



SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

Collaborating for Regional Vitality

Le Sueur County Investments

We envision southern Minnesota as a prosperous and growing region with vibrant communities, innovative and successful economies, and engaged and valued citizens. To achieve this vision, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, a regional development and philanthropic organization, fosters economic and community vitality in 20 counties of southern Minnesota through a culture of collaboration and partnership.

For every donation of
from Le Sueur County

\$1

=

\$16

is invested back into
Le Sueur County
communities.*

*Includes grants, loans & programming

27 LOANS

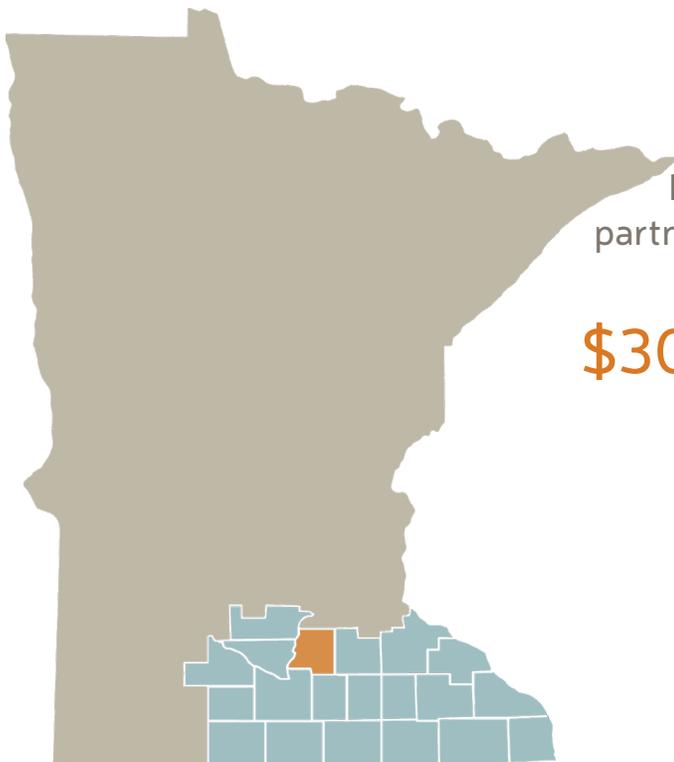
\$1.5 million to Le Sueur County entrepreneurs

\$2.2 million to support community initiatives

229 GRANTS

\$1.3 million to support grant-making

***\$5 million invested annually to the 20 counties of
south central and southeastern Minnesota***



Since 1986, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation has leveraged local investments & partnerships to create a stronger **Le Sueur County**:

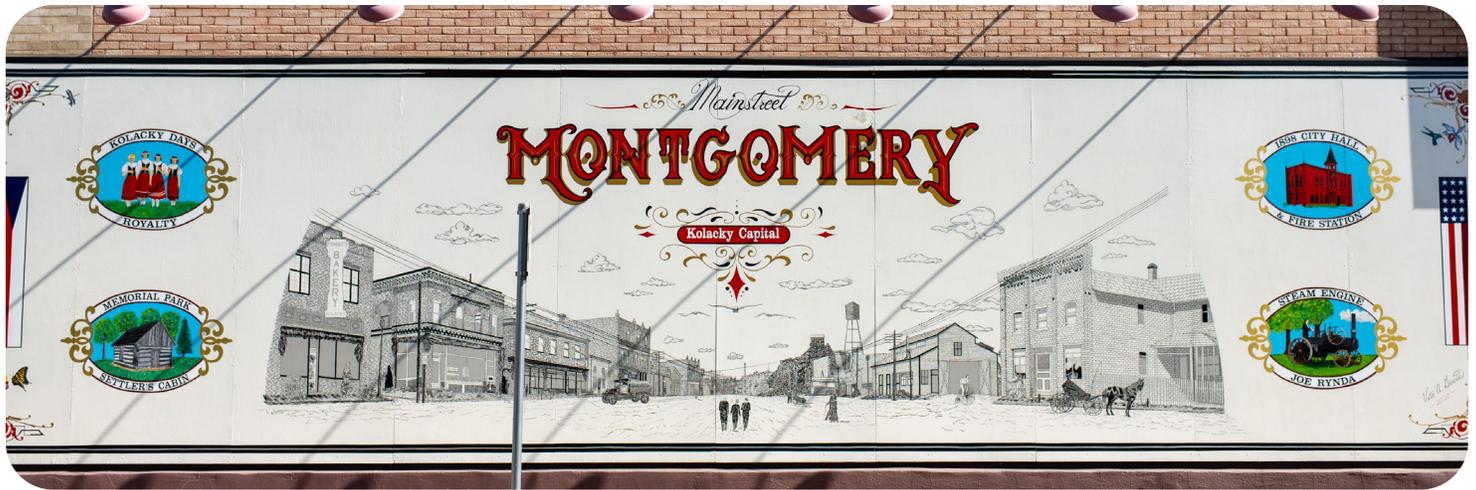
\$307,000 in local donations to SMIF

\$5 million

invested by SMIF in Le Sueur County through grants, loans, and programming for stronger kids, businesses and communities

Making a Difference

Building partnerships for community vitality



Montgomery Community Foundation (MCF), one of SMIF's 30 Community Foundations, was established in 2018. MCF has supported local organizations to restore a mural, create an outdoor play space for children and preserve a historical log cabin. The need during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 presented opportunities for them to support their community and give back in many ways. SMIF provided a COVID relief matching incentive, which MCF used to support local businesses. In 2020, MCF was awarded \$10,000 through a Small Town Grant for a "Monty Bucks" program for residents experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. In 2021, MCF received another \$10,000 Small Town Grant to organize and implement a farmers' market in the city park, to include local entertainment and food vendors.

Early Childhood

- Tri-City United Public Schools received a \$20,000 grant to provide summer preschool, ECFE, outreach and programming for children in Montgomery and in surrounding areas.
- Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Public Schools was awarded 350 books through the Early Literacy Grant for a district program to provide literacy opportunities to all populations and providing activities for academic growth and a successful literacy foundation.
- 35 local Early Childhood professionals participated in free trainings provided by SMIF in 2021, impacting over 300 children, to gain resources and knowledge to increase quality care for young children.

Number of children impacted: **988**

Hours of Training Provided: **43**

Economic Development

- 22 Le Sueur County businesses received \$225,000 in DEED Small Business Relief Grants to assist with pandemic-related challenges.
- Le Sueur and Montgomery engaged in the Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) program. This is a three-year commitment to focus on growing their local economy by connecting entrepreneurs with mentors and resources.
- Margarita's Cleaning Service from the Montgomery area enrolled in the Prosperity Initiative Program which provides one-on-one technical assistance to minority entrepreneurs.

Number of entrepreneurs impacted: **72**

Hours of training and events provided: **565**

Community Vitality

- Le Sueur Community Foundation, Elysian Community Horizons, New Prague Community Foundation and Montgomery Community Foundation received more than \$25,000 in matching funds and services throughout 2021. As the fiscal host, SMIF maintains all filings with the government and administrative work while providing technical assistance to the local board. Volunteers focus on raising dollars and granting them where they see fit in the community.
- The Rotary Club of New Prague received a \$10,000 Small Town Grant to collaborate with local organizations to develop a community Peace Garden.