

# elements

[ vol. 1 winter 2008 ]



## Celebrating a quarter century OF DREAMS ACHIEVED.

The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation was born just when our region needed it most. The early 1980s brought tough economic times, with a declining population and high unemployment. And area nonprofits were struggling to meet increasing needs.

After attending a national United Way conference, Kay Slack, United Way Board President, became aware of the tremendous resource community foundations can provide. Eight “can-do” citizens formed a feasibility committee and never looked back. After months of work, a Bush Foundation challenge grant got things moving. The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation was a reality—part of a larger community foundation movement nationwide.

“Watching the community develop trust in the staff and principles of the Foundation has been very rewarding,” said Slack. “I’m proud of the Foundation’s evolution from being a community trustee and funding source to becoming a leader in identifying community problems and working cooperatively to develop solutions.”

In 1990, Holly C. Sampson joined the staff as President. Under her leadership, the Community Foundation has grown from

\$5 million to \$52 million, serving seven counties in northeastern Minnesota and two in northwestern Wisconsin, and with Affiliate Funds in Two Harbors, Bayfield, Grand Marais and Hermantown.

“In other words, it has been about ‘giving,’ with \$28 million in grants and scholarships, and ‘getting,’ with assets of \$52 million; but more importantly, it is about improving the quality of life in our region—building vibrant communities,” said Holly C. Sampson, President.

Industrious members of three committees—Growing, Gathering and Giving Back—have been planning events and setting goals for the 25th Anniversary year, and founding trustees are well represented on each.

“We’re hoping to make our 25th a banner fundraising year, and we’re counting on

From vision to vibrance.  
CELEBRATING A QUARTER CENTURY  
OF DREAMS ACHIEVED.

## 25

### *Celebrations*

25th Anniversary  
Celebration, May 21

Scholarship Reception, July 2

Touchstone Awards, Oct. 9

your help to reach our goals,” said Becky Byers Strand, Development Officer. “While all donations are welcome, we’re focusing on growing our unrestricted fund, the Community Opportunity Fund. These gifts give the Community Foundation the flexibility to respond to emerging needs in the region and to place resources where the necessity is greatest. Please contact us for more information on realizing your charitable goals.” •

### We want to know ...

if you have included the DSACF, its Affiliates or any of our 250 charitable funds in your estate/planned giving. During the 25th Anniversary year a Legacy Circle will be launched and a special event will be held to thank these good friends. Please contact Becky Byers Strand, Development Officer at (218) 726-0232 or [bbstrand@dsacommunityfoundation.com](mailto:bbstrand@dsacommunityfoundation.com).

## Touchstone Awards Celebrate Creativity

The 13th Annual Touchstone Awards honored three outstanding nonprofit organizations that “Celebrate Creativity Within.”

Gold Award Winner **Lake Superior Writers** was selected, in part, because of the success of the 2006 Great Northern Festival of Words, which attracted 1,500 people to workshops and events featuring celebrated wordsmiths like *Fresh Air’s* Terry Gross, Duluth’s first ever poet laureate Baron Sutters, Wisconsin poet laureate Denise Sweet, and Minnesota filmmaker Ali Selim, writer and director of *Sweet Land*. In 2008, the Lake Superior Writers are planning a performance-art collaboration, memoir-writing workshops and a community-wide literary celebration and book fair.

The Opera Collaboration of the **Lake Superior Youth Chorus (LSYC)**—this year’s Silver Award winner—got young people excited about an unfamiliar musical genre. Angela Keeton, a teacher and artist with the Minnesota Opera’s Education Program, led the singers at a fall retreat. In the spring, the LSYC performed an opera collaboration, complete with costumes and set changes, at Weber Music Hall in Duluth. This was just the latest way the LSYC has introduced something different to its members. In 2008, musical theater will be the focus.

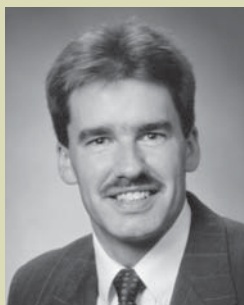
**The Duluth Public Schools’ Scott D. Anderson Leadership Forum** was chosen for the Bronze Award because it trains high school youth in the servant-leader model. The program is based on a peer-helping program established in

Blue Earth, Minnesota. During the five-day workshop, participants consider the opportunities and responsibilities of leadership and establish a creative, problem-solving action plan for the following school year. Over 70 students from area schools participate. At Denfeld, this year’s project involved introducing freshman to the numerous available extracurriculars.

“Often, kids might be interested in a group, but they don’t know who to contact, what it costs, etc.” said Angelo Florestano, social studies teacher. “This year, older students visited English classes and told the students all about the various clubs. Interested students were then asked to fill out a survey. A list of ninth graders who will be contacted to see if they would like to become involved was generated based on the survey results.” •

## Volunteer Board Spotlight

### Don Wallgren



A Managing Director at RSM McGladrey, Inc., Board Chair Don Wallgren traveled south to earn his master of accountancy degree at UW-Madison, and was content to stay in Wisconsin’s capital city—or so he thought.

