Foundation awards $227,500 in Pathways 2 Prosperity grants

(May 1, Minneapolis) — The Women’s Foundation of Minnesota has awarded a total of $227,500 in grants to three organizations through its Pathways 2 Prosperity: Building Women’s Economic Opportunity (Pathways 2 Prosperity) pilot program. The grant period is March 2015 to March 2016.

Pathways 2 Prosperity is a new initiative of the Women’s Foundation to increase access to post-secondary education and high-paying employment for low-income women, women of color, and women in greater Minnesota.

Through the initiative, the Foundation awards grants to innovative programs at community and technical colleges that create pathways for women to pursue employment in high-demand, high-skill and high-paying fields through training and certificate programs, and workforce development. Funded programs must also focus on increasing access to financial aid and other financial supports, and expanding and improving student supports and services for women.

Grantees:

Northwest Technical College Foundation (Bemidji) | $100,000 — To support Coding the Path from Poverty to Hope, a program done in partnership with Leech Lake Tribal College and Red Lake Tribal College to help women enter the medical coding field. The program includes classroom and online courses, culturally grounded advising and mentoring, career counseling, daycare/eldercare support, transportation support, and up to $3,000 of past higher-education debt forgiveness. Program participants must be living below the federal poverty level, caretaker of a child or elder, or a woman of color.

Dunwoody College of Technology (Minneapolis/St. Paul) | $100,000 — To support the Women in Technical Careers program, a cohort of underrepresented, low-income female students entering one of four programs offering degrees in high-paying, high-demand fields: Construction Sciences and Building Technology, Computer Technology, Automotive Technology, or Robotics and Manufacturing Technology. Through the cohort, students are provided need-based scholarships to cover tuition and/or childcare, individual mentoring by female professionals in their future field, additional academic support services, and professional development.

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (Hibbing and Virginia) | $27,500 – To expand Career Pathways for Women, a program which partners low-income women with school districts, community colleges, trades’ apprenticeship programs, and workforce development programs. The expanded program will serve women, ages 18-24, and provide child care, transportation, and financial training.

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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 makes grants, conducts and reports research, advocates public policy, builds philanthropy for gender equality, and educates the public about the successes and challenges of Minnesota’s women and girls. Founded in 1983, it is the oldest statewide women’s foundation in the country. More at wfmn.org.

Special thanks to the Walmart Foundation for its generous support of Pathways 2 Prosperity.