

2015 MEDICA

A DARING  
HOPE  
P.4

# FOUNDATION

THE NEXT  
FRONTIER  
P.9



## OUR FUTURE IN TRAINING

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CHANGING THINGS FOR THE BETTER

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**THIS YEAR THE MEDICA FOUNDATION AWARDED**

**104**

**GRANTS TO**

**102**

**NON-PROFIT AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, TOTALING**

**\$1,494,500**

The Medica Foundation has developed a broad and balanced grantmaking approach to address the urgent and emerging health care needs of our community.

Published by the Medica Foundation. The Medica Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable grantmaking foundation. It is an affiliate of Medica Health Plans, a Minnesota-based nonprofit HMO. Funding is provided to organizations within Medica's service area in Minnesota, Western Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota.

**Foundation Staff:**

Robert Longendyke, Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Director  
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# OUR FUTURE IN TRAINING

The promise of a brighter future is something many of us take for granted. But this promise is an illusion for many. It is not real or attainable. Circumstances like poverty, homelessness, mental health challenges, lack of access to support and care, and lack of timely response to a crisis all contribute to extinguishing the promise of a brighter future. And it's made more challenging by the fact that these conditions can exist over generations. One aspect of the American Dream is the promise that "my children's future will be better than my own." But how can that be when circumstances like these pass from generation to generation?

The grants we funded in 2015 were all about breaking the cycle and offering people the help they need to train for a different future. As you read this report, you'll see themes emerge. First and foremost, we funded grants that met people where they were: in a shelter, in their home, in their place of crisis, in the community. We cannot expect people to come into the health care system when that system is often far removed from and foreign to their lives. The "system" needs to go to them.

We funded programs that addressed root causes, not just symptoms. You'll read about efforts to help people break old habits and learn

new ones. On average, it takes about 66 days to learn a new habit and the benefits can last a lifetime. It's hard work. Thus, you'll also read about programs that helped people gain new perspectives and fresh motivation (check out Ariel's story in *A Daring Hope*).

We've been privileged to fund and work with great partners. They know the people they serve. They care. They are committed to giving people reason to believe in the promise of a brighter future, and to help them train for it. Enjoy the stories about the differences they are making.



**Robert Longendyke**  
Executive Director



**JoAnn Birkholz**  
Foundation Director



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pictured left to right: Samuel Leon, M.D.; Daryl Durum; John Buck, Chair of the Board; Esther Tomljanovich, Vice Chair of the Board and Burton Cohen.

# A

# HOPE

# DARING

HOW INNOVATIVE,  
TARGETED SERVICES  
CAN SAVE LIVES



Young people find acceptance, encouragement and safety at The Bridge for Youth.

**W**hen runaway or homeless youth walk through the doors of The Bridge for Youth, they often simply need a place to shower and do laundry. Other times, they find comfort in a poetry group where they can express themselves without judgment. But sometimes they need more serious protection and advocacy in the face of real danger. This was the case for a teenage girl who first came to The Bridge in 2012.

## A DANGEROUS GAP

Xion\* had no money and no one to turn to for help. She was placed in foster care while her mother was incarcerated for selling drugs. Her father was in prison. When her mom was released, Xion's homelife turned dangerous and chaotic. Her mom and her mom's boyfriend abused her and she was being sexually exploited. To escape, she decided to live on the street, carrying a knife for protection. Then someone told her about **The Bridge for Youth** (The Bridge). Over the next three years, Xion returned for emergency shelter 16 times.

*\* Name changed for privacy.*

Like many runaway or homeless youth with addictions or broken family ties, Xion fell into the gaps of the child welfare system. Isolated and with no resources for help, young people in these circumstances face a higher risk of sexual exploitation than any other age group. Living on the streets can lead to trading sex for a safe place to sleep or conditions that put them at risk for personal harm. When they come to The Bridge for help, they're offered case management, support groups and overnight emergency shelter; a place to shower, do laundry and receive counseling; as well as care packages with snacks, transportation tokens and referrals to community resources.

Life on the street takes a heavy toll on mental health and there was no good way to measure the most significant safety, health and mental health risks facing a young person. The Medica Foundation helped fill this gap with a grant to develop the Vulnerability Index™ and provide mental health services for the youth. This index measures specific needs, equips the staff to talk with young people about their needs and helps to build trust, consistency and connections.

“Entering our doors, youth are at the lowest point in their lives. The Bridge provides them with a safe place to move from crisis to stability.”

