

# County community health center earns incubator grant

**SIOUX CENTER** — A sizable grant from the Iowa Department of Health will help the Greater Sioux Community Health Center, Inc., get off the ground and help it qualify for federal funding.

A \$650,000 Community Health Centers Incubator Grant was announced last week, to help Greater Sioux Community Health Center establish a primary health-care center in Sioux Center.

Plans call for the center to locate at 334 First Avenue Northwest in Sioux Center, the former bowling al-

ley building adjacent to Las Palmas, a newly remodeled facility.

Plans are for the health center to be open to serve families within 120 days of receiving funding.

Services at the clinic will be offered on a sliding-fee scale, based on a client's ability to pay. Each visit will have a minimum fee, similar to insurance co-pay.

The center will be open to serve all members of the community.

Planners began working on a health center in 2001

after recognizing the need to increase health-care access for the uninsured and under insured.

Factors in the decision to establish a health center and which helped make Sioux County eligible for funding included increases in Sioux County's poverty rate and minority population, low rate of first trimester prenatal care, lack of affordable dental care and a high rate of elderly residents.

A 20-member steering committee and a grant-writing team applied for the

United States Department of Health and Human Services grant in December of 2006. While the Sioux County center did not receive the grant, the application scored high enough for the project to qualify for state funding.

Health centers first began providing services in the U.S. in 1965. To date, community health centers are health care centers for 14 million Americans at more than 3,000 clinics across the U.S.