

# The Dakota Venture Group: The Nation's First Completely Student-Run Venture Capital Fund

Grant Type: **Dollar and nondollar support**

Dollar Amount: **\$400,000**

Foundation Name: **The Dakota Foundation**

## What was your objective with the grant or initiative?

The Dakota Foundation wanted to give students real-world experiences early by allowing them to invest in early stage private companies, giving them complete responsibility for the success or failure of the operation, and teaching them through experiential learning—the most effective way to learn.

## What were the results of this grant or initiative?

More than 140 students have been through the program since it started in 2006. Many say this experience was the best part of their college experience. The first fund is an evergreen one in which dollars go back into the fund when investments are sold. That fund has achieved a positive rate of return over 10 years and has done better than any angel fund in the area. In the past 3 years, the students have raised the first completely student-run for-profit fund of \$1.6 million.

## Why would you say this grant or initiative had outsized impact?

The grant has changed the lives of students by giving them early responsibility and experience. It has improved the regional economy by funding companies and employing people. Because it is an evergreen fund, it will go on indefinitely, provided the students can continue to perform as they have in the past 10 years.

The Dakota Foundation has learned that it can trust capable students to do a great job and that real experience is the best teacher. The foundation is amazed by the students' professionalism and abilities. Visit [www.dakotaventuregroup.com/about.html](http://www.dakotaventuregroup.com/about.html) for more information.



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