

RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS OF THE ATTRACTING & RETAINING YOUNG ADULTS TASK FORCE

A comprehensive plan to attract and retain young adults in the Duluth Superior area has been developed by a Task Force of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation. Building on a variety of research projects, the Attracting & Retaining Young People Task Force worked for a year to develop a series of recommendations with the goal of creating a culture and/or activities that will lead to more young people to stay in the Twin Ports. Solutions include:

Give young adults a chance to lead. The Community Foundation will create a Young Leaders Advisory Committee and Fund that will allow young adults themselves to make decisions about projects to fund while giving them practical leadership experience. Grants would fund leadership skills, civic engagement endeavors, special events and entrepreneurship. *The Young Leaders Fund will begin accepting grant applications in 2009.*

Create a better way to share information. The region needs a “One-Stop Shop” website for information on living and working in the Twin Ports, geared toward the 18-35-year-old age group. The task force found that difficulty in finding information was consistently cited by young adults as one of their frustrations. The task force noted there are many great online resources but not a single comprehensive website. *TheDuSu.com, which is scheduled to launch in fall of 2009, will be the one-stop shop for 18-35-year-olds living in Duluth and Superior.*

Raise awareness of career and economic opportunities. While the Task Force acknowledges that there are sometimes few jobs in specific job categories, the tide of economic opportunities is beginning to change. As the Baby Boomers retire, an estimated 75,000 job opportunities will open up in the region. The biggest job issue is going to be matching people with the right jobs and encouraging young adults to get the right training in job categories that will be open in the area. In addition, the Task Force believes that all of the existing workforce and job development programs should be supported. *The northlandworks.org is addressing this concern by the Attracting and Retaining Young Adults Taskforce.*

Increase connections between college and university students and the community. College students are 23 percent of the population, now its time to connect with them. Internships, mentoring, job shadowing and networking should all be encouraged and supported. Universities, colleges, technical schools, and K-12 institutions should take the young adult issue seriously. Civic Engagement and Service Learning opportunities for college and university students should be increased. Many of these projects are already underway in both Superior and Duluth with programs for Leadership Superior/Douglas County Superior Connections program, to the University of Minnesota Duluth’s Office of Civic Engagement. *Fuse Duluth has created College Connections for Duluth and Superior college students to directly address this lack of connection.*

We love this place. Now admit it. In public. The task force feels that it is important to share all of the positive events, places and activities this region has to offer. *Duluth/Superior: A Cool Place to Live and Work*, would continually emphasize the positive aspects of living in the Duluth/Superior area, using things like “top ten” or “highly recommended” lists, a logo, magnets, bookmarks, billboards, radio public service announcements, and newspaper columns. *The Community Foundation created a Top 10 postcard and is working with other regional groups focused on young adults to find creative ways to change this attitude.*

Support projects that foster Duluth Superior being a more vibrant place for young adults to live and work. The Community Foundation will emphasize that we want people of all abilities and ages to know that they can come to us a resource. This involves emphasizing existing services in all areas of grant making (preliminary assistance; navigating Community Foundation grants procedures; and, where appropriate, providing links to other resources). *Through the Young Leaders Fund and other sources, the Community Foundation commits to investing additional resources towards young adult related projects.*

