

Initiative Foundation Presents Minnesota Oomph!
Community Health Conference Set for March 6th

How can your business deal with skyrocketing health insurance?
Is your community designed for cars or people?
Will obesity cause kids to have shorter lives than their parents?
Can locally grown foods make your family and community healthier?
Are we headed for a “Silver Tsunami?”

Focused on the hot topics of community health, the Initiative Foundation and eight partners will host a regional leadership conference called *Minnesota Oomph!* on Thursday, March 6th at the St. Cloud Civic Center. The conference follows the foundation’s winter issue of *IQ Magazine*.

Mark Fenton, humorist, community health expert, and national host of *America’s Walking on PBS*, will keynote the event. Fenton will also show highlights of his “walkability” tours in St. Cloud and Brainerd, and then discuss how leaders could encourage more walking and biking opportunities.

Breakouts will cover community design strategies, childhood obesity, local foods and healthy eating, the rapidly aging population, and employer programs that reduce health insurance costs. Each session will be led by a statewide expert and include a panel discussion.

“We’ve seen these community health issues become greater challenges in central Minnesota, from skyrocketing health insurance to obesity in young children to how our towns are designed,” said Kathy Gaalswyk, Initiative Foundation president. “This conference is for people who maybe haven’t thought about these things before, but who want to understand the big picture and how they fit into it.”

Presenting partners are the Brainerd Lakes Area Chambers of Commerce, Brainerd Lakes Integrated Health System, CentraCare Health System, Central Minnesota Community Foundation, Cuyuna Regional Medical Center, Happy Dancing Turtle, KLKS Radio, and the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce.

Registration fees are \$45 before February 15 and \$65 before February 27. For more information or to register, visit www.ifound.org/oomph or call Anita at (877) 632-9255.

Government Training Services - Workshop Registration now open

Government Training Services, an organization that offers workshops for staff and appointed officials from all levels of government, is offering a new workshop series -- *Working Nature into Land Use Decisions*. These educational workshops will share information on trends, tools, and processes that help local units of government balance development and open space conservation.

"A Fresh Look: Rethinking Local Land Use Planning" held this **Friday, February 1** at the Initiative Foundation offices in Little Falls. This workshop presents useful information to help local officials understand why and how natural resources information can be incorporated into local land and water planning and zoning to reduce the impacts of development on local infrastructure...

A second workshop, on Wednesday, **February 27th**, again in Little Falls, "Redefining the Development Process: Choosing Collaboration over Contention to Protect Natural Resources and Maximize the Public Value of Private Development."

The third session is offered in St. Paul on a half-day (\$60) on March 27th called "Resolving the Funding Dilemma." "This workshop is designed for local officials who want to learn how to understand the benefits and costs of open space conservation in relation to development plus learn how to construct an effective approach to finance land conservation including local referendums, grant programs, and working with developers and landowners."

Registration is now open, go to <http://www.mngts.org/LandUse/LandUse2008.html>

Anderson Brothers Family Fund

In partnership with the Initiative Foundation, the Anderson Brothers Family Fund is accepting grant inquiries from now through mid-March for projects beginning this summer. This fund's advisory committee has identified economic development projects as a funding priority. Grants from this fund can be made to nonprofits and local government agencies and range in size from \$1,000-\$5,000. Projects must be volunteer-driven and demonstrate financial need within Crow Wing County, southern Cass County, northern Morrison County (including Little Falls) or the Park Rapids area. For more details http://www.ifound.org/news_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=137

VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America)

The Initiative Foundation is currently looking for project sites to host a full-time VISTA volunteer for one year starting August 2008. VISTA (Volunteer In Service To America) is a national service program like the Peace Corps that places members in nonprofits and local government agencies to help in the fight against poverty. While

serving, VISTA members receive a modest monthly living stipend, an end-of-service cash or education award, medical coverage and child care assistance if eligible. Inquiries will be accepted from potential project sites until February 8. For more details, http://www.ifound.org/news_newsroom.php?NWArticleID=136

Innovative Community Planning Assistance

<http://www.1000fom.org/MNGrows.htm>

A \$1.5 million grant from the McKnight Foundation will fund 1000 Friends of Minnesota to deliver direct planning and implementation assistance to 10 rapidly growing communities, offering greater choices in how they grow. Nearly half of the \$1.5 million grant will be passed directly to the 10 selected communities.

