

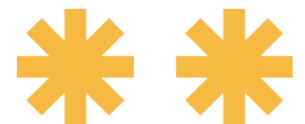


LA CROSSE PUBLIC EDUCATION
FOUNDATION
Support a school. Raise a community.

GRANTS

AWARD LUNCHEON

LEARNING EVERYWHERE





Celebrating Enhanced Educational Experiences Made Possible Through Community Generosity

Welcome to the annual Grants Award Luncheon of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation! Thank you for supporting students, teachers, and schools throughout the School District of La Crosse.

To put your support for public education into action in 2024, you can donate using the envelopes on your table or by visiting www.lacrosseeducationfoundation.org/donate.

2024 Impact

\$104,000

Gold Star Grant funds for 41 innovative classroom and teacher training projects impacting students at every grade level in the School District of La Crosse.

\$46,000

Distributed to meet student and family needs through Random Acts of Kindness.

\$420,000

Total dollars directed to the School District of La Crosse through LPEF.



Featured

PRESENTERS

Clinton Grabhorn has been an art teacher for 9 years and is co-leader of Longfellow's Outdoor Adventure Club. He hopes to share his appreciation for the power of nature and to reveal the recreation opportunities that our local natural spaces provide our students, families, and communities. Clinton is a proud parent of a Central High School sophomore and glad to be a part of this wonderful community that supports public education.

Lila Planavsky is the Library Media Specialist at Longfellow Middle School and in her 10th year with the School District of La Crosse. In the summers, Lila teaches mountain biking, Summer on the Farm, and backpacking courses. She also trains for and competes in ultra and endurance running and biking events.

Jenn Speckeen is a dedicated educator currently serving as a Title I Teacher at Hamilton. With five years of experience teaching first grade at the same school, Jenn has cultivated a passion for fostering learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. She strongly believes in the power of outdoor education to inspire curiosity and engagement among students. Jenn is grateful for the unwavering support of her husband, who enthusiastically volunteers his time to assist in her educational endeavors.

Nick O'Keefe is a K-5 Physical Education teacher at Summit Environmental School. He has been teaching for 17 years in the School District of La Crosse. He and his wife Katie have two children who both currently attend La Crosse schools. Nick has written and received many Gold Star Grants that usually focus on introducing his students to the outdoors in the La Crosse area. Nick greatly appreciates the support of LPEF and all our amazing community donors!



Margaret Dihlman-Malzer

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

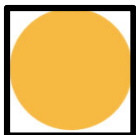
For their dedication to students and educators in the School District of La Crosse through generosity and collaboration, Maureen and Robert Freedland are this year's recipients of the Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer Distinguished Service Award.

In 2007, they established the Maureen and Robert Freedland-LPEF Fund for Studies of the Shoah at the La Crosse Area Community Foundation. Over 16 years, the fund has provided \$23,000 in support for students and educators in the School District of La Crosse to study and learn from the genocide in which approximately six million Jews and five million others were murdered by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. In addition to establishing the fund, the Freedlands have worked closely with district staff over the years to integrate high-quality educational opportunities related to the Shoah into classrooms across the School District of La Crosse.



The Freedlands have further supported education in our community through a second fund for studies of the Shoah to benefit students at other area schools, and a fund established in 2022 with friends, Heather & Stephen Ross, to support diversity education.

Maureen served on the LPEF board for 8 years, including two years as President. She has been elected to the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors since 2005. Her BA is from Emory University and JD from Loyola University. Bob received his Bachelor's degree from Princeton University and Medical degree from University of California at Davis and practiced ophthalmology for 26 years at Mayo Clinic Health System. Maureen and Bob are proud of the education their three children, Ben, Celia and Leah received in our La Crosse Schools.



Maureen & Bob Freedland



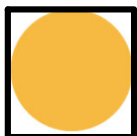


Richard Swantz

LEADERSHIP AWARD

In recognition of his dedication to students, educators, and the entire Logan High School community, Wally Gnewikow is this year's recipient of the Richard Swantz Leadership Award.

Wally is currently the Principal at Logan High School. He is in his 33rd year within public education serving 19 as a Math teacher and 14 in administration. Wally earned a Bachelors degree at UW Eau Claire and a Masters with Educational Leadership and Superintendent Licensure through Viterbo University. Wally loves time with his family, reading, movies, and travel. He believes in creating a culture that allows learning to thrive where both students and staff are supported. He also fiercely believes in education for all through public education.



