

Otto Bremer Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Otto Bremer Foundation to Begin Grantmaking in Mankato

Four initial grants totaling up to \$1 million seek to build community capacity to support youth

ST. PAUL, September 29, 2011—The Otto Bremer Foundation today announced four grants totaling up to \$1 million to promote positive youth development in Mankato and strengthen community capacity to support youth. Grant recipients include:

- Mankato Area Foundation, up to \$400,000 over three years for an ongoing endowment to support teen programs and staff support.
- Mankato Area Healthy Youth (MAHY), \$325,000 over three years to build community capacity to support youth.
- Greater Mankato Area United Way, up to \$230,000 over three years for youth activity scholarships, staff support and bus passes to enable teens to participate in activities.
- Mankato Family YMCA, up to \$45,000 over three years, to provide teen programming on the east side.

The grant to the Mankato Family YMCA and portions of the grants to Mankato Area Foundation and Greater Mankato Area United Way will match, dollar-for-dollar, additional funds raised for youth.

The grants are the result of an intensive series of conversations and meetings held over the summer months between Otto Bremer Foundation staff and Mankato residents, including youth and people from local businesses, government, schools and nonprofits. The Foundation's focus on teens recognizes the importance to a community's future of support across the entire child/youth continuum.

"These grants are based on what we heard and learned on the ground," said Charlotte Johnson, a trustee of the Foundation. "We know that quality youth programming helps to transform young people during this important developmental stage into engaged community members. The community benefits when all youth have access to opportunities for participation and leadership."

The youth initiative is designed to make a difference for Mankato youth and the community now and in the future. The grants support youth development activities and help to ensure access by addressing financial and logistical barriers to participation through scholarships, bus passes and other means. The matching grant to the Mankato Area Foundation is intended to encourage community members to help build the financial capacity to continue to support youth development into the future.

“We hope these grants help to shine the spotlight on teens in Mankato,” said Daniel Reardon, Foundation trustee. “In essence, we’re asking the entire community to get involved to strengthen the community’s future.”

In addition, with the grand opening today of a Bremer Bank location in Mankato, the Otto Bremer Foundation is now accepting applications for grants and program-related investments from organizations whose beneficiaries are residents of the Mankato area. The community becomes one of 79 Bremer communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and western Wisconsin. In 2010, the Foundation provided approximately \$24.1 million in grants to Bremer communities in the three-state region.

Foundation staff and trustees will visit Mankato over the coming months to learn more about community opportunities and needs.

“We extend a warm welcome to Mankato as the newest member of the family of Bremer communities,” said William Lipschultz, Foundation trustee. “We are proud of what our support for other Bremer communities has helped them accomplish. We know that our limited funding will necessitate difficult choices, but we hope to be a resource for activities that help to move Mankato forward in powerful ways.”

Created in 1944, the Otto Bremer Foundation assists people in achieving full economic, civic and social participation in and for the betterment of their communities. This mission is based on the intent of founder Otto Bremer. His vision and longstanding commitment to communities during and after the Great Depression are carried forward today through the Foundation’s work in the places that are homes and neighbors to Bremer banks. The Foundation strives to help build healthy, vibrant communities—communities where basic needs are met, mutual regard is prized and opportunities for economic, civic and social participation are within everyone’s reach.

The Otto Bremer Foundation owns 92 percent of Bremer Bank, and receives an equivalent share of the bank profits that are paid out as dividends. This means that a large portion of bank profit is invested back in local communities through grants and program-related investments.

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