

Press Release
April 19, 2006



11 Bridge Square
Northfield, MN 55057

CONTACT: Candy Taylor
507.649-2084
info@5thbridge.org

NEW NORTHFIELD VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

NORTHFIELD, MINN. (April 19, 2006) – A grassroots volunteer organization called 5th Bridge has announced plans for encouraging Northfield area residents of all ages to engage in volunteer endeavors. The organization launched this week in celebration of National Volunteer Week.

5th Bridge, which was the brainchild of Greg Carlson and Justin Stets of Carlson Capital Management in Northfield, received private funding and a donation through the Northfield Sesquicentennial Governor's Ball. The goal of the organization is to encourage volunteerism and philanthropy throughout the community. The leadership's vision is ambitious. Executive Director Candy Taylor said, "Our goal is to have every man, woman and school-aged child in Northfield volunteering at least five hours per month."

5th Bridge is a donor/volunteer-focused organization dedicated to encouraging the habits of volunteerism and philanthropy. The name has a true Northfield connection. There are four bridges across the Cannon River in the heart of Northfield. The community volunteer effort represents the fifth bridge, helping connect the community across many divides.

The philosophy of the organization calls for people serving people. 5th Bridge hopes to work with the City of Northfield, local schools and churches, the Northfield Hospital and other non-profit organizations to identify volunteer projects that fit the time constraints of residents' busy lifestyles. "We will also be gathering ideas for service projects that you can do on your own, with groups of friends or co-workers, or as a family," Taylor said. "Volunteering doesn't have to happen through an institution or formal program," she continued, "you can make up your own activities and do them when it's convenient for you." In addition to serving as a conduit between volunteers and projects, the organization will also facilitate an online forum for gathering ideas for services projects that can be completed by an individual or group without any formal organization.

-more

New Northfield Volunteer Initiative Launched
April 19, 2006
Page two

The 5th Bridge initiative is operating under the umbrella of the Minnesota Center for Philanthropy, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Taylor said, “We are thrilled that we have gotten to this point in the project. Studies show that people who are engaged in their communities and volunteer on a regular basis are happier, healthier and even live longer. Their communities also thrive. Every single person that has helped in the planning stages of this project is dedicated to community service, so it’s easy to understand how happy we are to dive into connecting with people in the community.”

According to Taylor, the opportunities for people to share their gifts and talents are endless. She cited ideas like organize a neighborhood garage sale and give the proceeds to charity; make a dinner for a friend who has had a baby or suffered a loss in the family; take a family walk and pick up trash along the way; call a local retirement center and volunteer to read to some of their residents; contact your church and see where they could put your gifts to good use.

The organization’s web site, www.5thbridge.org, which should be live by the end of May, will provide information on how to volunteer, what organizations could use volunteer services and other useful tools for people interested in getting connected in the community through volunteerism. A pledge drive to encourage volunteerism is also slated for later this summer.

For more information or to share ideas, please contact Candy Taylor at 507/649-2084 or info@5thbridge.org.

###