



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Denise Mayotte, Executive Director
dmayotte@sheltering-arms.org
612-871-9210

Sheltering Arms Foundation announces 2016-17 slate of grantees, awards \$455,000 to 42 Minnesota nonprofits serving children

MINNEAPOLIS, September 8, 2016 — The Sheltering Arms Foundation today announced its 2016-17 financial support of 42 nonprofit organizations that are working hard to deliver that high quality learning to our state’s most vulnerable children. Sheltering Arms will invest \$455,000 in innovative direct service programs in early childhood and out-of-school-time youth development, as well as statewide advocacy campaigns designed to improve Minnesota’s policies that impact children and their families.

Many Sheltering Arms grantees are addressing the achievement gap and school readiness by looking at the whole child and expanding their programming to address key areas of child development that will help toward school success. One area Sheltering Arms is seeing addressed by both early childhood and youth development programs is the social and emotional development of children, with a number of grantees incorporating the arts into their programming as way to support this growth.

“The arts are a proven strategy to help children develop socially and emotionally,” said Denise Mayotte, executive director of the Sheltering Arms Foundation. “The Sheltering Arms Foundation is proud to support programs from north Minneapolis to White Earth that provide children with arts experiences in both out-of-school and early childhood programs.”

One grantee adding arts to its growing mentor program is **EMERGE**, a Minneapolis-based community development organization that operates the program EMERGE Link, which enhances the social and academic skills of pre-K to 12th grade youth who have previously been homeless and now live in two of EMERGE’s north Minneapolis housing developments. Sheltering Arms funding will support EMERGE Link’s growing mentorship program for children ages 6-12, in which EMERGE is adding additional art-focused enrichment activities structured to build social and emotional learning. EMERGE is partnering with EDIT and Juxtaposition to bring the arts into the mentor program.

“The art instructor has built an amazing rapport with the children and the parents as well, and the kids are excited,” said Marvin Clark, EMERGE director of housing. “When a child completes an art project that they wanted to do, they feel like they have accomplished something. It really builds their self-esteem and confidence. They begin to say, ‘If I can do this, then I am able to do other things in my life.’ ”

A twelve-year-old who participated in the art classes wrote, “Art class taught me that I can use my own two hands to make the world a kinder place. Because of art, I am now more active in my other classes. It made me think of my future.”

More grantees using the arts to help children grow include **Honor the Earth**, an organization on the White Earth reservation in northwestern Minnesota that is adding weekly art classes in traditional Ojibwe art to its programming for youth ages 5-12, culminating in creating murals in the Pine Point Village on White Earth; **Urban Arts Academy**, a bilingual Spanish-English arts-based preschool in south

(more)

Minneapolis, which is partnering with MacPhail Center for Music for early childhood music classes, as well as building its own capacity to integrate music into the curriculum; **ComMUSICation**, an intensive after-school choral-based program serving children in the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood, is adding a youth leadership program; and **Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities** is building on their successful pilot of a new art-based mentoring program, Art Buddies, to make final enhancements this year before incorporating Art Buddies into their ongoing programming.

In Sheltering Arms youth development funding category, 19 grantees received a total of \$188,500. In addition to EMERGE, Honor the Earth, ComMUSICation, and BBBS of the Greater Twin Cities, more after-school and summertime programs supported by Sheltering Arms can be found throughout the state:

- **Neighborhood House** in St. Paul is partnering with Canine Inspired Change to pilot a new program for children ages 5-12 using therapy dogs to increase self-confidence, self-esteem, team-building skills, and social and emotional skills.
- **Project Friendship** in Northfield, which provides mentoring relationships with college students from Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges for children in 2nd-7th grades in the Northfield School District, is expanding a cultural liaison position to reach and serve more children in Northfield's growing Latino immigrant community.
- **Urban Strategies**, based in Missouri and serving the Heritage Park housing development in north Minneapolis, supports the Green Garden Bakery program for teens. The program is expanding to incorporate younger children, grades K-5, in STEM, creative arts, and a cooking/gardening program that will prepare them to participate in the Green Garden Bakery when they are older.

In Sheltering Arms' early childhood funding category, 23 programs received a total of \$266,500 in grants. In addition to Urban Arts Academy, other early childhood care and education grantees include:

- **Hmong American Partnership** in St. Paul is expanding its new Montessori preschool, which recently earned a 4-star Parent Aware rating, to serve more students and to further develop its bilingual literacy program.
- **Northland Foundation** in Duluth is offering free trainings to engage licensed family and center-based childcare providers across rural northeastern Minnesota in the Parent Aware rating system.
- The **YWCA of Mankato** is expanding Ready To Learn, an early-childhood education program for immigrant and refugee children ages birth to 5, to bring programming to the St. Peter community to reach the increasing numbers of Latino, Somali and Middle Eastern families moving into the area.

This year's funding includes \$72,500 in advocacy/public policy grants, continuing the foundation's work to improve systems and policies that affect Minnesota's children. Areas served by the 42 Sheltering Arms grantees include Blooming Prairie, Brainerd, Brooklyn Center, Chisholm, Crosby, Duluth, Golden Valley, Hibbing, Hopkins, Mankato, Maplewood, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, New Brighton, Northfield, Pequot Lakes, Pillager, Richfield, Robbinsdale, Rochester, St. Paul, St. Peter, Staples, and White Earth.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The complete, annotated list of 2016-2017 grantees is available here: http://www.sheltering-arms.org/index.asp?page_seq=34

About the Sheltering Arms Foundation

The mission of the Sheltering Arms Foundation is to invest in the lives of children and help them reach their full potential. Based in Minneapolis, the foundation funds nonprofit organizations and supports policies that benefit Minnesota children and their families who have the least access to resources. Since its inception as a grantmaking foundation in 1983, the foundation has provided more than 1,100 grants totaling over \$14.7 million. The next deadline for grant applications is in January 2017, with grant applications from Episcopal congregations due on April 1, 2017. For information about submitting a grant request, volunteering, or donating to the foundation, visit <http://sheltering-arms.org> or call 612-871-9210 (toll-free: 866-871-9210).