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**GOVERNOR NAPOLITANO PROCLAIMS STATEWIDE HONOR
TO ARIZONA'S LARGEST COMMUNITY-BASED NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**

*Governor Recognizes Friday, February 24, 2006 as Southwest Human Development Day in
Recognition of the Organization's 25th Anniversary*

PHOENIX – (February 23, 2006) – Southwest Human Development (www.swhd.org), Arizona's largest provider of services for young children and their families, has been recognized by Governor Janet Napolitano for its outstanding work in the community over the past two decades. As a tribute to Southwest's 25th Anniversary, Gov. Napolitano announced today that Friday, February 24 will be recognized statewide as "**Southwest Human Development Day.**"

"It is a great honor to have the Governor recognize Southwest Human Development's success in Arizona," said Ginger Ward, executive director of Southwest Human Development. "Although, the true reward has been working with the hundreds of thousands of Arizona children and families over the years, and seeing the positive changes in their lives spanning the past 25 years."

Southwest Human Development's determination to improve the quality of life for Arizona children and families began 25 years ago when Ginger Ward dedicated her passion to tackle one of Arizona's most overlooked issues: early childhood development. Ward recognized the need for more services and education directed toward young children and families to help children grow and become successful individuals in the Arizona community.

About Southwest Human Development and the Arizona Institute

Founded in 1981 as a non-profit organization, Southwest Human Development provides comprehensive services for young children and their families in four areas: child health and welfare, disabilities, Head Start and professional training. Now serving more than 50,000 children and families each year, Southwest Human Development is the state's largest community-based organization of its type.

Southwest Human Development's newly formed Arizona Institute for Early Childhood Development focuses on three areas: child abuse prevention, early literacy and infant mental health. The Libraries For Literacy program also is part of the Institute's early literacy efforts.

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