



Northland Foundation announces 35 quarterly grants awarded July through September

More than one-third of funding went toward helping sustain and expand child care in northeast Minnesota

November 1, 2023

From July through September, the Northland Foundation awarded 35 quarterly grants totaling \$603,500 to support northeast Minnesota people and communities working toward a future where everyone feels they belong and can thrive.

In addition to awards to nonprofit organizations, Tribal nations, and school districts, the foundation directed over one-third of all grant funds last quarter – more than \$200,000 – to help sustain and expand licensed child care in the region.

The Northland Foundation has prioritized early care and education for more than 20 years with training and education, partnership development, funding, advocacy, rallying around the topic. During the past year alone, the Northland Foundation has, in collaboration with government partners, invested nearly \$800,000 to assist with stabilization and expansion of existing child care and start-up of new child care businesses. Northland has also administered millions of dollars in Minnesota Early Learning Scholarships to help families in the region pay for high-quality care and led programming to support “informal providers” who regularly care for the children of family members, friends, and neighbors.

Need, however, continues to outpace efforts to increase child care access. According to the *2023 Child Care Needs Summary* report newly released by First Children’s Finance, the current child care shortfall in northeast Minnesota is 4,223 slots – a loss of 500 slots since June 2022 when the shortfall was reported at just over 3,700. (Find the 2023 Summary and drill down by region, county, and city, here: <https://www.ruralchildcare.org/data>.)

Tony Sertich, Northland Foundation President, has been closely involved with the child care issue at the local, regional, and state levels.

“The State of Minnesota took strong positive steps this year to help stabilize child care, and we can’t take our foot off the gas now. Northland will keep doing what we can alongside public and private partners,” said Sertich.

“That said, from all our work on child care, it is clear that a quick-and-easy fix does not exist especially in relation to infants and toddlers,” continued Sertich. “There is no silver bullet. It will take broad community engagement, the courage to try new and different approaches, and significant public

investment to reach long-term solutions that work for families, early care and education providers, and employers.”

The child care expansion grants and all Northland Foundation quarterly grants awarded July 1 – September 30, 2023, are as follows.

BASIC NEEDS GRANTS *Food security, homeless services, affordable housing, and other human needs essential to wellbeing*

Loaves and Fishes Too, Minneapolis: \$10,000

To support nutritious meal programming in Aitkin County.

Two Harbors Area Food Shelf, Two Harbors: \$10,000

To support the Two Harbors Area Food Shelf's mission to provide emergency food assistance in Lake County.

Duluth Center for Women and Children, Duluth: \$24,000

To support the growth of management capacity for Food Forward, a Central Hillside community project.

Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Nett Lake: \$30,000

To support cultural and community activities at the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa's New Moon Supportive Housing.

YWCA of Duluth, Duluth: \$35,000

To provide general operating support to YWCA Duluth's mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, and freedom for all.

Churches United In Ministry, Duluth: \$30,000

To support the staff, residents, and broader community of the St. Francis Apartments in Duluth.

Project Care Free Clinic, Hibbing: \$25,000

To maintain operations of Project Free Care Clinics in the Iron Range.

Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, Saint Paul: \$20,000

To provide comprehensive and culturally specific sex education to BIPOC residents of the Duluth area.

Children's Dental Services, Inc., Minneapolis: \$30,000

To provide comprehensive dental care and substance use prevention education to women and pregnant people who have experienced domestic violence and their children and family members in northeast Minnesota.

BELONGING GRANTS *Efforts to help all people be fully a part of their community with the voice and power to shape institutions and systems*

OutFront Minnesota Community Services, Minneapolis: \$10,000

To support LGBTQ+ equity, inclusion, and belonging in St. Louis County, Cook County, and the Fond du Lac Reservation.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE PREVENTION GRANTS *Prevention and intervention in relation to domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking*

Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault, Duluth: \$30,000

To support the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program that provides forensic medical exams and advocacy services to victims of sexual assault.

First Witness Child Advocacy Center, Duluth: \$35,000

To support the ongoing child advocacy services and child abuse prevention education school programming in Lake and Carlton County.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION GRANTS *Early care and education quality and access, parenting education and supports*

Ostara Initiative, Minneapolis: \$25,000

To support the Minnesota Prison Doula Project, which provides doula care and parenting education to mothers in St. Louis County Jail.

ServeMinnesota, Minneapolis: \$30,000

To provide support for the placement of Early Learning Corps tutors in pre-k classrooms in Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, and St. Louis counties.

Families and Communities Together, Virginia: \$5,000

To support the expansion of professional level training in trauma-informed practices for childcare providers, educators, and other service providers who work with children and youth in northeast Minnesota.

Duluth Licensed Child Care Providers, Duluth: \$10,000

In partnership with the City of Duluth 1200 Fund, the Northland Foundation is assisting licensed child care programs with implementing creative recruitment and retention strategies.

- Happy Time Day Care Center, Duluth: \$10,000

Child Care Start-up and Expansion Grants, Northeast Minnesota: \$126,500

To support the start-up or expansion of center-based or family-based child care programs in northeast Minnesota, in partnership with the State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

- Bubbling Brook Child Care Center, Duluth: \$25,000
- Makenzie Renaud, Grand Rapids: \$5,000
- Itasca County Family YMCA, Grand Rapids: \$35,000
- Hannah Christenson, Duluth: \$5,000
- KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc., Grand Rapids: \$28,000

- Building Blocks Learning Center, Duluth: \$28,500

St. Louis County Child Care Startup & Expansion Grants: \$70,000

To help support the start-up or expansion of center-based or family-based child care programs in Greater St. Louis County.

- Baudeck's Daycare, LLC, Chisholm: \$25,000
- Happy Days Preschool, Inc., Ely: \$25,000
- Heidi Fingeroos, Eveleth: \$5,000
- Dream Weaver Childcare, Hibbing: \$10,000
- Marie Johnson, Virginia: \$5,000

St. Louis County Child Care Sustainability Grants: \$5,000

To help Greater St. Louis County licensed family-based child care providers and centers experiencing an unanticipated repair, upgrade, or equipment replacement needed to maintain services.

- Precious Care Daycare, Hibbing: \$5,000
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OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME SERVICES GRANTS *Programming and enrichment activities for children and youth*

Friends of the Finland Community, Finland: \$30,000

To support the continued expansion of Finland Community Youth programming in northern St. Louis County.

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