

Schools meet growing need for Random Acts of Kindness funds



A student browses a clothes closet for gently used items. Students can get new socks and underwear purchased with RAK funds.

When a new student arrived at school without a backpack and other basic supplies, Random Acts of Kindness funds allowed the school to buy the needed items and help the child move seamlessly into her classroom.

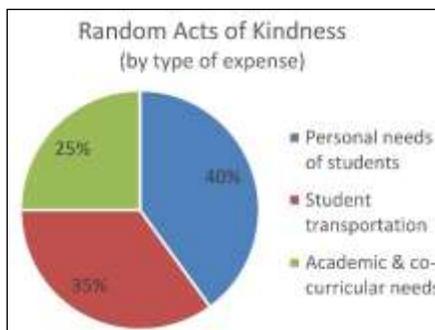
When families could not afford to send snacks to school so their children would have something to eat when other students were enjoying a mid-morning break, a school used RAK funds to help.

Whether it is the cost of a school field trip, or a winter coat, or new underwear, or a bus pass — RAK funds are available to help schools fill the need.

The La Crosse Public Education Foundation's Random Acts of Kindness Fund helps students overcome roadblocks to achievement by addressing critical needs. RAK funds are controlled by each build-

ing principal and may be used confidentially to: (1) Meet an individual student's needs for food, clothing, personal health care or special items, such as graduation gowns or prom clothes; (2) Enhance a student's ability to learn, including school supplies or pre-college testing; or (3) Benefit a student whose family is struggling financially by helping with bus passes or the cost of a field trip.

Roughly half of all students in the School District of La Crosse are eligible for RAK help. In 2016-17, LPEF provided nearly \$24,000 in RAK funds. Total costs rose sharply as schools reported increased needs and stepped up to meet those needs. Every school but one spent more than the prior year. Spending was up 21% compared to the three year-average. School staff are becoming more proactive in using RAK funds to address student needs, and remove obstacles to school attendance, self-esteem and academic success.



Read more online: http://lacrosseeducationfoundation.org/random_acts_of_kindness/



Logan High School Teacher Steve Johnston watches from behind as a student tests an Exo-Skeleton arm designed and built by students with money from an LPEF grant. The project was among more than 90 LPEF grants for classroom innovation awarded in the past two years.

SEE PHOTOS INSIDE OF MORE GRANT PROJECTS

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Grants spur innovative projects

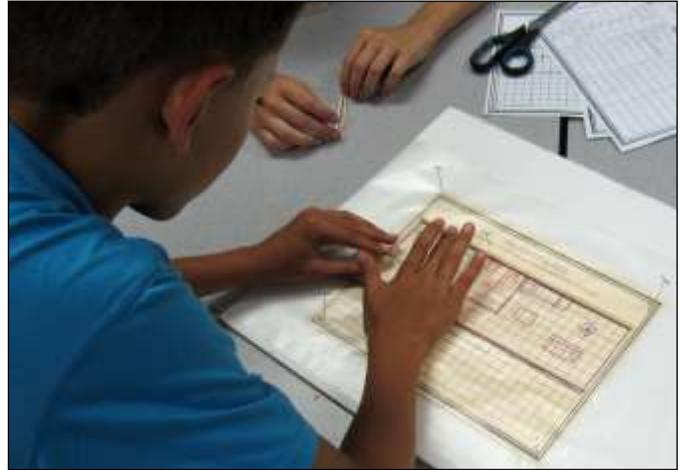
Innovative projects in every La Crosse public school and in every curriculum area have been funded through the classroom grants program of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation. About 90 grants, totaling more than \$128,000, have been awarded in just the past two school years. Here are snapshots of some recent projects:

Recycling bottle caps and lids into art



Summit Elementary students make art from discarded bottle cap lids, inspired by an artist who visited both Summit and North Woods schools. The \$2,050 LPEF grant was awarded to Summit teacher Carissa Brudos and North Woods teacher Maria Mason.

Building math skills with tiny house design



Avonte Gaut-Page, a sixth-grader at Logan Middle School, works on his tiny house design during a summer school class. Students put math to work in designing floor plans, then had some hands-on fun using matchsticks to build their tiny houses. The project was one of several aimed at engaging students in developing reading and math skills with real-life experiences and hands-on projects.

RECIPIENT: Kellie Schmitz

GRANT AMOUNT: \$1,200

Engaging students in academics through musical instruments



Asher Pleuss-Grimslid

Students at Spence Elementary are using musical instruments to bring science, social studies and other lessons to life. "The biggest thing is engagement," says 5th-grade teacher Alyssa Gray. On this day, students composed music to help them study and understand science vocabulary.

