



Bridging The Gap

ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION
ANNUAL REPORT
2018-19 SCHOOL YEAR

Celebrating educators – their creativity, resourcefulness, and perseverance – and the REF donors who support them.

REF | ROCKFORD EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

State of the Rockford Education Foundation 2018-19

Mission: Provide funding for educational opportunities, both basic and innovative, in the Rockford community.

REF

Major Programs



DEVELOPING HEALTHY KIDS

REF has pledged **\$90,000** over three years to expand the Rockford Public Schools' mental health awareness and suicide prevention mission. We know there is a clear link between social-emotional wellness and academic success!



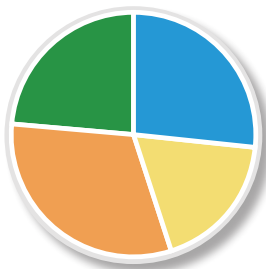
EARLY COLLEGE

REF has committed **\$125,000** over five years to the Early College Program at Rockford High School. Early College classes give students the opportunity to earn college credit onsite at RHS at no cost to their families.



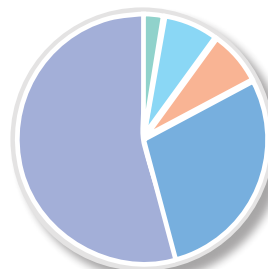
FOUNDERS' GRANT

The Founders' Grant is a grant of up to **\$25,000** awarded annually. It is underwritten by the Wolverine Worldwide Foundation and began in 2015. The Founders' Grant is designed to spur innovative thinking within the Rockford community.



Community Support 2018-19

- Corporate Gifts 19%
- Interest / Dividends 23%
- Annual Giving 27%
- Special Events 31%



Areas of Focus 2018-19

- Fine Arts - 3%
- STEAM - 7%
- Literacy - 7%
- College & Career Readiness - 30%
- Social-Emotional Wellness & Healthy Living - 55%

Awarded more than \$150,000 to our local schools!



2018-19 Grant Recipients

Teachers are the heart and soul of every school. That is why REF invests directly in teacher-led programming. *student grants

FOUNDERS' GRANT

Social Work & Library Initiative, Matthew Zokoe
Sensory Integration & Support for All, Sarah Noe

COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

Early College Program (through 2021)
Developing Healthy Kids (through 2020)

ASSUMPTION BVM

Flexible Seating, Dorothy Remington
Weather Station, Carrie Westman
Science Matters: Curriculum Kit, Dorothy Remington
Junior High Reading library, Cecilia Remington*
Ukuleles, Renee Vande Wege

BELMONT ELEMENTARY

Sensory Area Equipment, Blazic, Ouellette, Thorsen, Clark
Warriors of Calmness, Clara Peacock & Irelynn Gulliver*

CANNONBURG ELEMENTARY

Math Manipulatives, Lindsay Behl

CRESTWOOD ELEMENTARY

Ladybug Science, Tam LeFurge-McLeod
Movement & Flexible Seating, Emily Napieralski

EAST & NORTH ROCKFORD MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Standing Desks, Health Quest Magnet, A. Banfield & T. Schamp
PE Heart Rate Monitors, Cassidy Munger
New Drums for Marching Band, Rebecca Kilgore
DeskCycles for Active Learning, Joseph Kessel
Tripod, Green Screen, Microphone, Kelly Taylor
Counseling Office Mental Health Books, Michelle Falk
Classroom Library, Troy Anderson
Classroom Library, Lori Watters
Classroom Library, Julie Gitchell
NRMS Student Work Display Boards, Ross Dondit
Classroom Library, Jennifer Deuel
Chillie, the Counseling Dog, A Ohlman, C Deveau, L Weidenfeller

LAKES ELEMENTARY

3D printer, Jeffrey Post
Classroom Library, Aubree Throop
Storybird Books, Rachel DeKuiper

MEADOW RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Behavioral Resource Tool Kit, Meredith Dompierre
Reusable Take Home Book Bags, Heather Schmidt
Classroom Library, Sarah Nuechterlein

OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION

Ukuleles, Renee Vande Wege

PARKSIDE ELEMENTARY

Kindergarten Mini STEM Labs, Emily Molesta
Math Manipulatives, Stacie Gregory
Rain Garden Totems, Leta Holloway
Magnetic Easels, Karla Plank

