

## **A Message from The McKnight Foundation**

In 1986, Minnesota faced widespread financial hardships, high unemployment, and shifting rural economies. Similarities to 2011 are striking, but with six critical differences: the Minnesota Initiative Foundations.

Established by The McKnight Foundation and statewide leaders 25 years ago, the Minnesota Initiative Foundations are independent, regionally focused entities reaching throughout Greater Minnesota. In a quarter century, each has found its own path, creating unique programs and operational structures.

With the ongoing support of government agencies, foundations, businesses, and individuals, they transform financial investments every day into innovative social services, prosperous industries, and stronger, more vibrant communities.

The Minnesota Initiative Foundations hit the ground running in 1986, and they haven't slowed down. Every year, they forge dynamic new collaborations and help define the spirits of giving, of innovation, and of engagement that are hallmarks of our state. They stand collectively among The McKnight Foundation's proudest and farthest reaching legacies — both for the progress they have made and for the promises they hold.

On behalf of McKnight's board of directors and staff, we are pleased to announce that The McKnight Foundation has approved a grant to the Southwest Initiative Foundation totaling \$6 million over the next five years to further the organization's mission and impact in this region. Thank you for your leadership, your hard work, and your partnership to serve the people of southwest Minnesota!

Kate Wolford, President  
The McKnight Foundation