“Actually, we didn’t have plans to return, but the call of the Northland brought us back,”

he said. “It’s a great place to raise a family and enjoy the beautiful outdoors.”

Don has been involved in a number of community groups, including the Superior Jaycees and Rotary. Since 2001, he’s held a number of positions on the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation’s board, including Chair,

Investment Committee Chair, member of Anishinabe Committee and Grants Committee, and Chair of the 2006 Social Capital Benchmark Survey Task Force.

“The DSACF serves as a catalyst for change,” said Don. “By being on the cutting edge of identifying community needs, we can help meet them. I’m proud of the energetic staff, the generous donors, the wonderful volunteers and our unique programs. By bringing together these resources and talents, we can make a profound difference in the communities we serve.”

Don and his wife, Sue, live in Hermantown with their two girls, Alex, 12 and Josie, 7. His elusive free time is often taken up by running kids to sports and church activities. He gets away on fishing, hunting and BWCAW trips when he can—anything to enjoy being outside. •

# Knight Creative Communities Initiative

## CATALYZING CHANGE IN OUR REGION

The Knight Creative Communities Initiative (KCCI) is halfway through the first year, and each of the five groups—based on one or more of Richard Florida’s “Four Ts” of economic prosperity: Talent, Tolerance, Technology and Territory—are working hard to make our region more attractive to both people *and* businesses.

## ART WORKS!

The Art Works! group has been busy, completing a survey about the arts in the Twin Ports—from visual to performing—and planning an Art Works! conference for March 13-14, 2008. The event is designed to bring together arts, business and civic leaders to explore innovative ways to increase regional prosperity.

Art Works! members have been traveling, too, gathering information from five cities that have strong business-arts ties. People active in those communities—including Santa Fe, New Mexico and Paducah, Kentucky—will also take the survey to see how their results compare with our own, and results will be used to help the Art Works! team develop conference topics and select speakers.



*KCCI Catalysts*

“The Twin Ports is blessed with an abundance of artistic talent and assets,” said John Heino of Art Works! “We’ve seen how the arts, business and civic sectors in other cities have collaborated to increase economic prosperity. The conference will bring together arts, business and community leaders to consider how to adapt them and rev up our own arts-related economic engine.”

## BRAIN GAIN

Duluth and Superior are home to a thriving college community—and with it, valuable talent. Unfortunately, many of our students leave the area after graduation. The members of the Brain Gain gang are working to “stop the drain.”

Brain Gain has four ambitious goals. First, the Regional Campus Connections/Welcome Week Subcommittee is hoping to design a week of events for students, helping them make connections on and off campus. Research is a second component, and this subcommittee is working to find out about students’ needs, interests and perspectives.

In addition, mentoring programs linking students with professionals have attracted over 90 University of Minnesota Duluth, College of St. Scholastica and Lake Superior College students. Plans are in the works to roll out mentoring at the University of Wisconsin-Superior and the *continued on page 4 ...*

## SUSTAINABLE TWIN PORTS

Environmental sustainability and business—it’s time these two mixed, according to Sustainable Twin Ports. The group is furthering the Twin Ports Early Adopters of Sustainability Project to encourage responsible practices.

Sustainable Twin Ports will identify organizations that are recognized

community leaders—and interested in sustainability—to participate in the Early Adopters project. The Natural Step Canada, a nonprofit advisory organization, will be hired to implement this project, training organizations in the Twin Ports in their principles. From there, organizations will design and implement specific action plans.

“It’s our hope that the knowledge and success stories generated from these Early Adopters will shake up our region,” said Chani Becker of Sustainable Twin Ports. “We want to position the Twin Ports as an environmental leader.” ●

*Knights Creative Communities Initiative continued*

*... continued from page 3*

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College as well. And finally, one subcommittee is developing plans for a community service event to celebrate student volunteers.

“The Brain Gain Initiative is wonderful because, for the first time ever, faculty and students from all five of our higher education institutions are collaborating to reach one goal—keeping our graduates in our region, as young professional residents,” said Heather Rand of Brain Gain.

## MIX IT UP

The mission of Mix It Up is to make the Twin Ports a welcoming place—for *everyone*.

They’ve developed a project called “The Hodgepodge Supper Club” to introduce people whose paths don’t ordinarily cross. The project was inspired by the diverse group’s own challenges in communicating, and in educating each other on their differences. The idea is simple—host dinners, set at local restaurants, for 12 people from all walks of life.

“It’s our hope that the camaraderie at the dinner will promote acceptance, and help break down racial, economic, and social barriers,” said Mix It Up member Jen Bertsch.

