

Missouri River Historical Development, Inc. (MRHD)

For immediate release

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MRHD distributes more than \$200,000 in grants for economic development, quality of life, scholarships

SIoux CITY, Iowa (Feb. 3, 2016) – Missouri River Historical Development, Inc. (MRHD) awarded more than \$200,000 in grants to non-profits and government entities today at the Betty Strong Encounter Center. The grants support economic development, quality- of-life enhancement and college scholarships in Woodbury County.

MRHD is the licensed, non-profit organization that jointly holds the state gaming license for Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sioux City.

The City of Sioux City received a **\$20,000 grant for National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) sports tournaments**, with the option of repeating the grant for two additional years.

"The success of NAIA sports tournaments has a very large economic impact on our communities," said MRHD President Mark Monson. "As sponsorship dollars continue to fluctuate, MRHD now is positioned as a 'Community Partner' which supports all NAIA tournaments in Sioux City. By supporting NAIA tournaments, MRHD also is supporting businesses and organizations that rely on the tournaments for added impact during specific times of the year."

The City of Sioux City also received a **\$20,000 grant for the Orpheum Theater's "Broadway Series"** to support continued high-quality theatrical entertainment. The grant may be repeated for a second and third year. In return, MRHD will receive tickets for select groups, including seniors and children who otherwise could not attend the shows.

Sioux Gateway Airport was awarded a \$15,000 grant for two years to support air service to Dallas. "The additional route to travel south is critical to expanding transportation to and from our area for business, industry and quality of life," said Monson.

To ensure continued service from Sioux City to Dallas, the carrier must at least break even for the first two years. "MRHD is joining with area private businesses, communities and government entities to make sure that happens," Monson said.

MRHD awarded a total of **\$150,000 for scholarships to Woodbury County colleges**: Briar Cliff University (\$40,000); Morningside College (\$0,000); Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) (\$40,000); and St. Luke's College of Nursing (\$30,000). The colleges will administer the scholarships. The funding has the possibility of providing scholarships to 50 students.

Only Woodbury County high school graduates are eligible for the scholarships which will be awarded to students in amounts up to \$3,000 over two semesters. Students must have less than a 3.5 grade point average. Since MRHD began the scholarship program, it has awarded more than a half million dollars to the four colleges in Woodbury County.

“With these scholarship funds, MRHD encourages students to study, work and live in Woodbury County,” said Monson.

Wednesday's grants bring MRHD's total contribution to Woodbury County non-profit organizations governmental entities to more than \$24 million since 1994.

MRHD was formed in 1989 when Woodbury County voters approved a referendum that sanctioned riverboat gaming. A second referendum passed by 75 percent in 2002. A third passed by more than 75 percent in 2010.