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For immediate release

Bremer Foundation Awards Minnesota Rural Health Association (MRHA) \$85,000 to Address Health Care Challenges Facing Rural People and Communities

Crookston, Minn. (February 16, 2009) – Issues related to health care raise concern for everyone, but health care is of no greater concern than in the rural areas. The Otto Bremer Foundation recently awarded the Minnesota Rural Health Association (MRHA) \$85,000 to help build advocacy and ensure that the rural voice is not left out of statewide discussions and decisions on health care.

Judy Neppel, executive director for the MRHA, was pleased with the support given by Bremer. “We want to continue to make sure that we are there to support efforts to improve rural health care,” Neppel says. “The Bremer Foundation’s grant support will help us execute the mission of the MRHA and identify the greatest health care needs of rural Minnesotans so we can bring them forward.”

The grant award is for two years: \$50,000 in year one and \$35,000 in year two. The purpose of the grant is four-fold: to improve organizational effectiveness and build board capacity; strengthen relationships and advocacy; foster civic engagement; and convene rural health policy summits.

“The MRHA is a relatively young organization,” explains Neppel. “We are hoping to move this organization to the next level by strengthening important aspects of our infrastructure and raising our effectiveness. We owe our thanks to both Rob Jacobson, president of the Bremer Bank in Crookston and Kelly Greenlees, Bremer’s Nonprofit Resource Specialist in Grand Forks, N.D., who really supported this effort.”

The mission of MRHA is to bring together diverse interests to address rural health issues and to advocate for and with rural Minnesotans. To learn more about the MRHA, visit www.mnruralhealth.org.

The Otto Bremer Foundation’s mission is to assist people in achieving full economic, civic, and social participation in and for the betterment of their communities. For more information, visit www.ottobremer.org.

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