**Michelle Basham, Executive Director**

Xion scored in the highest risk category on the Vulnerability Index and The Bridge began providing her with intensive case management. As Xion developed greater trust, she participated in counseling and began working on self-care, anger management and communication with her mom. One barrier to seeking help was Xion’s fear that child protection would cause difficulty for her mom and “mess up” her mom’s schooling. Because of Xion’s documented history of vulnerability, The Bridge was able to file child protection reports on her behalf.

**FROM HIGH RISK TO HIGH HOPES**

**819**  
youth were screened and 143 scored high-risk, three times more than anticipated

**84%**  
were able to connect with a trusted peer or caring adult

**100%**  
created safety plans

.....

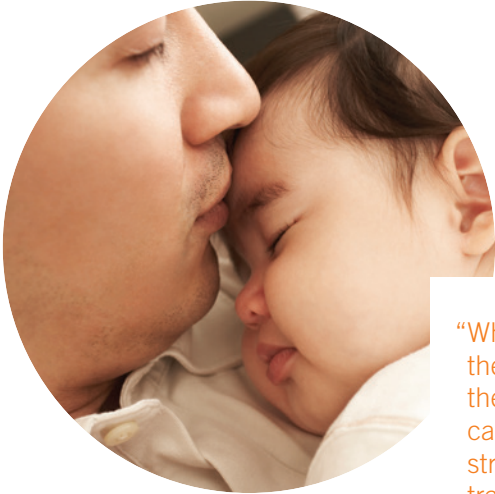
**THE BRIDGE FOR YOUTH**  
[bridgeforyouth.org](http://bridgeforyouth.org)

**BREAKING THE CYCLE OF NEGLECT**

Like abuse, neglect can be generational and can have a strong impact on how a child develops. Ariel\* was 19 years old with a three-year-old daughter. As a child, Ariel moved from one homeless shelter to another with her mom and siblings. She remembers having a bedroom only once as a child, and it wasn’t for very long. Ariel came to the **YWCA Duluth** ([ywcaduluth.org](http://ywcaduluth.org)) because she wanted something different for her child.

Every Monday, she attended a parenting group called the “Circle of Security,” where she could think and talk about struggles she was having with her daughter’s behavior. A video clip of their interactions changed everything. “My little girl was being silly and doing cute things, like making faces and playing on a climber,” Ariel explained. “She went on like this for about two minutes of the video, always turning back and looking in the same direction – looking for something.” ➤

*\* Name changed for privacy.*



“When parents change the way they respond to their child’s needs for care and confidence, a struggling child can be transformed.”

*Source: Circle of Security International*

After a few minutes of working to get noticed, the child lay defeated on the slide. The video revealed the girl was looking toward Ariel, who was on her cell phone, not looking up. "It was so hard for me to watch my child give all these cues that she needed a connection, and during those moments she wasn't even on my mind. I thought that I had it together, but what the videos of our interactions showed me was that I couldn't see what I couldn't see," Ariel said.

The Circle of Security program, an intervention model developed in the U.S. and used worldwide, redirected Ariel's perspective. She learned how to interact with her daughter and gained confidence in her parenting skills.

A Medica Foundation grant provided the resources for the YWCA to offer this powerful intervention program.

### SENDING HELP

Sometimes people need shelter from abuse or help ending a cycle of neglect. Other times, crises arise where people need to be protected from themselves. Timely mental health interventions can save lives.

In the winter of 2014, a unique crisis team was deployed to an emergency room to assess a suicidal woman. Bev\* was severely depressed and had suffered in silence for 18 months grieving the death of her son. She was admitted to the Wellstone Recovery Center for six days, and then released with a safety plan and solid connections to community services. Without the support of **Range Mental Health's** Mobile Crisis Response Team, Bev may have been hospitalized out of the area or medicated and sent home. She credits the crisis team with saving her life.

\* Name changed for privacy.



In-home visits and assessments can help people live independently.

### ON-SITE CRISIS CARE

149

crisis calls

72%

avoided hospitalization

47

were admitted for crisis stabilization

**RANGE MENTAL HEALTH**  
[rangementalhealth.org](http://rangementalhealth.org)

"The Medica Foundation's willingness to fund this new approach literally helped us save lives."

