

THE ECONOMY: Helping Communities Recover



Summer 2009

Facing Minnesota's Current Economic Issues—Head On



Welcome to the first issue of our new quarterly publication! *MNSights* (pronounced *minn-sites*) combines content you would have previously found in *Enrichments*, *Perspectives*, *Partners in Philanthropy* and *Connecting*. Streamlining our publications is just one effort to ensure the effective use of human, financial and environmental resources.

Minnesota Community Foundation and The Saint Paul Foundation are also investing in and protecting the vital work accomplished in the nonprofit community in a new way during this economic downturn. In this issue, we share with you our proactive approach to grantmaking that will allow us to respond to escalating needs in our community in a timely way.

We sincerely hope you will join us in this initiative—after all, we know we can all achieve more together!



Carleen K. Rhodes, President and CEO

Connecting our core strengths. Pursuing shared interests. Achieving more together.

Making a Difference — The Community Economic Relief Fund

Times are tough—but together we can make a difference. Minnesota Community Foundation and The Saint Paul Foundation are focusing our efforts on people who are most adversely affected by the economic downturn. Through a new initiative—the Community Economic Relief Fund—we are making a targeted investment in programs that help our most vulnerable neighbors across the state.

THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC RELIEF FUND—WHAT IS IT?

Along with key partners, our Foundations have allocated more than \$2 million to the Community Economic Relief Fund. Money from the Fund will be distributed over the next 12–18 months. We have identified several key areas of basic need in which we will invest, and we plan to partner with select nonprofit organizations that are uniquely configured to have the greatest impact on people in these areas of need.

The first three critical areas of focus are: **Housing stability**—helping people find stable housing through foreclosure prevention programs, assistance to renters and homeless shelters. **Hunger relief**—helping support the hungry through food shelves and banks, and food support assistance programs. **Financial counseling and assistance**—helping people with budgeting, debt relief and avoiding bankruptcy through consumer credit counseling and tax preparation assistance. **Healthcare, mental health, and jobs and training** are the other areas of basic need on which we plan to focus in the future.

THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC RELIEF FUND—WHAT WILL IT DO?

Every day the number of Minnesotans affected by job loss, foreclosures and other such financial instability is rising. The Community Economic Relief Fund will support not only traditionally low-income populations, but also those who have only recently become economically vulnerable. Dollars from the Fund have already been invested in our communities.

The Family Place, a day center for homeless families in Ramsey County, received money from the Community Economic Relief Fund to help expand its capacity. Each day approximately 40 individuals spend their day at The Family Place—but the need is much greater, and the center has had to turn people away. With the money received from the Fund, The Family Place has added space to accommodate 20 more individuals and has paid for additional staffing to provide crucial services. That is 50 percent more people who are served at the center and now have a safe place to go.

THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC RELIEF FUND—HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We invite you to partner with us to increase the size of the Community Economic Relief Fund. We hope to double its size to \$4 million so that we can best respond to our neighbors' needs in both a timely and impactful way.

Philanthropic giving is more essential than ever as economic turmoil disconnects many of our Minnesota neighbors from security, basic needs and quality of life. Nonprofit organizations in our communities will increasingly be called upon to provide basic services, even as they face shrinking assets and declining donations. In short—they need our help!

To learn more about how you can make a difference, to make a gift directly or to make a gift from your Donor Advised Fund, please call Jean Vukas Roberts, Sonja Moore or Sally Seiberlich at 651.224.5463. For more information and regularly updated news about the Community Economic Relief Fund, or to make a gift online, please visit our website at www.mncommunityfoundation.org or www.saintpaulfoundation.org.

Learning How to Help—Together

On June 10, the Foundations sponsored a panel discussion entitled "Leverage Your Giving: New Ways to Help in Troubled Times." Among the items discussed were how current economic conditions are impacting vulnerable populations in our communities, how the nonprofit sector is coping with increased demands for services despite decreased financial resources, and how the Foundations' Community Economic Relief Fund will help. Panel experts included Kate Barr, executive director of Nonprofits Assistance Fund, and Margaret Lovejoy, executive director of The Family Place, as well as several Foundation staff members.



Donor Advisors—Please Join Us

On August 11, the Foundations will host a tour of East Metro nonprofit organizations. This tour will show firsthand how dollars are being used to help our communities during these difficult times. If you are interested in attending, please contact Sarah Richter at 651.325.4294 or sir@saintpaulfoundation.org. Note: there will be a briefing in the West Metro this fall.



Partners in Philanthropy Now Online

Partners in Philanthropy—the publication that informs you about organizations and programs The Saint Paul Foundation is supporting with gifts from its unrestricted endowment funds—now lives online. This list of grants, organized by fields of interest, will be posted on our website three times a year following grant approvals by the board of directors. You can find *Partners in Philanthropy* at www.saintpaulfoundation.org/grants under the Grant Recipients section.



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