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As a 501(c)3 charitable organization, the Foundation strives to engage parents, alumni and businesses to invest in the greater Wilson community. The non-tax dollars raised by the Foundation support the needs of Wilson students and teachers by funding academic programs, grants, scholarships, facility upgrades and more. This report will provide a better understanding of the types of programs and projects WEF supports, how we raise funding and how YOU can help!

## PROUD OF WILSON EDUCATION FOUNDATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

The Wilson Education Foundation (WEF) has been an extremely effective organization since its founding in July 2007. We have received and distributed \$282,800 of contributions from area businesses via the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program to support Fast ForWord, which serves over 100 Wilson students each year. The Wilson School District would not have had access to these EITC funds without a Foundation in place.

In addition, WEF acted as the fundraising arm to obtain \$463,000 of non-tax based dollars for improvements to the Wilson School District athletic facilities. These campus improvements provide a better experience for our students as well as the Wilson community at large. To learn more about this campaign, please see page 2.

Finally, nearly \$85,000 has been raised and disbursed for grants and student scholarships. We are thankful for the foresight of a few individuals for establishing the Wilson Education Foundation, and the support of many in the Wilson School District community for its success to date. When compared to benchmarks of what other education foundations are accomplishing around the state, Wilson Education Foundation is fairing quite well! We look to you, our parents, alumni and business community, for your continued support in the coming years.

Sincerely,  
Stephen Fritz,  
*Wilson Education Foundation  
Board President*



*Wilson Iron Chef was a community-wide event hosted by WEF that brought together students, parents, faculty, administration and the business community. Pictured above are Green Valley students, who during the event, demonstrated how the District utilizes technology in the classroom.*

*A Venture Grant supported "Nooks for Today's Readers" at Southern, encouraging middle school students to read.*



## EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT (EITC) PROGRAM

The change in the philanthropic climate of the country requires education foundations as well as other nonprofits to be innovative in their fundraising efforts. The Wilson Education Foundation (WEF) has been approved to participate as an Educational Improvement Organization in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program for the sixth consecutive year. The EITC program offers substantial tax credits to eligible businesses that make financial contributions to approved organizations.

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# FACILITY UPGRADE CAMPAIGN

During 2013, the Wilson Education Foundation coordinated its first major capital campaign to assist the Wilson School District in the implementation of enhancements to John Gurski Stadium and George Mack Stadium at Bulldog Field, as well as upgrades to the Roy G. Snyder Natatorium. The campaign raised \$463,000 in non-tax dollars to support the facility upgrade projects. The success of this campaign was made possible by generous contributions from many area businesses, Wilson alumni, parents and friends of the district. We thank all of our supporters:



## PLATINUM

The Heebner Family  
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Gene Curry  
Liam Goodwin

## ADDITIONAL DONORS

David Cooper  
Herbein + Co., Inc.  
Andy and Beth Fick  
Tom and Elaine McDevitt

As part of this campaign, the Foundation sold bricks, pavers and tiles. You can still leave your mark on the Wilson High School Campus! A limited amount of pavers and tiles can be purchased by calling 610.670.0180, ext. 4842.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT (EITC) PROGRAM

*Continued from page 1*

In 2013, WEF received donations totaling \$78,200 from businesses that participated in the EITC program, which enabled the foundation to financially support Fast ForWord, an auditory improvement activity geared toward aiding with language acquisition and reading skills. The reading intervention program, designed for students in grades K-12 who are reading below grade level, develops brain processing efficiency through intensive, adaptive exercises (i.e. memory, attention, processing rate, and sequencing) to improve critical language and reading skills. Students were selected to use this program for 30-minute session, five days a week, based on demonstrating difficulties in the areas of cognitive skills, memory, attention and processing and/or sequencing. The successful completion of Fast ForWord demonstrates improved brain processing, and a large majority (more than 75%) of the students were able to achieve this.

For 2014, the Wilson High School STEM Academy was also

approved for WEF to provide support with EITC contributions. This rigorous academy for grades 9-12 allows students to focus their studies on integrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Math concepts. The four focus areas within the STEM Academy are Engineering, Computer Science, Material Science and Biomedical Science. During the past school year, a culminating project for the Wilson High School Biomedical course was to clone a gene! In their genetic engineering lab, "Cloning of a PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Amplified Gene," 10th, 11th and 12th-grade students used enzymes to cut and paste DNA molecules into a bacterial plasmid. This is just a sample of the type of unique experiences provided to our students through the STEM Academy.

We look forward to even more success and continued support from businesses through the EITC program. If you are interested in learning more about the EITC program, please contact us at 610.670.0180, ext. 1111.