**Mary J. Carpenter MSED LP**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Range Mental Health Center



For the 200,000 people living in the small mining towns and communities along Lake Superior's north shore (over 7,000 square miles), when a mental health crisis hit, it was nearly impossible to dispatch a care team fast enough to avoid a calamity. This scenario changed when a Medica Foundation grant helped the Range Mental Health Center build its Mobile Crisis Response Team. This team of specially trained medical and mental health professionals travels to crisis locations, helps to stabilize the situation and gets people the care they need. This novel model for emergency mental health services proved so effective that the center has been certified to form a Children's Mobile Crisis Response Team, as well.

### CARING FOR PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Another major gap in care exists among people who have both a mental and chronic physical illness. Psychiatric hospitalizations in Minnesota are on the rise, and people with serious mental illness typically live to age 58, compared with 82 for the general population.\*\* Illness can spiral out of control when people fail to keep doctor appointments, leave the hospital or treatment early, or lose their job, housing, or the support of friends and family when they need it most.

\*\* Source: Minnesota Department of Health

A Medica Foundation grant provided funding for MVNA nurses to earn the certification they need to offer combined physical and behavioral health services.

**MVNA's** Home Health program, which has served the community for 114 years, now offers these services to people wherever they live – whether it's a homeless shelter, out in the community or wherever else they call home.



of behavioral health clients took their medications as ordered by their doctor

Source: MVNA Home Health's grant report to Medica Foundation

### CHANGING LIVES

Innovative and targeted services, like the ones described here, are helping to change people's lives. Remember Xion, the teen living on the street? She's now living in The Bridge's Transitions housing program and is on track to finish high school. She has been applying for jobs, submitting housing applications, meeting regularly with her counselor and learning how to build a better life for herself.



**STEVE LEPINSKI, EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR OF THE WASHBURN  
CENTER FOR CHILDREN  
IS RETIRING**



**A LIFELONG CHAMPION FOR  
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

**W**hat are the links between a child's brain development, mental health and ability to grow into a healthy adult? Researchers are still connecting the dots, but in Minnesota, thanks to one man's dedication to serving children and families, we have a jump start on addressing this important public health issue.

**A LEGACY OF SERVICE**

A champion for children's mental health at the local, state and national levels, Steve Lepinski led the **Washburn Center for Children** ([washburn.org](http://washburn.org)) for 29 years.

Washburn is recognized as one of the nation's most innovative and effective resources for children's mental health. It is a top-tier research center for families dealing with mental health issues, offering access to the field's foremost pediatric clinicians. At its core is a philosophy grounded in an unwavering belief that all children can be helped and get better.

Steve's ability to build partnerships among diverse communities is legendary. In retirement, he leaves a legacy of strong, innovative alliances within the realms of education, social services, health care and philanthropy. Our community will long benefit from the connections and knowledge resources he helped build. But Steve is leaving another legacy that is just as important, one of bricks and mortar, a place devoted to leading-edge services and research.

In the years leading up to his retirement, Steve devoted countless hours to advocating for children's mental health and leading a capital campaign that raised \$24.5 million to build a new children's mental health center. It's located in North Minneapolis — in the heart of the city, where families can easily access the help they need to offer their children a healthier future.

**"Children can be helped and get better. Parents shouldn't be afraid to ask for help."**

**Steve Lepinski  
Washburn Center for Children**



**STEVE AND  
MEDICA FOUNDATION**

Over the years, we have been privileged to help support Washburn with five grants, all of which led to important developments in the assessment and treatment of children and adolescents with social, emotional and behavioral problems.

Steve Lepinski noted that two of those grants generated particularly remarkable results. "It takes a community to sustain a nonprofit, and it is helpful to have flexibility in how grants are used. The Medica Foundation's framework of working with nonprofits to respond to a challenge and take it to the next level is a very powerful funding model," he said.

**2009**

A collaborative pilot project that brought mental health clinicians into the schools was so successful in improving children's behavior outcomes that today there are 22 Washburn clinicians in schools throughout the metro area.

**2015**

Expanding a day treatment program led to serving 40 percent more children using Dr. Anne Gearity's "developmental repair model," a nationally-recognized intervention model for very at-risk young children with aggressive behaviors.





**UNDERSTANDING LINKS  
BETWEEN LEARNING,  
BEHAVIOR AND HEALTH**

# THE NEXT FRONTIER

**B**rain research shows that children form 700-1,000 new neural connections every second\* in the first few years of life. These connections are formed through the interaction of genes and the baby's environment, experiences and interaction with adults.

