



## THE WREA FOUNDATION

The Charitable Arm of the  
Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association

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### RETIRED EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES FIVE WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

Five Wisconsin elementary school innovative programs have been recognized, by the Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association (WREA) Foundation, as part of the organization's annual "Challenge Award Program."

Each of the five schools received a \$2,000 check to support their program. The awards are given annually, and are rotated each year from elementary schools, to middle schools, to high schools. The program is designed to recognize and encourage innovation at all levels of public schools.

The five awards were presented at WREA District meetings held across the state.

This year's recipients were rewarded for the following programs:

- Northland Pines School District, (Eagle River) and Nutrition Education Coordinator Jasmyn Schmidt for the "Farm to School Program" project. The project was created in 2014 to promote better health as well as Common Core Curriculum through nutrition education, gardening, cooking, and community involvement which established a positive school climate for both Northland Pines and the community as a whole.
- Brillion Elementary School, (Brillion) and District STEM Coordinator Steve Meyer for "Elementary STEM Education." The program started in 2013 and encourages creativity in young children, by giving them the tools, processes, and knowledge to design, invent and dream. The importance of this program shows the connection between science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to English, reading, music, and social studies.

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- McDill Elementary School, (Stevens Point) and Teacher Tori Suhs for “Student Council Community Service Projects.” The 2013 project was created to teach children the importance of helping those who may be facing issues such as poverty, sickness, or emotional well-being. This project benefits children in expanding their knowledge of community issues.
- Red Apple Elementary School (Racine) and Physical Education Teacher Dan Niespodziani for “Red Apple News.” The project was started in 2014 to teach students 21<sup>st</sup> century technology skills while increasing their reading skills. Computer and editing continues to change and with student participation new skills help advance their educational path.
- Glacier Edge Elementary School (Verona) and Fourth Grade Teacher Amy Otis for the “DREAM Lab.” This project was created in 2014 to teach students how everyday life is intertwined in the real world. Problem solving and creating innovative devices to help in the school, their family, and even a student with physical needs.

WREA Foundation President, Berland Meyer from Wausau, personally contacted each of the Challenge Award winners and spoke highly of all 54 applicants who competed for the five honors. “Every one of them was surprised and excited and several shed more than a few tears! It sure gives you a good feeling to know how much our small grants are appreciated,” he said.

This program is made possible in part by the generous support of our Member Benefit Partners and donations from our members. On behalf of the Wisconsin Retired Educators’ Association (WREA) Foundation we thank all of you for your continued support of the WREA Foundation Challenge Award Program.

WREA, which organized in 1951, is a statewide association of over 15,000 members and 66 local units. It is recognized for protecting the public pension fund, promoting public education, and providing member benefits. With a central office in Middleton, WREA maintains a strong lobbying presence to represent the views of the retired educational community.

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