ROGUEWOOD ELEMENTARY (TRADITIONAL & SPANISH IMMERSION)

Active Seating, Brooke Meyer & Kristin Ward
Coffee Cart Business Supplies, Renee Crittenden
House System Community Building Program, Kathy Walcott & Doug Hoogerland
Childrens Yoga & Mindfulness Training, Sarah Aalderink
Headsets & Touch Board, Mark Schlaudt
Classroom Library, Anne Monterusso
Classroom Library, Kallie Holzhueter
Active Seating, Theresa Schwallier
Lizard Habitat, 4th Grader*

ROCKFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Beyond the Rock Headphones, Nicole Dionne*
Classroom Library, Shelby Denhof
Interact Club - Dominican Republic school project, Kelly Gardner
Mindfulness Teacher Training, Lynda O'Malley
Metal Working Equipment, Hunter Reed*
Spanish 4 Books to Build Fluency, Carissa Matthews*

ROCKFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

School Nature Trail, Phil Warners

VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY

Classroom Library, Caleb Westveer
First Year Teacher Classroom Updates, Megan Treiber
Classroom Library, Amy Gardner
Classroom Library, Evan Fedewa
A Workshop Experience with Patricia Polacco, Kristin Hubner
3D Printer, Caleb Westveer
Junior Geography Replacement Books, Cheri Dettwiler
Classroom Library, Jennifer Patzer
Classroom Library, Kristin Hubner
Mileage Club, Raina Glanzman*

ROCKFORD COMMUNITY GRANTS

Preschool Engineering Space, Sonia VanBragt
Projector for Adult Learning Classrooms, Claire Guisfredi
Seniors Unlimited, Kris Wolpert
College & Career Night, Lisa Jacobs

ROCKFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS - DISTRICT WIDE

Story Champs Curriculum Kit, Speech/Language Pathologists
Training for District Counselors, Sarah Young

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



72

Grants Funded

7

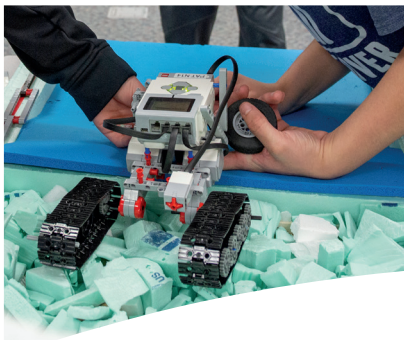
Student Grants Awarded

67+

Educators Served

18

Schools And Organizations Served



STEAM

Science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math are access points for inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. STEAM education is an intro to real world problem solving. In 2018-19, REF-funded programs helped students at every grade level gain critical exposure to STEAM concepts ranging from computer science to robotics and more.

In 2018-19 Crestwood Elementary 1st grade teachers wrote a grant to support hands-on science curriculum and non-fiction reading comprehension curriculum. This grant provided a net habitat for each classroom, 100 live ladybugs, and six non-fiction books to support reading comprehension goals.

Using these books and observing the live ladybugs, students learned about how ladybugs keep aphids and other insects from destroying garden plants. Students were able to hold the ladybugs, look at them closely with a magnifying glass, and write about what they learned. At the end of the unit, the children released the ladybugs in the Quiet Area Garden at Crestwood so the ladybugs can do their work.



DID YOU KNOW?

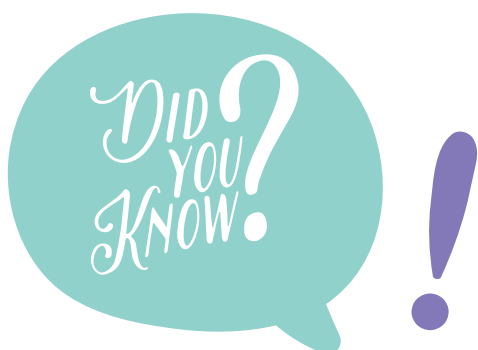
REF helped bring the "Maker Movement" to Rockford, providing funding for makerspaces at each elementary and middle school.