Wally Gnewikow





Partner in

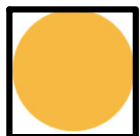
EDUCATION AWARD



For its deep commitment to public education and support of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation and many organizations throughout the region, Marine Credit Union is being honored as LPEF's 2025 Corporate Partner in Education.

Marine Credit Union was founded in 1949 and commitment to community is a guiding principle for the organization. Marine Credit Union and the Marine Credit Union Foundation support this commitment through financial contributions, service, and partnerships with local organizations.

Marine Credit Union has supported La Crosse Public Education and the School District of La Crosse for at least 15 years, including most recently as Valedictorian Education Investor and a Youth Apprenticeship partner.



Marine Credit Union



Presenting Sponsor



festival
foods[®]

THANK YOU!

Festival Foods' generous sponsorship supports LPEF programs throughout the year bringing enhanced educational experiences to students in the School District of La Crosse



2024

SPONSORED GRANTS



* Salute to Education Sponsor



Fowler & Hammer sponsored this grant in honor of recent retirees from the School District of La Crosse - *Christine Kjos* (right) and *Jennifer Ruetten* (left).

Finger Aerobics for Little Hands

Provides materials to develop fine motor skills in PK and Kindergarten students at North Woods International School.

Grant Recipients: *Becky Misch, Tara Schuttenhelm, and Tanya Dagendesh*



Market Day



Sponsored by



Provides materials for second grade students at Spence Elementary School to learn entrepreneurship by starting their own business and selling their products/services at a Market Day open to families and school staff.

Grant Recipients: *Maureen Jones, Stephanie Schmitt, Elizabeth Roberts, and Dana Eide*



Summit Sugar Shack



Sponsored by



Provides materials to construct a shelter to teach maple syruping at Summit Environmental Elementary School in coordination with the Logan High School Tech Ed department.

Grant Recipients: *Nick O'Keefe and Reid Hansen*



Integrating Sphero Robots into Programming Curriculum



Sponsored by



Provides Sphero robots and curriculum for use in programming classes at Logan High School to enhance student engagement and understanding of coding concepts through hands-on, interactive learning experiences.

Grant Recipient: *Daniel Adler*





Embracing Reading Differentiation & Neurodiversity within Students with Special Needs

Sponsored by



Provides materials and tools designed to grow reading and regulation for neurodiverse and autistic students and students with cognitive delays at Northside Elementary.

Grant Recipients: *Kadie Koepke, Tracy DeLong, Jenny Leren, Emily Lagerman, Tyler Leadholm, Gwen Holley, and Makayla Nettesheim*



Story to Production

Sponsored by



Provides equipment and funding for SOTA II Charter School students to work with the La Crosse Film Academy to create a short film.

Grant Recipients: *Erin Shmuck, Mel Hanson, Kellie Schmitz, Leigh Eck, and La Crosse Film Academy*



Pedal Power:

Building Balance and Confidence on Two Wheels

Sponsored by



Provides 20 Strider balance bikes for use in K-1 PE classes at Hamilton/SOTA I Elementary School.

Grant Recipient: *Jordan Young*



Traveling Interactive Display



Sponsored by



Provides a large, movable interactive touch screen for use in 7th grade classrooms at Logan Middle School. These screens are used to increase student engagement, especially in math.

Grant Recipients: *Scott Bagniefski, Tim Sprain, Christina Fenton, Jesse Martinez, Amy Kendall, Jenn Appel, Joelle Schreiner, Amy McDaniel, and Deanna Langrehr*





Growing Outdoor Adventure Club Programming

Sponsored by



Supports a pilot program for an advanced outdoor adventure Summer School class for more experienced Longfellow Middle School Adventure Club Members to take a field trip to Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.

Grant Recipients: *Clinton Grabhorn and Lila Planavsky*



Listen to Learn: Enhancing Classroom Learning Through Yoto Players

Sponsored by



Hanson & Associates
Ameriprise Private Wealth Advisory Practice



Provides Yoto Players and supporting materials for use at Hintgen Elementary School. Yoto Players are screen-free audio players designed to enrich literacy, creativity, and independent learning.

