



THE WREA FOUNDATION

The Charitable Arm of the
Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association

CONTACT: Diane Wilcenski, WREA Foundation Executive Director
Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association (WREA) Foundation
6405 Century Avenue, Suite 201
Middleton, WI 53562
608-831-5115
dwilcenski@wrea.net

RELEASE IMMEDIATELY

ALGOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT "WOLF PACK" PROJECT

WINS WISCONSIN RETIRED EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION AWARD

Algoma, WI – Algoma School District and Special Education Teacher Mary Donaldson have been awarded \$2,000 by the Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association (WREA) Foundation. The award was given for the school's "Wolf Pack" project.

With increased poverty, low academic scores and the need for the community to come together, "Live Algoma" was created. One aspect of Healthy Children and Healthy Community is the after school Wolf Pack program (they are the Algoma Wolves). The Wolf Pack was created to improve academics but went beyond this need to serving the whole child in every grade.

Ms. Donaldson explained, "This Pack is created by our youth, executed by our youth and successful because of our youth. Adults are there for oversight, but the youth are the "Leaders of the Pack".

She explained that some of the activities range from dental care to multiplication facts to bowling to community service. Elementary children in graded K-6 (Pups) attend to experience 2.5 hours of social interaction, academic tutoring and eating. The Wolf Pack concludes with a family dinner where the entire "Pack" shares a meal and celebrates their day.

The funds will be used to create Pack Activities to go home with each Pup to accompany the food. The funds would be used to create Literacy Pack activities that would include a book, a game and all items required to play the game. The plan is to create 50 pack activities. Our Wolf Pack has grown from 12 to 50 Pups and has the potential to increase as the demand is high.

LAKEVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL "1ST AND 5TH GRADE MENTORING" PROJECT

WINS WISCONSIN RETIRED EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION 2ND PLACE AWARD

Neenah, WI - Lakeview Elementary School and Literacy Coach Mary Thompson, have been awarded \$250.00 by the Wisconsin Retired Educators' Association (WREA) Foundation. The award was given for the school's "1st/5th Grade Mentoring Program" project.

The program was started to address the needs of students who were performing at the beginning of year benchmark in reading at the first-grade level. To boost the reading skills of students, the mentoring program was started. The program pairs identified first-grade students with a fifth-grade mentor.

Six months into the program, the anecdotal evidence speaks for itself. Surveys given to the fifth-grade students to gauge their involvement in the program show that 100% of the students feel they are making an impact and enjoy working with the first-grade students. Data shows that 88% of the target group of students are performing at the expected district reading benchmark in January 2018.

OOSTBURG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL “SNOW PANTS LOCKER HANGER” PROJECT

WINS WISCONSIN RETIRED EDUCATORS’ ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION 2ND PLACE AWARD

Oostburg, WI – Oostburg Elementary School and Elementary School STEM Teacher Curtis Bretall, have been awarded \$250.00 by the Wisconsin Retired Educators’ Association (WREA) Foundation. The award was given for the school “Snow Pants Locker Hanger” project.

What do you do with wet snow pants at an elementary school? After much creative design and testing, the 3rd and 4th grade classes came up with a hanger solution that is easy to use, dries the snow pants and helps to keep the halls looking neat. The ultimate goal is to produce a snow pant hanger for all of the 2-5 grade students who have lockers in the school. The students learned how to design and print the prototype hangers on a 3-D printer. The impact this experience has allowed the kids to learn the process of innovative design and improvement while creating something that will have a tangible, positive impact on their daily lives during the winter season.

The story of their journey through the process will be used to inspire future students to look around the school for ways that they can use their skills and imagination to solve problems and improve the world around them. Funds awarded from the grant will be used to complete the snow pant hanger project for our entire school and continue the creative work our students do through the Destination Imagination program and the Lego Robotics work.

The financial award is part of an annual “Challenge Award” program sponsored by the WREA Foundation. It recognizes ten schools each year, in each of the five statewide regional districts that comprise WREA. From year to year, the awards are rotated from elementary schools, to middle schools, to high schools, every third year.

Algoma School District is one of five innovative elementary school projects to be awarded \$2,000 this year, for a total of \$10,000 donated by the WREA Foundation. The other projects awarded were Park Falls & Glidden Elementary Schools (Park Falls), Oaklawn Elementary School (Menomonie), The School for Agriculture and Environmental Studies (Fox Lake), and Sandhill Elementary School (Stoughton).

In addition to the first-place winners, five second place winners were awarded \$250.00 each for their innovative projects. The schools include: Lakeview Elementary School (Neenah), Oostburg

Elementary School (Oostburg), Whitehall Memorial Elementary School (Whitehall), Forest Ridge Elementary School (Oak Creek), and Rio Elementary School (Rio).

The WREA and the WREA Foundation are independent, non-profit organizations representing more than 10,000 retired educators across the state of Wisconsin. Their primary focus is to support and protect the retirement interests and needs of its members, and to advocate for public schools. Both organizations are located at 6405 Century Avenue, Suite 201, Middleton, WI 53562.

WREA, which was organized in 1951, is a statewide association of more than 10,000 members and 62 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.

6405 Century Avenue, Suite 201 • Middleton, WI 53562 • phone: 608.831.5115 • fax: 608.831.1694

www.wrea.net • email: wrea@wrea.net