



*The Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi Foundation for Children has awarded nearly \$20 million in grants since 1999. More than three quarters of that amount has supported educational programs and organizations, with most of the remainder dedicated to social justice and public health. The Foundation serves as a catalyst for creative, innovative, and systems-changing programs to achieve long-term impact in promoting equitable education and opportunities for Minnesota's children and youth.*



## Foundation awards more than \$1.3 million in grants

Kicking off a season of good cheer for schools and nonprofits across the Twin Cities, the Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi (RKMC) Foundation for Children has announced \$1,345,000 in grants. These grants, approved by the Foundation's board in December, represent the lion's share of its anticipated grantmaking for 2016. They will support 14 high-performing schools, innovative education programs, and other nonprofits serving Minnesota's children.

"Minnesota's opportunity gap is a crisis we can't ignore," said Michael Ciresi, Board Chair of the RKMC Foundation for Children. "We're investing in schools and organizations that are working full-bore to make sure that all of our students get an excellent education."

### Grantmaking priorities of the RKMC Foundation:



Expanding **great schools** and school networks



Increasing **parent demand** for schools that provide excellent educational outcomes for all students



Creating a **sense of urgency** to address the extreme disparities that exist in educational outcomes between students of color and white students in the Twin Cities

### Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi Foundation for Children Board Members

Michael V. Ciresi  
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## 2016 Grants

**\$50,000** to **Children's Theatre Company** to support its Neighborhood Bridges program at six Minneapolis Public Schools. Neighborhood Bridges is an in-school curriculum that uses arts-based teaching techniques to support the development of language and literacy skills.

**\$50,000** to **Cristo Rey Jesuit High School** to support the school's continued delivery of rigorous coursework, research-based teaching strategies, and support services that prepare students for college. Cristo Rey serves roughly 400 students in the Phillips neighborhood of South Minneapolis.

**\$100,000** to **Educators 4 Excellence** to continue developing teachers as leaders in education policy and to advance positive outcomes for students. In the past three years, E4E has grown to more than 1,100 teachers from 230 schools in the Twin Cities.

**\$75,000** to **Friendship Academy of the Arts** for its expansion and continued delivery of rigorous K-6 academic coursework and arts programs. Friendship, a charter school near Powderhorn Park in South Minneapolis, serves about 140 students. The school topped the Star Tribune's 2015 Beating the Odds list, which honors schools where a significant portion of students perform well in reading and math despite high poverty rates.

**\$150,000** to **Hiawatha Academies** to support the expansion of its high-performing charter school network in South Minneapolis. Hiawatha currently operates four schools that serve about 1,000 students, of whom 98% are children of color, 95% qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, and 74% are English language learners (ELL). Last year, its ELL and low-income students outperformed their peers in Minneapolis Public Schools and statewide in both math and reading.

**\$100,000** to **Mastery School**, a K-5 grade school in the high-performing Harvest Network of charter schools in North Minneapolis. Harvest Network schools serve predominately African American and low-income students. Students in the network continued to achieve an average of one or more years of growth in their reading and math skills during the last year.

**\$125,000** to the **Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now** (MinnCAN) to continue leading statewide advocacy efforts to advance educational equity.

**\$100,000** to **Minnesota Comeback** (formerly the Education Transformation Initiative) to support its development of a portfolio of initiatives and school investments to ensure that all Minneapolis students attend high-quality schools by 2025.

**\$120,000** to the **Northside Achievement Zone** to continue providing wrap-around services to families living in a 13- by 18-block area of North Minneapolis. Built on the model of the Harlem Children's Zone, NAZ is a group of schools and housing, health, career, and other organizations that work together to ensure that local children graduate from high school ready for college.

**\$150,000** to **Parent Aware for School Readiness** to continue its work promoting and evaluating the Parent Aware quality ratings system so that all families have access to high-quality early learning programs, and parents can make informed decisions about which programs best serve their children.

**\$50,000** to the **St. Paul Promise Neighborhood** to provide early learning scholarships, parent engagement, out-of-school time and wrap-around supports to low-income children and families in the Frogtown and Summit-University neighborhoods of St. Paul.

**\$125,000** to **Think Small** to support its work to increase the number of Parent Aware rated early childhood programs.

**\$75,000** to **Way to Grow** for its preschool, home visiting, and parent engagement programs for low-income families in Minneapolis.

**\$75,000** to the **YWCA of Minneapolis** to support early childhood education for families in need at its four Children's Centers in Minneapolis and St. Paul.



**For suggestions or comments,  
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*The RKMC Foundation for Children is a private foundation that partners closely with The Minneapolis Foundation to leverage their investment services, operating support, and community expertise.*