RECIPIENT: Alyssa Gray
GRANT AMOUNT: \$600



Derrick Pangier, Taylor Turner and Damairius Mitjans-Banks use music to explain living systems vocabulary, such as geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere.

Plan-Do-Study-Act: a systems approach to improved learning



Amanda Thao (in back) with Lilly Retzlaff (left) and Emily Thao explore the globe.



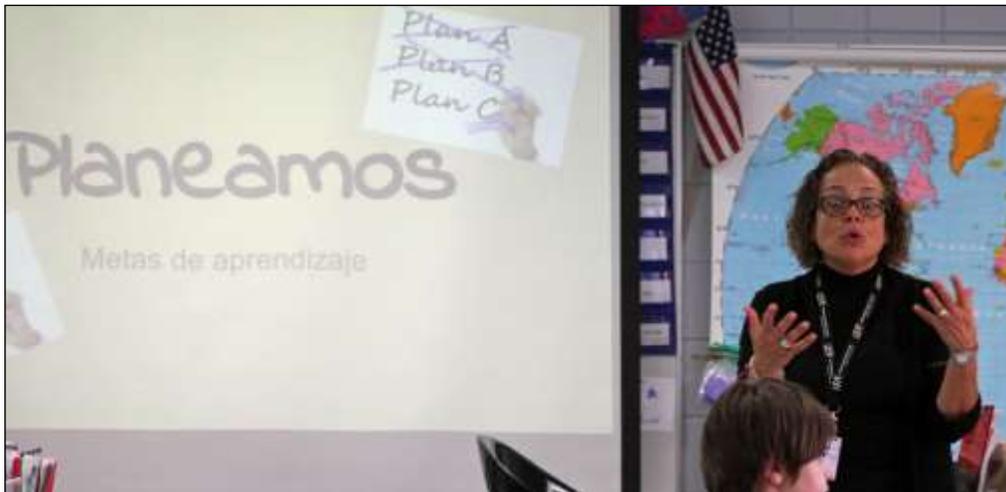
Teacher Iliana Gonzalez-DeRemer watches as William Klatte programs an animation.

At North Woods International School, teachers are creating a collaborative community of learners out of two Spanish-immersion classrooms for 4th and 5th grades.

In the team-based approach, students are in groups at tables, or in comfortable seating around the room. They are learning to use a continuous improvement approach: to plan what they intend to learn; to actually “do” the learning (not just “get” taught); then to analyze what worked and what didn’t; and finally to try alternatives and improve their outcomes. Students will keep reflection journals and track their own growth through data.

RECIPIENTS: Iliana Gonzalez-DeRemer and Jessica Hembd

GRANT AMOUNT: \$2,500



Study of subatomic particles capped by Fermilab visit



Students in Central High’s Advanced Placement Chemistry class visited the control room at the Fermilab near Chicago in May as a capstone to their year-long study of subatomic particles. Students learned about the particle accelerator and other research, plus had a Q&A session with one of the scientists.

RECIPIENT: Naomi Golden

GRANT AMOUNT: \$1,200

New mouthpieces make better music



Alana Seddon, music teacher at Logan Middle, works with 8th-graders Gao Na Thao and Gianna Hutchinson as they use mouthpieces purchased for school instruments with a grant for \$1,127. Students enjoy improved sound quality and can play more easily.

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2017 Charlie Miller Bowtie Classic
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Bowtie Classic raises more than \$27,000 for LPEF



The fifth Charlie Miller Bowtie Classic Golf Outing and Knowledge Open teed off on Saturday, Sept. 2 with 91 golfers at Forest Hills Golf Club. The event — which is the largest annual fundraiser in support of classroom grants and other programs of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation — raised more than \$27,000 after expenses, plus \$1,000 in prize money distributed to schools.

The 2017 presenting sponsor was GO Riteway.

OTHER MAJOR SPONSORS OF THE 2017 BOWTIE CLASSIC



Special thanks to the family of the late Dr. Charles Miller III for supporting the Bowtie Classic, including helping at the event and underwriting the cost of golfing for two teams of La Crosse school students.

OTHER 2017-18 CORPORATE INVESTORS



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LPEF benefits from Chili Cook Off

Many thanks to all of the cooks and chili lovers who helped at the 26th annual State Bank Financial Chili Cook Off at Riverside Park on Oct. 14. Proceeds go to support LPEF and the local DARE program.