Fine Arts

For the past several years, band students at East Rockford Middle School have had to use decades-old marching drums. They were falling apart. The harnesses couldn't be adjusted due to rust and stripped bolts and as a result the drums didn't fit well, falling below the students' waists, making walking and marching difficult, even painful. And they were **heavy**, the snares clocking in at 34 lbs and the larger drums anywhere between 60 and 90 lbs. That's a lot of weight when you're thirteen and marching whole parade routes.

REF supplied funding to replace the old drums at East Rockford Middle School with Power-Lite drums, which are much lighter and ergonomically designed. Rockford Public Schools matched these funds to replace the drums at North Rockford Middle School. These drums were used at the Whitecaps Memorial Day performance and the Start of Summer Parade.



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2017 REF funded the Uke-Can-Do-It program, which brought ukuleles to every elementary school in the district.



Social-Emotional Wellness and Healthy Living

Academic success depends on healthy minds and healthy bodies. Challenging issues like anxiety, depression, and bullying impact the entire learning community. REF funds programs that teach youth to take care of themselves and others, building a foundation for both health and academic achievement.

In 2018-19, REF funded **Chillin' with Chillie**, which introduced Chillie, a golden lab and trained support dog, to students at North Rockford Middle. Counseling Dogs provide support for students experiencing anxiety, depression, or stress. Chillie's job is to diffuse tension and open up new possibilities in the educational environment.

2018-19 Founders' Grant Highlights

Underwritten by the Wolverine Worldwide Foundation, REF awarded two \$15,000 Founders' Grants.

Cannonsburg Elementary principal and Director of Media and Library Services for the district, Matthew Zokoe created a partnership between the district's Libraries and Social Work departments to provide every school with books that teach empathy, perseverance, and gratitude. It all started when middle school librarians and counselors started searching for **books related to mental health/social emotional wellness**. From there, it grew into a large, district-wide initiative.

"Currently, RPS is servicing 73 families who need immediate mental health assistance... Our students come to us with ever-changing demands they are not fully equipped to face on their own. They have access to social media that can cause developmental issues based on what they view. Students are being set up for unrealistic societal norms and as a result, mental health and the awareness of it in our schools is growing each year."

~ Matthew Zokoe

The second Founders' Grant provides a **fully integrated Sensory Room** for use by any student in the district with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Submitted by Sarah Noe, a teacher at Parkside, the sensory room's goal is to provide a safe space where someone who has sensory differences can go when they need to either calm or stimulate their senses.





Literacy

No measure of academic success correlates with college readiness, college graduation rates, and general life success more than literacy, and nothing supports literacy more than helping kids become interested in and excited about reading.

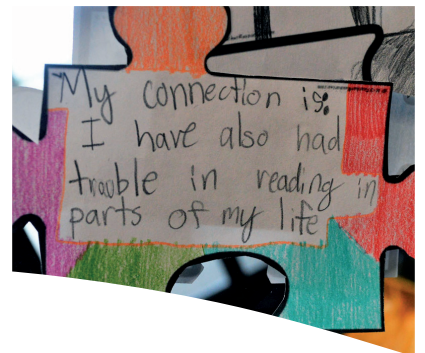
In 2018-19 REF helped bring award winning author, Patricia Polacco, to Valley View elementary, where she spent the day reading to and inspiring students with her storytelling, infectious curiosity, and warmth.

"Polacco's stories are about being kind and overcoming adversity. We can all relate to that," said third grade teacher, Kristin Hubner. After reading "Thank You, Mr. Falker," students made puzzle pieces that lined the halls, each telling of their personal challenges. "I could spend all day reading them," Hubner said. "It was magnificent to see the way they reacted to the story."

Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP)

In spring 2018, REF awarded LAMP devices to the Regional Autism Spectrum Disorder program. Autism presents unique challenges to language acquisition. LAMP technology gives speech pathologists a game-changing tool. The results speak for themselves. Last year, using LAMP, one area student said "Hi Mom" for the very first time.

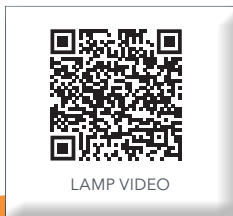
"The LAMP devices are giving kids voices who didn't have them," said speech pathologist Andrea Murphy. "One student had no words at all and can now communicate wants and needs throughout the day. It's very powerful. That REF breaks down the financial barrier so we can have something like this is really cool."