# WILSON EDUCATION FOUNDATION VENTURE GRANTS 2013-2014

The goal of the Venture Grant Program is to enhance and to expand educational experiences and opportunities for the students of the Wilson School District by providing grants to individual teachers, groups of teachers, departments, and other professional employees who support creative and innovative programs that would not normally be funded through the school budget. Grants are awarded semi-annually to enable unique programs, teaching strategies, and learning experiences to become a reality in the classroom or through support services where they can influence the learning climate and directly benefit students. During the 2013-2014 school, the following programs/activities were selected as Venture Grant recipients:

For several years Berks Art Council and Land Displays have promoted the work of professional artists through **"Fast Lane Art."** For the first year, a juried student category was added. Elizabeth "Bibba" McKemy, high school art teacher, encouraged visual art students in grades 9-12 to enter the competition. Winning entries have their artwork displayed on billboards throughout Berks County and the first and second place winners earn scholarships. Twelve Wilson students entered the competition, and Wilson's Emily McGuigan won the "People's Choice Student Category" for most Facebook "Likes" of her artwork *Majesties*, which was displayed on electronic billboards.

Through **"Flipping the Classroom,"** Jocelyn Moyer and Karin Mohr engaged high school Family and Consumer Science students in a new way of learning. Teachers posted video demonstrations online, which students watched as homework prior to class. Students can view the clip multiple times until they feel comfortable with the material. This allowed for more in-class time for students to practice their new skills with teacher support, which increased student engagement. It also allowed students to give feedback and to ask questions beforehand enabling teachers to tailor the lesson for each class.

Ann Yarwornitsky, Wilson Southern Middle School librarian, encourages students to read through **"Nooks for Today's Readers."** Introducing new technology through Nook eReaders has helped generate interest in reading for students who previously did not read for enjoyment. Nooks are used to help students and faculty lead discussion groups that help to broaden students' love of reading. They also provide easy access to multiple copies of books used in the

Berks County Reading Olympics, allowing more Southern students to participate. Each year Southern has moved up in the rankings at the Reading Olympics, thanks to the Nooks! During the 2013-14 school year, 6th grade teams received first and a second place ribbons. A 7th grade team earned second place, and the 8th Grade team received third place.

In the **Southern Middle School Pre-STEM Academy RC Model Club**, science and technology are integrated in the area of aviation. Knowledge gained helps catapult students into the STEM Academy in 9th grade. Mark Wiebner and Cory Luft obtained the grant to purchase an iPad for the club to utilize "first person view RC technology" in order to fully fly their AR drone, a radio controlled flying quadcopter helicopter. Students are able to explore the concept of flight from a first person viewpoint and record the experience. ▼



**The Tulpehocken Ecology Field Study** program, submitted by Ed Ulmer, high school biology teacher, provides opportunities for Wilson High School students to participate in true science outside the classroom, learn about environmental issues, test and study water quality and observe the flora and fauna of the Tulpehocken Ecosystem. Students use this experience as part of a science fair project, community service, and career exploration. Some develop educational materials for elementary students and collaborate with local environmental groups. ▲



For the 2014-15 school year, students will assemble the new **Wilson High School Literary Magazine** featuring creative nonfiction, poetry, photography, and other writing or artistic submissions from students. The goal is to create two issues and to provide students with a voice and an audience for their writing and art. The production of the literary magazine will also teach students the fundamentals of good writing and publishing and give students a place to see their writing and art in print.

Faculty at Shiloh Hills Elementary are **Building a Modern Classroom Library** with Google Books, an online library of high-interest books for elementary-age children. One online book is purchased, but a whole classroom of children has access to it. Instead of holding a physical book in hand, students will read popular titles on Chromebooks, Kindles and other electronic devices. Successful implementation of reading high interest books of a variety of genres, should increase students' reading ability.

A grant will be used to purchase electronics kits and accessories for the Spring Ridge Elementary School Library to promote creativity and problem solving through the **Makerspace Projects** (A makerspace is a learning environment rich with possibilities. They serve as a gathering point for tools, projects, mentors and expertise.) Expanding the makerspace materials will allow up to 12 students to work on a makerspace project at once. Creating makerspace projects gives students an opportunity to integrate the arts, science, engineering, and technology in one project. The design and engineering process of "Think, Make, Improve, and Maker Better" also teaches real-world problem solving.

Launching this fall at Wilson High School is **Link Crew**, an innovative, research-based program used to orient freshmen and new students to the high school. The program involves training upperclassmen to become Link Leaders who will serve as mentors and guide new students and freshmen through their entry into high school. Providing multiple days for activities and group building as well as ongoing activities through the school year, the program supports students being connected to school, student socialization and feeling supported in the high school environment, which directly impacts student success in the classroom.

