FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sheltering Arms Foundation announces 2015-16 slate of grantees, awards $455,000 to 40 Minnesota nonprofits serving children

MINNEAPOLIS, August 6, 2015 — As families get ready for the new school year, Minnesota is poised to take a bite out of the state’s achievement gap: The 2015 legislative session resulted in significant outcomes for the state’s education budget, with $100 million targeted for early learning over the next two years, giving thousands more children access to high quality early learning programs. The Sheltering Arms Foundation today announced its 2015-16 financial support of 40 nonprofit organizations that are working hard to deliver that high quality learning to our state’s most vulnerable children. Sheltering Arms will invest $455,000 in innovative direct service programs in early childhood and out-of-school-time youth development, as well as statewide advocacy campaigns designed to improve Minnesota’s policies that impact children and their families.

“Minnesota is making a major investment in our youngest learners with the new dollars being allocated for early learning,” said Denise Mayotte, executive director of the Sheltering Arms Foundation. “The legislature has dedicated $48 million to scholarships that low-income families can use to send their children to early childhood programs that have earned a high Parent Aware rating. Sheltering Arms is proud to be helping programs improve quality so they are ready to make use of these new early childhood dollars.”

One new grantee is having a significant impact in the northeast corner of our state: Northland Foundation, in Duluth, has made it a priority to increase the number of Parent Aware-rated childcare providers who are serving families in seven counties across the region, focusing especially on unserved counties and rural areas.

“Wherever children live in Minnesota, they should have access to quality care,” said Lynn Haglin, vice president of the Northland Foundation. “Support from the Sheltering Arms Foundation will provide critical resources to help reduce financial barriers for child care providers in northeast Minnesota, so they can earn their Parent Aware Rating. More rated providers in our region will also allow families greater access to early learning scholarships, which will help support their child’s school readiness through quality early learning environments.”

Northland Foundation is one of 21 grantees receiving Sheltering Arms’ funding in the early childhood category, which this year totals $260,000. In addition to supporting multiple grantees working toward high Parent Aware ratings, Sheltering Arms is also supporting a number of nonprofit programs working to improve the social/emotional learning of young children by adding the Circles of Security (COS) early intervention training to their programs:

- The Montessori Training Center of Minnesota in St. Paul is implementing the COS parenting program at two of MTCM’s early childhood program sites to help parents address attachment issues.

(more)
• **West Central Initiative** in Fergus Falls is introducing professionals in west central Minnesota to the impact COS can have in their work around trauma and general pre-K alignment.

• The **YWCA of Duluth** has already tested COS on a small scale within their early childhood program and has become a leader in introducing other providers in the Duluth area to the COS protocol. They are now fully integrating it in all areas of their program.

In Sheltering Arms’ youth development funding category, 19 programs received a total of $194,500 in grants. After-school and summertime programs supported by Sheltering Arms can be found throughout the state. For example:

• **Camp Fire Minnesota** is bringing their year-round programming to a new affordable housing community in Roseville, Minn., which will help low-income African-American and Somali children gain skills and experiences that will prepare them for success in school.

• **FamilyMeans** in Stillwater is creating new out-of-school-time programming targeted at older youth in grades 4-6 living in two high-poverty manufactured homes communities it serves in St. Croix County. The new programming is being designed to help the children develop the skills needed to navigate middle school.

• **The YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities** is expanding their peer reading mentor program, in which 3rd-5th graders serve as mentors for younger elementary school students, to Anne Sullivan/Anishinable Academy in south Minneapolis and Sheridan Elementary and Nellie Stone Johnson School in north Minneapolis.

This year’s funding includes $68,000 in advocacy/public policy grants, continuing the foundation’s work to improve systems and policies that affect Minnesota’s children. Areas served by the 40 Sheltering Arms grantees include Duluth, Fergus Falls, Golden Valley, Grand Rapids, Maplewood, Minneapolis, Plymouth, Roseville, St. Charles, St. Paul, Stillwater, and Winona.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The complete, annotated list of 2015-2016 grantees is available here: 
http://www.sheltering-arms.org/index.asp?page_seq=34

**About the Sheltering Arms Foundation**
The mission of the Sheltering Arms Foundation is to invest in the lives of children and help them reach their full potential. Based in Minneapolis, the foundation funds nonprofit organizations and supports policies that benefit Minnesota children and their families who have the least access to resources. Since its inception as a grantmaking foundation in 1983, the foundation has provided more than 1,050 grants totaling over $14 million. The next deadline for grant applications is in January 2016, with grant applications from Episcopal congregations due on April 1, 2016. For information about submitting a grant request, volunteering, or donating to the foundation, visit http://sheltering-arms.org or call 612-871-9210 (toll-free: 866-871-9210).