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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Student-produced summit “M is for Mobilize” urges attendees to re:imagine activism, business and the liberal arts

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE, AMHERST, MA, (FEBRUARY 13, 2012): “M is for Mobilize” is a daylong summit at Hampshire College, calling students to action – social action, through entrepreneurial thinking. The March 3 summit brings together national and local change makers with change makers-in-training to mobilize interest in social action ventures through critical dialog and workshops on the changing relationships of environment and economy, society and value, and activism and business.

The coming decade will be an era of mobilization. In the past year, the frustrations of citizens around the globe have exploded into protests and occupations that expose the inefficiencies and inequalities of the current systems of government, economics, and power. As students, we analyze these systems. We have written, read, and spoken to these failures and are eager to make permanent positive change. Yet the question constantly looming over our heads is—how?

Socially conscious business owners before us have found the answer. In order to change the way things are, we must work to change how we envision business. Over the past years, there has been a gradual shift towards socially, environmentally and economically just ventures in business schools and large universities. It is now time for those in the liberal arts to actively engage with this burgeoning movement by providing students not only with the ideas of what could be, but with avenues of action to institutionalize the positive change they seek.

Liberal arts institutions are granting degrees at a time when the very validity of a liberal arts degree has come under intense scrutiny, given that so many graduates, rigorously trained to think critically, are unable to find jobs and are seemingly unprepared for the rigors of “real” life. The student organizers of Mobilize, hailing from Hampshire College as well as Amherst, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, believe there is a place for the ‘real’ world in liberal arts education, just as there is a practical use for the critical and analytical skills gained from a liberal arts institution. The two converge in the arena of social entrepreneurship, where systems-thinking is actively applied to create lasting steps towards positive change within one or multiple contexts. With centers for social entrepreneurship taking root at such liberal arts bastions as Middlebury and Wesleyan, Mobilize is joining the movement to empower a generation of problem solvers and social entrepreneurs.

“M is for Mobilize” features workshops and panels led by social entrepreneurs from across the country, who are changing perceptions of activism and entrepreneurship and addressing complex issues, including the well-being of our economy. For instance, Ennis Carter, Founder & Director of Social Impact Studios, combines artistry and activism to call attention to important social issues. After studying Philosophy at New York University, she started her career as a community organizer in 1987, running consumer, environmental and good-government campaigns across with New Jersey Public Interest Research Group (NJPIRG). After 10 years of grassroots and administrative non-profit work, she launched Social Impact Studios to help public interest initiatives make the most of public awareness efforts. With a combination of strategic planning, visual & message designing and promotional campaign implementation, Social

Impact Studios has helped more than 600 groups in its 15 years of operation.

Other featured social entrepreneurs include: Lisa DePiano, Mobil Design Lab; Ben Flanner, Brooklyn Grange; Beth Ferguson, Sol Design Lab; Jill Lewis, *Protected*; Aaron Wieler, Whirlwind Wheelchair International. Full bios and information available on our website (www.MforMobilize.com).

Mobilize also offers attendees the opportunity to engage with local, socially minded activists and entrepreneurs in the Mobilize Community Room and Social Action Gallery. With representatives present from twenty local progressive organizations, including Food for Thought Books, Amherst's cooperative bookseller, and Pedal People, the Northampton-area human (bicycle) powered hauling service, the venue offers students opportunities for community-based learning following the summit.

M is for Mobilize is produced by SEARCH, a collaborative student platform for social and environmental action at Hampshire College, which cultivates the discipline of social entrepreneurship within the Five College Community. In addition to organizing the summit, SEARCH is working to create a student run social entrepreneurship consulting service to help prospective social entrepreneurs write business plans and find financial support for their ventures.

For more details and registration information, visit our website (www.MforMobilize.com).