



Northland Foundation awards \$90,000 in grants to 6 child care projects in the region

DEED funds support child care start-ups and expansions in Cohasset, Duluth, Eveleth, Grand Rapids, and Littlefork

An \$85,000 Child Care Economic Development Grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), along with \$5,000 from the Northland Foundation's grant funds, has been distributed as grant awards to five new child care entities and one expanding child care in northeastern Minnesota.

- City of Cohasset Childcare and Community Center, Cohasset, start-up
- Hope for Kids (Hope United Methodist), Duluth, start-up
- New Hope FOR Families, Duluth, start-up
- Brandie's Little Bear Learning Center, Eveleth, start-up
- Itasca County YMCA WeeFolksgarten Child Care Center, Grand Rapids, expansion
- Littlefork Child Care Pod Model Project, Littlefork, start-up

"Access to high-quality child care is absolutely essential for families and our region's economy to thrive. It's encouraging to see new businesses underway, and growth for existing child care sites, to help meet the need in area communities," stated Tony Sertich, President of the Northland Foundation.

The DEED grant dollars can be used for staff training, facility modifications or improvements required for licensing, assistance with licensing or other regulatory requirements, and child care equipment from furniture to playground materials. It is anticipated that, when fully operational, the above six grant recipients will offer care for 341 children and provide 61 jobs.

Two of these projects* along with three others also received grants totaling \$50,000 provided through funding from the Northland Foundation's partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) earlier this year. The Virginia, Aitkin, and Hermantown projects awarded grants through the DHS partnership are projected to add yet another 171 child care openings and 47 jobs.

- Virginia Drop-in Daycare, Virginia
- Kidz Zone Daycare Center, Aitkin
- YMCA at the Essentia Health Wellness Center Early Childhood Development Center, Hermantown
- *Brandie's Little Bear Learning Center, Eveleth
- *Hope for Kids (Hope United Methodist), Duluth

In 2017 and 2018, DEED Child Care Economic Development Grants provided \$215,000 to the Northland Foundation, which helped fund 10 other northeastern Minnesota child care projects which resulted in 330 child care openings and 49 jobs.