

NEWS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

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Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Helps Northfield Company Remove Language Barriers

(Northfield, May 20, 2009) Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) is partnering with SpeechGear, Inc. in their efforts to remove the language barrier. SMIF is providing working capital to help SpeechGear promote their products which instantly translate anything you see, hear, say, read, write or type.

SpeechGear's products are used in situations where multiple languages meet – across commercial, consumer and government sectors — to enable communications between individuals who do not share a common language. As an example of the need for this line of products, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 20% of America's households speak a language other than English within their homes. This represents approximately 50 million individuals. On a worldwide basis, English is the language of commerce; however, it is the native language of only 6% of the world's population. For example, Mandarin Chinese speakers outnumber native English speakers two to one.

"This technology provides a unique opportunity to share knowledge and promote commerce on an international basis with greater confidence within the global

marketplace,” says Tim Penny, SMIF President/CEO. “And it could be just what the doctor ordered, for improving health care within our state and the 20-county region.”

“People often encounter barriers in communicating and understanding in the workplace,” said Robert Palmquist, SpeechGear’s President & CEO. “SpeechGear’s products remove that language barrier.”

Palmquist went on to say, “I very much appreciate the foundation’s commitment to SpeechGear, and look forward to partnering with them as we continue to develop and deploy our products.”

SMIF provides a range of finance and management assistance services to start and grow businesses. To learn more, call 507-455-3215, or visit www.smifoundation.org. (SMIF is an equal opportunity lender.)

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About Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation:

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), a donor-supported foundation, invests for economic growth in 20 Minnesota counties. The Foundation has provided more than \$40 million in grants and loans within the region during the past 23 years. SMIF’s key interests include early childhood programs, workforce readiness, and economic development with a focus on emerging bioscience and renewable energy businesses. To learn more about our work and mission call 507-455-3215 or visit www.smifoundation.org.