



# THE OAK TREE PROJECT

*Making a Difference to Those Who Make a Difference*

## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**For Details, Contact:**

**Barbara Chan CMC or Lorre Zuppan**

Phone (510) 231-8919

bchan@oaktreeproject.org or lzuppan@oaktreeproject.org

### **OAK TREE PROJECT SERVICE GRANT AWARDED**

**Richmond, California, February 21, 2006.** Richmond-based California Autism Foundation (CAF) has been awarded the Oak Tree Project's Service Grant for the East Bay. A 22-year old non-profit organization, CAF is dedicated to providing people with autism and other developmental disabilities the best possible and most comprehensive opportunities for integrated lifetime support and training to assist them in reaching their highest potential for independence, productivity and fulfillment. CAF also is committed to building public awareness of people with developmental disabilities and their potential contribution to society.

When asked how the Oak Tree Project would benefit CAF, John Clay, founder and Executive Director, said, "We're going through an historic transition in the scope of responsibility CAF has, bringing together a small non-profit agency and small chocolate company and trying to make this transformation. It will also require a transformation for many of us. And if you're going to achieve something Olympian, it's great to have Olympic coaches. I'd never dream of climbing Mt. Everest without a guide. I think the Oak Tree Project offers us that kind of expertise."

The Oak Tree Project received over 35 applications from primarily East Bay non-profits. "There were so many deserving organizations; it was difficult to select just one," reported Oak Tree Project spokesperson, Lorre Zuppan. "We felt CAF's needs matched best with the management consulting expertise we each offer, and we're excited to be contributing to their success. CAF has a history of leading services for the developmentally disabled with new and innovative approaches, like their packaging and chocolate companies allowing businesses to give back while supporting meaningful rehabilitative services and other programs for CAF's consumers."

The East Bay Oak Tree Project Team's Lorre Zuppan, Jim Thompson, Mary Janaitis, Craig Metzler and Joe O'Brien bring over 100 years of consulting experience to this round of The Oak Tree Project "Making a Difference to Those Who Make a Difference" Service Grants to the non-profit community. Active members of the Institute of Management Consultants USA (<http://www.imcusa.org>), who have served on non-profit boards and consulted to non-profits as well as corporate and government clients, the consulting team will donate their services through The Oak Tree Project to the California Autism Foundation.

For more information about The Oak Tree Project, visit <http://www.oaktreeproject.org> or contact Barbara Chan or Lorre Zuppan at 510-749-6790. Future Service Grant application deadlines for the Greater Bay Area will be posted on the website.

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