The action team is hoping to develop a marketing campaign to get the word out, get people signed up, and give the dinners their first dry run in December. A formal rollout of “The Hodgepodge Supper Club” will happen in early spring. To be as inclusive as possible, Mix It Up hopes to secure enough funding for the dinners to be free. •

## PATHWAYS

Twin Ports Pathways had the honor of unveiling the first KCCI event to the public—Train/Ride, the Northland’s first road/rail hybrid. Nearly 50 people—44 adults and 5 kids—loaded their bikes into a baggage car and enjoyed a scenic excursion up to Two Harbors. The aim was to build awareness of our area’s unique territorial assets, namely, the North Shore Scenic Drive and, of course, Lake Superior.

The ride ended with a pizza party and prizes at Grandma’s Sports Garden.

“It was a lot of fun,” said Jennifer Smith of Pathways, who made the 26.2 mile trek on her Specialized 21-speed. “We got a lot of great feedback, and lots of questions as to when the next one would happen.”

Pathways’ goal is to develop, connect and promote non-motorized transportation routes to benefit our community in a

number of ways—by contributing to our overall health, making it a more attractive place for people and business, and encouraging alternative transportation. Next up for Pathways is a project to get artist-designed bike racks strategically placed throughout Duluth and Superior. Oh, and yes, another Train/Ride, too. •



*The Pathways team is working to promote non-motorized transportation in our region. From left to right: Jennifer Smith, Tara Alfonsi, Gary Hedin, Pat Heffernan and Kris Larson.*



*Kris Larson, Pathways co-chair, addresses a train full of bike enthusiasts at the debut Train/Ride event.*

## Times change.

### A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY FUND OFFERS FLEXIBILITY FOR TOMORROW.

We're setting aggressive fundraising goals for our 25th year and beyond—\$5,000,000 by the end of 2010. And we're focused on growing our unrestricted assets. A gift to the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation's unrestricted fund, the Community Opportunity Fund, gives the Foundation the ability to respond to new and changing needs in our area—needs that today we may not be thinking about.

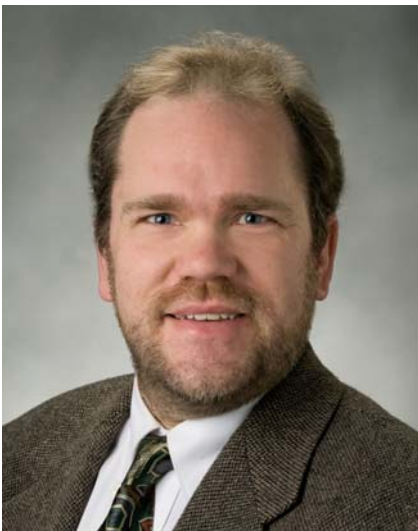
"These gifts allow us to fulfill emerging needs in the region, and to place resources where the necessity is greatest," said Becky Byers Strand, Development Officer.

Gifts can be made in cash, appreciated securities, real estate, personal property or irrevocable life income agreements, and deferred gifts like charitable remainder and charitable lead trusts. You can even honor someone special—a friend, family member, or mentor—with a gift in his or her name to the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.

Please contact Holly C. Sampson, President, or Becky Byers Strand, Development Officer, at (218) 726-0232 for more information on realizing your charitable goals. •

## From Akita, Japan to Duluth, Minnesota

### WELCOME DAVID HAMMER DSACF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SCHOLARSHIP OFFICER



We are thrilled to announce the addition of David Hammer to our staff as our new Chief Administrative and Scholarship Officer. Hammer grew up in Duluth and graduated from Denfeld High School in 1986. However, for the past nine years, he has lived and worked in and around Akita, Japan. He returns to Duluth to be close to his family and says Duluth is near and dear to his heart.

"My goal has always been to eventually make my way back to Duluth," Hammer says. "Now is the perfect time for me to return, for my family, and because I truly enjoy the relaxed lifestyle, the friendly people

and the natural environment that make Duluth such a wonderful place to live."

Hammer has a bachelor of arts degree in Asian studies and a master of arts degree in rural development. He is currently busy overseeing the publicity and application process for our scholarship funds. Come January, he will be working on a new, more technically advanced and user-friendly Web site for the Foundation.

"Working in the area of education is very exciting to me, as well as getting reacquainted with Duluth and the great things happening in this town," says Hammer.

Yookoso, David. •

## Mission Statement

The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation encourages private giving for the public good. The Community Foundation brings together people who need assistance and people who are able to give. Through its board of community leaders, the Foundation:

- attracts and manages a growing endowment for our area's future;
- provides customized services for donors with varied charitable interests;
- identifies and effectively responds to emerging and changing community needs; and
- serves as a resource and catalyst for philanthropy.

## Affiliate Funds of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation

Apostle Islands Area Community Fund  
Cook County Community Fund  
Hermantown Community Fund  
Two Harbors Area Fund

## Vision

The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation will be the leading force for improving our region by fostering generosity, civic engagement and inclusiveness.

## Core Values

Community      Stewardship      Integrity

P: (218) 726-0232 • F: (218) 726-0257  
[www.dsacommunityfoundation.com](http://www.dsacommunityfoundation.com)



DULUTH SUPERIOR AREA  
**COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

*Private giving for the public good.*

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