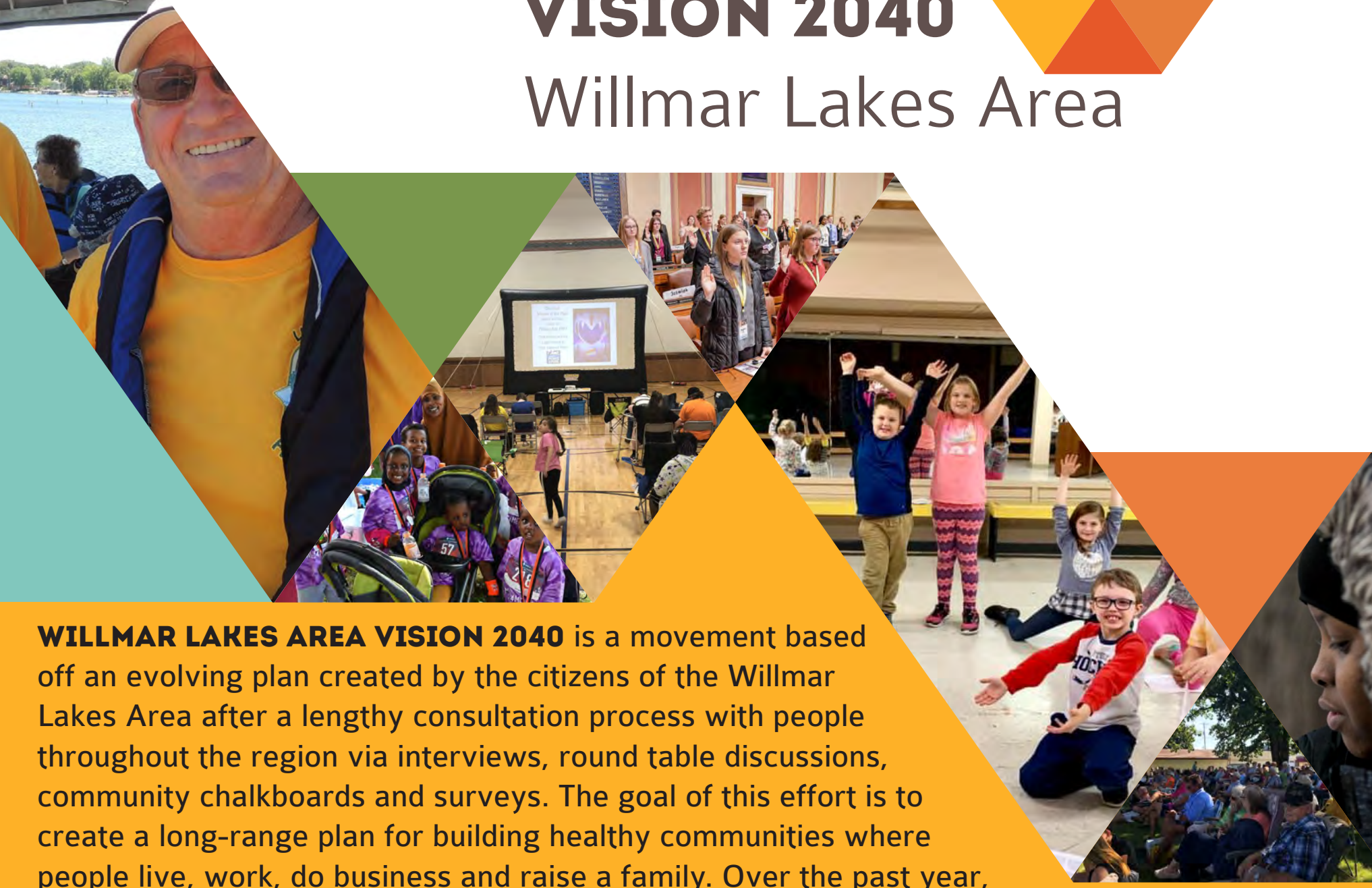




VISION 2040

Willmar Lakes Area



WILLMAR LAKES AREA VISION 2040 is a movement based off an evolving plan created by the citizens of the Willmar Lakes Area after a lengthy consultation process with people throughout the region via interviews, round table discussions, community chalkboards and surveys. The goal of this effort is to create a long-range plan for building healthy communities where people live, work, do business and raise a family. Over the past year, individuals have worked on four focus areas with a variety of projects.



VISION 2040 is made successful by generous donors and innovative thinkers. If you or your organization are considering becoming a generous donor, give us a shout – we'd love to tell you more about your dollars at work.

HERE ARE A FEW PAST PROJECTS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF

- Destination Playground
- Kandiyohi County Dog Park
- Vision 2040 Leadership
- WeLead



VISION 2040

Willmar Lakes Area

2019 FUNDED PROJECTS

2019 FUN RUN SERIES WITH MILES4MENTORS

The 2019 Fun Run Series, created by the Miles4Mentors organization, shines as an example of a health and wellness focused project funded by Vision 2040. Miles4Mentors has successfully held free, family friendly events that encourage children of all backgrounds to enjoy healthy outdoor activities with members of the community.

