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## Foundation awards \$60K in grants

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Published: Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at 3:15 a.m.

The Spartanburg County Foundation awarded six nonprofits a total of \$60,000 in grant money Tuesday morning.

The programs being funded range from landscaping for the Union Street Skate Park, introducing families to the arts through the Chapman Cultural Center and implementing a program to teach family relationship skills at the Ellen Hines Smith Girls' Home.

Tuesday's grants were given as part of the Spartanburg County Foundation's winter grant cycle and were approved by its board during the December meeting.

The foundation usually has three grant cycles each year. John Dargan, the foundation's president, said the board is considering having two grant cycles in 2009, allowing it to distribute more grant money than has been given in the past.

Dargan said the board will also consider establishing a pool of money that could be an emergency fund for special situations experienced by local nonprofits this year.

"We want to be there for the community," Dargan said. "We're just trying to reallocate our resources so we can do the most good."

### **ELLEN HINES SMITH GIRLS' HOME**

The girls' home received \$10,000 to use for building renovations so it can adopt the Teaching-Family Model, a program designed to teach relationship skills and how to be self-sufficient.

"The relationships they've had in the past, in so many cases, were destructive, and this model allows them to learn skills on healthy relationships and how to relate to the community," said Chamblee Loscuito, Ellen Hines Smith's executive director.

Loscuito said being certified for the Teaching-Family Model is usually a three-year process. The state has one facility certified in the program, Thornwell Home for

Children in Clinton.

Thornwell is helping the girls' home through the process.

The girls' home plans to move its offices from the house where girls reside to a modular building this week. That office space will be converted into bedrooms.

Loscuito said the girls will be better divided into age groups, which will help them developmentally.

"One of the key things the model does is teach social skills, which (is) one of the primary things learned in a family," Loscuito said.

Loscuito said renovating the house will cost about \$20,000, and \$35,000 will be used for a few more structural changes and to adopt the "Teaching-Family Model."

She said the girls' home needs another \$20,000 to carry out the project.

"We would be doing better, but there have been some cuts in state funding," Loscuito said.

Crystal McMillan, program director at Ellen Hines Smith Girls' Home, started working with the Teaching-Family Model when she worked in Catawba County in North Carolina.

"I like that it's individualized, flexible and can meet a large scope of needs, and it's research based," McMillan said.

Other agencies receiving grants include:

-- SAFE Homes-Rape Crisis Coalition received \$20,000 toward moving to a new shelter site.

-- Upstate Forever was given \$5,000 toward the completion of a Special Places Inventory for Spartanburg County, which will be a reference tool for land-use planning decisions.

-- Coalition for Active Youth received \$5,000 to landscape the Union Street Skate Park.

-- Healthy Smiles of Spartanburg was given \$10,000 for its Dental Clinic program.

-- Arts Partnership of Greater Spartanburg received \$10,000 for its Passport to Fun, a program designed to introduce families to the arts while providing an opportunity to bond.