



For Immediate Release

March 4, 2014

Contact: Max Evans

Telephone: (507) 282-0203

Email: max@rochesterarea.org

ROCHESTER AREA FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES LATEST GRANT CYCLE AWARDS

The Rochester Area Foundation has determined its 2014 Cycle 1 Grant Disbursements. A total of \$124,222 will be granted to 15 local community organizations to improve the overall quality of life in the greater Rochester area. The Foundation also thanks our donors who partnered with us in making these grants possible. The following are the names of the organizations, their given grant amount, and the initiative the funds will be used for.

- A. **Apple Tree Dental** – \$13,000 as a matching grant for expanding services in Rochester, specifically to include treatment rooms for special needs and elderly patients which will have IV sedation, ceiling lifts, special dental chairs to provide ease of transfer from wheelchair to dental chair. Sincerest sympathies
- B. **Girl Scouts MN & River Valleys** – \$5,000 for a program called ConnectZ which is designed to reach girls in diverse and low income communities. TO this end they are partnering with Boys & Girls Club and the Rochester Public Schools to reach girls where they are. They would like to reach 500 girls in the whole of Olmsted County.
- C. **Beacon Academy** – \$13,000 to carry out research and awareness for a new charter school which will serve children with disabilities such as Aspergers, ASD, Anxiety Disorder, ADD, mental health defects and brain injuries. The school aims to provide schooling and transitional work experience. It will start with high school and move later to the earlier grades. The Foundation has chosen to provide some in-kind grants for office space, back office assistance and some specific capacity building support for this group.
- D. **Family Means** – \$10,000 to continue serving families in Olmsted County with financial counseling and debt management education. This past year 140 families were served. This program of Family Services supports low income families in Olmsted County.
- E. **Mindset Foundation** – \$2,000 to fund a program to develop curriculum as requested by Kasson Mantorville schools in addition to the pilot project already underway and funded for developing leadership curriculum to enhance the anti-bullying work already in place. The request is for Senior High student Real World Safety. Knowing what to think about when the student is “out in the real world” either in college or working and not in the protective high school environment.

- F. **Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center** – \$18,622 to provide primary care to clients diagnosed with serious mental illness that do not have a provider through Mayo or Olmsted Medical. They serve low to moderate income families in the greater Rochester area. This program looks to relieve the compromised access of this underserved population which doesn't have access to mental health care through other avenues. In addition this program will reduce the ambulance and emergency care calls for this population by providing primary care in a familiar setting.
- G. **Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge** – \$5,000 as a matching grant for providing furnishing in their new facility which was Bethany Samaritan previously. The work focuses on serving those with chemical dependency issues in order to help them overcome those issues and become productive members of society. This facility serves adult men.
- H. **Brighter Tomorrows** – \$10,000 to develop a program for families whose children do not successfully overcome cancer. This will be a program expansion since Brighter Tomorrows already serve families of children with cancer. They are tightly linked to Mayo, Olmsted Medical and to Ronald McDonald house and their support is seen by them as essential. This is a collaborate effort with Seasons Hospice to provide grief programming to families of children who lose their battle with cancer. They are also eligible for a 3 year curriculum development grant ending in 2016. The total program cost is \$90,000.
- I. **Legal Assistance Olmsted County** – \$5,000 to continue the collaborative work with the Women's Shelter which was started in 2013. This grant will fill in until more grant funding comes their way later in 2013. This grant will ensure that the work with Women's Shelter continues uninterrupted while waiting for the promised funding to come in.
- J. **Community Food Response** – \$13,500 to provide a walk in cooler to ensure food safety year round. The cooler would protect the approximately 200,000 lbs. of food that is annually collected from restaurants and businesses and the re-distributed to those in need. The dieticians from Mayo that collaborate with CFR strongly recommend taking this step now before it becomes a critical need which might suspend the CFR work.
- K. **Distant Relatives** – \$3,000 to support the tutoring program that was successfully launched with a Mayo grant last year. Distant Relatives serves first generation immigrant population students who do not have computer resources at home and need additional ESL work one on one. Distant Relatives has rented a location which is near the community they serve and since inception late 2013 have served 40 students on a regular basis. They are linked with other sports organizations and provide sports as an incentive to stay in school and do well.

- L. **Silver Salute to the Fourth** – \$2,000 to start a community group and campaign for a sustainable 4th of July celebration which honors the veterans which made these celebrations possible. The goal is to provide a venue for veterans groups to have displays, food vendors, artists, bands and in general provide a larger celebration than just fireworks. The mayor supportive of this group's goals and RAF has agreed to be their fiscal agent. They are linked to a number of veteran's groups and art groups which are interested in helping make a 4th of July celebration sustainable.

- M. **Rochester Public Library/Reading Center** – \$20,000 to develop a new literacy program which will increase literacy in the greater Rochester area. This funding will provide the build up to train 17 community volunteers which will provide 1-1 tutoring for up to 70 community members which will increase to 350 community members being served by year 10. They are also eligible for a 3 year curriculum development grant ending in 2016.

- N. **MN Council of Nonprofits** - \$1,000 as well as in kind office space to house a representative for Rochester. MCN presence will allow for more nonprofit training, advocacy, resources and development. Chapters already exist in the Twin Cities, Duluth, Grand Rapids, Willmar, St. Cloud, and Mankato areas. Rochester will be the first chapter in the SE region of the state, providing service to hundreds of nonprofits.

- O. **Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester** - \$3,100 to develop adaptive programs for special needs youth and their families. To create a safe place for learning, play and networking. The total for the program cost is \$6,200.

About the Rochester Area Foundation. For nearly 70 years, the Rochester Area Foundation has partnered with donors to improve the quality of life, promote greater equality of opportunities, and develop effective methods to assist those in need in the greater Rochester area. To find out how the Foundation can connect you with the causes you care about most; call (507) 282-0203 or visit online at www.rochesterarea.org

###