\* Source: Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University

When an infant or young child babbles, gestures or cries and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words or a hug, neural connections that support the development of communication and social skills are built and strengthened in the child's brain. These are the connections that build brain architecture, the foundation upon which all later learning, behavior and health depend.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF A CONNECTION NEVER DEVELOPS?

Without early diagnosis and treatment, children with mental disorders can have problems that interfere with healthy development. Children can have problems at home, in school and in forming friendships. Without help, these problems can continue into adulthood.

## MEDICAL AND FINANCIAL REALITIES

**700+**

new neural connections are made each second in the first few years of life

**\$247B**

estimated annual cost of mental, emotional and behavioral care for children under age 18

**1 IN 5**

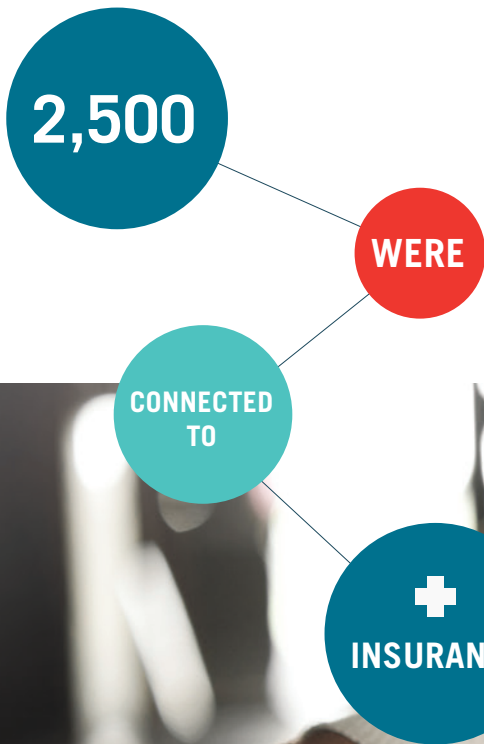
U.S. children experience a mental disorder in any given year

Source: National Research Council and Institute of Medicine



## OFFERING HELP TODAY

Recognizing that uninsured refugees and immigrants with low incomes often go without medical care because they can't afford it, **HealthFinders Collaborative** is helping ease the financial barrier faced by some families in our community. Some are uninsured and waiting for public health care coverage; others are ineligible for it. With our grant, HealthFinders Collaborative filled that gap. They provided 1,100 dental exams, helped 92 people learn to manage diabetes and connected 2,500 people to health insurance.



## ENVISIONING A BETTER FUTURE

People who are financially strapped are unlikely to seek help for basic needs like emergency dental care or eyeglasses. Thankfully, medical volunteers in Greater Grand Forks provide care for these most basic health needs at a clinic where primary and dental care, prescription assistance and limited vision care are offered at no cost. Our grant provided resources for **Third Street Clinic** to cover the cost of new eyeglasses for people who couldn't see well enough to drive or read a job application. This help gave them the opportunity to get to a doctor or dentist for care and health education – and today their futures look brighter.



Source: HealthFinders Collaborative  
healthfindersmn.org

## REAL RESULTS

# 135

people received vision exams and new glasses

# 152

had emergency dental surgery

# 1,963

prescriptions were filled

**THIRD STREET CLINIC**

[thirdstreetclinic.org](http://thirdstreetclinic.org)



Seeing clearly opens a world of possibilities, no matter your age.

**COMMUNITIES UNITE  
TO SUPPORT BETTER  
CARE AT HOME**



# BANDING TOGETHER

**T**he realities of coping with a child’s disability or aging parents can be overwhelmingly stressful. Yet, caring for those we love at home yields emotional, financial and physical health benefits – both for the person who needs help and for their family members. No one can do this alone: it takes a village.

## **BEFORE AND BEYOND BIRTH**

Prenatal exposure to alcohol can result in an almost limitless combination of physical and functional birth defects. The full range of disabilities for affected individuals may become evident at different times through childhood, adolescence and even into adulthood.

