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Three Northeast Minnesota Tribal Nations receive grants to expand nutrition and essential services for Elders during COVID-19

Northland Foundation awards a total of \$90,000 to address immediate needs

Northeast MN – Three Tribal Nations in northeastern Minnesota have received grants in the amount of \$30,000 each to help their Elders access healthy meals, necessary hygiene and household products, and other critical services during the COVID-19 health crisis. The [Northland Foundation](#) awarded a total of \$90,000 to the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

The three Tribal Nations acted quickly to address the challenges created by the pandemic in order to continue providing services in a way that reduces Elders' risk of exposure to the virus. All three nutrition programs have traditionally offered meals served in a community setting. In addition to food delivery the grants will also help supply items such as hand sanitizer, soap, toilet paper and other essential supports to Elders in their homes. The Tribal Nations serve hundreds of households with older adults, many living in isolated areas, through this program. Expanded services are urgently needed to help keep Elders safe and abide by the stay-at-home order.

Under normal circumstances, this programming is supported by revenues from Tribal business ventures such as gaming. In the current health crisis, with operations and revenue streams shut down, an infusion of grant dollars will help them meet essential needs now.

"The Bois Forte Band is extremely thankful for the funding from the Northland Foundation to help support our Elders with their needs during this Covid-19 pandemic," stated Cathy Chavers, Bois Forte Chairwoman. "They are our most treasured resource that we must protect, and the \$30,000 grant will provide us that opportunity to do so with access to delivered meals and other essential needs they may have."

In March, the Northland Foundation announced the suspension of its typical April 1st grant round. Instead Northland is devoting available grant funding to programming that serves people most vulnerable to the impacts of the pandemic. Partner organizations are being invited to apply for targeted grants, primarily to meet basic needs such as food access, housing access, and other pressing services.

"We reached out to many nonprofit partner organizations, asking what they are seeing in terms of community impacts and what resources would help them deliver critical support," said Erik Torch, Director of Grantmaking.

“The Bois Forte, Grand Portage and Fond du Lac Tribal Nations expressed an immediate need to adapt and expand their programs, ensuring that Elders would not miss meals or run out of essential supplies,” added Torch, “and the Northland Foundation was happy to partner with them in this important work.”

About the Northland Foundation

The Northland Foundation is a publicly supported foundation serving seven northeastern Minnesota counties: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis, and all or parts of five Tribal Nations within the same geographic boundaries: Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Through grantmaking, small business lending, the KIDS PLUS operating program, and special initiatives, the Northland Foundation helps people and communities move forward together. Overarching the all programs and initiatives are three intersecting [Strategic Focus Areas](#): Children & Youth, Individual & Community Wellbeing, and Economy & Jobs.

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