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SD COMMUNITY FOUNDATION MAKES PLEDGE TO GROW WORKFORCE AND EDUCATE THE STATE'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Recently, the Build Dakota Scholarship Fund received a \$50,000 grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation to support continued workforce development efforts. The funds have been allocated to each of the state's four technical schools to provide additional funding for full-ride student scholarships.

"During the first five years of the Build Dakota Scholarship Fund, the program successfully recruited over 1,900 skilled employees into critical fields of workforce shortage in South Dakota," said Stephanie Judson, President/CEO of the South Dakota Community Foundation. "Given the workforce challenges we are seeing today, we feel that this investment will have a ripple effect in our state and add to the tremendous success the program has already generated."

The \$40,000 was disbursed to the state's four technical colleges to provide more Build Dakota Scholarships to students seeking degrees in high-need fields. The remaining \$10,000 will be used to pilot a matching grant program. SDCF Community Savings Account partners can utilize program funds to sponsor students as industry partners for jobs in their communities.

"The technical colleges have done a fantastic job of promoting industry partnerships with local businesses and economic development organizations, and we are thrilled that the South Dakota Community Foundation is investing dollars to generate more industry partnerships on behalf of their partners," said Deni Amundson, Program Manager for Build Dakota Scholarship Fund.

Industry partners provide a match with scholarship dollars, allowing for more students to receive funds each year. In return, students commit to working for the industry partner for 3 years following graduation.

“The scholar has a sense of job security, and the industry partners have a steady stream of talent trained in the field they are seeking employees. It’s truly a win-win scenario,” said Amundson.

To learn more about the Build Dakota Scholarship and find details about the application process or industry partner programs, visit www.builddakotascholarships.com.

About Build Dakota:

The Build Dakota Scholarship Fund was formed in 2015 through a \$25 million gift from local philanthropist T. Denny Sanford and a matching contribution from the South Dakota Future Fund. The Build Dakota Scholarship Fund exists to fill a critical workforce shortage in high-need career fields where a skills gap exists between available labor and hiring requirements.

The initial \$50 million provided over 1,900 students with the opportunity to graduate debt-free and enter the workforce in South Dakota. In 2020, an additional \$20 million was invested to keep the program running and supporting students for another five years.