's website, www.ClearwaterJuniors.org or by calling (727) 723-0888.

Five Mary Clark Scholarships of \$1,000 each will be awarded in 2006, along with one \$1,000 Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarship. Scholarship applications must be received by March 31, 2006. "The Mary Clark Scholarships are awarded to students who are attending school in Florida while overcoming some adversity in their lives," explains Carolyn Waidley, CJWC Scholarship Chairman, "and we also consider academic performance, financial need and community service. The Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarship is awarded to an individual who has turned their life around and needs the money to stay on the right track. Requirements are similar, but we place less emphasis on community service."

Waidley shares some history of the scholarship program, "Mary Clark was a local resident, an active clubwoman, and was instrumental in the founding of the Clearwater Junior Woman's Club. In 1987, the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs presented the Mary Clark award, for the most outstanding Junior Woman's Club in the state, to the Clearwater Juniors. CJWC began offering the Mary Clark Scholarships the following year. Mary Clark's husband, Joseph, assisted in the funding of this scholarship. Upon Mr. Clark's death in 1995, he left a financial gift to the club in order to help continue the scholarship program, and the Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarship was created shortly thereafter. Since 1988, the club has awarded \$111,000 in scholarships."

Four Helping Hands Community Grants of up to \$2,500 each will be awarded this year to local charitable and social service organizations to help them start new programs or improve existing facilities and services. Grant applications must be received by April 3, 2006. Past recipients include PARC (Pinellas Association for Retarded Children), Ronald McDonald House, Humane Society of North Pinellas, and Habitat for Humanity.

Lori Engler, CJWC Grant Chairman, says "Grant applicants must identify a specific need or program for which the funding is requested. We consider applicants based on need, the impact of the program on the

community, and programs which fall within the focus areas of the club's six departments: Arts, Conservation, Education, Home Life, International Affairs, and Public Affairs."

Engler adds, "Since its inception in 1990, over \$200,000 in funding has been provided to local charities through the Helping Hands Community Grants program. We are able to continue this program because of the continued success of our annual Christmas Under the Oaks Arts & Crafts show."

Scholarships and grants will be presented at the annual CJWC Community Awards Banquet, which will be held on May 10, 2006. For ticket information, visit the club's website, www.ClearwaterJuniors.org or call (727) 723-0888.

About GFWC Clearwater Junior Woman's Club (CJWC)

For over 50 years, CJWC members have found many ways to uphold the club's goals of community service and enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service while developing leadership skills and lasting friendships. CJWC is a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs International, which has for more than a century encouraged women to improve their skills, expand their rights, and apply their abilities to society's problems.

Through the Helping Hands Community Grants and the Mary Clark and Joseph Clark Memorial scholarship program, CJWC has given away over \$311,000 to local students and charities. Most of the money is raised at the club's annual Christmas Under the Oaks arts and crafts show, held each November at Coachman Park. Clearwater Juniors volunteer hundreds of hours each year to help organizations and projects such as Safety Village, Women on the Way, the Room that Love Built, Operation Smile, Homeless Emergency Project, Relay for Life, One Voice for Children, Safety Harbor Neighborhood Family Center, Wimauma, Parent University, Coastal Clean-Up, Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership, and local schools, emergency services, and community events.

About the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC)

GFWC Clubwomen contribute an average of 13 million hours and \$37 million each year through 168,400 local club projects. Over its century-plus history, the General Federation of Women's Clubs accomplishments include establishing 75 percent of the public libraries and the first traveling libraries in the country, helping to establish kindergarten as part of public schools, participating in enactment of child labor and protection laws, playing a significant role in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, and working for the establishment of a National Gallery of Art. GFWC and its member clubs continue to support numerous programs in the areas of education, preserving natural resources, encouraging healthy lifestyles, working on behalf of the elderly and people with disabilities, advocating for issues of concern to women, children, and families, and supporting participation in the arts.

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