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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Banquet to Celebrate Scholarship, Grant Awards**

CLEARWATER – Apr. 11, 2006 – The GFWC Clearwater Junior Woman's Club will present the Mary Clark and Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarships and Helping Hands Community Grants at its annual Community Awards Celebration dinner on Wednesday, May 10, 2006. The banquet will be held in the Dimmitt Atrium Lounge at Ruth Eckerd Hall and the evening's program will include the scholarship and grant awards as well as a featured speaker. Tickets are \$45 each, award recipient dinners may be sponsored for \$30, and a limited number of table sponsorships are also available. Please visit the club's website, [www.ClearwaterJuniors.org](http://www.ClearwaterJuniors.org), or call Tracey Birch (727) 641-8806 for ticket purchase information.

A total of \$16,000 in grants and scholarships will be presented at the banquet. The Mary Clark Scholarships are awarded to students who are overcoming some adversity in their lives while attending school. The Joseph Clark Memorial Scholarship is awarded to an individual who has turned their life around. The scholarship committee also takes into consideration academic performance, financial need, and community service. Since 1988, the club has awarded \$111,000 in scholarships.

The Helping Hands Community Grants are awarded to local charitable and social service organizations to help them start new programs or improve existing facilities and services. Applicants are considered based on need, the impact of the program in the community, and programs which further one of the club's six focus areas: Arts, Conservation, Education, Home Life, International Affairs, and Public Affairs. Over \$200,000 in funding has been distributed since the program's inception in 1990.

**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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