A Proposal for:

XXXX Foundation

Grant Request: $25,000

From Northern Star Council, BSA

Executive Summary

Northern Star Council's Vision: Northern Star Council will be recognized as a positive influence in the lives of 100 percent of the youth in the communities we serve.

This request to the XXX Foundation seeks support for Northern Star Council's public school partnership hosted at Base Camp, our urban program and environmental learning center at historic Fort Snelling. Base Camp provides an anchor to Northern Star Council's commitment to urban youth, youth at-risk, and youth in underserved communities. Scouting provides youth with an opportunity to try new things, provide service to others, build self-confidence, and reinforce ethical standards. These opportunities not only help them when they are young, but also carry forward into their adult lives, improving their relationships, their work lives, their family lives, and the values by which they live.

Because of the XXX Foundation's interest in projects that improve the lives of at-risk families, children, youth, and young adults we request that you consider a grant to support the Base Camp public school partnership. Character building, citizenship training, and physical fitness are our goals for every youth member, and we request your support to help the council provide programs that help urban, at-risk youth meet these goals.

2011 Organization Budget	$12,476,734
2011 Program Budget	$105,000
Amount requested	$25,000

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Organization Overview

Boy Scouts were first organized in Minnesota in 1910, three years after Scouting was founded in England in 1907. Over its 100 -year history Scouting has changed with the times. We offer age-appropriate programs that challenge both physical and mental development. These programs allow youth to explore a variety of activities that instill life skills through experiential learning techniques. The council offers eight different programs both in traditional Scouting (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturing), through Learning for Life, a separate division of Boy Scouts, we support youth in classrooms, working with companies through Exploring and youth offenders with Juvenile Diversion; and, we offer focused programs to the urban community through Scoutreach and Special Needs Scouting, the Polaris District, for youth and adults with disabilities.

It is Northern Star Council's mission to lead youth to be healthy, contributing citizens and leaders in their families, communities, and the world. The council supports nearly 23,500 adult volunteers who develop and enrich the lives of more than 77,000 boys and girls, ages 6 through 20. The council is comprised of youth and adults representing most racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds, physical and

mental abilities, and educational experiences, and is available to all youth in the community. It serves 25 counties across central Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

Northern Star Council is governed by a 63 member volunteer board of directors who represent education, business, corporations, and other non-profit and community organizations. Adult volunteers and Scouts are served by 83 full-time professional and support staff and more than 550 seasonal program staff. The council operates two service centers, one in St. Paul and the other in Golden Valley, and nine camps in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Working with Others

Scouting only works though its partnerships and in collaboration with other organizations; more than 1,300 community organizations enter into an agreement with the council to become a chartered organization and become responsible for a pack, troop, team and/or crew. In 2010, these groups charter 571 Cub Scout packs, 480 Boy Scout troops, 23 Varsity teams, 228 Venture crews, 3 ships, 135 Explorer posts, and 19 Learning for Life classrooms.

All Scouting units perform community service projects, often in partnership with volunteers from their charter organization, to the benefit of their community. This service is as varied as helping keep highways and byways clear of litter, to the Scouting for Food drive which annually collects more than 300,000 pounds of food, and cash, to support community based food shelves in the council service area. In 2010, youth members provided s total of 612,544 hours of service to their communities.

Purpose of the Grant

Challenges and Opportunities for Northern Star Council

The communities Northern Star Council serves are more racially, socially, and ethnically diverse than ever before. For example, in St. Paul and Minneapolis public schools the majority of students are children of color – a significant demographic shift from just 20 years ago.

Students in Minneapolis and Saint Paul Public Schools speak more than 100 languages and dialects. Literature sent to parents is frequently published in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali. Significant characteristics of our community include:

- The Twin Cities has the largest population of both Somalis and Hmong in the U.S.
- The Twin Cities is home to the largest Tibetan population outside of Tibet and the second largest Southeast Asian population in the U.S.
- The Twin Cities are experiencing a rapid increase in Hispanic/Latino immigration.
- A much higher percentage of Minnesota immigrants come as refugees than the national average (about 24 percent compared to 8 percent nationally).
- Mind the Gap – Reducing Disparities to Improve Regional Competitiveness in the Twin Cities by the Brookings Institution found: "While just over one-fifth of the region's population lives within the two central cities (St. Paul and Minneapolis), the majority of the region's poor live there. … Concentrated poverty - neighborhoods where the poverty rates are 40% or higher – is solely found in Minneapolis and St. Paul. In other words, there are no extremely poor suburban neighborhoods, only extremely poor central city neighborhoods."

Research has shown that children and adults are having less contact with nature and the outdoors.

