

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **The Dunham Fund Issues a *Challenge for Change***

*Aurora area nonprofits are offered a unique funding opportunity*

The Dunham Fund, a private foundation established by Aurora businessman and philanthropist John C. Dunham, announced a grant proposal competition for non-profit organizations called the Challenge for Change. The competition was announced at a reception for community and local nonprofit leadership at the Dunham Fund headquarters in Aurora, Illinois.

The Challenge for Change is a grant proposal writing competition for 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. As Dunham Advisor, Ryan Maley, explained in his presentation, "The Challenge for Change was inspired by the principles that John Dunham followed in his own very successful business life. We need to listen to those organizations that deal with the challenges facing our community on a daily basis. We believe that providing those organizations with incentives for innovative thinking and high-quality planning will help the Dunham Fund realize its mission of helping people reach new heights of achievement".

To encourage the investment of time and resources to develop a Challenge program concept, the Dunham Fund is offering nonprofit organizations financial awards of \$100,000 (First Place), \$50,000 (Second Place) and \$15,000 (Third Place) for the best grant proposals. The challenge proposal deadline is January 15, 2009. The awards will be made on March 15th. The Challenge application can be downloaded at [www.dunhamfund.org](http://www.dunhamfund.org).

"Although inspired by and incorporating some of the elements of the MacArthur Foundation's Innovation Awards for digital media and learning and the X-Prize Foundation's awards to stem the effects of climate change, the Challenge differs from these competitions in that it is not focused on one foundation-identified problem but challenges the more experienced and community-savvy nonprofit organization to identify and document a critical need and to propose a solution. Although cost may be a significant factor in the eventual implementation of the proposed program, the awards will be made for grant proposals that effectively express an innovative, collaborative and high-impact program concept, regardless of future implementation.", said Bob Vaughan, Dunham Fund Executive Director. "The program initiatives of the Challenge award recipients will automatically be considered by the Dunham Fund for further funding in its next grant making cycle and the Fund will encourage other foundations and funders to review and support the implementation of these program concepts."

As an example of an innovative and collaborative program, the Challenge announcement included a presentation by Dr. William Marzano, Assistant Vice-President of Community Development for Waubensee Community College, who described the conception and implementation of the Dunham Early College Academy. In 2007, the community college received a \$1M+ grant from the Dunham Fund to provide up to two years of college credit course work to East and West Aurora High School juniors and seniors who wouldn't ordinarily aspire to a college degree. Dr. Marzano presented an impressive list of outcome measures demonstrating the program's impact in Aurora School Districts 129 and 131 and the community as a whole. Because of the cutting edge elements and measureable impact of this unique dual-credit program, Waubensee has been invited to present the program model at several higher education conferences.

As part of the Dunham Fund's effort to encourage positive change and to develop the capabilities of nonprofits, Dunham Fund Board Chairman, William Skoglund, also offered nonprofit leadership the

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opportunity to participate in a two-day nonprofit institute at North Island Center in November, 2008. The training is fully funded by the Dunham Fund and presented by KeyStone Research in conjunction with the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley and Fox Valley United Way. Agencies will be sent information about the training in mid-October and registration will be available online at the Community Foundation at that time.

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### About the Dunham Fund . . .

The Dunham Fund is a private foundation established in 2006 to honor the legacy of John C. Dunham, businessman and philanthropist, through grants to Aurora, Illinois area organizations that have the vision and programs to help fulfill Mr. Dunham's dream of "making the world a more comfortable, safer place for mankind to live and prosper."

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Waubonsee Community College's instructor, Ms. Allison B. DeStefano, works on communication skills with Dunham Early College Academy students from East and West Aurora High Schools during the Fall 2007 semester. *(WCC has granted permission for this photo to be used by the media.)*