

Twin Falls Times New, Saturday, Dec. 5, 2009 – by Ben Botkin

Albertson Foundation gives to charter schools

Two area charter schools have been awarded grants from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation that are part of \$925,000 total that the foundation is giving to nine charter schools in Idaho.

The donations, called expansion grants, are a piece of Know Where 2 Go, a new statewide initiative of the foundation that's intended to raise awareness and participation in education choices for students.

North Valley Academy in Gooding is receiving \$100,000, and Xavier Charter School in Twin Falls is getting \$75,000. Both schools are using the grants for their expansion into new facilities.

North Valley Academy plans to move from space at the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind into its own facility in Gooding, the Gibbons Building on Main Street.

The building needs some mold abatement and kitchen renovations done, and the grant will help with the renovations, said Deby Infanger, board chairwoman of NVA.

"I'm so happy," she said. "This has been a long struggle for us."

The building, which has 20-plus classrooms, should meet all the permanent needs of the charter school, which cannot grow beyond 312 students, Infanger said.

She said she'd like to see the students have classes in the new building by February.

Xavier is building a new facility. Cindy Fulcher, principal of Xavier, said the grant will help pay for needs in the building like computers and kitchen equipment.

"Charter schools can't go to the public for a bond when they build new facilities, so the costs of our facilities have to come out of our general budget, so when we receive grants like this, it really helps," Fulcher said.