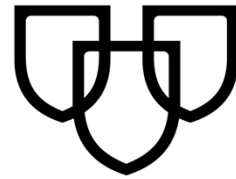
Grant Recipients: *Emily Juneau, Delane Swanson, and Amanda Pfiffner*



Calm Kits for Classroom Success



Sponsored by



MAYO CLINIC
HEALTH SYSTEM



Provides a variety of sensory tools to build "Calm Kits for Classroom Success" at Emerson Elementary School. These tools help students self-regulate, stay focused, and manage strong emotions in the classroom.

Grant Recipients: *Cindy Schofield, Summer Elston, and Nancy Weaver*



Striding the Streets of La Crosse



Sponsored by



Provides three, 20-inch Strider balance bikes for use by third grade through high school age students in the School District of La Crosse. These balance bikes will help students who are not yet able to ride a bike independently learn the skills, to be able to participate in P.E. biking units, and to become confident bikers for life.

Grant Recipient: *Lisa Boyer*






LPEF Endowed Funds

DESIGNATED GRANTS

LPEF Funds

- Judy and Randy Eddy Sr. Fund
 - McGavock Family Music Education Fund
 - Quarberg Family Pride of the North Side Endowment
 - Rachel Gundersen Endowment for the Arts & Humanities
 - Claire E. Jandt Endowment for Library Media at Northside Elementary School
 - Randy and Lynn Nelson Fund
 - Tom and Jean Heyt Thompson Endowment Fund
 - Tyser Power of Nature Fund
 - Random Acts of Kindness Forever Endowment Fund
- 

La Crosse Area Community Foundation Funds

- Richard Swantz Endowment Fund
- Sally Grimslid Random Acts of Kindness Memorial Fund for Northside Elementary
- Maureen and Robert Freedland-LPEF Fund for Studies of the Shoah
- Kids for Kids Fund-LPEF
- Dr. Gunnar and Mary Baldwin Gundersen Memorial Fund
- Duane and Carol Taebel Fund
- Carol Taebel "Thank A Teacher" Fund
- Tom and Judy Sleik Family Fund
- Judy and Dave Bouffleur Fund
- Heather & Stephen Ross and Maureen & Robert Freedland LPEF Fund for Diversity Education of La Crosse Area Community Foundation





Author Candice Iloh Visits La Crosse

**Sponsored by Heather & Stephen Ross and Maureen & Robert Freedland
LPEF Fund for Diversity Education**



Provides funding to bring award-winning author and poet Candice Iloh to speak to all La Crosse high school students and staff during a two-day author visit in Spring 2025. Iloh writes coming-of-age novels and poetry that "captures the nuance of young Black life."

Grant Recipients: *Kristi Moulton, Abby Von Arx, and Linda Jerome*



The Natural Science from Space to Underground Mural

Sponsored by Rachel Gundersen Endowment for the Arts & Humanities
and Dr. Gunnar and Mary Baldwin Gundersen Memorial Fund of La
Crosse Area Community Foundation



Provides funding to bring artist Julia Crozier to Summit Elementary to paint a mural (with students' help) on the new outdoor classroom, which will be built with funding by Solar on La Crosse Schools (SOLS).

Grant Recipients: *Oscar Uribe and Johnnyray Wildt*



Summer Media Academy



Sponsored by Randy and Lynn Nelson Fund



Establishes a summer enrichment course that will culminate in the publication of a magazine produced entirely by students. Students gain the experience of publishing from start to finish and the broader community will benefit from hearing the voices of young people in our area.

Grant Recipient: *Lissa Carlson*



Developing Leadership Districtwide for Co-Regulation Using Bal-A-Vis-X



Sponsored by Richard Swantz Fund



Provides funding for 14 teachers to attend a 2-day training for Bal-A-Vis-X hosted by the school district. These teachers would be eligible to pursue the process to become a Bal-A-Vis-A school trainer for the district. Bal-A-Vis-X stands for Balance, Auditory, Vision, Exercises. Teachers who are using Bal-A-Vis-X are noticing improved attention, self control, and engagement in their classrooms.

Grant Recipient: *Barbara Oettel*





Backpacking 101 with Outdoor Adventure Club

Sponsored by Tyser Power of Nature Fund



Funds the purchase of outdoor gear for Longfellow Middle School's Outdoor Adventure Club to hold a summer "Backpacking 101" course. This course will teach students basic skills and knowledge necessary to safely participate in overnight adventures in the outdoors.

