



Northland Foundation Initiates Program to Unite Older Adults and Young People in Ten Northeastern Minnesota Communities
Foundation among 24 Community Experience Partnership grant recipients nationwide
(June 2008)

Thanks to a recent \$100,000 grant, the Northland Foundation has launched an exciting new initiative called “**AGE to age—bringing generations together**”. This grant award represents the second phase of support the Foundation has received from the *Community Experience Partnership* which was developed by The Atlantic Philanthropies, a private foundation. *Community Experience Partnership* aims to expand opportunities for older adults to engage in work, lifelong learning, and volunteer activities that better their communities.

The Northland Foundation was among 30 community-based foundations in the nation to participate in the first phase of *Community Experience Partnership*, which assessed opportunities and barriers faced by older adults seeking greater levels of civic engagement. The Northland Foundation has now been chosen as one of 24 foundations to participate in the second phase, planning and implementing programs to mobilize residents over 55 to help address local needs and issues.

In the first phase, the Northland Foundation conducted an extensive regional study of adults age 55+ in regard to employment, lifelong learning, and volunteerism. The study revealed that many older adults wish to interact more with young people, and see a great mutual benefit in intergenerational activities. Adults 55 and older also indicated that, although they want to be engaged in their communities, practical obstacles such as family obligations, health issues, financial concerns, or a lack of information about opportunities can be limiting. Often communities do not have the resources to address those barriers or are not aware of ways to more effectively involve older adults.

Through **AGE to age**, the Northland Foundation will work within 10 communities to develop strategies for overcoming such obstacles in the second phase of the *Community Experience Partnership*.

“We know from the first phase of the *Community Experience Partnership* that many people over 55 are active—or want to be more active—civically. Their depth of knowledge and talents are an asset to the region,” said Lynn Haglin, Northland Foundation’s Vice President/KIDS PLUS Director. “We also know from many years of working with children and youth that, if given the opportunity, young people are valuable contributors and resources

as well. With this grant, we can help connect a greater number of older adults with youth to accomplish incredible things in their communities.”

AGE to age will bring older adults, adults, and young people to the table to share ideas, build relationships, and work together. A community organizing process will take place in 10 communities over the next 18 months. This planning phase will include a series of meetings involving community members of all ages. Each community will identify a community need and generate plans for a program or project to address that need.

The 10 **AGE to age** communities are Bois Forte Reservation, Bovey-Coleraine, Chisholm, Cloquet, Floodwood, Fond du Lac Reservation, Grand Portage Reservation, McGregor, Moose Lake, and Proctor. The planning process will launch in five communities in September 2008 and the remaining five in January 2009.

The *Community Experience Partnership* is managed by San Francisco-based Community Planning & Research LLC with fiduciary support from the Community Initiative Funds at the San Francisco Foundation.

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About The Northland Foundation

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 that address 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.

About The Atlantic Philanthropies

The Atlantic Philanthropies is dedicated to bringing about lasting changes in the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Atlantic focuses on critical social problems related to aging, disadvantaged children and youth, population health, and reconciliation and human rights. Programs funded by Atlantic operate in Australia, Bermuda, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the United States and Viet Nam. To learn more, please visit www.atlanticphilanthropies.org.



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