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Women's Foundation Awards \$50,000 in girlsBEST Fund Planning Grants

(Feb. 11, Minneapolis) — The Women's Foundation of Minnesota has awarded \$46,000 in planning grants to 11 nonprofit organizations through its girlsBEST (girls Building Economic Success Together) Fund. The grant period is February 1, 2010 to April 30, 2010.

Established in 2001, the girlsBEST Fund awards multi-year grants to programs that build the future economic success of Minnesota's girls. Priority is given to programs that include outreach to underserved, underrepresented populations of girls around the state. Grantees are funded in one of five program tracks: Academic; Entrepreneurial; Employment Development & High-Paying/High-Skill Careers; Public Education & Advocacy; and Sports & Arts.

On March 5, the Foundation will issue a Request for Proposals for full, multi-year girlsBEST funding. The online application will be available at www.wfmn.org; the deadline is May 3, 2010.

Grantees:

Bagosendaan (Mahnommen) | **\$5,000** -- To partner with 25 at-risk, Native American girls (10-18) to develop a new program structured to increase their self-esteem and leadership skills through Bagosendaan's Talking Circles and equestrian program. (*Program Track: Academic.*)

Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin Lakes and Pines (Waite Park) | **\$4,000** -- To develop an outreach plan targeted to at-risk girls' academic programs, including Willmar SISTERS (Stay in School to Enjoy Real Success), Willmar Somali Outreach, and the Leech Lake and Red Lake "Connecting to Careers" program. (*Program Track: Academic.*)

Harriet Tubman Center (Minneapolis) | **\$4,000** -- To engage teen student focus groups in curriculum planning and message refinement for Voices in Prevention, a program for teen girls to explore, design and promote healthy relationships, and anti-violence skills and messages. (*Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.*)

Illusion Theater (Minneapolis) | **\$4,000** -- To engage middle school girls (with women artists/mentors) in the design of a performing arts program (theater, music, dance) about the real-life issues girls' face, in order to help them become strong mentors and leaders for other girls. (*Program Track: Sports & Arts.*)

Old Arizona Collaborative (Minneapolis) | **\$4,000** -- To support teen girls (with adult mentors) develop a business plan, job descriptions, and training and hiring strategies for Petals Flower Shop (E. Franklin Ave. & First Ave. S.), a teen girl-led business scheduled to open in June 2010. (*Program Track: Entrepreneurial.*)

Parenting Resource Center (Austin) | **\$4,000** -- To plan the development of two listening circles for teen girls to discuss bullying, dating and domestic violence, and sexual assault in a safe environment, as a way to build girls' self-esteem and empower them to make a positive impact on their community. (*Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.*)

Professional Hmong Women's Association (St. Paul) | **\$4,000** -- To support planning for the Career Mentorship Program to recruit, train and provide mentors for high-risk Hmong girls to explore and plan for post-secondary education, careers, and set goals for their future. (*Program Track: Academic.*)

Project SIGHT (Faribault) | **\$4,000** -- To survey and work with immigrant and refugee Hispanic and Somali girls in Faribault to help them determine the supports needed to achieve academic success, make healthy choices, and connect to the community. In partnership with So How Are the Children. (*Program Track: Academic.*)

Suntanka (Redwood Falls) | **\$4,000** -- To engage Native American high school girls from the Redwood-Lower Sioux community in a facilitated, three-month planning process to develop a model framework for Native girls' leadership and self-sufficiency to ensure academic achievement and post-secondary success. (*Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.*)

Warroad Area Women of Today (Warroad) | **\$5,000** -- To plan and conduct a program evaluation of the Leadership Program for Girls (grades 9-12) to create a sustainable model that can be replicated in other communities. (*Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.*)

Women's Environmental Institute at Amador Hill (North Branch) | **\$4,000** -- To develop a plan for Girl Farm, a summer farming program for low-income, at-risk, Twin Cities' girls to learn sustainable farming and about healthy food choices for better health; curriculum explores how sexism, racism and classism (corporate industrial farming) in rural areas affects food access and food justice in the metro areas for economically challenged communities. (*Program Track: Entrepreneurial.*)

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About the Women's Foundation of Minnesota

The Women's Foundation of Minnesota is a statewide community foundation that invests in social change to achieve equality for all women and girls in Minnesota. The Foundation funds innovative social change programs, builds women's philanthropy, conducts and reports research, advocates public policy, and educates the public about the successes and challenges of Minnesota's women and girls. It is the oldest women's foundation in the country. More at www.wfmn.org.