



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Women's Foundation awards \$630,000 in grants to end child sex trafficking in Minnesota**

(May 5, Mpls) — Today, the Women's Foundation of Minnesota has awarded 16 grants totaling \$655,000 through its MN Girls Are Not For Sale Fund. The Foundation has invested more than \$4 million through MN Girls Are Not For Sale, a campaign to end the sex trafficking of Minnesota children through grantmaking, research, and public education.

Over the next year, grantees will focus on the following priorities:

1. Decrease demand for child sex trafficking through increased arrests, prosecution, and penalties for traffickers and buyers.
2. Educate and mobilize public support and activism through strategies aimed at youth, men, and the broader community to prevent the sex trafficking of children.

The Foundation also continues to work towards a state investment of sustaining housing and services for sexually exploited youth. We are pleased to announce transition grants to the five grantees who previously received housing grants in order to continue supporting their work to provide housing and supportive services to youth victims of sex trafficking.

#### Demand and Public Education Grantees:

**Advocates for Human Rights** (Statewide) | **\$25,000** – To create training and awareness-building resources and conduct trainings and presentations to end the trafficking of Minnesota girls, as well as plan and execute the regional Safe Harbor convenings throughout Minnesota in 2015 with the Ramsey County Attorney's Office.

**Mankato Department of Public Safety** (Mankato, Southwestern MN) | **\$40,000** – To provide resources (personnel and equipment) in support of stings leading to increased arrests and prosecution using a victim-centered approach to end demand.

**City of Minneapolis: Police Department** (Minneapolis, Statewide) | **\$25,000** – To conduct training on internet crimes and data mining and provide technical support to agencies around the metro area, the state, and the upper Midwest region.

**City of Waite Park: Police Department** (Central MN) | **\$40,000** – To initiate a regional investigative "team" concept, including a multi-city collaboration for the Central MN Sex Trafficking Task Force, enabling the task force to prioritize sex-trafficking operations, purchase equipment, and train officers.

**The Family Partnership** (Statewide) | **\$40,000** – To conduct intensive committee staffing, testimony coordination, and one-to-one legislative meetings required to secure the maximum investment in the 2016-17 state Health & Human Services budget for the Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door model.

**Hennepin County Sheriff's Department** (Hennepin County) | **\$20,000** – To support a Criminal Information Sharing Analyst to analyze Hennepin County data and link with other investigations, and to continue and expand the scope of juvenile sex trafficking work by sharing information across the seven-county region.

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## **2/... Women's Foundation awards grants...**

**Hmong American Partnership** (St. Paul/Minneapolis) | **\$20,000** – To create an awareness-raising campaign aimed at the Hmong community to mobilize public support to end the sexual exploitation of Southeast Asian girls, and to educate police officers and social service providers about the prevalence of sex trafficking within the Southeast Asian culture.

**Men As Peacemakers** (Northeastern MN) | **\$50,000** – To create the Not Buying It campaign to engage, educate, and mobilize men and boys to reduce the commercial sexual exploitation of girls. The project includes development of an online survey, training module, and outreach campaign.

**The Link** (Minneapolis) | **\$35,000** – To create a youth-focused public education campaign to prevent the sexual exploitation of vulnerable youth. The campaign will be informed by focus groups done with homeless/vulnerable teens, in collaboration with The Link, University of Minnesota UROC, the City Attorney's office, and KNOCK.

**Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center** (Minneapolis) | **\$20,000** – To continue local and statewide education, training, and advocacy mobilizing community-driven responses; to support the Respect of Native Girls (STRONG) program, an intergenerational program engaging the urban American Indian community in sexual exploitation prevention; and to support educational and healing activities.

**TrueChild** (Statewide) | **\$50,000** – To conduct formative research, develop messaging effective with young males, identify communication channels, and produce a strategic plan for a demand-reduction social marketing and public education campaign.

**UROC-Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center** (Statewide) | **\$190,000** – To develop a high-level picture of the demand for victims of sex trafficking in Minnesota by gathering data through review, coding, and analyses of police records, combined with group and individual interviews.

### Housing Grantees:

**180 Degrees** (St. Paul) | **\$25,000** – To continue support for Brittany's Place, a 12-bed therapeutic housing facility for trafficked youth that provides on-site supportive services tailored to each girl, including mental health, chemical, physical, school, and family reunification.

**Heartland Girls' Ranch** (Benson) | **\$25,000** – To build a new home on the ranch property to serve sexually exploited youth, including dedicated staff, additional essential service delivery space, and intensive and specialized services to meet the individual needs of each girl.

**Life House** (Duluth) | **\$25,000** – To expand the Intensive Housing Program for teens and young adults who have been sex-trafficked by adding a .5 FTE Youth Mentor/Advocate and stabilization services, including long-term housing options and additional wrap-around services as needed.

**The Link** (Minneapolis) | **\$25,000** – For support towards capital costs for the Passageways Emergency Shelter and Housing program, which provides six beds for youth in emergency shelter and five units of transitional housing, as well as trauma-based therapy; survivor mentoring; educational services; individual case management; medical and mental health services; and youth development activities.

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## **2015**

**About:** 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. More at [wfmn.org](http://wfmn.org).