



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mary Beth Hanson, 612-236-1811 direct, 612-812-6733 cell, [marybeth@wfmn.org](mailto:marybeth@wfmn.org)

### **Women's Foundation of Minnesota awards \$366,500 in grants to end the prostitution of Minnesota girls**

First state foundation to dedicate funding stream to end sex trafficking

(Mar. 30, Minneapolis) —The Women's Foundation of Minnesota has awarded \$366,500 in grants to eight organizations through MN Girls Are Not For Sale. Launched by the Women's Foundation in November 2011, MN Girls Are Not For Sale is a five year, \$5 million campaign to end the prostitution of Minnesota girls through grantmaking, research, and public education.

Over the next year, grantees will drive legislative action to change state laws to recognize girls under age 18 who've been prostituted are victims of a crime, not the criminals; pursue sustainable housing for prostituted girls to ensure that advocates can create and sustain holistic shelters for survivors; and develop a statewide county multi-jurisdictional model for intervention and services.

"This is the first time in the Foundation's history that we've funded government – St. Paul Police and Ramsey County Attorney's Office – in addition to nonprofits. This underscores the depth and breadth of our partnerships to develop housing and multi-jurisdictional interventions – two key priorities for us," said Lee Roper-Batker, president and CEO of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. "We know these grantees will move the needle on this issue in our state."

#### **Grantees:**

**Advocates for Human Rights** (Minneapolis) | **\$35,000** – To continue the work of the Safe Harbors for Sexually Exploited Youth Initiative working for effective implementation of Minnesota's Safe Harbors law.

**Breaking Free** (St. Paul) | **\$56,500** – To develop and implement a strategic long-term awareness and education campaign to decrease the demand that leads to the commercial sexual exploitation (prostitution) of Minnesota girls.

**Heartland Ranch** (Benson) | **\$32,500** – To develop a comprehensive, culturally specific, housing model program to meet the safety and healing needs of domestically sex trafficked girls, ages 13 to 18.

**Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center** (Minneapolis) | **\$35,000** – To create a training curriculum that builds the local and regional capacity of organizations to end the prostitution of indigenous girls, with specific modules developed for tribes, law enforcement, child protection, and health professionals.

- more -

## 2/... FOUNDATION AWARDS FIRST GRANTS TO END PROSTITUTION OF MINNESOTA GIRLS

**Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault / Life House (Duluth) | \$32,500** – To develop a multi-jurisdictional model in connecting law enforcement and supportive services, and develop sustainable housing for girls.

**Ramsey County Attorney's Office (St. Paul) | \$60,000** – To conduct independent and coordinated systems audits in partnership with the St. Paul Police Department to determine whether policies and practices comply with principles of ensuring victim safety and intervention, and offender accountability.

**St. Paul Police Department (St. Paul) | \$55,000** – In addition to work (*see Ramsey County grant description, above*) with the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, the St. Paul Police Department (SPPD) will conduct "John Sweeps" to identify the typical procurer of sexual services. This information will be developed through the responses given by each person arrested for purchasing a child for sex (the "John") to a series of questions that will be asked at the time of arrest.

**The Family Partnership (Minneapolis) | \$60,000** – To partner with the Polaris Project (Washington, D.C.) to conduct and coordinate advocacy strategies to redefine commercially exploited domestic girls under age 18 as victims of a crime, and ensure access to housing and holistic services.

-0-

2012

---

### About the Women's Foundation of Minnesota

The Women's Foundation of Minnesota is a statewide community foundation that invests in social change to achieve equality for all women and girls in Minnesota. The Foundation funds innovative social change programs, builds women's philanthropy, conducts and reports research, advocates public policy, and educates the public about the successes and challenges of Minnesota's women and girls. It is the oldest women's foundation in the country. More at [www.wfmn.org](http://www.wfmn.org).

### About the MN Girls Are Not For Sale campaign

MN Girls Are Not for Sale is a five-year, \$5 million campaign of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota to galvanize resources to end the prostitution of Minnesota girls. The Women's Foundation will use the \$4 million it raises to make grants, fund research, convene stakeholders, and educate and mobilize the public on this issue. More at [www.MNGirlsNotForSale.org](http://www.MNGirlsNotForSale.org).