

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Dakota County Regional Chamber Charitable Foundation - MN Dual Scholarship Press Release**

**Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce Charitable Foundation Receives First Ever Approval from State for its Share of $3.3 Million in Dual Education Grants. The State Grant Increases Annual Foundation Scholarship Support to the Region by 10-Fold.**

Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce Board Member and Charitable Foundation Chairman, Mark W. Lofthus, announced this week that the State of Minnesota approved the first ever Foundation’s request for $76,000 for training for up to forty phlebotomists (blood draw professionals) working with health care members within the Dakota County Region, all training through the Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) accredited health curriculum.

“It is an honor to support the mission of the DCR Chamber of Commerce in supporting Members in the Region, development of their employees at low cost, while strengthening the healthcare infrastructure that is so much in need right now,” Mark said. This program will be in addition to the DCR Annual Women’s Leadership Forum scholarships, offered annually.

Maureen Scallen Failor, President of the DCR Chamber of Commerce and member of its Charitable Foundation Board, added, “It is another great strength of our Chamber to have a Foundation so in tune with our mission to cultivate our vibrant communities. This Grant comes together with key Chamber of Commerce members and partners like Dakota County Technical College in Rosemount, Twin Cities Orthopedics (TCO) and i-Health. The program will be low cost to our healthcare members and no cost to their employees to provide deeper, needed training.”

**The Importance of Phlebotomists**

Phlebotomist services is a key step of all critical medical treatment, and the DCR Chamber and Foundation uncovered a serious need in the Region with Healthcare member interviews, surveys, and analysis of State of Minnesota economic data.

**DCR Chamber Member Support**

The first DCR Chamber healthcare partner to participate in the Grant program is Infinite Health Collaborative (i-Health), which was formed when TCO and other physician-led independent specialty practices came together. Kellie Krysmalski, Director of Laboratory Services with i-Health, explained “As a premier healthcare entity in the Region and beyond, we are always looking for ways to enrich the training and job skills of our employees. Our attention to their ongoing training at no cost to them is an aid in slowing turnover as well as improvements in their personal skills. We are excited to partner with the DCR Charitable Foundation and DCTC through this important State of MN Dual Grant Program.”

Dakota County Technical College, based in Rosemount, was also anxious to partner with the DCR Charitable Foundation in the Dual Grant process. Bob Trewartha, Director of Continuing Education and Customized Training at Dakota County Technical College was an early adopter to the program and explained “The DCTC phlebotomy program is one of the College’s jewels in our healthcare training curriculum. There is such a need for this expertise and our academic staff has both important clinical and classroom expertise.”

**Opportunity for More Healthcare Partners**

Per Lofthus, the Chamber and Foundation will look for additional partners in the Regional health space to round out the phlebotomists that i-Health will bring into the program. The plan is to bring forty into the program within the next year. Health entities interested in learning more about this low cost program should contact Mark Lofthus at mark.w.lofthus@gmail.com or Maureen Scallen Failor at mscallenfailor@dcrchamber.com

The DCR Charitable Foundation partnered with John LeTourneau in writing the Grant. Mr. LeTourneau will also assist the DCR Charitable Foundation with administration of the program. John can be reached at jletourneau@co2partners.com

For the full 2022 Minnesota Dual Grant press release, click here:

[$3.3 million in Dual Training Grants awarded to Minnesota employers (state.mn.us)](http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=2513)

**Purpose of the Foundation**

The Foundation serves as a venue for chamber members and others to get involved in the community through initiatives based on business interests, including leadership development, workforce education, and business resource development. The Foundation also serves as a supporting pillar of the benefits of the community and its educational system by partnering with other organizations with similar values and missions. **To learn more visit** dcrchamber.com / About Us / Charitable Foundation

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