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**Natividad Medical Foundation Helps Local Women In Need of Gynecologic Surgery
More Than \$55,000 Raised -- Enough for 22 Surgeries Raised in 60 days!
*Onyx Necklace Specially Designed To Raise Funds***

SALINAS, CA (August 24, 2010) – Natividad Medical Foundation (NMF) President & CEO, Linda Ford, announced NMF has raised more than \$55,000 in 60 days – enough for approximately 22 women to have the gynecologic surgery they so desperately need. To date, four surgeries have already taken place and one more is scheduled in the next 30 days.

The fundraising is part of The Onyx Fund for Women – named in honor of a Natividad Medical Center (NMC) patient named Onix who inspired a hospital’s doctors and a philanthropic fund. NMF is raising money to support The Onyx Fund for Women by selling the specially designed Onyx Necklace created by Ford. The sterling silver “O” featuring three onyx stones is secured to a black cord. Designed by Ford, the Onyx Necklace can be viewed at www.theonyxfund.com. The necklace sells for \$125, and \$100 from each sale goes directly to The Onyx Fund For Women. Each donation is matched 2:1 by the Community Foundation of Monterey County.

To join the Natividad Medical Foundation’s Compassion in Action Team by donating to The Onyx Fund for Women and/or purchasing a necklace, please call (831) 755-4187 or visit www.theonyxfund.com.

Background on The Onyx Fund For Women:

Onix is mom to a 4-year-old daughter and works full-time as a housekeeper in Carmel, CA – a job she has held for 9 years – a job that offers a meager income and no health insurance. Onix is one of our nation’s many uninsured “working poor” who do not qualify for financial assistance and do not earn enough to pay for private insurance. When Onix’s daughter was born at NMC by C-section, her doctor found moderate size fibroid tumors in her uterus which needed to be surgically removed. Onix, like other uninsured patients, had to pay a \$3,000 down payment toward the elective surgery cost before it could be performed. Sadly, Onix “disappeared” for four years.

Linda Ford, President and CEO of Natividad Medical Foundation said NMC's Obstetrics & Gynecology Service Director, Peter Chandler, M.D., and his team of obstetricians and gynecologists, came to the Foundation asking for help for patients like Onix. Chandler said, “We see so many women in pain who are living with a prolapsed uterus or fibroid tumors and bleeding and incontinence – she’s living this way because she’s uninsured and can’t afford the down payment for the elective surgery to correct it.”

Ford says, “For the uninsured working poor woman seeking elective surgery to stop bleeding and incontinence, it may be a choice between food and shelter for her family and the down payment for the care she needs. The goal of The Onyx Fund for Women is to support these women in choosing not to delay care so that we can help end their suffering sooner.”

After living for years with pain, bleeding and the fear of not being able to care for her daughter or dying, Onix returned to her doctor. She had a mass of tumors that made her look 9 months pregnant. It took Onix another 6 months to earn and borrow the \$3,000 for her down payment.

Ford says “I was shocked when I learned that women in my own backyard are suffering for years with gynecologic problems that could easily be fixed by surgery.” Ford says Dr. Chandler and his colleague and NMF Board member, Dr. Caleb Liem, made generous donations to establish The Onyx Fund for Women at Natividad Medical Foundation. The Onyx Fund assists uninsured working poor women with their surgery down payment enabling them to have medically necessary elective gynecologic surgery in a timely manner and avoid living for years with these conditions.