Money will support efforts to develop a community vision and plan, to create and revise ordinances in support of that plan, and to develop implementation processes. The goal is to support and nurture local resident-advocates for thoughtful community planning, helping local visions come alive that address livability, local identity, economic development, and natural resource conservation.

The project will kick off in March 2008, when interested communities will be invited to submit a proposal to participate in a six-year process. Communities that would like to apply for the program or receive more information about the process are encouraged to contact Lisa Bigaouette, associate director, 1000 Friends of Minnesota, at 651/312-1000 or lbigaouette@1000fom.org

DNR Fishing Pier Grants

Program Purpose: To improve fishing opportunities, especially to meet the needs of children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Counties, cities, and townships may apply. Applications are accepted year-round. Project awards are made in the fall. For more information about this program call the Area Trails and Waterways Supervisor in your location or you may contact: Nancy Stewart, Water Recreation Program Coordinator at 651-259-5616 or by email at nancy.stewart@dnr.state.mn.us. More info is available on the web at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/fishing_pier.html

Grants Target Teen Driver Safety, Project Ignition

Project Ignition (<http://www.sfprojectignition.com/00home>), sponsored by State Farm and coordinated by the National Youth Leadership Council, is a chance for students and teachers to work together to address the issue of teen driver safety. Support is provided for innovative public awareness, service-learning projects based on teen driver safety developed by students enrolled in grades 9-12 at U.S. public schools. Students must create this project with the support of a teacher or advisor. Twenty-five semi-finalists will receive \$2,000 to help put their plan into action in the fall of 2008. Ten finalists will then

receive a stipend of up to \$5,000 for travel to the National Service-Learning Conference. *The application deadline is May 16, 2008.* **Visit the website** for online application information.

Community News Ventures Supported

New Voices (<http://www.j-newvoices.org/site/story/2008rfp/>), administered by J-Lab at the University of Maryland and supported by a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, is a pioneering program to seed innovative community news ventures in the United States. New Voices will fund the start-up of ten micro-local news projects with \$12,000 grants. The program also maintains an educational website for grantees, and helps foster their projects' sustainability through \$5,000 second-year matching grants. Funding is available for print or electronic news initiatives, including online, cable, broadcast, narrowcast, satellite, and mobile efforts. Nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and civic groups are eligible to apply. The application deadline is February 20, 2008. **Visit the website** for program details.

US Potato Board & School Nutrition Foundation Co-Sponsor School Wellness Grants

The US Potato Board, representing US potato growers, and the School Nutrition Foundation (SNF) are co-sponsoring the first-ever School Wellness Grant program. Ten grants of \$2,500 will be awarded for one of the following: purchasing foodservice equipment for the healthful preparation of fresh or processed potatoes; physical activity equipment; or development or execution of nutrition or physical activity educational programs.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicant must apply on behalf of a public elementary school.
- The school must participate in the national School Lunch Week.
- Applicant must either be a member of SNA for a minimum of one year, or an SNA member must sponsor the applicant. (Visit the SNA website at: www.schoolnutrition.org/index.aspx?id=1111 to find a member in your state through the SNA state affiliate.

Grant applications are due April 15, 2008. Winners will be announced at the 2008 Nutrition Association Annual Conference. If you have questions regarding the grant or if you have any questions regarding eligibility, please contact the Foundation Coordinator at 800-877-8822 ext 104.

Blue Cross' Active Living Minnesota Request for Proposals

Blue Cross seeks to fund selected communities throughout Minnesota to plan for and implement a comprehensive approach to support active living with a focus on environmental and policy change efforts. For more information about this Blue Cross program, including how to apply, proposal instructions, and project budgeting information, go to:

<http://www.preventionminnesota.com/objects/Funding/599/ALMN-RFP599.pdf> The deadline for submitting a letter of Intent to apply is due by Thursday, February 14, 2008, and proposals are due March 14, 2008.

Free Climate and Energy Assistance for Minnesota Communities

<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/retap>

Minnesota communities are faced with significant issues related to climate change and energy. The Minnesota Climate Change Corps (CCC) is a new program, started in November 2007, comprising skilled, retired professionals who work on either long or short-term assignments to help reduce a community's carbon footprint (the amount of carbon dioxide released into the environment). The CCC, an initiative of the Minnesota Retired Engineers Technical Assistance Program (RETAP), is funded by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. City and county governments are the Corps' priorities for assistance.

