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**BUSH FOUNDATION EXPANDS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
THROUGH GRANT TO THE BLANDIN FOUNDATION**

Saint Paul, MN (April 9, 2009)—The Blandin Foundation of Grand Rapids, MN, has accepted a \$425,832 grant from the Bush Foundation to extend the work of its Blandin Community Leadership Program, which helps rural leaders develop and enhance the skills, knowledge and relationships they need to build and sustain healthy communities. The grant will enable the Blandin program to offer the program to four additional communities (training 100 individual leaders) in 2009.

“The impressive history of the Blandin Community Leadership Program makes it a natural partner for the Bush Foundation when it comes to leadership development and engaging communities in solving problems,” said Peter C. Hutchinson, president of the Bush Foundation. “We have great expectations for the impact the combined work of the two foundations will have on people and communities in Minnesota.”

Leadership development has been an important part of the Bush Foundation’s activities since 1965, when it established the Bush Leadership Fellows Program for individuals. In those 44 years, the more than 1,300 Bush Leadership Fellows have had tremendous impact on their communities and their fields of work.

The Bush Foundation’s investment in leadership development for communities through the Blandin program puts a new strategy to work for the Foundation with regard to its goal to develop courageous leaders and engage entire communities in solving problems (one of three goals that make up the Foundation’s [Goals for a Decade](#)). Successful achievement of that goal means that by 2018, 75 percent of people in all demographic groups in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota say their community is effective at solving problems and improving their quality of life.

The **Blandin Foundation** is a private foundation and Minnesota’s largest rural-based and rural-focused foundation. It was founded in 1941 by Charles K. Blandin. The Blandin Foundation’s mission is to strengthen communities in rural Minnesota, especially the Grand Rapids area, with the vision of healthy rural communities grounded in strong economies where the burdens and benefits are widely shared. Learn more about the Blandin Community Leadership Program at www.blandinfoundation.org/leadership.

The **Bush Foundation** was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife Edyth. The Foundation strives to be a catalyst to shape vibrant communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota by investing in courageous *and* effective leadership that significantly strengthens and improves the well-being of people in these three states. Learn more about the Foundation and *Goals for a Decade* at www.bushfoundation.org.

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