Grant Recipients: *Clinton Grabhorn and Lila Planavsky*



Discovering Nature in our Community

Sponsored by Duane and Carol Taebel Fund of La Crosse Area
Community Foundation



Provides funding for all Hamilton Elementary students to visit Hixon Forest 2 times during the school year. These field trips will help expand the students' view of the community, increase vocabulary in relation to the surrounding nature, and show students how nature can help them feel better physically and mentally.

Grant Recipient: *Jenn Speckeen*



Sports & Entertainment Marketing Field Trip



Sponsored by Judy and Randy Eddy Sr. Fund



Provides funding for students in the Sports & Entertainment Marketing classes at Central and Logan High schools to attend a field trip to Milwaukee where they will tour Fiserv Forum, attend a Brewers Game, and possibly tour the Business School at UW-Milwaukee.

Grant Recipient: Joanna Carman and Jamee Houchins



Creating Thinking Spaces

Sponsored by Judy and Dave Bouffleur Fund of La Crosse Area
Community Foundation



Funds the purchase of vertical rolling whiteboards that will allow Logan Middle teachers to create thinking spaces for students to stand and collaboratively problem-solve and work together during designated times in their classes.

Grant Recipients: *Megan Burke, Ashley Burke, and Karla Lawrence*





“Let’s Eat!”

Sustainable Food Practices

Sponsored by Tom and Judy Sleik Family Fund of La Crosse
Area Community Foundation



Provides funding to purchase sustainable materials needed for students in the Central High School Special Education Program to learn how to make, package, and distribute basic food products. These practices create learning opportunities to foster independence within their home and to master job skills.

Grant Recipient: *Stephanie Mick*



Afoutayi Residency

Partially supported by the Global Awareness Fund of the La
Crosse Area Community Foundation



Brings a midwestern-based Haitian dance company to North Woods Elementary School to provide students with an immersive educational experience in Haitian culture, including learning about Haitian instruments, dance, music, and storytelling.

Grant Recipients: *Katie Pierre, Mandi Wolfgram, Anna Auten, Gary Boisvert, and Chiana Valencia*



Shoah Fund



Sponsored by Maureen and Robert Freedland-LPEF Fund for Studies of the Shoah of La Crosse Area Community Foundation



Supports five teachers from the School District of La Crosse to attend the Viterbo Holocaust conference and sends all 7th graders in the district to see the main speaker at this conference. Also supports sending some Logan and Central High School students to the Holocaust Museum in Skokie, IL.

Grant Recipient: *Tammy Gruen*



Inclusive IB Training



Sponsored by Brauer IB Adventure Grant



Supports teachers from North Woods International School to attend Inclusive IB Training to continue learning about equitable and inclusive education.

Grant Recipients: *Sara DePaolo, Brin Lawrence, and Kallie Hughes*





Quarberg Pride of the Northside Fund

Provides support for Logan High Marching Band and Choir





Additional 2024 Gold Star Grants



Hydroponics in the Agriculture - Funds the purchase of a hydroponics tower, seeds, and other supplies for the Agriculture department at both Central and Logan High School. The hydroponics tower will help to teach students year-round about growing plants and the benefits. Recipient: Brooks Lueck.

Canoeing at Summit - Funds the purchase of a trailer for 10-12 canoes at Summit Environmental School to take students canoeing in the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge in front of the school. Recipients: Oscar Uribe and Nick O'Keefe.

Pollinator Project - Contributes to enhancing or expanding pollinator patches at North Woods, Hamilton, and Hintgen elementary school garden sites. The project will engage students with hands-on seed-to-table nutrition and environmental stewardship education. Recipients: Bonnie Martin and Kari Bersagel Braley.

Electric and Bass Guitar Bundles for Modern Music Ensemble - Provides funding to purchase an electric guitar and bass guitar package for use in Logan High School's new Modern Music Ensemble - Rock Band course. The goal of this class is to provide a performing music course for students that love music, but never fit neatly into the typical performing courses. Recipients: Brian Renkas and Zach Meyer.

Reading Buddies Collaboration - Funds the purchase of personal books for K-2 students at Northside and Hamilton Elementary participating in the collaborative UW-La Crosse and Boys and Girls Club Reading Buddies collaborative after-school program. Recipients: Caryn Peterson, Teigen Meiners, and Denise Rueter.

