

# taking THE INITIATIVE

News from Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

525 Florence Avenue | Owatonna, MN 55060 | 507.455.3215  
[www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org)

October 2014

## Message from Tim Penny

This is an important time of year for Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation. We are wrapping up our annual update visits with local city and county government leaders, requesting their continued financial support of the work we do. In addition, we now kick off our fall solicitation of businesses, banks, and individuals who support the work of the Foundation.



We are proud to receive significant financial support from a variety of people and organizations throughout the region we serve. Many of our over 400 donor partners do so year after year, helping SMIF to catalyze our region's early childhood and economic development efforts.

SMIF strives to be a resource for all of the communities in our 20-county area. We provide funds to advance both early childhood and economic development efforts. SMIF also provides administrative and investment support to 24 Community Funds—offering matching dollars for grants and endowment fund opportunities.

In the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2014, we invested \$4,485,075 into southern Minnesota. Our early childhood programming received \$1.5 of those allocated resources and \$2 million was invested in our economic development programming.

***We're excited about the work we are doing. But without our donors' support, none of this would be possible. If you would like to learn more about how you can contribute, visit our website at [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org) or call 507-455-3215.***

## Program Spotlight

SMIF recently awarded our 2014 One Big Thing Grant at our October 2 Annual Luncheon. We announced that the Regional Community Growth Initiative (CGI) will receive \$100,000 for community projects.

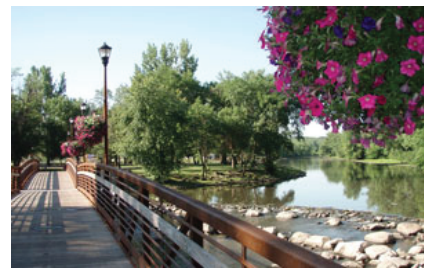
SMIF developed the Regional CGI to bring together community leaders in southeastern Minnesota to position themselves for future growth in response to the City of Rochester's implementation of Destination Medical Center. We brought together leadership in the bordering communities to analyze assets and design a strategy for collaboration.

The goal is to create initiatives that showcase southern Minnesota's quality of life and take advantage of the strength we find in working together to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

On November 15, key community leaders and stakeholders will come together and have the opportunity to exchange ideas for projects that will benefit the entire region.

Through the \$100,000 One Big Thing Grant, these communities will be well positioned to design and implement projects leading to future growth and prosperity.

***For more information about the Regional CGI or to bring the CGI process to your community, contact Pam Bishop at 507-455-3215.***



## Partner Spotlight

Organizations across the nation, including SMIF, are convening a "Sneak Preview" Launch Event to show the opening signature hour of ***The Raising of America***.

These community events are designed to bring together diverse sectors of your community along with local experts to explore how growing inequality is affecting our very youngest children, and what as a society, we can—and should—do to give all infants the opportunity for a strong start.

Together, these events will launch ***The Raising of America*** National Public Engagement Campaign to change the conversation about early childhood in America—because how we talk changes the way we work.

The event in our region will feature **Art Rolnick**, Former Federal Reserve Economist; **Tim Penny**, President, Southern MN Initiative Foundation; **Jerry Cutts**, CEO, First Children's Finance; and **Melvin Carter**, Director, MN Office of Early Learning.

Visit [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org) to learn more and to register.

**Steele County History Center - 1700 Austin Road, Owatonna  
November 12, 2014 | 12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.**



**Capstone Club (\$50,000 and above)**

\*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation, St. Paul  
\*L & N Andreas Foundation, Mankato

**Cornerstone Club (\$10,000-\$24,999)**

\*Bill and Katie Rossi Davis, Utica  
\*Davisco Foods International Incorporated, Le Sueur  
\*F & M Community Bank, Preston

**Champion (\$5,000-\$9,999)**

\*Center for Prevention-Blue Cross Blue Shield, Saint Paul  
\*Hormel Foods Corporation, Austin  
Steele County

**Leader (\$1,000-\$4,999)**

Alliant Energy, Cedar Rapids  
Dodge County, Mantorville  
\*Le Center Economic Development Authority  
Firmenich Incorporated, New Ulm  
Freeborn County  
\*IBM Corporation, Rochester  
\*Tim and Sandy Penny, Owatonna  
\*Rivers Ridge Holding Co., Minneapolis  
\*Raymond and Helen Stawarz, Owatonna  
Waseca County  
Watonwan County  
Winona County

**Partner (\$500-\$999)**

aba Water Systems Incorporated, Plainview  
Accentra Credit Union, Austin  
Associated Bank- Lanesboro, Red Wing, Rochester,  
Rushford  
Jane and Mary Campion, Rochester  
First Bank Blue Earth  
\*IBI Data, Brownsdale  
\*Living Greens Farm, Prior Lake  
Odin State Bank  
\*Jennifer Sawyer, Northfield  
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**Contributor**

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Lynn and Chris Smith, Owatonna  
\*USDA - Rural Development, Faribault  
Valley Design Enterprises Incorporated, Fountain  
Jake Vela, Austin  
Joseph Weis, Rochester

**\*PROGRAM DONORS**

To make a donation,  
visit [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org).

Recent Activity

**Grants**

**One Big Thing Grant**—\$100,000 to the Regional Community Growth Initiative  
Communities participating: Byron, Chatfield, Dodge Center, Elgin, Eyota, Pine Island,  
Plainview, Spring Valley, St. Charles, Zumbrota

**Paint the Town Grant**—70 gallons, valued at \$1,820 to Blue Earth Community Foundation

**Loans**

Aleamar Cheese Company, Mankato  
Little Stars Childcare, Kasson  
Curly Girlz Candy LLC, Medford  
Urban Finds, Medford  
Home Town Bakery, Gibbon  
Style Lounge Salon, Austin  
Simplified Ag Technologies, Blue Earth

For more information about these grants and loans, visit [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org)

Thanks to the generous support  
of our many donors, we are able  
to continue serving southern MN!  
See inside to learn about SMIF's  
involvement in early childhood  
and economic development.

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