



Northland Foundation honored nationally for *AGE to age* initiative
(September 21, 2011)

The Northland Foundation was recently honored by Generations United with an Intergenerational Innovations Award. This national award recognizes the outstanding contribution *AGE to age: bringing generations together* has made to advance the intergenerational field and unite people of all ages through creative and exemplary practice. The Northland Foundation was singled out from a pool of nominees from across the country.

“Northland Foundation’s *AGE to age* initiative in northeastern Minnesota exemplifies innovation at its best,” says Donna Butts, executive director of Generations United. “By taking a holistic approach, the initiative brought together members of rural communities of all ages to address critical local needs. The experience created a tremendous bond between older and younger generations as they worked together to find solutions that honored local cultures, traditions, and economic realities.”

AGE to age: bringing generations together, launched in 2008, links youth with older adults to build friendships and work together toward community improvement in 10 rural northeastern Minnesota communities, including three Indian Reservations. So far, *AGE to age* has merged the energies of 2,400 young people ages 5 to 18; 1,200 adults 55-plus; and 1,350 people who fall somewhere in between. Each of the participating sites is undertaking locally-driven and unique projects that address community needs. Common themes include arts and culture, health and wellness, teaching and mentoring, volunteering, gardening, Native American crafts, and broad community-building events such as barbecues and game nights. In addition to financial support, the Northland Foundation brings together representatives from all 10 sites to share their ideas and lessons learned, as well as provide training.

“We are pleased to receive this award on behalf of the Northland Foundation and our *AGE to age* community partners,” states Lynn Haglin, Vice President/KIDS PLUS Director of the Northland Foundation. “The older adults, young people, and generations in between from Bois Forte Reservation, Chisholm, Cloquet, Floodwood, Fond du Lac Reservation, Grand Portage Reservation, Itasca Area, McGregor, Moose Lake, and Proctor have been doing incredible work that benefits not only the participants, but also their communities as a whole.”

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AGE to age is an initiative of the Northland Foundation's KIDS PLUS Program, which is now in its 20th year of connecting kids and community in northeastern Minnesota. The foundation will celebrate this milestone with many of its community partners on evening of Wednesday, October 5th at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

AGE to age is made possible through the generous support of the following funding partners: the Community Experience Partnership, an initiative for U.S. community foundations from The Atlantic Philanthropies; the Bush Foundation; the Blandin Foundation; the Otto Bremer Foundation, Communities for All Ages, an initiative of The Intergenerational Center at Temple University; The Sheltering Arms Foundation, and the Walmart Foundation.

About AGE to age: bringing generations together

AGE to age is designed by the Northland Foundation to connect youth with older adults to enhance their communities. This program provides an avenue for different generations in 10 rural community and reservation sites to overcome age stereotypes, establish friendships, and pool their strengths for civic good. More than 2,400 youth in rural northeastern Minnesota have been involved in this initiative, and momentum continues to grow.

About Generations United

Generations United is the national membership organization focused solely on promoting intergenerational strategies, programs, and policies. Generations United is a voice for more than 100 international, state, and local organizations representing more than 70 million people and is the only national organization advocating for the mutual well-being of children, youth, and older adults. Generations United serves as a resource for educating policy makers and the public about the economic, social, and personal imperatives of inter-generational cooperation. Generations United provides a forum for those working with children, youth, and the elderly to explore areas of common ground while celebrating the richness of each generation.

About The Northland Foundation

Now celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Northland Foundation is a resource for people, businesses, and communities working toward prosperity through economic and social justice in Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis Counties. The Grant Program directs resources to nonprofits addressing children and youth/ strengthening families, poverty alleviation/self-reliance, and programming to help older adults remain vital and independent. The Business Finance Program provides loans to help grow a sustainable economy. The KIDS PLUS family of programs is focused on improving the well-being of children and youth. Visit www.northlandfdn.org for more information.



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