- O. Pergams and P. Zaradic report in the January 2008 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that "most reliable long-term per capita visitation measures of nature recreation peaked between 1981 and 1991, are declining at approximately -1.2% per year, and total to date -18% to -25%." Pergams and Zaradic surveyed every form of recreation from visits to national parks to registration for fishing and hunting licenses. They noted that "camping is the largest recreation component of the per capita pie chart, a choice for approximately one in five

Americans. As such, a trend of few and fewer Americans going camping is especially notable." They are detecting a real shift away from nature as a recreation choice.

- In his book Last Child in the Woods author Richard Louv describes a condition he calls *Nature-Deficit Disorder.* The condition describes the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses. The disorder can be detected in individuals, families, and communities.

Children learn by doing – and those are the lessons that tend to stick for a lifetime. The camping tradition, integral to the Scouting experience, teaches teamwork and self-sufficiency while opening a door to the wonders of nature for young people growing up in an urban setting. The value of outdoor activities cannot be overstated; youth learn faster, about both themselves and their abilities, when they are put outside of their day-to-day surroundings. One of the issues facing urban youth is that the travel distance to any one of the council's nine camping facilities can be 30 to 200 miles, one way. The distance, and parental discomfort with letting their children participate in situations that are not understood by the parents, limits the involvement of many youth and the program experiences they have.

It is important that we find a way to bring children to "outdoor classrooms," where Scouting's methods of youth development are so effectively put into practice or, alternatively, bring these "outdoor classrooms" into neighborhoods. The challenge to Northern Star Council is how do we communicate the benefits of the Scouting experience to an immigrant parent who has never seen or heard of it before, been a participant themselves, or when none of his or her children's playmates have been participants? How can we make it easier for the broadest spectrum of children to participate? Lastly, and perhaps most important, how can we make the program more accessible to all youth in our communities?

Northern Star Council's Solution: Base Camp - an Urban Youth Leadership Center

In order to make meaningful strides towards being recognized as a positive influence in the lives of 100 percent of the youth in the communities we serve, Northern Star Council's Board of Directors decided to purchase the hippodrome facility at historic Fort Snelling in 2008 to create a program center for youth in our urban neighborhoods to better orient and connect them to outdoor adventures, leadership, environmental and camping programs and activities. The center, called Base Camp, includes physical challenges like bouldering and climbing walls, a youth leadership center, activities created in collaboration with other agencies and schools, and will serve as a link to existing camp activities. This facility opened to the public on October 2, 2010.

Base Camp Vision

Northern Star Council will expand existing service delivery models with Base Camp, designed to fuel the program development and delivery necessary to reach a youth population that is more diverse, helping us to introduce Scouting's methodology to those who could benefit most while strengthening service delivery to each and every child in our community.

Base Camp Goals

The Scouting program has three specific objectives, commonly referred to as the "Aims of Scouting." All Base Camp programs have been developed on a foundation of these goals.

- **Develop Strong Character**
  Learning teamwork and cooperation, developing personal vision and leadership skills, teaching respect for self, for others, and for the environment, and building self-reliance and a positive outlook for the future.

- **Encourage Participating Citizenship**
  Demonstrating the value of doing your share as part of a group, learning to value the diverse history of our community and country, and a respect for all people. Understanding the responsibilities of citizenship and providing opportunities for service to others.

- **Build Physical, Mental, and Emotional Fitness**
  Developing high self-esteem and building the body's physical and mental abilities to solve problems and cope with adversity. Introducing youth to personal habits of fitness that will pay dividends over their entire lifetime.

Base Camp Programs
Base Camps are traditionally a place to begin a journey, an exploration, a path to discovery. The Northern Star Council Base Camp in particular is designed to spark a longer-term interest in learning and leadership in young men and women. Currently, there are seven distinct curriculum areas available:

Leadership Development: This area focuses on creative problem solving as a team, learning about how to establish a vision, practicing decision-making, and presenting information to a group. Activities include learning how to use a map and compass to navigate, building a simple outdoor shelter, and use of the indoor ropes course and the indoor and outdoor climbing walls.

Team Building: Students explore team building through trust games and debriefing discussions to reflect on what they learned and observed.

Outdoor Skills: Students learn survival basics, knots, lashings, orienteering, GPS, shelter building, archery, and basic fire safety.

Environmental Science: Students learn about carbon footprints and gain a sense of their own personal carbon footprint, practice observation skills, test air quality of area, and build a micro-environment.

Aviation: Students experience first hand basic principles of flight, build and fly "Balsa" or plastic plat flyers, learn more about careers related to aviation and what kinds of training and education are needed. Activities require the application of basic math and science concepts to hands-on learning activities. Students are encouraged to think about the connections between things they are learning in school and the exciting world of aviation flight.

