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Small Town Faculty and Student Fellows Program

Summary: The University of Minnesota, Morris, in partnership with the Otto Bremer Foundation, offers a Small Town Faculty and Student Fellows Program.

(September 11, 2006)-The University of Minnesota, Morris, in partnership with the Otto Bremer Foundation, offers a Small Town Faculty and Student Fellows Program. The program begins with a three-year grant of \$202,109 to connect communities with UMM in order to enhance regional community development activities across western Minnesota. The Center for Small Towns (CST), with its 11-year history of working on locally identified issues, will coordinate the program. The program will provide needed assistance to communities in the region while also encouraging enhanced outreach and community research activities as part of the academic life at UMM.

Greg Thorson, UMM associate professor of political science, is the faculty coordinator of the program. Thorson has a rich history of providing curricular and co-curricular solutions to problems defined by community organizations in the region. This integration of teaching, research and public service is a model that will be utilized in the Fellows program. Ben Winchester, coordinator of data analysis and research at the Center for Small Towns, is the program coordinator for the grant.

The Fellows program will strengthen three to six community-based projects per year through the involvement of UMM faculty and students. This will be done by providing faculty and student fellowships. Thorson will mentor faculty members who have an interest in developing rural research agendas and work with them to increase statewide awareness of rural research findings.

For more information about the program, contact Ben Winchester at the Center for Small Towns, (320) 589-6451 or visit www.centerforsmalltowns.org.

The Otto Bremer Foundation is a private, independent charitable trust that authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations in Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota and Wisconsin.

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