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City of Duluth - Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Mayor Larson, Ecolibrium3 Awarded \$50,000 CommunityWINS Grant

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

Mayor Larson, Ecolibrium3 Awarded \$50,000 CommunityWINS Grant
U.S. Conference of Mayors, Wells Fargo Announce 2019 CommunityWINS Grants at Conference's Annual Meeting in Honolulu

(Duluth, MN) – Mayor Emily Larson has been recognized and honored with a 2019 CommunityWINS® Grant in the amount of \$50,000 on behalf of the nonprofit Ecolibrium3.

Presented at the Conference's 87th Annual Meeting in Honolulu, the CommunityWINS Grant Program is funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation and recognizes nonprofits and cities for leadership in driving neighborhood stabilization, economic development and job creation efforts. An independent panel of judges selected recipients of the Wells Fargo-funded grants from 188 applicants representing small, medium and large cities. Launched in 2015 with a three-year, \$3 million commitment, the CommunityWINS grants program will extend into 2020 with an additional \$3 million investment by the Wells Fargo Foundation, bringing the total to \$6 million over six years.

"The 2019 CommunityWINS Grant Program is an opportunity to honor and showcase productive neighborhood revitalization efforts that are making a real difference in communities across the country," said Tom Cochran, CEO and executive director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "We appreciate Wells Fargo and the Wells Fargo Foundation for their continued support of the CommunityWINS Program, which also celebrates the leadership of mayors and city governments."

"We are thrilled to receive this CommunityWINS grant. Ecolibrium3 does incredible work in the Duluth community, and we could not be more excited to have their important work recognized by the Innovation Zone Energy and Education Project," said Mayor Larson.

Through this project, Ecolibrium3 will provide solar power to the Lincoln Park neighborhood to offset electrical usage at the Duluth Veteran's Place transitional housing project and to create an Emergency Energy Fund assisting residents at risk of utility shut-off. In addition, in collaboration with Duluth Public School, the initiative will pilot helping students learn from participating in community-based improvement projects and support a volunteer-based energy efficiency and healthy housing program.

"Wells Fargo is pleased to join the U.S. Conference of Mayors to make these grants available for nonprofits to further innovative solutions to address community challenges," said Connie Wright, Wells Fargo Foundation's assistant executive director of housing philanthropy. "Wells Fargo wants to work with communities to bring positive societal change, and the 2019 CommunityWINS grant program is among several efforts we support to strengthen communities."

Additional 2019 CommunityWINS Grants were also presented to:

-Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller receives the top honor in the metropolitan city category, and the CNF Film Production Center of Excellence at the Albuquerque Rail Yards is presented with a \$300,000 donation. Grant funds will be used for the planning and design of the future CNM Film Production Center of Excellence. As part of Albuquerque's economic development plan, the city has partnered with Central New Mexico Community College to revitalize the Barelmas neighborhood and historic Rail Yards building in support of the state's growing film industry. More than 200 major productions have filmed in New Mexico since 2003.

-Atlanta Mayor Keisha Bottoms is the top honoree in the large city category, and nonprofit Women's Academy receives a \$200,000 donation for its Wellspring Living, Inc., program, which provides job training and critical support to women who are human trafficking survivors or are vulnerable to human trafficking. Wellspring enables survivors and at-risk young women with

the opportunity to earn their GED, receive therapeutic services and participate in life skills, career readiness and technology training that lead to high school diploma equivalency and sustainable-wage employment placement. The Women's Academy anticipates serving 80 women from Metro-Atlanta with job training, apprenticeship, job placement services and support services over the next year.

-New Haven Mayor Toni Harp is the top honoree among medium city mayors, and Continuum of Care, Inc., receives a \$150,000 grant for its Supported Training and Employment Program (STEP) for citizens diagnosed with severe mental illness and developmental disabilities. Started in 2016, STEP serves citizens with severe mental illness and developmental disabilities. The grant funds will be used for additional staff and equipment to expand the apprenticeship and training aspect of the program, which prepares participants for employment in fee-for-service cleaning, landscaping, moving and food services.

-Romeoville, Ills. Mayor John Noak receives top honors among small city mayors, and a \$75,000 grant is awarded to Lewis University in support of its Lewis Innovation Hub. The partnership among Romeoville, Will County and Lewis University serves as a business incubator for start-up companies. With the Lewis Innovation Hub, college students and entrepreneurs receive access to offices, meeting space, mentorships and an array of business support resources and services to support local economic development.

Additional 2019 CommunityWINS Grant Program Outstanding Achievement awards honorees include:

-Austin, Texas, Mayor Steve Adler receives honors among metropolitan city mayors, and nonprofit Affordable Central Texas, Inc., is awarded a \$100,000 grant in support of The Austin Housing Conservancy Fund. Through this effort, an innovative effort will be initiated to provide a scaled housing affordability solution to serve Austin's workforce. The intended impact of this initiative is to reverse income segregation and increase opportunity for Austin's workforce to live in areas that foster health and well-being through their access to jobs, transit, education, green grocery, recreation and health services.

-Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey is recognized among large city mayors, and nonprofit Appetite For Change, Inc., is awarded a \$75,000 for grant in support of its initiative Hungry for Change: Northside Food Economic Development, Neighborhood Revitalization and Job Creation. Hungry for Change creates public, food-centered economic opportunities accessible to minority-owned businesses and generates jobs for minority residents in Minneapolis' Northside.

-Plainfield, N.J., Mayor Adrian Mapp is honored among small city mayors, and Second Street Youth Center, Inc., is awarded a \$50,000 grant for the Second Street Youth Center Pathways to Stabilization initiative. The grant funds will enable the nonprofit to expand Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) programs for children. In addition, the center will expand the computer technology program and add a Robotics Club and curriculum. The STEAM program also incorporates the nonprofit's Urban Farm, providing opportunities for children to learn many STEAM skills through growing fresh produce.

About USCM

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are more than 1,400 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/usmayors](https://www.facebook.com/usmayors), or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

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