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From: Zakula, Linden (GOV)
Sent: Monday, May 04, 2015 8:39 PM
To: GMD; Smith, Tina (GOV)
Cc: Tincher, Jaime (GOV); Hume, Bob (GOV); Hardy, Shawntera (GOV); Sen, Katy (GOV); Dornfeld, Joanna (GOV); Swenson, Matt (GOV); Piper, Emily (GOV)
Subject: Communications Update - May 4, 2015
Attachments: 2015_05_05_MDE_Bright_Ideas[2].docx

Importance: High

Communications Update

May 4, 2015

DECISIONS

REGIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE RECOGNIZED – The Minnesota Department of Education plans to announce tomorrow that Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance has chosen Minnesota's Regional Centers of Excellence as one of 25 programs in the nation to be selected as a "2015 Bright Idea". The following is a draft quotation for your edits. The release is attached.

"Minnesota's Regional Centers of Excellence have already improved the educations, and lives, of Minnesota students, said Governor Mark Dayton. "The award is a testament to Commissioner Cassellius's strong vision and the tremendous efforts of our hardworking educators at each of our state's six regional centers."

AGENCY UPDATES

PREDATORY/SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY – WCCO TV contacted DPS today regarding the state's predatory offender/sex offender registry. The agency sent the reporter background information on how the registry works. The agency declined an on camera interview request because the reporter wouldn't share what the topic would be. DPS suspects WCCO may be working on a story about a specific case for the immediate future.

MEDICAL CANNABIS FACILITY TOUR – Tomorrow, Minnesota Medical Solutions, one of the state's medical cannabis growers will provide tours of their facility to members of the media. In conjunction with the tour, MDH will provide a medical cannabis program update. The agency intends to tell reporters that the program is on track for a June registration and a July launch. See the attached news advisory for more details.

MILLE LACS WALLEYE POPULATION – MPR contacted the DNR today for a story about the walleye population in Lake Mille Lacs. The reporter focused his questions around whether tribal netting was impacting the lake's walleye population. The agency said that their data shows tribal harvest has not been a factor in walleye population decline. The agency said that the cause of the decline is not clearly understood, but that the declining population may be the work of warmer water and invasive species.

SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA – The Star Tribune will talk with MDE staff tomorrow to get a better understanding of how formula funding works. The reporter is trying to understand the differences between your proposal, the Senate proposal, and the House proposal. No story is pending.

IRRRB DATA PRACTICE REQUEST – The Star Tribune filed a data practice request with the IRRRB today regarding the agency’s loans to Silicon Energy. The company, which produces solar panels, fell behind on its loans in 2012. The company also briefly shutdown production last year, when it was dealing with a product recall. The last time the IRRRB communications staff checked on the status of the Silicon Energy loans, they were up-to-date. The IRRRB hasn’t responded to the request yet.

NEWS CLIPS

Star Tribune - Dayton, DFL lawmakers blast GOP campaign spending provisions
<http://www.startribune.com/politics/statelocal/302448311.html>

Star Tribune - Senate rejects bid to deny public financial assistance for 2018 Super Bowl in Minneapolis
<http://www.startribune.com/politics/national/302478301.html>

Star Tribune - Dayton to announce Minnesota bid to host NCAA football championship
<http://www.startribune.com/politics/statelocal/302462861.html>

MPR - Big gulfs remain on taxes, transportation and spending at Capitol
<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/05/04/capitol>

MinnPost - MnDOT struggles to keep up with MnPASS demand
<http://www.minnpost.com/twin-cities-business/2015/05/mndot-struggles-keep-mnpass-demand>

MPR - Iron Range hospital finds new life with Essentia in charge
<http://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/05/04/essentia-virginia>

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