Base Camp is home to one of only seven official NASA designed Space Shuttle Simulators. Participants learn about the different responsibilities for a successful shuttle flight and play the roles of shuttle crew (commander, pilot, mission specialist) and mission control (flight director, SimCom, and the Sim Director).

History: Students see and hear about the many cultures represented in Minnesota, reflect on individual heritage, and explore Base Camp and the surrounding area with a focus on its historical roots and significance. They participate in games and fun activities as a vehicle for learning about the lives of Dakota young people and young people who lived at Fort Snelling. Hands-on craft projects are designed to simulate the experiences of indigenous Minnesotans and early settlers. One unique program is the Underground Railroad simulation that offers an experiential diversity training opportunity that will explore the historical connections of the Underground Railroad and the Fort Snelling area.

Cycling/Physical Fitness: Students prepare for a safe and enjoyable bicycle ride by reviewing safety precautions, checking and making needed adjustments to their bike, and getting equipped with appropriate protective gear. They then participate in a riding tour to see local landmarks and areas of interest located in and surrounding Fort Snelling National Park. Bicycles are provided through a partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Partnerships
More than 1,100 community organizations, representing educational, religious, non-profit, civic, business, and labor organizations join in partnership with Northern Star Council by chartering 1,589 Scouting units. Additionally, numerous partnerships have been established and are being explored to further create unique programming opportunities at Base Camp. Currently, partnerships have been established with Historic Fort Snelling, the National Park Service, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Air Guard Museum, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, the Minnesota

Elementary School Principals' Association, Minnesota Army Reserve and the Girl Scouts of USA. Additionally, formal partnerships are being explored with St. Paul Public Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools, the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, YMCA, and Project Footsteps.

Public School Partnership

The Boy Scouts of America and the public school system share a common vision of a community strengthened through the development and empowerment of youth. To emphasis this shared vision Northern Star Council plans to utilize and market Base Camp for school programming during the day; allowing teachers to connect classroom learning to a new kind of experiential education. Base Camp staff assists teachers in meeting their classroom objectives through activities tied to age-specific Minnesota State Educational Standards.

While Base Camp is available for any public school to utilize, serving "at-risk" and first-generation immigrant youth remains one of its core goals. To realize this goal, Northern Star Council plans to target market to schools recognized by the State of Minnesota as serving "at-risk" youth to secure their participation in a subsidized pilot program at Base Camp during the 2011 calendar year. To date, an invitation has been extended to 21 schools to participate in the free program.

How the Model Works

Co-operation Between Youth and Adults
The Scouting program model is designed to be youth-led and this same concept is applied to Base Camp programs for school classrooms. A group's experience at Base Camp will have the most impact if it is youth-driven. This can be a tremendous challenge with a class of students who have never had any exposure to Scouting and are just excited to be somewhere different! To overcome this, teachers and other adults are encouraged to engage in activities as co-learners and co-leaders with students. Adults are encouraged to try out the activities the youth are participating in, but to not do something for a student that he or she can do independently. All participants are instructed to ask questions first and give answers second.

Developmentally Attentive Programming
Within each program area are three different modules or plans for a 4-4.5 hour day at Base Camp. One module in each area is targeted at grades 3-4, one at grades 5-6, and one for older youth, grades 7-12. In general the activities are similar and the difference will be more in terms of how the information is processed and the level of complexity included. For example, the tiered program for Environmental Science includes a nature walk for elementary students where they learn to identify plants and animals, a water testing unit for middle school students where they learn about basic environmental chemistry, and exercises in wildlife rehabilitation for high school students.

Program Objectives
All program area modules have thee types of objectives identified and are categorized as "Know," "Be," and "Do." The *Know* objectives help students to reach certain academic benchmarks identified by the State of Minnesota. The *Be* objectives identify developmental outcomes. Specifically, each module identifies several developmental assets that may be strengthened in the process of the experience. Developmental Assets are factors in young people's lives that have been shown through research to help them thrive and be positive members of society. Finally, the *Do* objectives give a brief overview of the actual experiences the modules are designed to facilitate.

Standards and Initiatives:
Each module's learning objectives reflect Minnesota Academic Standards. Examples of standards that are re-enforced are:

- SPPS Strategic Plan Measurable Outcome #9: Create safe, welcoming & respectful environments (Leadership Development & Team Building)
- Minnesota Statue 120B.232: Character Development Education (Leadership Development)

- Anti-Bullying Curriculum (Team Building, Leadership Development)
- MN Science Academic Standards (9-12): Strand: History & Nature of Science, Substrand: Scientific Inquiry Standard: Student will design and conduct a scientific investigation (Aviation, Environmental Science)

Base Camp Staff
The following full-time employees are responsible for implementation of the Base Camp program and supervision of 10 part-time employees and over 50 volunteers.