Examples of assistance are:

- Identifying opportunities for carbon reductions
- Recommending cost-saving measures and projects with high returns on investment
- Assessing energy conservation options
- Developing community outreach strategies
- Energy audits
- Starting and strengthening a climate change action plan
- Reducing use of and reliance on fossil fuels
- Advising on energy-saving technologies and practices

The CCC will customize its assistance to meet your needs, and coordinates closely with RETAP's technical specialists. For more information contact Jim Jacques, Corps Coordinator, at jimjacques@comcast.net or 612/747-6023. For more information on RETAP contact RETAP Coordinator Mike Vennewitz at retap2002@yahoo.com.

Grants Promote Livable Communities in the U.S. and Canada

The Home Depot Foundation (<http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/support.html>)

The Home Depot Foundation supports nonprofit organizations in the communities where company associates live and work throughout the United States and Canada. The Foundation is dedicated to creating healthy, livable communities through the integration of affordable housing built responsibly and through the preservation and restoration of community trees. The Foundation's Affordable Housing Built Responsibly Program provides grants to organizations that help families live in homes that provide safe, healthy environments and conserve energy, water, and other natural resources. The Healthy Community Trees Program provides grants to organizations that work to incorporate trees and landscape into the community development plans of towns and cities. The next deadline for letters of inquiry for both programs is March 1, 2008. Visit the website listed above for online submission information.

The Home Depot Foundation has grants available in its “Affordable Housing Built Responsibly” program.

Preference is given to proposals producing, preserving, or financing housing for low- to moderate-income families with an emphasis on green building practices and smart growth designs. There are two cycles in 2008. **Letters of Intent are due on March 1 and July 1 and proposal deadlines are on May 15 and September 15.** Go to http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/support_housing_apply.html for more information.

Dollar General Literacy Grants

The Dollar General Literacy Grants programs provide funding to literacy providers in the communities served by the company. The Adult Literacy Grants program supports nonprofit organizations that provide direct service to adults in need of literacy assistance by offering adult basic education, general education diploma preparation, or English for speakers of other languages. The Family Literacy Grants program supports family literacy service providers that offer programs for both parents and children. Eligible organizations must be located within 20 miles of a **Dollar General store** in the company's 35-state market area. The application deadline for both programs is March 4, 2008. Visit the website: <http://www.dollargeneral.com/storelocator/default.aspx> for application guidelines for the programs.

Here are several USDA grant opportunities;

1. Community Connect Grant Program
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/commconnect.htm>
Applications Due: March 28, 2008

\$13.4 million available

2. Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm>
Applications Due: April 14, 2008
\$24.7 million available

3. Public Television Digital Transition Grant Program
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/public-tv.htm>
Applications Due: March 28, 2008
\$4.9 million available

Wind Energy Development

www.midwestagenergy.net/webseminar-wind.html#agenda

There is a webinar -- audio and PowerPoint that you can view at any time convenient to you, regarding wind energy development.

I listened to it and learned a lot about the "how to" aspects such as the various forms of financing a project, the legalities involved, importance of studying the cash flow, the cost and responsibility of maintaining the system for decades in the future (which were covered by the attorney, Daniel Yarano).

The engineering aspects such as where to (and not) locate a wind generator and how to get on the transmission grid were explained by Tom Wind.
Above is the web site if you are interested (free of charge).

Upgrade that Old TV Antenna

After Feb. 17, 2009, most broadcast TV stations will shut off their analog signals, which leaves perhaps 20 million U.S. homes without cable or satellite still use. But Congress will help you pay the \$50 to \$70 cost of converting old TVs for the new digital signals. Each household can get two \$40 coupons toward the digital converters. But the feds will mail the coupons on a first-come first-served basis. Applications can be submitted starting January 1, 2008, at www.dtv2009.gov or by calling (888) 388-2009. The coupons start going out in February, meaning you could enjoy crystal-clear digital TV a year early.

If you wish to be removed or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact Dan Frank (dfrank@ifound.org) or Leah Posterick (lposterick@ifound.org).

