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For further information:

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SIOUX FALLS SELECTED AS GRANT RECIPIENT

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — According to the National Eye Institute, macular degeneration and various diseases affect the vision of millions of Americans. To help address this problem, the Touchmark Foundation is funding a pilot program at Waterford at All Saints to provide reading magnification systems to senior communities.

The special equipment has been installed at Waterford, a local retirement community, and will be available for use by people throughout the Sioux Falls area. Waterford will collaborate with South Dakota Visually Impaired to design and implement the program.

According to Touchmark Foundation Executive Director Janet Plummer, the low-vision project is a top priority of the Foundation in its ongoing efforts to improve the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual lives of seniors. “Not being able to read causes many seniors to feel isolated, frustrated and dependent on others,” she says, adding, “Having access to this magnification equipment truly will improve the lives of seniors with low vision.”

“This is a very exciting project for the people of Sioux Falls,” says Waterford Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Krista Musser, who is heading the project locally. “Simple tasks, such as reading the newspaper and mail and viewing family photos, can be difficult for people

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with failing vision. This project can help people accomplish those daily necessities and enjoy the small pleasures of life.”

The Foundation ordered an Optelec ClearView+ Desktop Video Magnification System and installed it in late January. People can contact Krista Musser at (605) 335-1117 if they have questions about the equipment, its use or upcoming programming.

Waterford at All Saints opened in June 1996 and is currently home to more than 125 people. The retirement community offers a variety of lifestyle options and homes.

The Touchmark Foundation is devoted to finding ways to help seniors receive support and services. This includes offering scholarships to those pursuing a career in nursing as well as working to give grants to nonprofit organizations focused on improving the physical, social, spiritual and intellectual lives of older adults.

- 30 -