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Women's Foundation Awards \$200,000 in girlsBEST Fund Grants

(Aug. 5, Minneapolis) — The Women's Foundation of Minnesota has awarded \$200,000 in implementation grants to 15 nonprofit organizations through its girlsBEST (girls Building Economic Success Together) Fund. The grant period is September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011.

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.

Grantees:

Augsburg – MN Urban Debate League (Minneapolis) | **\$13,000** – To engage Minneapolis middle and high school girls of color in regional debate tournaments. The girls meet with diverse women leaders in academia, law, corporations, and politics and are mentored by women from the Women's Studies department at Augsburg College. *(Program Track: Academic.)*

Bagosendaan (Mahnomon) | **\$14,000** – To partner with at-risk Native American girls (10-18) 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 & Pines (Willmar, Red Lake, Leech Lake) | **\$13,000** -- To provide leadership development and create pathways to academic success through the Challenge and Change Outreach Program targeted to immigrant, first-generation Americans and Native American girls. *(Program Track: Academic.)*

MIGIZI (Minneapolis) | **\$14,000** -- To support In the Footsteps of Our Grandmothers project to help Native American girls (ages 14-18) of the Ojibwe People reclaim tribal matriarchal traditions and learn to assume positions of leadership in their community. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

Old Arizona Collaborative (Minneapolis) | **\$14,000** -- To support the teen-girl launched and led 29th Street Petal Pushers flower shop, building girls' leadership skills, self-esteem and financial literacy through management and operation of the business. *(Program Track: Entrepreneurial.)*

Parenting Resource Center (Austin) | **\$13,000** -- To support the Girls Are in the House program and two listening circles for teen girls: "Paths to the Future" for girls (ages 12-14) to build skills and self-esteem, and "Honoring Our Diversity" for girls (ages 14-17) to strengthen positive identity, and promote understanding and respect for others. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota (Rochester, Duluth) | **\$11,000** -- To position girls for future economic success by reducing teen pregnancies, promoting healthy choices and developing girls' leadership skills through the Teens Teaching Teens program. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

Rochester Juneteenth Celebration (Rochester) | **\$14,000** – To utilize the Art of Yoga Project, a program for at-risk teen girls that leads them towards accountability to self, others and community by providing tools for behavior change. *(Program Track: Academic.)*

Somali Women United Council (Minneapolis) | **\$14,000** -- To support the Himilo-Girls Achieving Success program to help Somali girls (ages 14-18) understand the role of women and girls in the United States as it relates to Somali culture, promote financial literacy, set post-secondary education goals, and promote community involvement. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (Marshall) | **\$14,000** -- To encourage girls to achieve academic success as well as developing business, financial literacy, leadership and public advocacy skills through a girl-led small business model to develop, manage, market and maintain a sustainable community garden. *(Program Track: Entrepreneurial.)*

Suntanka (Redwood Falls) | **\$14,000** -- To support the Wikoska project to build Native American high school girls' leadership and self-sufficiency through culturally relevant curriculum to ensure academic achievement and post-secondary success. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

Warroad Area Women of Today (Warroad) | **\$14,000** -- To support the Girls Lead and Leaders of Tomorrow programs for girls (grades 9-12) to build leadership, team-building, public speaking and promote community outreach through work on a public issue of their choice during the summer with a mentor. *(Program Track: Public Education & Advocacy.)*

We Win Institute (Minneapolis) | **\$13,000** – To support the Women of Distinction - Girls Mentoring Program to develop leadership, cultural identity and academic success for African American high school girls through layered mentoring and positive peer relationships. *(Program Track: Academic.)*

Women's Environmental Institute at Amador Hill (North Branch) | **\$14,000** -- To support Girl Farm to engage low-income, at-risk Twin Cities' girls in sustainable farming and healthy food choices for better health. The 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.)*

YWCA of Minneapolis (Minneapolis) | **\$11,000** -- To support Discovery Leadership and Girl Power for girls of color in the Twin Cities (grades 4-8) to build academics, financial literacy and leadership skills through afterschool and summer programs. *(Program Track: Academic.)*

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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.