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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **San Diego Microcredit Expert Available for Local Response to Nobel Prize Winner Muhammad Yunus' Speech This Weekend**

#### **--Non-profit Floresta has made 4,500 micro loans in four developing nations**

**San Diego, Calif.** – Reporters attending the Sunday, October 21, appearance at UCSD of 2006 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dr. Muhammad Yunus can get a local perspective on the power of small loans to transform the lives of rural poor.

Floresta ([www.floresta.org](http://www.floresta.org)) was founded in San Diego 23 years ago and during that time has awarded 4,500 small loans totaling more than \$500,000 to help thousands of poor villagers in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Tanzania start their own businesses. Floresta continues to expand its scope of lending no-money-down, low-interest loans to poor people who do not qualify for conventional business loans.

Executive Director Scott Sabin and Director of Development Megan Vandergeest are available to talk with reporters about some of the villagers whose lives have been changed by Floresta's microcredit efforts including:

- African villagers who used a \$150 loan to start a catering business and then used the profits to open an orphanage.
- A woman in the Dominican Republic who received a \$75 loan to open a convenience store. Subsequent loans have helped her continue to grow the business from dry goods to dairy and meat products.
- A Mexican farmer who took out a \$100 loan to open a taco stand and was so successful, he qualified for a second loan used to open a corn mill.
- Women in Oaxaca, Mexico, used \$50 loans to begin a project of creating pine-needle baskets. The products provide a way for them to increase their income and an incentive for them to preserve their local forest.

The average Floresta loan is \$100 and repayment is enforced by peer accountability.

An international Christian charity that works in areas where poverty is caused by deforestation, Floresta ([www.floresta.org](http://www.floresta.org)) restores the environment and empowers the poor. For more than 20 years, Floresta has provided solutions to meet the complex economic, environmental and spiritual needs of impoverished farmers in developing countries by planting millions of trees, revitalizing thousands of small farms, and making over 4,500 small business loans.