

**Cooper Foundation
870 Wells Fargo Center
1248 O Street
Lincoln, NE 68508**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COOPER FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GRANTS AND NEW GUIDELINES

The trustees of the Cooper Foundation have approved eight grants totaling \$58,440. Art Thompson, president, said that amount is substantially less than approved in the first quarter of 2008. He said the Foundation's asset value has declined in line with the overall decline in the markets over the last year. The Foundation's distribution goal is to pay 5% of its average market value annually. Therefore, without a significant rebound in asset values Thompson expects that Cooper's grant payments for 2009 will be significantly lower for the remainder of 2009.

With that fact in mind, the trustees revised Cooper's grant policy. This year the Cooper Foundation will support the operations and core programs of strong, well managed and effective non-profit organizations located in and working in Lancaster County. The Foundation will continue to consider proposals in its traditional priorities of education, the arts and humanities, human services and the environment. Thompson said the Foundation's grants will be for smaller amounts than in the past and that it will not make any multi-year grants.

In the first quarter of 2009, the Foundation awarded grants to the following nonprofit organizations.

Community Services Fund - \$3,700

Support for the annual campaign of this fundraising coalition of 26 Nebraska nonprofit organizations.

Council on Foundations - \$2,240

Annual support for this national organization dedicated to a vibrant, growing and responsible philanthropic sector that advances the common good. This is the only grant approved for an organization outside of Lancaster County.

Food Bank of Lincoln - \$15,000

Support for a full time coordinator for the Backpack Program. The Program serves over 1,500 low-income students and their families in Lincoln and the surrounding area. Its goal is to provide four to five meals for the student and his or her family over the weekend. Each Friday during the school year the students take home a backpack filled with one of six offered menus.

Friendship Home - \$7,500

Third grant in support of the full-time Intern Coordinator position. Friendship Home's primary goal for 2009 is maintaining full capacity of its 50 emergency shelter beds. Interns and the

Intern Coordinator are crucial to achieving this goal. Friendship Home provides emergency shelter and comprehensive services for battered women and their children.

Lincoln Symphony Orchestra - \$5,000

Third-year support for the administrative staff in the areas of development and marketing.

Lux Center for the Arts - \$5,000

General operating support for arts education programs. The Lux Center for the Arts offers gallery exhibitions, community outreach, and art education for youth and adults in contemporary fine craft media, printmaking, and photography.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Psychology Department - \$10,000

Second-year support toward the Project SAFE Coordinator at the Child Advocacy Center. Project SAFE provides free on-site individual and group therapy services to victims of sexual abuse, their siblings and non-offending parents and caregivers.

YWCA of Lincoln - \$10,000

General operating support. The mission of the YWCA is to eliminate racism and empower women by creating opportunities for growth, leadership and power for women, girls and families.

The Cooper Foundation was founded in 1934 and has granted over \$17.8 million to benefit the people of Nebraska. The Foundation makes quarterly grant awards supporting education, human services, the arts, the humanities, and the environment in Lincoln and Lancaster County. For more information about grant guidelines and application deadlines visit the Foundation's website, www.cooperfoundation.org.

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