Empowering Every Learner: Establishing an Adapted Book Library - Establishes an adapted book library within the Hintgen Elementary school library, providing tailored reading materials to meet the diverse needs of students. The adapted library can enhance the educational experiences of students, promote literacy development, and foster a more inclusive learning environment. Recipients: Emily Juneau, Jill Utz Lebakken, and Hannah Gaska.

Enriching Cultural Connections: A Proposal for Floor and Tapestry Looms in Fiber Arts Exploration - Funds the purchase of a floor loom and two tapestry looms for Logan High School's new Fiber Arts Exploration course, which will provide students with hands-on experience in weaving traditions from diverse cultures. Recipient: Allecia Kruser.

Empowering Creativity: Equipping Students for a World of Digital Art Possibilities - Funds the purchase of styluses for art students at Logan and Central High Schools for use with their iPads. Recipients: Bethany Nugent and Allecia Kruser.

Outdoor Literature - Provides funding to purchase materials needed for a new Outdoor Literature class at Logan High School. The goal of this class is to improve students' relationship with reading while providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and immersion. Recipient: Logan Fulton.

La Crosse Promise College Tours - Provides funding for La Crosse Promise to take juniors and seniors on a field trip to tour UW-Eau Claire and the University of Minnesota. Recipient: La Crosse Promise.

Suiting Up for Safety Patrol - Funds the purchase of high-visibility vests, raincoats, umbrellas, gloves, and hats for 4th and 5th grade Safety Patrol students at Spence Elementary. The Safety Patrol job allows students to build their leadership skills. Recipient: Jocelyn Buxton.

Longfellow Community Mural Project- Provides partial funding to hire local artist, Chase Gentry, to work with Longfellow Middle School students to plan, design, and create an interactive "living" mural for a new outdoor classroom. Recipients: Amoreena Rathke, Matthew Remus, and Clinton Grabhorn.

Making Cultural Connections through Hmong Folklore & Mythology - Brings Hmong artist, Shoua Yang, as an artist-in-residence to Central High School for a printmaking workshop that explores cultural connections through a curriculum of Hmong history, folklores, and mythologies. Recipient: Lori Aschenbrener.

Wheels of Inclusion: Empowering Special Education Students through Accessible Outdoor Adventures - Provides a Wonderfold wagon and accessories for use in Special Education classes at Hintgen Elementary school. The wagon will allow all students to participate in outdoor field trips. Recipients: Emily Juneau, Emma Kossiski, Jessie Rooney, and Katelyn Koehler.

Central Dance Team Equipment - Provides mirrors for the Dance Team at Central High School to use during practices. Recipient: Joanna Carman.

Clay Creations - Supports 5th grade art students at Hamilton Elementary School to take two field trips to All Glazed Up to learn to make 3D objects with clay. Recipient: Grace Tester and Heidi Hanneman.

Enhancing Musical Opportunity for Coulee Montessori – Provides a full electronic piano and dolly for use in Coulee Montessori Charter school music classes. Recipients: Jessica Ingvalson, Rhiannon Baasch, Kim Shively, Anna Taylor, Isabel Hoff, and Josh Shively.

THANK YOU, SPONSORS!



Table Sponsors:

- UWL Department of Education
- Association of La Crosse School Administrators
- Viterbo University
- La Crosse Tribune
- La Crosse Education Association
- Western Technical College Foundation
- School District of La Crosse Board of Education



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Acknowledgements

Luncheon Committee: Tom Thompson, Byron Holz, Brad Quarberg, and Laura Huber

Special thanks to Lisa Klein for serving as MC!



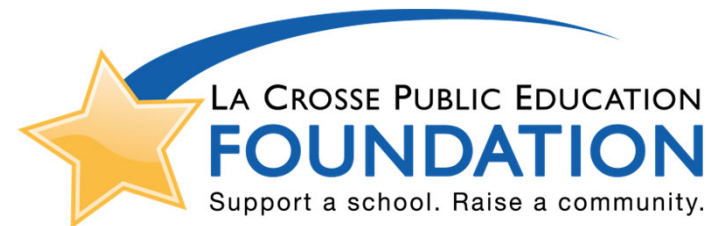
Thank you for celebrating public education with us!

The La Crosse Public Education Foundation (LPEF) strives to enhance learning opportunities for students in the School District of La Crosse while promoting community support and understanding of public education. Founded in 1988 by forward-looking residents passionate about public education, the Foundation invests in innovation for fresh, creative programs and curriculum unable to be funded through the district's already tight budget.

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