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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**The Chiesman Foundation for Democracy, Inc., awards almost \$400,000 to nine nonprofit organizations.**

RAPID CITY, SD – The Chiesman Foundation for Democracy, Inc. has awarded nine nonprofit organizations nearly \$400,000 through the Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF). The purpose of SCF is to build capacity in community and faith-based nonprofit organizations working to address broad economic recovery issues in their communities.

The nine organizations are:

- Behavior Management Systems, Rapid City
- Black Hills Area Habitat for Humanity, Rapid City
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Black Hills, Rapid City
- Northern Hills Alcohol & Drug Services, Spearfish/Sturgis
- Sturgis Economic Development Corp.
- The Dahl Arts Center, Rapid City
- The Journey Museum, Rapid City
- Volunteers of America – Dakotas, Rapid City
- Wellspring, Rapid City

Ten other nonprofit organizations also received SCF subawards during the first year of the program. Together these nineteen organizations have received almost \$700,000 to increase their capacity in the areas of leadership development, organizational development, program development, collaboration and community engagement and evaluation of effectiveness.

The Chiesman Foundation received the SCF grant through the American Recovery and Investment Act funding from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services — Administration for Children & Families. The SCF is designed to build organizational capacity by providing training, technical assistance and financial assistance to nonprofit organizations in the Black Hills region (Butte, Custer, Fall River, Lawrence, Meade and Pennington counties), including Pine Ridge Reservation (Jackson and Shannon counties).

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services defines capacity building as “...increasing their effectiveness, enhancing their ability to provide social services, expanding their organizations, diversifying their funding sources, and creating collaborations to better serve those in need.”

*The Chiesman Foundation for Democracy, Inc. is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that serves as a forum to provide greater awareness of the meaning of democracy and the importance of active citizen participation in the democratic process. The Foundation promotes and supports greater awareness of democratic ideals by citizens and organizations by providing programming for civic participation, education and research.*