DID YOU KNOW?
The top grant request REF receives is for books.
Help us get high quality books in the classroom!



POLACCO'S STORIES



LAMP VIDEO



College And Career Readiness

Academic excellence means striving to ensure every student is college and career ready. REF is proud to partner with Rockford Public Schools to support the Early College Program at Rockford High School. This innovative program, assists Rockford families with the cost of college tuition and prepares our future leaders for a successful transition to post-secondary education which REF is committed to supporting with \$25,000 annually for five years. The beauty of the Early College Program, as opposed to dual enrollment, is that our students remain at Rockford High School and receive instruction from RHS teachers while earning both high school and college credit for the same course. Students experience the rigor of college work prior to arriving on a college campus while reducing the cost of their college education.

Student-Led Projects

Students of all ages may submit their own grant proposals for educational projects. In doing so, they learn to identify a problem, write persuasively, budget, implement their idea, and lead.

Hunter - 11th Grader at RHS: Hammer & Chisel engraving for metal scrollwork. The materials benefited all students in the metal art classes. "I think hand engraving can come out with a much higher degree of detail."

Carissa - 4th Year Spanish Student at RHS: La Hija del Sastre, e-course and readers from Fluency Matters. "With these materials, we will be able to further our understanding of the Spanish language and add to our comprehension in both English and Spanish."

Raina - 4th grade student at Valley View Elementary: "There are many reasons why I think Mileage Club is awesome! It has been around since 1986, it helps children get more exercise, which improves their bodies and also their brain function. It reduces stress, anxiety, and reduces playground hassles...Children like to have options for their recess time, and this is a good option!" In just 10 days this spring, 250 Valley View student ran over 2,300 miles!



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2018-19, REF granted \$1,000 to support the annual RPS College & Career Night held at Rockford High School in January, ensuring that students get the information they need to take their next big step.



Upcoming Events

REF - Celebrating educators and the donors who support them.

The Taste Saturday, March 7, 2020

The Taste is REF's largest fundraising event to date thanks to our generous sponsors and participating restaurants. Local restaurants donate "tastes" or samples for attendees to enjoy while they listen to a fun live band and enjoy mix and mingling with friends at Blythefield Country Club. Mark your calendars and visit REF's website to register for The Taste on March 7, 2020.

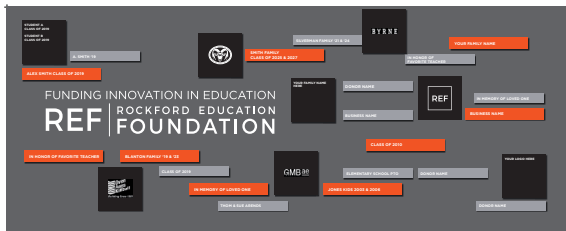
rockfordEDfoundation.org/events



Fall 2020

The Rockford Public Schools Hall of Fame was established to celebrate the achievements and talents of alumni from Rockford High School. Nomination forms may be found and completed online at

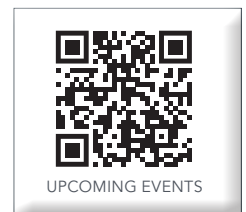
rockfordEDfoundation.org/Hall of Fame



Donor Wall:

Located at the Creative Teaching and Learning Center at Rockford High School. Honor a recent graduate, or promote your business, create a family legacy or recognize a favorite educator.

rockfordEDfoundation.org/donorwall



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thank you to our generous donors

\$25,000

Wolverine Worldwide Foundation

\$5,000-\$9,999

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GMB Architecture + Engineering
Integrated Packaging Machinery
Brian and Dana Kraus
Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.

\$2,500-\$4,999

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\$1,000-\$2,499

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Steele Family Foundation
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Title Boxing Club Grand Rapids
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Steven Workman and Kim Schmidt

\$250-\$499

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[07/01/2018 to 06/30/2019]

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MISSION

Our mission is to provide funding for educational opportunities, both basic and innovative, in the Rockford community.

OUR VISION

We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve under the guidance of teachers who care about them and believe in their potential. Whether it's helping kindergarten students read their first words or reducing hurdles by addressing special needs, REF helps students by supporting schools, creating the best possible environment for our children to learn, grow, and thrive.