



Southern  
Minnesota  
Initiative  
Foundation

SMIF's investments and partnerships in

# Goodhue County since 1986

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) is a regional development and philanthropic organization that fosters economic and community vitality in southern Minnesota through a culture of collaboration and partnership. Serving 20 counties which includes 175 communities and one Native nation.

For every donation  
from Goodhue  
County of

\$1



\$22

is invested back into  
Goodhue County  
communities.\*

*\*Includes grants, loans & programming*



## 53 Loans

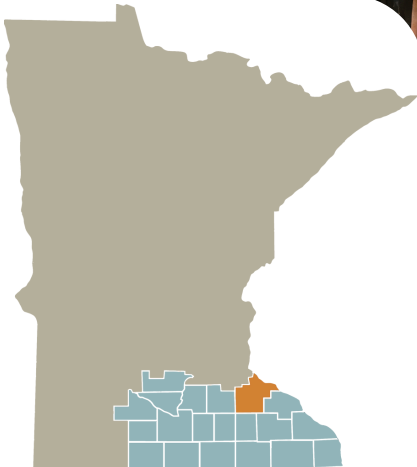
to support entrepreneurs

## 341 Grants

to support community projects

## \$9.9 Million

invested by SMIF in Goodhue County  
through grants, loans and programming



### Questions?

**Alissa Oeltjenbruns**

Vice President of Philanthropy &  
Community Vitality

507-475-3056

[alisso@smifoundation.org](mailto:alisso@smifoundation.org)



Check out SMIF's recent activity in your county



# SMIF's Recent Activity in Goodhue County

## Early Childhood Spotlight



### Three Rivers Community Action receives Early Literacy Grant

Three Rivers Community Action in Zumbrota was awarded 850 English and 25 Spanish books in SMIF's Early Literacy Grant to hand out during home visits and at Head Start fall/spring conferences, along with literacy activities to do at home. They focus on family literacy by supporting parents as they build literacy skills with their children by building awareness of the range of literacy activities families can do together with books beyond just reading.

### Other recent activity:

- Kenyon-Wanamingo ECFE and Pine Island Public Schools received the Early Care and Ed Grant
- Goodhue Public School awarded Early Literacy Grant

## Entrepreneurship Spotlight



### Ignite Cup supports local entrepreneurs

SMIF partners with Ignite MN's annual Ignite Cup event, which is a regional pitch competition that awards prizes to competitors of startups. Competitors are given a platform to pitch their ideas to a live audience of other entrepreneurs, investors and regional leaders. Winners advance to the MN Cup, where prizes are even bigger, giving these entrepreneurs the leg-up they need to succeed.

### Other recent activity:

- Local Food Peer Network members: CannonBelles and Santa Martha Cafe
- Loan clients: River Bluff Technologies, JockLab, CannonBelles, Custom Iron Inc

## Community Vitality Spotlight



### \$16,410 in matching grants to Wanamingo Community Foundation

SMIF's Community Foundations address the most critical or persistent local issues and produce significant, widely shared and lasting results. Fundraising, marketing and grant recommendations are completed by a local board with SMIF staff support. Established in 1991, Wanamingo was SMIF's first Community Foundation and has granted over \$500,000 back into the community to date.

### Other recent activity:

- Pine Island Community Foundation joined under SMIF's umbrella as one of 33 Community Foundations SMIF fiscally hosts

**2.7K** Children Supported

**78** Entrepreneurs Supported

May, 2025

Scott Arneson  
Goodhue County Economic Development Authority  
509 5th St W  
Red Wing, MN 55066-0408

Dear Mr. Arneson,

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) has been working with our region since 1986 to vitalize both economies and community vitality. Through partnering and collaboration, SMIF focuses on three key areas: entrepreneurship, community vitality and Early Childhood development.

SMIF's Prosperity Initiative (PI) program gives entrepreneurs from traditionally underserved populations extra coaching, and technical assistance, as well as access to a supportive peer group. One of PI's new members, Wren Writing, is an all-in-one software for authors that provides tools from formatting to writing and everything in between. The support they received through the PI program positioned Wren Writing to become one of Ignite Cup's 2025 finalists, as well as winning the Busy Baby First Step Award. SMIF is proud to partner with IgniteMN on the Ignite Cup, a regional pitch competition that was created to elevate entrepreneurs and emerging startups as a feeder to the statewide MN Cup competition. In winning, Wren Writing received prize money and regional recognition that will help them take their business to the next level.



To give these kinds of opportunities to entrepreneurs, SMIF relies on funding from donors, including a large portion of funding from cities and counties. The Prosperity Initiative is just one of many ways we put your gifts to good use. Enclosed you will find a fact sheet that illustrates what SMIF has been doing in your area. You will notice that for every dollar donated, SMIF invest \$22 back into your county. ***Thank you so much for your recent gift of \$3,000.00 on 5/1/2025. Would you consider an increased donation of 5% for your 2026 gift, bringing your contribution to \$3,150.00 for 2026?***

We are enormously thankful for your support.

Sincerely,

Tim Penny  
President and CEO