Cleary family gift supports projects for students at Central and Logan

A new scoreboard for the football field at Central High School, and a major upgrade to the sound system in the Weess Theater at Logan High School, are among improvement projects being funded through a major gift from Gail (Kumm) Cleary.

Gail, a 1951 graduate of Central, provided the donation last winter to the La Crosse Public Education Foundation, asking only that it be used for improvements to benefit students at her alma mater, and the alma mater of her late husband, Russell Cleary, a 1951 graduate of Logan High. The couple married in 1955 and Russell died in 1997 at the age of 63.

Russell and Gail Cleary were among the early supporters of LPEF, helping fund the foundation's initial endowment in 1991. The family is known for its generous community philanthropy.



*Russell Cleary
Logan High School
Class of 1951*



*Gail (Kumm) Cleary
Central High School
Class of 1951*

Each high school identified priority projects where funding was lacking.

At Central, the major project is a new scoreboard to be dedicated in 2018 at Central's football field.

At Logan, a new sound and video projection system, along with better lighting, will be installed in the theater, which was long overdue for improvements.

Added \$100,000 gift expands reading program to Northside

The anonymous donors funding the Readers Creating Readers program at Hamilton Elementary School have provided a new \$100,000 gift to continue the program at Hamilton, and add a similar program at Northside Elementary School.

About 120 students at Hamilton were involved last year in the special tutoring program funded by a previous \$50,000 gift to LPEF. The donors, who also have provided food, clothing and toiletries for needy students, wanted students to have more time reading with an adult. They conceived a program to hire parents and others – providing them with extra income while helping students improve skills.

Due to the initial success, the donors will continue funding for Hamilton and support a similar program at Northside. The gift will pay tutor salaries for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.

Logan High Pride of the Northside Marching Band benefits from new Quarberg endowment

The Logan High School Pride of the North Side Marching Band will be the beneficiaries of a new endowment fund established by Brad and Gail Quarberg.

The Quarberg Family Pride of the North Side Endowment is being funded through a multi-year gift to the La Crosse Public Education Foundation. The Quarbergs, whose children have attended Logan, are devoted supporters of music and public education. Brad is a member of the Board of Education, and also serves on the LPEF Board. The primary funding for the endowment is from the stipend he receives as a member of the school board.



The fund expects to award its first annual grant during the spring of the 2018-19 school year. Money will be used to enhance the marching band program. This may include the purchase of instruments or music, or support student travel or show expenses.

The Quarberg fund joins a growing portfolio of endowed LPEF funds supporting grants or other initiatives that sustain and strengthen teaching and learning in the School District of La Crosse. **To discuss creating an endowment to support a specific need, please contact LPEF Executive Director David Stoeffler at (608) 787-0226.**

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Donor support provides nearly \$24,000 for Random Acts of Kindness funds in schools
READ MORE DETAILS INSIDE

In the News

Grand piano dedicated: A grand piano for the Logan Middle School Auditorium was dedicated Sept. 6 with a concert featuring La Crosse native David Marck, whose family support was key to the community fundraising drive to buy the instrument. The Marck Family Fund provided \$23,000 toward the \$42,000 purchase. Other fundraising was led by LPEF.



Franke Foundation awards grant: A \$10,000 grant from the Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation

will support an innovative project to help Northside Elementary School students succeed in school and overcome adverse childhood experiences. The grant was obtained with help from LPEF in support of a two-year project at Northside.

Support-a-School.org projects making a difference in our community: Educators in the School District of La Crosse are tapping the power of community fundraising through the LPEF Support-a-School.org program. More than \$4,500 was raised to put culturally representative books into the hands of young people through the See Me. Read Me. project. And more than \$2,200 was raised for the 2017 Black Youth Summit.

For more, go to: <http://lacrosseeducationfoundation.org/news-events/recent-posts/>

Community involvement is focus of Strategic Plan

Support for development of “Community Schools” at two elementary buildings, and efforts to engage more businesses and citizens in schools are key parts of a new Strategic Plan adopted in August by the Board of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation.

The five-year plan was developed with input from teachers, administrators, donors and community members. The plan also endorses District efforts to develop stronger Trauma-Informed Schools, and continues other LPEF programs, such as classroom grants and Random Acts of Kindness.

LPEF was founded in 1988 with a mission to enhance learning opportunities for students in La Crosse schools.

Support a School. Raise a Community.

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