PROJECT GOAL

“ Our intent was to reach the Somali, Latina and Karen, as well as Caucasian children and their families in the Willmar and local area. Building community by being inclusive and supporting our young children and their families with fun events they can all participate in, ”

wrote Paul Cool, President of Miles4Mentors.

EVENT SUCCESS

In 2019, the Fun Run Series included four events: Willmar Fest Run Little Foot, Run with the Stingers, Rockin Robbins Run and Kids’ Day at the Kandiyohi County Fair. The Vision 2040 grant helped offset the costs of t-shirts for the runners and volunteers, 50 pairs of running shoes for the Stingers event, medals, administration fees for the registration setup, advertising materials (posters and fliers), finishers arch, feather flags for finish chute and cones for marking the course.

With over 200 child participants at each event, Miles4Mentors is looking ahead to another successful season in 2020. Check their website, miles4mentors.com, for more information on the 2020 Fun Run Series.



RURAL REFUGEE PROJECT WITH WILLMAR AREA ARTS COUNCIL

The inclusion focus area for Vision 2040 has a high impact on the community as many new Americans call the Willmar Lakes Area home. Rural Refugee Project took this opportunity to share the story of Hamdi Kosar, a 21-year-old Somali refugee who has lived in Willmar for nearly 10 years, to help many understand the journey of the newer community members.



PROJECT GOAL

Erica Dischino, photographer and creator of the Rural Refugee Project, wrote, “The Rural Refugee Project aims to complete the body of work about Hamdi in an effort to build cross-cultural relationships and change perceptions of refugees in our community. The project includes community outreach events before the trip to Kenya, blogging and live-updates following our journey, a finale publication, and a public presentation to community members of the completed photo essay of Hamdi’s experiences.”

PROJECT SUCCESS

In August of 2019, Hamdi Kosar, Erica Dischino and Jessica Rohloff had the opportunity to fly to the refugee camp where Hamdi was born. The journey allowed them to fully capture the refugee story that continues to be shared with the Willmar area community today. Their stories and project work are helping increase the understanding and compassion to help diminish the separation between the refugees and the rest of the community. Stay up to date on future public presentations through their Facebook page: Rural Refugee Project.

VISION 2040 LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Vision 2040 Leadership is a training program that focuses on preparing the next generation of leaders to answer the call to serve the communities of the Willmar Lakes Area. Vision 2040 Leadership brings together a diverse group of participants to develop skills necessary for building inclusive communities.

PROJECT GOAL

This program enhances the Willmar Lakes Area by engaging, developing and empowering the leader within. Participants develop a base of leadership knowledge and skills including effective communication, facilitation and conflict management. Personal development throughout the course help students gain an in-depth understanding of their leadership style and how to work with others more effectively. These newfound skills will help build personal and professional networks with community leaders and organizations to prepare the next generation of leaders within the Willmar Lakes Area.

PROJECT SUCCESS

“The Vision 2040 Leadership program provided a transformational experience. The facilitators helped to create the space necessary for us to be reflective and ultimately empowered to engage in life, work, and our community, in ways we never imagined. I gained new skills in facilitation and coaching. I walked away with tools that could be immediately used for team building and development,” wrote Kasey Baker 2015 Vision 2040 leadership attendee.





Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 is about creating a better tomorrow by supporting projects that are community minded. The first Idea Works event was held last summer! The event brought together community members who shared their ideas and collaborated on how to implement these ideas through resources, tools and funds. A few projects that were funded from the Idea Works event are:

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- Language and Friendship Meals
- Garden Box Program
- Sharing Our Immigration Stories

BOUNCE BACK
promoting health through happiness

The Bounce Back Project promotes health through happiness, by focusing on tools to help people build resiliency. The program focuses on three main tools: gratitude, three good things, and random acts of kindness. These tools provide people with simple actions to focus on the positivity of mental wellness within individuals and our community. Initial project rollout will begin with promotion within local businesses and service clubs. This fall a community event will be held with a speaker from the original Bounce Back Project in Monticello, Minnesota.

Speak your Peace
The Civility Project

Vision 2040 is launching a subcommittee focusing on the Speak Your Peace Civility Project. The team will be working towards promoting a sense of community by increasing civic participation with more respectful and effective communication. Stay tuned as the initial rollout is planned for this summer!

MOVIES IN THE PARK

Movies in the Park has become a tradition of the Willmar Lakes Area community. The Vision 2040 grant has helped the Willmar Parks and Recreation purchase a screen for the movies to be projected on for years to come for families. Up until last year, the screen was rented for movie showings.



LANGUAGE AND FRIENDSHIP MEALS

The Goodness Coffee House has incorporated their Language and Friendship Meals into a twice-monthly meal from local restaurants and caterers featuring a variety of food styles. During these events, participants engage in small group discussions and connect with a variety of cultures.



