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First National Bank Awards \$494,000 in Community Development Grants

OMAHA, Neb. September 8, 2015. – First National Bank has awarded a total of \$494,000 in community development grants to 19 organizations in the Omaha metro area to support programs in several categories: Affordable Housing, Financial Wellness and Economic Self-Sufficiency, Employment Readiness and Vocational Training, Adult Literacy and Education and Credit Counseling and Debt Management, announced Alec Gorynski, senior director, Community Development and Corporate Social Responsibility.

“First National Bank believes in supporting the communities we serve and these grants are a critical part of a comprehensive effort by the bank to help individuals understand and manage the most important issues affecting their finances while supporting the local economy through the development of a workforce that’s prepared for today’s evolving job environment,” Gorynski said.

Additional community development activities by First National Bank include investment in four local community loan pools providing access to capital for new and emerging businesses; sponsorship of the Straight Shot entrepreneurship accelerator; supporting two community organizations that provide home loans to low- and moderate income families; and serving as the largest Nebraska-based Small Business Administration (SBA) lender in the state.

Grants for Affordable Housing are expected to increase access to safe, quality and affordable housing. This quarter, First National Bank’s lone Affordable Housing grant was \$30,000 to the Nebraska Housing Developers Association to provide homebuyer education and down payment assistance to more than 850 households across the state.

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Grants supporting Financial Wellness and Economic Self-Sufficiency included:

- \$40,000 – Financial Hope Collaborative: financial education series primarily serving single mothers.
- \$40,000 – Hope Center for Kids: support academic enrichment, employability training and small-group mentoring for more than 1,600 youth through the Hope Employment and Learning Academy.
- \$32,000 – Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska: educate refugees arriving in Omaha on the U.S. financial system through a full-time financial educator.
- \$25,000 – NorthStar Foundation: increase financial literacy and career readiness skills for 200 elementary and middle school-aged boys.
- \$15,000 – Family Housing Advisory Services: assist more than 6,000 families to overcome financial barriers through free tax preparation services and connection to financial programs.
- \$10,000 – Communities in Schools of Mid-America at Omaha: increase financial literacy and support services to nearly 1,600 students at an Omaha North High School.

Grants to support Employment Readiness and Vocational Training included:

- \$40,000 – Urban League of Nebraska: provide job readiness training in targeted high-growth industries via a career boot camp.
- \$35,000 – Seventy-Five North, in partnership with Omaha Code School: summer program for high school students living in North Omaha to increase exposure and knowledge of software development, web design and coding.
- \$30,000 – Boys Town, in partnership with Heartland Family Service: increase self-sufficiency by providing short-term, low-interest auto loans to finance car purchases, enabling transportation to and from work.
- \$22,000 – Nebraskans for Civic Reform, in partnership with Together Omaha: provide housing and employment readiness services for homeless veterans.

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- \$20,000 – Women’s Center for Advancement: empower victims of sexual assault and domestic violence to become financially independent and self-sufficient.
- \$20,000 – 100 Black Men of Omaha: increase employability skills, career readiness and financial literacy for more than 650 youth and adults.
- \$10,000 – Goodwill Industries, Inc.: support for YouthBuild, a program that combines education with hands-on vocational training for at-risk high school students.

Grants to support Adult Literacy and Education included:

- \$30,000 – Metro Community College Foundation: enhance coaching and tutoring services; increase GED completion rates for 500 adult learners.
- \$20,000 – Latino Center of the Midlands: expand tutoring and GED assistance to the Park Avenue neighborhood in east Omaha.
- \$20,000 – Literacy Center of the Midlands: provide literacy instruction and tutoring to adults to improve self-sufficiency.
- \$20,000 – InCommon Community Development: provide education and employment support required for economic self-sufficiency via a neighborhood-based community center.

Grants to support Credit Counseling and Debt Management included:

- \$25,000 – Green Path Debt Solutions: provide one-on-one credit counseling and education workshops to 600 individuals.
- \$10,000 – Family Housing Advisory Services: provide financial education workshops to 100 individuals.

In 2014, First National Bank awarded more than \$1.5 million in community development grants to 79 organizations across its seven-state service area, Gorynski said.

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First National Bank is a subsidiary of First National of Nebraska. First National of Nebraska is the largest privately owned banking company in the United States. First National and its affiliates have \$20 billion in managed assets and 5,000 employee associates. Primary banking offices are located in Nebraska, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Texas.

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