Conditions associated with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) carry lifelong implications.\* Here are just a few of them:



**Infants:** low birth weight; irritability; sensitivity to light, noise and touch; poor sucking; slow development; poor sleep-wake cycles; increased ear infections



**Toddlers:** poor memory capability, hyperactivity, lack of fear, no sense of boundaries and a need for excessive physical contact



**Grade-school years:** short attention span, poor coordination and difficulty with both fine and gross motor skills



**Teenagers:** poor impulse control, difficulty distinguishing between public and private behaviors, a need to be reminded of concepts daily

## **OPENING THE DOOR TO UNDERSTANDING**

Families and caregivers whose children have intellectual, developmental or behavioral disabilities face unique challenges at home, in school and in public. **Arc Northland** is a lifeline that offers professional services, parenting resources and advocacy to families in northeastern Minnesota. Our grant funded developing a new curriculum and training manual for professionals helping families whose children have intellectual, developmental and behavioral disabilities. Sections of the new guide also were shared with area schools, opening the door to understanding how to care for these children at home and in the communities where they live.

## **REGAINING STRENGTH AND BALANCE AT HOME**

Granite Falls, Minnesota is a powerful example of how creative thinking can help a community

\* Source: [mofas.org](http://mofas.org)

adapt to an aging population. In 2015, a quarter of the town's population was 65 or older and 50 percent of those people had limited incomes. Proud and resilient, this town's elders wanted to do whatever it took to remain strong, independent and live at home for as long as possible. So, when the Granite Falls **Living at Home/Block Nurse Program** ([lahgranitefalls.org](http://lahgranitefalls.org)) developed a new class to improve balance and reduce the risk of falling, it was a welcome health improvement program.

A small professional staff and more than 100 volunteers provided classes, transportation, friendly visits, in-home assessments and social activities to help people

live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.

### IMMEASURABLE RESULTS

Strong community resources empower people. They help children develop to their fullest potential and enable elders to remain independent in their homes. A commitment to care for people at home not only lets people control their own destiny, it also increases their confidence, enhances their quality of life and engenders something priceless – greater personal happiness. We feel privileged to offer grants to support communities that are breaking new ground in home-based services.



## SUPPORTIVE CONNECTIONS

# 22

parenting groups received resources, education, health care and parenting tips

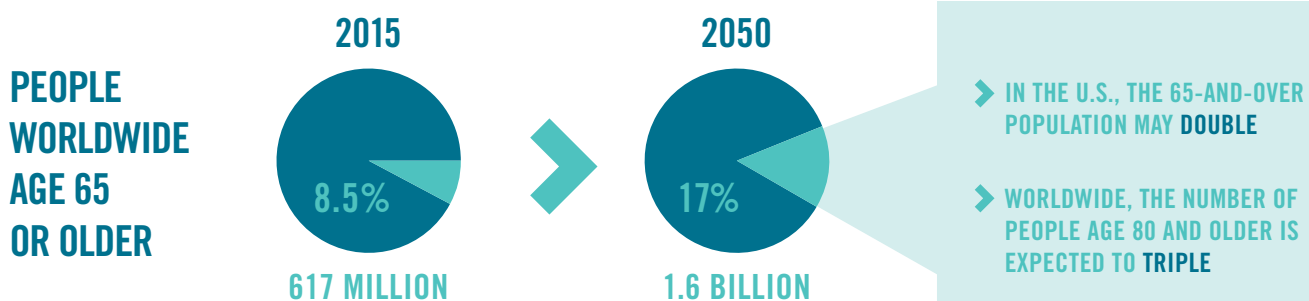
# 15

crisis calls a month connected health care providers, government services, advocates and families to resolve escalating issues

ARC NORTHLAND  
[arcnorthland.org](http://arcnorthland.org)

## THE WORLD IS AGING:

### PROJECTIONS SHOW MAJOR CHANGES BY 2050



### POPULATION AGING AFFECTS MANY ASPECTS OF PUBLIC LIFE:

- Pensions
- Retirement
- Housing
- Transportation
- Acute health care
- Long-term health care
- Work

Source: *An Aging World: 2015*, a report from the National Institute on Aging ([nia.org](http://nia.org))

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

MEDICA FOUNDATION

	2015	2014
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Investments	26,540,615	25,304,259
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,540,615</b>	<b>25,304,259</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Liabilities	1,432,707	1,375,664
Net Assets	25,107,908	23,928,595
<b>Total Net Assets and Liabilities</b>	<b>26,540,615</b>	<b>25,304,259</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Contribution from Affiliate	4,000,000	0
Investment Income	868,342	909,686
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>4,868,342</b>	<b>909,686</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Administrative Expense	436,970	439,936
Investment Management Fee	148,515	145,992
Community Funding	1,489,500	1,398,975
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,074,985</b>	<b>1,984,903</b>
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	2,793,357	(1,075,217)
<b>Net Assets at Beginning of Year</b>	<b>23,928,595</b>	<b>24,932,048</b>
<b>Net Assets at End of Year</b>	<b>25,107,908</b>	<b>23,928,595</b>

## GRANTS

During 2015, the Medica Foundation awarded grants totaling almost **\$1.5 million** to 104 different initiatives and projects.

