

“Center” Board and Staff Complete Training Program, Set Strategic Directions

In October, the Center was one of six non-profits in the area to complete the Initiative Foundation’s Healthy Organizations Partnership (HOP) Program.

This two-year program helps non-profits become more effective by providing strategic planning assistance, leadership training and implementation grants.

Among the goals achieved by the Center during HOP were:

- increased partnerships with community-based organizations working with youth
- further development of our volunteer base (including service-learning students and interns from area colleges/universities)
- development of a website



Kevin LaNave (center) holds HOP’s certificate of completion, flanked by Cathy Hartle and Chris Fastner, staff members at the Initiative Foundation



The Center’s board of directors: (left to right) Lalita Subrahmanyam, (professor of teacher education, SCSU); Dan Anderson (principal, Madison Elementary School); Karen Vann (Coordinator of Shared Ministries, Atonement Lutheran Church); Eileen Bitzan (Director of Programming, Anna Marie’s Alliance); Scott Frieler (youth minister, Holy Spirit Catholic Church)

The four HOP workshops in which we participated, as well as conversations with IF staff members, have also increased our skills in strategic planning. In recent board meetings, assessment of our programs has identified strategic opportunities to expand:

- the **breadth** of key programs (e.g. involving more schools in our annual conference; expanding our Culturing Compassion retreats to include more faith communities, and possibly even a school-based version)
- the **depth** of our partnerships with educators in schools, faith-communities, and community-based organizations – increasing the integration of social justice education and service-learning strategies into their work with young people

The articles in this issue bear witness to these emerging directions. We are grateful for the Initiative Foundation’s support – and the support of our donors.

Kevin LaNave, Director