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Nonprofits Find New Ways to Support their Programs



Front row: Vern Hill, Colleen Gifford, Maltee McMahon, Michele Hermansen, Karen Krupa. Second row: Jill Shannon, Sue Gerlach, Danette Olsen, Rachel Renner, Anne Schmidt, Ginger Lamotte, Wade Reddy. Last row: Mike Fisk, Lauren Koshere, Bianca Sedesky, Kirsta Benson, Margaret Smith, Marna Canterbury, Christine Tubbs, Verna Kragnes, Karen Nielsen, Kathleen Melin, Lindy Yokanovich, Jeff Grundtner, Karla Wiessner. Not shown: Jessica Pack, Nathan Pearson, Pam Trudeau, Steve Preisler, Darian Blattner, Linda Lia, Jamie Lawrence-Olson.

Leaders of thirty two nonprofits throughout the St. Croix Valley are now better equipped to find new and practical ways to raise funds for their organizations after completing a nine-month course on nonprofit fundraising. The series was hosted by the St. Croix Valley Foundation (SCVF) and participants earned a fundraising certificate from the University of St. Thomas upon completion.

“I can think of no better time for nonprofits to strengthen and diversify their fundraising skills,” remarked Jill Shannon, SCVF director of community partnerships. “For some time, local nonprofits have seen a

demand for services surge upward, first due to regional growth and more recently the economic downturn. But these organizations show their resilience, finding new and creative ways to communicate their impact and build resources for their organizations.”

The fundraising certificate series began last February and each month participants focused on a different facet of fund development -- annual campaigns, marketing, major gifts, capital campaigns and more. Working with the University of St. Thomas’ Center for Nonprofit Management, SCVF repackaged their certificate program to bring it to Western Wisconsin. The series provided an in-depth, interactive and supportive learning experience. The University of St. Thomas’ nonprofit programs are recognized throughout the nonprofit sector, both in Minnesota and nationwide. “A certificate of fundraising gives an organization professional stature,” said Ann Johnson, director. “And it gives participants tangible evidence of their knowledge and skills,”

“This class gave us the tools to dream big and act big” said Christine Tubbs, executive director of The Partnership Plan. Lindy Yokanovich from Cancer Legal Line agreed, “I was able to take many things I learned over the year back to my board and volunteers. And our ability to raise funds has dramatically changed as a consequence.”

The nonprofits participating in the workshop came from Washington County in Minnesota and Pierce, St. Croix and Polk counties in Wisconsin. They include Animal Foundation of Amery, Arcola Mills, ArtReach Alliance, Association Retreat Center, Bremer Bank, Cancer Legal Line, Family Resource Center St. Croix Valley, Friends of Freedom Park, Friends of Polk County Libraries, Good Samaritan Society – Stillwater & St. Croix Falls, Interfaith Caregivers of Polk County, Kinnickinnic River Land Trust, Kinship of Polk County, Lamar Community Center, New Richmond Community Foundation, Osceola Community Health Foundation, Partnership Plan for Stillwater Area Schools, Philadelphia Community Farm, Positive Alternatives, River Falls Community Arts Base, St. Bridget Catholic School, St. Croix Festival Theatre, United Way of Washington County East, United Way St. Croix County, Young Life St. Croix Valley.

The SCVF was grateful for the financial support of several local foundations including the Sundance Family Foundation, the Tom & Patty Doar Foundation, the William H. Phipps Foundation, United Way St. Croix Valley and Associated Bank. “With their assistance we were able to make the workshop series affordable, underwriting as much as 60% of the costs,” said Shannon.

The Foundation, which just changed its name from the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation, encourages charitable giving to create a lasting resource that serves the people, riverway, and natural beauty of the St. Croix Valley and surrounding region. Through funds established by nonprofits and caring individuals, the Foundation supports programs and awards grants to address key issues affecting the region as a whole. In its 14 year history, the Foundation has granted almost \$10 million to nonprofit organizations serving the area. For more information contact the St. Croix Valley Foundation at 715-386-9490 or visit the Foundation’s website at www.scvfoundation.org.

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