Kathryn Wyatt, Facility Director, has served five years as a Scouting professional. She provides leadership to the Base Camp Program Director and oversees facility development and budgeting. She has a B.A. in Outdoor Recreation from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities.

Jonathan Jones, Program Director, served as a part-time Scouting program aide for at-risk youth prior to his responsibilities at Base Camp beginning in July 2010. He provides leadership to program volunteers and staff and is responsible for outreach to public schools and the community. He has a B.A. in Special Education from Xavier University in New Orleans and a M.Ed. from Penn State.

How Base Camp Benefits the Community
By adapting time tested Scouting principles for a broader audience, Northern Star Council will be able to impact a greater percentage of the youth in our community. In 2001 and 2005 Wilder Research evaluated Scouting's impact on young people. Wilder specifically focused on "high-risk" or "not high-risk" respondents, "in order to examine differences in Scouting experiences and outcomes." High-risk participants are youth being served by the Scoutreach program and are the focus of the Public School partnership. Wilder found:

- Scouts in high-risk units had especially strong improvement in the areas of interest and appreciation for outdoor activities, interest in extracurricular activities outside of Scouting, and involvement in leadership activities.
- Youth in high-risk units, and their teachers and parents, more frequently reported increases in skills, interests, and abilities compared to youth and their teachers and parents not in high-risk Scouting units.
- They concluded that Scouting actually has a greater impact on youth from high-risk communities.

Impact for Existing Scouting Programs
Base Camp is a central strategic component in Northern Star Council's membership growth plan. While the Scouting program is not directly promoted to participating students, Base Camp is promoted as a facility operated by the Boy Scouts of America. In the first two months of operation, an average of one student per session has asked facility staff to tell them more about scouting programs in their area. Scouting promotional materials are also available in visible locations around the facility. Additionally, by providing free programming to schools and helping teachers accomplish academic benchmarks, the council will be able to create a new co-beneficial relationship with schools to leverage for improved fall youth recruitment for traditional programs.

EVALUATION

Base Camp Measures for Success

- Increase number of public school youth exposed to scouting activities and methods
- Create a contemporary image of Scouting by creating an "urban bridge" for "at-risk" and immigrant youth to become familiar with traditional scouting programs
- Become a resource to all youth in Northern Star Council's service area
- Increase school access in partner schools
- Provide increased opportunities for Scoutreach youth to experience regular outdoor activities
- Improve retention among existing scout units that participate in Base Camp programming

Evaluation of Base Camp Programs includes:

- Advisory Committee: A committee of volunteers at the council leadership level provide direction for the Base Camp program. This team regularly monitors the progress toward annual objectives and provides assistance to staff and volunteers. The advisory committee is chaired by Council Board member Brandon Maves, a Partner at McGladrey.
- National Camp Standards: As a facility owned and operated by the Boy Scouts of America, Base Camp is governed by National Camp Standards. These standards are designed to ensure a high degree of health and safety for participants and staff members engaged in programs operated by the Boy Scouts of America. All staff qualifications and training, as well as operation of the program, is reviewed against these standards.
- Teacher and Student surveys: Teachers and students are asked to fill out a brief survey about their experiences at Base Camp. Responses are evaluated by staff and the advisory committee to continually improve programming.
- Formal Research: Periodic parental and youth participant phone surveys are performed, usually by Wilder Research. Results have consistently shown that youth participating in Northern Star Council programs experience higher self-esteem, more interest in helping others, better decision-making skills, ability to ask for help when needed and improved problem-solving skills and leadership ability.

Long-term sustainability

Base Camp has been designed to generate revenues to support the majority of its programs and operation. A comprehensive proforma has been developed and approved as a business plan of operation. Revenues from the facility will come from internal sources (Scouting units using Base Camp and its program), partnering sources (other organizations – including schools and non-profits – that will partner with Northern Star Council to operate programs at Base Camp), and external sources (rental and fee-based program use).

Operating and staffing Base Camp for a day of school programming for 300 youth costs approximately $5,000. The council is committed to providing up to $105,000 towards subsidizing the school partnership and plans to seek a range of corporate and private funding as the program grows and participation increases, in addition to providing support from the general operating fund.

Thank you

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Your gift of $25,000 to support Northern Star Council's Base Camp will provide the means to influence how children respond to the world around them by giving them the tools to make the right decisions in life and to feel good about themselves and others. Thank you.