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**For Immediate Release**

## **State Farm® Invests in American Dream for Latino Families**

### ***State Farm Contributes \$1 Million to Support NALEO Civic Engagement and Education Efforts***

Bloomington, IL, June 25, 2009 – Building on the success of the 2008 *Ya Es Hora (It's Time)* citizenship and voter engagement campaign, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund and State Farm have pledged to continue their efforts to empower Latinos to become full participants in American life through increased civic engagement and educational opportunities.

“We engaged with NALEO last year based on a simple premise: everyone counts and everyone has a dream,” said Mike Fernandez, vice president of public affairs at State Farm. “Due in part to the *Ya Es Hora* effort nearly a half million Latinos became U.S. citizens last year, nearly a million new Latinos registered to vote and more Latinos than ever actually voted.”

State Farm in announcing a \$1 million grant to the NALEO Educational Fund for the second year in a row, made clear that the company’s investment was not merely a monetary investment, but a commitment by thousands of bilingual State Farm agent offices across the U.S. to provide citizenship and voter engagement information to the community, as well as participate in activities like citizenship workshops and voter participation drives.

“State Farm continues to be a good neighbor with its contribution to the *Ya es Hora* program, as well as with its vast network of caring agents,” said Arturo Vargas, executive director of the NALEO Educational Fund.

State Farm’s support of the NALEO Educational Fund and its *Ya es Hora* program is part of a larger community relations effort called “State Farm Es Para Mí™” (State Farm Is For Me). This philanthropic effort supports a broad array of activities in the Latino community associated with citizenship, education and culture. Under this program, participating State Farm agents’ offices with Spanish-speaking personnel serve as a trusted resource for civic and educational information. In the educational arena, State Farm has worked with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) to provide

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Latino students with scholarship and internship information through participating State Farm agents' offices. The company also provided in 2008 nearly \$150,000 in State Farm Es Para Mí educational mini-grants to community non-profits and schools intent on keeping young people in school and improving education.

State Farm has long been a partner of the NALEO Educational Fund with much of its focus centered on education. "They have been particularly instrumental in the NALEO Educational Fund's ability to improve the capacity of Latino policymakers to shape public policies that help eliminate the academic achievement gap between Latino and non-Latino students," said Mr. Vargas.

State Farm works closely with NALEO and its' educational efforts on a national scale through the NALEO Education Leadership Initiative (NELI), providing comprehensive leadership development training and resources to over 1,000 Latino school board members and state legislators representing 30 states across the country contributing to their respective ability to advance successful educational policymaking and reform and help ensure student success in their respective jurisdictions.

At NALEO's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, State Farm is sponsoring the National Leadership Luncheon on Saturday, June 27, and a public policy panel focused on improving educational opportunities for Latinos.

The NALEO Annual Conference is the nation's premier gathering of Latino elected and appointed officials. With more than 1,000 attendees representing all levels of government, the NALEO Conference is the largest convening of Latino public officials and their supporters in the United States. Conference participants from throughout the country will assemble for three days of professional development, public policy discussions, and exploration of key concerns that most affect the Latino community and the country.

"Through its philanthropic efforts, State Farm is committed to creating safer, stronger, and better educated neighborhoods. This is especially important during these challenging economic times," said Mr. Fernandez.

### **About State Farm**

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