Splendid undertakings

Dear Neighbors:

Charles Blandin was a man who had the strength and vision to establish this foundation during the uncertainties of 1941, making headlines across the country. While his dream was of a healthy Grand Rapids and Itasca County, what he cared about most was the foundation being a valued community partner—a vision we still hold for our work.

In 2011, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of our Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP), having partnered with more than 6,000 rural Minnesota leaders—500 in Itasca County alone—in building their skills and networks. Hardly a day goes by that we don’t hear a story about the impact of a single person who effectively framed an issue, built social capital and mobilized resources for their community. Community leadership most certainly matters.

Our public policy and grant-making work also give us a front-row seat to rural community leadership. The transformations we have seen through our partnerships in rural broadband, early childhood and student success—work that often leads the way nationally—makes us even more hopeful for rural Minnesota communities and their futures.

A look at the list of 2010 grants also is a powerful reminder of the passion and innovation of leaders here and throughout rural Minnesota, as well as the significant needs of our neighbors in such uncertain times.

Laurence Rossman, Charles Blandin’s good friend, said in 1946 that one of Blandin’s basic expectations for his foundation was that it was to be a “…partner in splendid undertakings with the community and the county.”

To our many partners, thank you for your truly “splendid” work to propel our students, to care for our neighbors, to create an intentional future for our communities, to work across and celebrate our differences, to be generous with each other. As in 1941, the challenges and opportunities of the future will demand the best of us all.

Jim Holohan

A share in progress

2010 grants infuse community action

Since 1941, Blandin Foundation has been a partner in community-driven activities in the Itasca County area and rural Minnesota. Working with people who share the Foundation’s mission of strengthening communities, grantmaking efforts move forward projects and programs of all sizes and scopes, giving people hope and opportunity to enhance their rural communities.

Grants listed below were awarded between January and December 2010, and were made in the Foundation’s three strategic priority areas. Each area addresses a unique aspect of rural life, with the common vision of healthy rural communities grounded in strong economies, where burdens and benefits are widely shared. Brown type denotes grants made in the Foundation’s home giving area, the Itasca County area. This list does not include grants of $1,000 or less.

Commitment to Home

Local Grants

Centennial Rotary Club of Grand Rapids .......................... $1,500
2010 annual Thanksgiving dinner for the Grand Rapids area
Cooperative Solutions ........................................ $9,000
Early Childhood Education/Job Readiness Sustainability grant program over 18 months for Junior Families in the Itasca County area
Dent.Commission Association .................................. $1,500
Support for the 2011 Governor’s Fishing Opener
GRACE House of Itasca County ............................... $5,000
For operating support of the shelter and day center services in Itasca County
City of Grand Rapids ............................................. $5,000
Support for the City of Grand Rapids digital initiative project
Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation ................ $9,000
Supports for the Library Automation project
Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation ........... $1,000
McMurry Family Foundation for the Rural Health Program
Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation ........... $5,000
Support for the Library Automation project
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Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation ........... $250
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Support for the Library Automation project
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Support for the Library Automation project

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Invest in Leaders

Rural Minnesota Grants

Cambridge Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation .................. $5,000
Support for the Cambridge Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation leadership program as part of the Rural Quick Start Program
Center for Sustainable Living ................................ $2,000
Underwrite the economic implications of climate change and local food dependence or rural communities as part of the Rural Quick Start Program
Headwaters Regional Development Commission .................. $5,000
Technical assistance for the Clinton County “foodshed”
Housing Authority of the Mississippi Valley .................. $5,000
Support for the “Foodshed” initiative in the Upper Mississippi Valley
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Grants Awarded 2005-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Area</th>
<th>Grand Rapids/Isaca Area</th>
<th>Rural Minnesota</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids</td>
<td>$18,148,034 (72%)</td>
<td>$22,828,582 (28%)</td>
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Note: Full financial statements are always be found at the MnHed Foundation website by clicking the foundation’s name.