

Charles K. Blandin Foundation

EIN: 41-6038619

Tax Year ending 12/31/05

FORM 990-PF, PART IX-A, SUMMARY OF DIRECT CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

The Foundation's role is to infuse and energize rural community economies in Minnesota, the Foundation offers:

- Leadership development programs that help communities capitalize on their assets;
- Grant making to support community-generated economic strategies and it provides Community Responsive Grant in the Grand Rapids area;
- Public Policy programs to inform and engage the public on issues affecting rural economic viability, which currently include two major initiatives: Vital Forest/Vital Communities and Rural Broadband and a special initiative; Goods from the Woods.

1. **Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP)** – is a nine-day residential learning program for development of current and emerging community leaders. The program is intended to identify and enhance individual leadership skills and to foster effective leadership networks for collaborative work on specific community projects. The Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP), since inception in 1985, has served over 4,200 leaders from 246 rural Minnesota communities focused on individual and community change. *The Reservation Community Leadership Program* is a version of the BCLP Core Program and specifically addresses the economic, cultural and social assets of reservation communities. This program was initiated in 2001 and has served 93 leaders from the Leech Lake, White Earth, Fond du Lac, Upper Sioux, Red Lake, Lower Sioux, and Mille Lacs Reservations. *Partners-in-Leadership Program* is for current and emerging leaders from communities of color and new immigrant communities. This program focuses on individual skill enhancement and links participants with BCLP alumni in partnership where participants and alums work together to broaden their community involvement and deepen their multicultural skills.

There were 191 community leaders from 14 communities who were involved with the core BCLP program in 2005, one reservation community with 13 leaders trained through the Reservation Community Leadership Program, and one community and 20 leaders trained through the Partners in Leadership Program during 2005, costing a total of \$1,529,648.

2. **Blandin Community Advantage Leadership Program (CALP)** – Building on the BCLP Core Program, the Community Advantage Leadership Program helps teams identify, align and mobilize their assets and opportunities in ways that advance their local economies. CALP is an advanced leadership program that helps leaders create private-sector driven changes that produce economic advantages with benefits that are widely shared. These widespread benefits are termed "community economic advantages." CALP provides the framework and tools for rural leaders to leverage and act in three strategic areas: support

existing businesses, explore new asset opportunities, and develop entrepreneurial environments.

There were 29 community leaders from one community involved in CALP, with a total cost of \$283,065 to operate this program.

3. Rural Minnesota communities need informed citizens and broad public engagement on issues relevant to their economic vitality. **Public Policy and Engagement** mission is to bring research, people and organizations together to address opportunities to strengthen rural Minnesota. The program encourages informed citizen action to assure that rural perspectives are well represented in public discourse. The Foundation has committed resources to address two public policy issues of particular relevance to rural Minnesota: forest resources and broadband technology.
 - *Vital Forest/Vital Communities* focuses on forestry as one of Minnesota's key economic advantages. This initiative champions the reciprocal relationship between healthy communities and healthy forest ecosystems and helps communities optimize the forest's many values as a sustainable resource for the future.
 - *Blandin Broadband Initiative* focuses on broadband telecommunications, which is key to keeping communities competitive and thriving in a global economy. The Foundation's Broadband Initiative aims to develop a high-profile statewide broadband strategy, develop high-level community leadership engagement and public sector involvement from all levels of government, engage telecommunications companies in the process to foster collaborative efforts, and focus on risk mitigation and correcting the risk/reward balance.

Total cost to operate Public Policy and Engagement in 2005 was \$741,706.

4. **Children First!** - A Foundation Program initiated in 1998 as a volunteer-based effort to help assure that all children in Itasca County start kindergarten healthy and ready to do their best. It is a grass roots effort that includes 150-200 volunteers working to improve the healthy development of Itasca County's children 0-5. Facilitates the partnership of existing social, economical, and health resources to directly benefit the children 0-5 in Itasca County.

Children First! Program operating costs for 2005 was \$158,225.

5. Blandin Foundation **Grant Making** seeks to invest capital in strategies that identify community assets and mobilize multiple stakeholders to maximize the contribution those assets make to a community's economic viability, with widely share benefits. The Foundation has three grantmaking categories:
 - Local grants that impact the Grand Rapids/Itasca County Area
 - A limited number of grants to communities that develop strong *Community Economic Advantage* strategies

- Grants that address rural economic advantage issues on a statewide or regional level.

Community and statewide grants must contribute to community economic advantage strategies, while local grants are split roughly equally between economic advantage and responsive grants that address a range of social and community issues with priority on proposals that address the needs of disadvantaged people.

When C.K. Blandin established the Foundation in 1941, he specified the Grand Rapids area as its primary beneficiary – the Foundation's most fundamental and enduring commitment. As the Foundation's assets grew, its mission expanded to include rural communities throughout the state. Concern about the Foundation's commitment to the local area has spurred periodic challenges and litigation. As a result, the Board of Trustees in December 2003 approved a resolution, ratified by Ramsey County District Court, to commit at least 55 percent of all grants to the area on the basis of a six-year rolling average.

The Blandin Foundation paid out over \$8.9 million in grants and scholarship in 2005 and the costs to operate the Grant Making program totaled \$386,973 for 2005.

6. During 2005, the Blandin Foundation's **Institutional Leadership program** was exited by way of a grant to a third party and cost \$60,322 to internally finish these programs. **Other miscellaneous** internal operational includes several small programs which total cost was \$496,733.