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**GENERATION NEXT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GREATER TWIN CITIES UNITED WAY, AWARDS SUBGRANT TO WAY TO GROW**

**Twin Cities, MN –**

The Social Innovation Fund, now in its third year, is an initiative of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The SIF fund is intended to transform lives and communities by mobilizing public and private resources. Generation Next, in partnership with Greater Twin Cities United Way, was one of 20 recipients across the country and will support a strong portfolio of replicable, evidence-based youth programs.

Among those programs is Way to Grow. Way to Grow uses a proven home visiting model, center-based programming, strong partnerships and evidence-based curricula and assessments to give low-income families in Minneapolis the knowledge and resources to stabilize their homes and engage with their children's early development and educational progress.

Generation Next is an alliance of community partners focusing on youth development for children in kindergarten through college in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Funded programs are designed to improve kindergarten readiness, third grade reading proficiency, ninth grade readiness for upper-level math, four-year graduation rates, and college enrollment rates for between 1,500 and 2,000 low-income youth each year.

Way to Grow Executive Director, Carolyn Smallwood said, "We're thrilled to be a part of this amazing network of organizations. Our collective work in the Minneapolis community echoes the ongoing research and trends we're seeing around the country, which shows that extended learning time for families in need can significantly increase the outcomes of students and help close the achievement gap."

Way to Grow will focus their fund expenditures on children ages 3 to 8 and, in particular, their school readiness programs. "At the end of 2012, 80% of our students were deemed ready for school," said Smallwood. "Compared to low-income students as a whole in Minneapolis, students in Way to Grow's programming are reversing negative academic trends."

"With Generation Next, we finally have the advantage of critical mass," said Executive Director Michael Goar, "a cohesive group of committed leaders from across the community, working together for the achievement of all students by focusing on best practices that get results."

**For more information** on Greater Twin Cities United Way's partnership with Generation Next and Way to Grow, please contact Meghan Barp at [meghan.barp@unitedwaytwincities.org](mailto:meghan.barp@unitedwaytwincities.org)

**Generation Next:** Generation Next is a broad partnership of organizations and leaders from across the Twin Cities – the first of its kind. We represent local schools and government, community organizations and programs, businesses, higher education and philanthropy – all dedicated to educational excellence and narrowing the achievement gap.

**Way to Grow:** Working closely with parents and communities in Minneapolis, Way to Grow ensures that children within the most isolated families are born healthy, stay healthy and are prepared for school. Together, we will insure that every child has an equal opportunity to succeed in school and life.

[Nationalservice.gov](http://Nationalservice.gov) | [tcgennext.org](http://tcgennext.org) | [mplswtg.org](http://mplswtg.org)