SPOTLIGHT THEATRE WORKSHOP

The grants provided for the Spotlight Theatre Workshop will be utilized as part of a July 2020 performance of The Little Mermaid with local youth at The Barn Theatre. This is an affordable and fun way for our community's youth to get involved in arts with over 30-75 participants.



GARDEN BOX PROGRAM

Cedar garden boxes are being created at two different heights for standing and wheelchair-bound individuals. The donated boxes will go to senior living facilities and disabled apartments filled with soil mix and ready for the upcoming 2020 planting season.



PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY FOUNDATION VISIBILITY MURAL SERIES

During the four Rockin' Robbins events this summer, Presbyterian Family Foundation plans to paint up to six small murals to be installed around the Willmar community. The public will be invited to paint, creating inclusive images and giving visual representation to an often-invisible population.



RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Highland Apartments are creating holistic, healthy opportunities to support low income, elderly and disabled residents. Cookbooks, painting classes and Let's Go Fishing events have been done in the past. This summer, the grant will fund busing to the Minnesota Arboretum and tickets to the Stingers games.

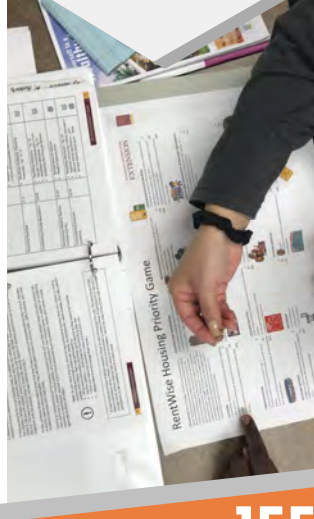


ADDITIONAL 2019 VISION 2040 SPONSORED PROJECTS

THE CITY OF SPICER'S BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
Fifteen local artists had the opportunity and platform to display their work within the Pirrotta Park in Spicer, Minnesota. This event increased participation for the Music in the Park event while promoting the local parks and the city of Spicer.



TRAIN YOUR TRAINER
Tenants throughout the Willmar Lakes Area have been empowered to better maintain their homes and develop trust and communication with their landlords. This program has developed emerging leaders with a diverse background and improved the quality of life for tenants throughout Kandiyohi County.



RIALTO REVISITED PROJECT
With collaboration between the Little Theatre and New London Roaming Cinema, this project created low cost events in the Willmar Lakes Area that attracted both the local community as well as the surrounding cities. Event organizers look forward to continuing these events into 2020.



SHARING OUR IMMIGRATION STORIES
The Norway Lake Lutheran Historical Association and the Norway Lake Parish held this event in October 2019. Sharing Our Immigration Stories project provided connection opportunities to bring cultures together, sharing culture over food events and host community conversation.



YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT
Kandiyohi County YMCA youth were among the approximately 1,600 students who took part in the Minnesota Model Session. Students participated in realistic, complex simulations of the Minnesota state government at the event. The funds from Vision 2040 helped alleviate event costs for attendees.



INTER-GENERATIONAL MUSIC
The Intergenerational Music project plans to use the Vision 2040 funds with the Rice Care Center to purchase 32 bells for their future events. The goal is to perform music together, both older adults and children, with hand bells in the community.



JUNE 4
JEFFERSON LEARNING CENTER FROM 6:00PM TO 7:30PM

Vision 2040 will host the second Idea Works Event on June 4 at the Jefferson Learning Center from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. This event will bring together community members to share their ideas on how to make our communities better; and collaborate on implementing these ideas through resources, tools and funds. This event is a fun, creative and welcoming to all across Willmar and Kandiyohi County.

The Idea Works Event will take place on June 4 at the Jefferson Learning Center from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. The event is free and open to all. Stay tuned to our Facebook page Willmar Lakes Area Vision 2040 for more details on this upcoming event.



The **WILLMAR LAKES AREA VISION 2040** plan is a community effort. We invite everyone to get involved and help move our community forward.

There are three ways to get involved in the Vision 2040 efforts: join an initiative, attend an event or donate.



Doers are needed! If you're looking to be a part of something great, this is the place to be. To get involved, visit the Vision 2040 website. Click on "Get Involved" tab in the main menu. Fill out the form and select which focus area you're interested in getting involved in. As a part of the volunteer database, you'll receive email alerts with projects that are endorsed or funded by Vision 2040. If you find something that strikes your fancy and looks like it would be fun to get involved with, we'll get you in touch!



Vision 2040 is helping fund and support many projects throughout the Willmar Lakes Area. Show your support for the amazing things that are happening in our communities by attending an event! Check out our Facebook page for a listing of upcoming opportunities.

As a community-led, grassroots effort to make our communities better for tomorrow, our organization is made successful by generous donors and innovative thinkers. If you or your organization are considering becoming a generous donor, give us a shout - we'd love to tell you more about your dollars at work!