

BUSH FOUNDATION SELECTS 19 LEADERSHIP FELLOWS FOR 2007

June 4, 2007

For Immediate Release

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Saint Paul, Minn. (June 4, 2007)—Twelve Twin Cities-area residents, three South Dakotans, a woman from North Dakota, two residents of Wisconsin and a woman from Moorhead, Minn., were named Bush Leadership Fellows for 2007. The new fellows will use their grants to learn how to improve their communities in diverse ways—working with youth and immigrants, improving wildlife management on Indian reservations, and using folklore and musicology to strengthen relationships between colleges and communities of color are only some of them.

The fellowships support full-time study in academic or self-designed educational programs. The program's goal is to help individuals at mid-career prepare for greater leadership responsibilities and make greater contributions to their communities.

The 2007 fellowships will support study in a wide range of fields including social enterprise, urban American Indian public affairs, immigrant business development, sustainable agriculture, anti-racism practices and the criminal justice system. The fellows include a police officer, a nurse practitioner, nonprofit human services and arts administrators, teachers, social workers and a Minnesota state legislator.

Specific information about each fellow follows; individual photos of the fellows can be viewed at www.bushfoundation.org.

In addition to the Leadership Fellows Program, the **Bush Foundation** provides fellowships to artists and physicians. It also makes grants to nonprofit organizations in a region that includes Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota to strengthen individual, organizational or community leadership. The Foundation was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife, Edyth.

In the Twin Cities and suburbs:

Tracine D. Asberry, Minneapolis—Asberry is a teacher at the W. Harry Davis Academy in Minneapolis. She will complete her doctorate in critical pedagogy at the University of St. Thomas and study home-learning environments of African and African American families to improve academic achievement.

C. Scott Cooper, Saint Paul—Cooper is the director of the TakeAction Minnesota Education Fund. He will pursue a master's degree in public policy and administration at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. His goal is to develop expertise in building civic engagement and developing democratic institutions, including building a democracy campaign in Minnesota.

DeAnna Cummings, Minneapolis—Cummings is the executive director of Juxtaposition Arts. She will pursue a master's degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, studying the intersection of the arts, community development, youth education, empowerment and urban policy in order to practice using the arts as a bridge to improve troubled neighborhoods.

Qamar Ibrahim, Woodbury—Ibrahim will attend the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota to obtain a master's degree in public affairs. She is a Somali refugee. Her goal is to improve her leadership skills as director of the Leadership, Empowerment and Development Group (LEAD) and to expand the competencies and leadership skills of local African immigrant nonprofit service organizations.

Jonathan R. Kahle, Eden Prairie—Kahle is a teacher in the Eden Prairie Independent School District #272. He will obtain a master's degree in social justice and education at the University of London's Institute of Education to gain expertise in minority literacy and achievement and to become an activist for better student achievement in his school district.

Michael C. Klein, Saint Paul—Klein is a social justice vocations instructor at the University of St. Thomas. He will complete a doctorate of education there with his fellowship. He plans to establish and direct a center for peace education at the University.

Kari L. Niedfeldt-Thomas, Mounds View—Niedfeldt-Thomas is the vice president of finance and administration at Neighborhood House in Saint Paul. She will attend the University of Minnesota to pursue a master's degree in business administration with an emphasis on social enterprise. She wants to lead a nonprofit organization that incorporates social enterprise into its revenue mix and culture.

Julie E. Nielsen, Bloomington—Nielsen is a development officer for the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University. She plans to complete a Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota in educational policy and administration with an emphasis on evaluation studies. She wants to establish an institute on urban Indian affairs.

Joyce A. Okara-Aduda, Brooklyn Park—Okara-Aduda is accounting director for the Special Olympics. She will use her fellowship to pursue a master's degree in accounting from the University of St. Thomas. She hopes to improve her skills in strategic planning and accounting, and apply them in the service of nonprofit organizations.

Katherine J. Sieben, Newport—Sieben, a Minnesota State Senator, plans to pursue a master's degree in public administration at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Her goal is to seek additional leadership roles in state government.

Kimberley Smolik, Minneapolis—Smolik is currently a program director with Catholic Charities. She will use her fellowship to attend the University of St. Thomas to complete a Ph.D. in critical pedagogy with an emphasis on anti-racist practices, and to establish an organization that will reach adult learners in creative and accessible ways to advance an anti-racist agenda.

Giovanni Veliz, Maple Grove—Veliz is a police sergeant with the Minneapolis Police Department. He will pursue a law degree at Hamline University and hopes to influence public safety in the criminal justice system with a focus on issues facing immigrant communities.

In Greater Minnesota:

Phyllis M. May-Machunda, Moorhead—May-Machunda is an associate professor and chair of American multicultural studies at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She will use her fellowship to complete her Ph.D. dissertation in folklore and ethnomusicology at Indiana University. It is her goal to develop and direct a regional multicultural resource center at MSU Moorhead. The center will collaborate with local communities of color and local primary, secondary and higher education institutions in creating school and curriculum reforms.

In North Dakota:

Theresa M. Podoll, Fullerton—Podoll is the co-owner and operator of the Prairie Road Organic Farm in Fullerton. She will pursue a master's degree in community development at Iowa State University and study sustainable agriculture and ecological health through a self-directed program. She plans to remain on her family's organic farm while working with other professionals committed to ecological, economic and social justice for rural people.

In South Dakota:

Susan F. Baker, Eagle Butte—Baker is a certified nurse practitioner, working with Indian Health Services on the Cheyenne River Reservation where she is a tribal member. She will attend South Dakota State University to obtain a Ph.D. in nursing so she can teach Native American nursing students at the local tribal college. Her goals are to encourage more Native people to become health care providers and to stay in their own communities. She also plans to do research into the causes of the Native American peoples' unequal access to health care.

Shaun M. Grassel, Lower Brule—Grassel is a wildlife biologist with Lower Brule Reservation's Wildlife, Fish and Recreation program. He is also a tribal member. His special interest is in the conservation of several species of animals that are native to his tribal lands and have been compromised by dams on the Missouri River. He will attend the University of Idaho to pursue a Ph.D. in natural resources.

David W. Jal, Worthing—Jal is a lead case manager for Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota. He will pursue a master's degree in social work at the University of North Dakota-Grand Forks. Jal, a Sudanese refugee, will use restorative justice practices to improve communications between settled communities and the influx of newcomers to the Sioux Falls area.

In Wisconsin:

Heather L. Halonie, Webster—Halonie is the training manager for the Intertribal Child Welfare Training Partnership at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. She will pursue a master's degree in social work at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She will train tribal and county welfare workers with the goal of improving communications and relationships between them to benefit Native American children in the system.

Keller D. Paap, Hayward—Paap is an elementary immersion teacher at the Waadookodaading Ojibwe Immersion Charter School in Hayward. He will pursue a master's degree in education at the College of Saint Scholastica and study successful indigenous language immersion programs through a self-directed study program. He hopes to promote language legislation and policy to provide leadership to maintain and restore the Ojibwe language.

Individual photos of the fellows can be viewed on the leadership fellows page at www.bushfoundation.org.