Alzheimer's Disease . . . . .	\$150,000
Behavioral Health: Filling the Gaps. . . . .	\$400,000
Early Childhood Health . . . . .	\$300,000
General Health Improvement . . . . .	\$244,500
Organization Core Mission Support . . . . .	\$200,000
Strategic Grants . . . . .	\$200,000
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,494,500</b>

# GRANTS

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

180 Degrees, Inc.  
Fraser Ltd.  
HealthEast Foundation  
Intermediate School District 287  
Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)  
Touchstone Mental Health  
Vail Place  
YouthLink

**EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH**

A Chance to Grow  
Children’s Dental Services  
Churches United in Ministry  
CornerHouse Interagency Child Abuse Evaluation and Training Center  
ISD 47 Sauk Rapids/Rice  
Lakes and Pines Community Action Council, Inc.  
PACT for Families Collaborative  
Simpson Housing Services Inc.  
St. David’s Center for Child & Family Development  
The Family Partnership  
Washburn Center for Children

**GENERAL HEALTH**

African Immigrants Community Services  
Alzheimer’s Association Minnesota-North Dakota  
American Cancer Society  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
American Red Cross Twin Cities Area Chapter

Ascension Place  
Better Futures Minnesota  
Bolder Options  
Can Do Canines  
Charities Review Council  
Community Emergency Services, Inc.  
Community Health Charities Minnesota  
Courage Kenny Foundation  
East Side Neighborhood Services, Inc.  
Face to Face Health and Counseling Service, Inc.  
Fraser  
Greater Twin Cities United Way  
Guild Incorporated  
Hmong American Partnership  
March of Dimes  
Minnesota Dental Foundation  
Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging  
Minnesota Public Health Association  
National Alliance on Mental Illness - Minnesota  
Nonprofits Assistance Fund  
Parents in Community Action, Inc., (PICA)  
Partnership Resources, Inc.  
Prevention Health Care Agency  
Ramsey County  
Senior Citizens Services Inc.  
Senior Community Services  
Somali Community Resettlement Services Inc.  
Southside Community Health Services  
Teenwise Minnesota

The Arc Greater Twin Cities  
West Broadway Business and Area Coalition  
YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities

**CORE MISSION**

Access North Center for Independent Living of Northeastern Minnesota  
Arc Kandiyohi County  
Arc Midstate  
Assumption Community Services, Inc.  
Boys & Girls Club of Rochester  
Bridges of Hope  
C.A.R.E. Clinic  
CentraCare Health Foundation  
Central MN Task Force on Battered Women  
Children’s Dental Health Services  
Ely Community Resources, Inc.  
Family HealthCare Center  
Family Resource Center St. Croix Valley, Inc.  
Generations Health Care Initiatives  
Granite Falls Living at Home/Block Nurse Program  
Hands of Hope Resource Center, Inc.  
Helping Hands Outreach  
HERO, Healthcare Equipment Recycling Organization  
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association  
Interfaith Caregivers - Faith in Action in Faribault County

Knute Nelson Foundation  
Leisure Education for Exceptional People, Inc.  
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota – Duluth  
Luthern Social Service of Minnesota – St. Cloud  
Monticello Christian Social Services, Inc.  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Southeast Minnesota  
North Shore Horizons, Inc.  
Northland Foundation  
Our Savior’s Lutheran Church  
Pearl Battered Women’s Resource Center  
Project Care Free Clinic  
Project Lulu  
Range Respite Project, Inc.  
South Central Adult Services Council, Inc.  
Third Street Clinic  
VINE Faith in Action  
Wellspring Faith in Action  
West Central Industries, Inc.  
West Central Initiative  
Women’s Health Center of Duluth, PA  
YWCA of Mankato

**STRATEGIC GRANTS**

ACT on Alzheimer’s – Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging  
Center for Alcohol & Drug Treatment  
Neighborhood Health Care Network

“There is no power for change  
greater than a community  
discovering what it cares about.”

– Margaret Wheatley, American author (b. 1941)

**MEDICA**<sup>®</sup>  
FOUNDATION

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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