



Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation



MINNEHAHA COUNTY AWARDED ADDITIONAL \$700,000 BY MACARTHUR FOUNDATION SAFETY AND JUSTICE CHALLENGE

Funding Will Support Local Justice System Initiatives and Advance Community Engagement

For Immediate Release

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MINNEHAHA COUNTY, SD February 9, 2021 – Minnehaha County is pleased to announce a \$700,000 grant by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The grant will continue collaboration with local leaders and the community regarding the local criminal justice system. A specific focus is placed on community engagement and enhanced data utilization for evaluation to inform future work. The Foundation’s total investment in Minnehaha County is \$1.45 million to date, and is part of the \$246 million Safety and Justice Challenge national initiative.

The Safety and Justice Challenge supports local leaders and individuals most impacted by the justice system. Minnehaha County was selected to join the Safety and Justice Challenge Network in 2017. Resources and funding provided by the initiative are used to implement justice system related strategies.

In partnership with South Dakota 2nd Circuit Unified Judicial System, Minnehaha County Sheriff’s Office, Sioux Falls Police Department, Minnehaha County State’s Attorney, Minnehaha County Public Defender, Minnehaha County Office of Public Advocate, and Minnehaha County Human Services, Minnehaha County has developed a comprehensive plan for strategies and initiatives to implement over the next two years. Strategies include pre-arrest, pretrial, court case processing, mental health services, and addressing racial equity through community engagement.

Think3D has expanded their successful Leaders of Tomorrow program and created a specific curriculum for Leaders of Tomorrow for justice impacted. Urban Indian Health will offer culturally-based mental health, substance use, mentoring, and culturally based programs and services. Funding has also been allocated to collaboratively bring training and a conference regarding equity to our community.

Presiding Judge Robin Houwman, 2nd Circuit, states “I am looking forward to expanding the availability of resources in our community for populations who have previously been underserved.”



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Commissioner Cindy Heiberger, Minnehaha County Commission, “Our continued partnership with the MacArthur Foundation will assist us in building upon existing relationships and ensure our work actively responds to the community’s needs.”

More than five years after its public launch, the Safety and Justice Challenge has grown into a collaborative of 51 jurisdictions in 32 states modeling and inspiring reforms to create more fair, just, and equitable local justice systems across the country.

“We are committed to supporting cities and counties as they reimagine a definition of safety that is inclusive of all communities and makes meaningful progress towards our goal of ending racial and ethnic disparities in jails,” said Laurie Garduque, MacArthur Foundation’s Director of Criminal Justice.

Several of the nation's leading criminal justice organizations will continue to provide technical assistance and counsel to Minnehaha County, their partners, and the other jurisdictions involved in the Safety and Justice Challenge. These include the Center for Court Innovation, Everyday Democracy, Nexus Community Partners, the Institute for State and Local Governance at the City University of New York, JFA Institute, the Justice Management Institute, Justice System Partners, the Pretrial Justice Institute, Policy Research, Inc., the Vera Institute of Justice, the W. Haywood Burns Institute, Urban Institute, and Bennett Midland.

More information about the work underway in Minnehaha County can be found on www.SafetyandJusticeChallenge.org.

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About the MacArthur Foundation

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. MacArthur is placing a few big bets that truly significant progress is possible on some of the world’s most pressing social challenges, including advancing global climate solutions, decreasing nuclear risk, promoting local justice reform in the U.S., and reducing corruption in Africa’s most populous country, Nigeria. In addition to the MacArthur Fellows Program and the global 100&Change competition, the Foundation continues its historic commitments to the role of journalism in a responsive democracy as well as the vitality of our headquarters city, Chicago. More information about the Foundation’s criminal justice reform work can be found at www.macfound.org/criminaljustice.