# WILSON EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, the Wilson Education Foundation provides scholarships to Wilson High School Seniors. The Foundation works with the families/organizations to manage the scholarship funds and coordinates with the Wilson High School Counseling Office and Athletic Staff/Coaches to identify deserving recipients. The following scholarships were awarded during 2013-14 school year:

Scholarship Name	Recipient	Amount
The General (Ret) US Army Fred & Denise Franks Scholarship for Public Service	Hannah Krall	\$3,000
Barbara Heckman Spirit of Wilson Scholarship	Mary Shea Kelly-Buckley	\$1,000
Scott Keenan Memorial Scholarship	Joshua Kuipers	\$1,000
Lorin Maurer Memorial Scholarship	Margaret Durning	\$1,500
Perseverance Award (One Time Only)	Christopher Thomas	\$1,500
Reggie Weiss Scholarship	Samuel Smith	\$7,500
Wilson School Board Scholarship	David Lewis	\$500
	Mary Shea Kelly-Buckley	\$500
Wilson Football Tradition Club Award	Madison Woodward	\$300
Wilson Football Tradition Club/	David Lewis	\$500
Wilson Football Parents' Award	Hassan Richardson	\$500
	Connor Smith	\$500
	Grady Weinheimer	\$500
	Matthew Close	\$300
	Matthew Timochenko	\$300
	Kyle Watkins	\$300
	Hunter Hatlee	\$200
	John Raifsnider	\$200
	Brendan Lenning	\$200
	Bryce Pych	\$200
	Hunter Rubright	\$200
	Madison Woodward	\$200

## Get Involved!

In order to continue to be successful, the Wilson Education Foundation needs more volunteers to join our committees and assist with our initiatives. To support the Foundation with your time, talent or treasure, please contact Kristin Kramer, Wilson Education Foundation Executive Director at 610.670.0180, ext. 1111 or [KraKri@wilsonsd.org](mailto:KraKri@wilsonsd.org).

## OTHER WAYS THE FOUNDATION CONTRIBUTES TO THE COMMUNITY!

During the past school year, the Wilson Education Foundation helped support the following events & programs:

- **Wilson High School/Whitfield Elementary Theater Residency Program:** throughout the past school year, students at both schools collaborated through a unique long-term artist residency program. Led by theater teaching artist Joel Gori, this residency was made possible through a partnership with the Yocum Institute for Arts Education.
- **Wilson High School 3rd Annual Art Show and Sale,** which was held May 5-9, 2014, showcased more than 1,000 works of art created by 200 Wilson High School students. A group of working artists/designers served as judges to identify award recipients in seven artistic disciplines.
- **Wilson Community Night at the Fightin Phils,** June 6, 2014, where top Wilson students at all grade levels were honored for their academic achievements by receiving a free ticket to the game and recognized on the field prior to the start of the game!
- **The 2014 Cap and Gown Party,** which was held following the high school graduation on June 7th for graduating Wilson seniors to celebrate their accomplishments!
- **21st Century Parent Symposium,** held on August 12, 2014. This free event provided an opportunity for parents/guardians to gain a better understanding of the conversion our schools are going through, not just in respect to technology. During this informative evening, parents gained knowledge to assist their children with technology and social media.



## FUNdraisers: Save the Date!

One way the Wilson Education Foundation raises non-tax dollars is by organizing and hosting special events throughout the year.

**Back-to-School Bash: Saturday, September 13, 5:30pm.** For the first year, WEF will hold this unique event at Fish Pond West (GPS: 200 Swiftwater Lane, Leesport, PA 19601). Enjoy an evening out with fellow Wilson parents and supporters at this more casual fundraiser. This clam-bake style evening will include food, beverages, music & more.

**Harlem Wizards Game: Saturday, November 15. Doors Open at 5:30pm.** Game starts at 6:30pm. At a Harlem Wizards game, fans see amazing basketball talent combined with hilarious comedy. For the second time, the Wizards will play against a team comprised of Wilson faculty members! Enjoy a family-friendly evening full of energy!

## Wilson Iron Chef Competition & Benefit Auction: Sunday, March 22, 1-5pm.

The first year was an amazing success! Join us for the second year where you can sample a variety of food from local restaurants and vendors, vote for the People's Choice and see last year's three top chefs face-off in a timed cooking competition. Participate in raffles, auctions and more! You definitely won't leave hungry!



If you are interested in purchasing tickets for any of these events, contact Kristin Kramer at [KraKri@wilsonsd.org](mailto:KraKri@wilsonsd.org), 610.670.0180, ext. 1111, or visit [www.WilsonSD.org/EdFoundation](http://www.WilsonSD.org/EdFoundation). Volunteers are also needed for the Harlem Wizards and Iron Chef. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Kristin!

## Calling All Bulldogs!

Right now we are actively growing the Wilson Alumni Committee to assist with planning the annual Homecoming Weekend along with other events for Wilson Alums to attend throughout the year. Give just a few hours a month to help grow our Alumni Association! Homecoming activities will be held Friday, October 3, 2014, 4-7pm, and include family-friendly activities, live music, food trucks and fun! Stay for the football game, which starts at 7pm, and cheer the Bulldogs onto victory!

To stay connected with the latest Alumni happenings, including the upcoming launch of our NEW Alumni website, please visit [www.wilsonsd.org/EdFoundation](http://www.wilsonsd.org/EdFoundation).