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## News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **Nonprofits Receive More Than \$750,000 in 3rd Quarter Grants**

The Initiative Foundation and its Partner Funds are pleased to announce that 81 grants totaling \$753,744 were awarded during the third quarter of 2017. The grants support organizations and projects primarily in the 14-county region of Central Minnesota.

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## Innovation Fund Awards

The following organizations were among those awarded funding during the months of July, August and September 2017:

- **City of Pequot Lakes--Pequot Lakes Thriving Communities Initiative (TCI):** \$5,000 to support projects resulting from the city's participation in the Thriving Communities Initiative (TCI) program, including: creation of a trademarked community brand, design of a new skateboard park, coordination of a community website to assist visitors and residents, and revisions to the city's current comprehensive plan to include elements from the TCI Initiative.
- **Big Lake School District--Big Lake Area Early Childhood Coalition:** \$7,000 to increase literacy-rich opportunities for families with young children, especially those living in poverty, by offering story times in various Big Lake parks. The grant will also help increase training and collaboration opportunities for early childhood professionals to support children in their school readiness skills.

- **Goodwill Industries, Inc.--St. Cloud Area Financial Services Training Program:** \$4,000 to support an eight-week, work-skills training program that provides individuals with experience in the financial service, call-center and customer service fields. The program offers additional support to help participants obtain employment upon program completion.
- **Brainerd Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce Education Association-Bridges Career Institute for Region Five for High School Internship and Apprenticeship Models:** \$5,000 to identify high school juniors and seniors from Brainerd, Pequot Lakes and Crosby-Ironton schools and match them for summer 2017 employment in manufacturing, hospitality, healthcare and information technology.
- **Central Minnesota Community Empowerment Organization--Capacity Building for La Cruz Community Center:** \$7,500 to La Cruz Community Center to help new Americans integrate in the St. Cloud area by providing mentoring and tutoring for students, summer youth engagement events, and English-as-a-second-language classes to parents.
- **Central Lakes College Small Business Development Center (SBDC)--Small Business Growth and Success Initiative:** \$10,000 to support consulting services which provide assistance in business plan development, loan application preparation, financial projection analysis, market feasibility assessments and other guidance to help local businesses grow.

[See the full list of grant recipients ...](#)

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## Partner Fund Awards

The Initiative Foundation hosts a variety of Partner Funds for families, businesses, nonprofit organizations and volunteer-led groups. The following organizations were among those awarded third-quarter 2017 grants:

- **Sauk Rapids-Rice Education Foundation:** \$45,654.67 to the Compass Program at Sauk Rapids-Rice School District (in partnership with Youthrise and the Social Innovation Fund).
- **Patrick and Jane Mitchell Family Fund:** \$5,000 to the Rocori Area Food Shelf.
- **Family Farm Fund:** \$2,500 to the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota in support of the Salsa Festival.
- **Granite Equity Partner Fund:** \$50,000 to the Anderson Center for operating support.
- **Cuyuna Lakes Education Foundation:** \$3,000 to the Cuyuna Lakes

Education Foundation.

[See the full list of Partner Fund grant recipients ...](#)

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## About Initiative Foundation Grants

Since 1986, the Foundation has awarded thousands of grants totaling nearly \$33.8 million. The average grant award is about \$5,000. All grants support projects that address at least one of the following areas:

- Help small businesses and social enterprises through access to technical assistance, mentorship and education efforts. The Foundation is especially interested in supporting minority business ownership and/or job creation in areas of concentrated poverty.
- Help communities address opportunities or barriers to business growth and creation or retention of quality jobs.
- Support activities that lead to improved skills and employment or advancement in growing sectors for future, displaced or underemployed workers.
- Support community-based early childhood efforts to advance literacy, school readiness and access to dental services for children in poverty.
- Help nonprofits that have a core focus on poverty become more effective or efficient through strategic planning, staff development or board training.
- Support activities that cultivate the next generation of leaders working and living in our region.
- Support planning or start-up funds for community-based amenities or events that help attract and retain skilled workers and young families.
- Help communities respond to and recover from significant local natural disasters.

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The Initiative Foundation exists to improve the quality of life and to build stronger communities within its 14-county region of Central Minnesota by offering leadership training, business loans, nonprofit grants and donor services. Since 1986, the Initiative Foundation has invested multiple millions in the region through targeted grants and business financing investments.

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