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YEAR-END EDUCATION GRANTS SUPPORT PREPARATION OF NEW, EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

(Saint Paul, MN – January 25, 2010)—In addition to the \$40 million committed in December 2009 by the Bush Foundation to [transform teacher preparation programs](#) over the next decade, the Foundation has approved three additional grants totaling more than \$4.1 million to further support the success of its teacher effectiveness initiative.

Bush Foundation Vice President Susan Heegaard said, “Our education partners deserve the best coaching and measurement tools we can provide as they undertake the challenging work of changing how they prepare new, effective teachers and how, ultimately, they support them once they are in the classroom.”

The **Value-Added Research Center (VARC)** at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will use a \$3.7 million grant over the next four years to develop a value-added assessment tool and reporting mechanism to measure student learning and teacher effectiveness. (An “effective teacher” is one who ensures that each child learns at least a year’s worth of knowledge for every year spent in the classroom.)

The term “value-added” refers to the contribution teachers and schools make to student achievement. Value-added measurement models use standardized educational test results as well as a range of other socio-economic factors (such as race, family income, English competency, etc.), to more closely determine the effect the school and teacher have made on a single student. Teachers will use this information to determine which methods are working with which students, enabling them to change tactics quickly and thus become more effective. (For an interesting explanation of “value-added,” visit <http://varc.wceruw.org/tutorials/Oak/index.htm>.)

The VARC is led by economist Dr. Rob Meyer. “We know that standardized test scores do not tell the whole story of the impact a teacher has on his or her students. By statistically eliminating the factors a teacher can’t control, we can see more clearly the effect of the teacher—for better or worse.”

A grant of \$349,619 was made to the Washington, D.C.-based **Academy for Educational Development, Inc. (AED)**, which will provide technical support and coaching to the 14 higher education institutions who are partnering with the Bush Foundation. Ivan Charner and Robin White of AED have been coaching the partner institutions since early in the planning phase and will continue their support throughout 2010 as the universities not only implement their redesigned programs but also recruit and admit their first classes of teachers to be trained in those programs.

Meyer, Charner and White work with the [advisory and review committee](#) that has advised the Foundation and its educational partners during the planning phases of the teacher effectiveness

initiative; the committee will continue to provide input through the critical next phase of implementation that will occur in 2010.

Finally, a \$100,000 grant was made to the **Minneapolis Foundation** to support the development and submission of the State of Minnesota's application for [Race to the Top](#) support. This program of the U.S. Department of Education will support states that advance reforms around:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and to compete in the global economy.
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and that inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction.
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most.
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

Heegaard said, "Minnesota can compete well for Race to the Top funding, given the work our educational partners in Minnesota are doing to dramatically redesign the way they recruit, prepare, place and support the thousands of new, effective teachers this state will need in the next decade."

*The **Bush Foundation** was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife Edyth. The Foundation strives to be a catalyst to shape vibrant communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, and in the 23 Native nations that share the same geography, by investing in courageous and effective leadership that significantly strengthens and improves the well-being of people in these three states.*

Since 2008, the Bush Foundation has been pursuing its [Goals for a Decade](#)—to develop courageous leaders and engage entire communities in solving problems, to support the self-determination of Native nations and to increase educational achievement. (For more information about Goals for a Decade, visit www.bushfoundation.org.)

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