

General Mills Foundation awards \$500,000 in grants

Written by
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The General Mills Foundation announced 50 grants of \$10,000 each to nonprofit organizations across the Twin Cities with programs designed to improve the lives of people within the communities of color. The grant recipients were selected for the wide range of individuals they serve including children, youth and adults, and for the innovative services they provide including resources for immigrant families, food shelf support, community gardens, early childhood care and education, and programs for at-risk youth.

“Through our Celebrating Communities of Color grant program, the General Mills Foundation is proud to support innovative, community-based programs that are meeting critical needs and enriching the lives of many in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area,” said Ellen Goldberg Luger, General Mills vice president and executive director of the General Mills Foundation.

Launched in 2004, the Celebrating Communities of Color grant program has provided a total of \$4 million dollars in grants to Twin Cities nonprofits. Sixty percent of the organizations selected this year are receiving a Celebrating Communities of Color grant for the first time.

Following is a sampling of the 2012 Communities of Color grant recipients. For a full list and summary of this year’s grant recipients, visit: http://www.generalmills.com/Home/Responsibility/community_engagement/Grants/Twin%20Cities_area/Communities_of_color/grant_recipients_2012.aspx

Above the E.D.G.E.
Sports and Leadership Education Program
Minneapolis, MN

The Sports and Leadership Education after-school program helps at-risk youth develop a healthy spirit of fun and sportsmanship. The program is focused on developing positive character, instilling principles to empower youth and engage them in pursuing their passion and purpose in life. A series of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) workshops will expose a group of 30-35 youth to careers in science and technology and prepare them for pursuing college and post-secondary employment. Each student will partner with a mentor in a STEM career that interests them. In addition, youth will learn about sports and leadership through basketball games and enrichment programs to build character, strengthen health and life skills and personal responsibility.

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CAPI USA - Centre for Asians and Pacific Islanders
Healthy Gardens/Farmers' Market Project
Minneapolis, MN

CAPI is working to empower immigrants and refugees, particularly women, as community leaders through gardening and small-scale farming, to create access to affordable healthy, fresh, and culturally suitable food. This project will empower 60 low-income Southeast Asian and African immigrant families to create systemic change through gardening and small-scale farming. The project could impact 2,500 individuals, including family members, farmers' market customers, and CAPI Food Shelf clients who receive fresh produce donations by project participants. By empowering immigrants and refugees to address hunger and nutrition in their own communities this initiative will create far-reaching long-term impacts.

Fresh Air, Inc.
Youth Get Real: Rapid Response Resource System
Minneapolis, MN

This program, working with KFAI radio, engages low-income, at-risk youth in actively addressing poverty and access to limited resources. Often there are resources that are available only for a finite amount of time: a homeless shelter with several empty beds for the night, or a food bank with excess produce that will soon expire. Quickly connecting those in need to what's available is imperative. KFAI, in collaboration with KMOJ radio, will work with at-risk youth interns to use social media, email, and text messaging to connect those in need with existing resources. KFAI will do outreach to organizations that provide resources to low-income people in the seven county Twin Cities area and encourage staff at these organizations to email an assigned KFAI staff person as resources become available that fit this 'short shelf life' model. Using social media, KFAI youth will spread the word about these items to low-income people in at least one to two messages per day and in turn, organizations that serve low-income people will promote the program to their clients.