

For information about serving on a committee, making a donation, or our other activities, please visit our website at auburnedfoundation.org.

Thank you!
We are sincerely grateful to our donors, business sponsors, and supporters for their generosity, engagement, and ongoing contributions!

2023 - 2024



**Auburn
Education Foundation**
Discover the Opportunities

ANNUAL REPORT

2024
Dean LaDue
Memorial
Scholarship
Winners

Gianna Bailey
Samuel Crosby
Olivia Leader
Trinity McFadden
Alexandra Vitale
Brody Wagn

★
don't forget!
Fall grant applications due by:
October 15, 2024
Spring grant applications
due by:
March 17, 2025

A letter from the outgoing PRESIDENT

Since 2003, AEF has demonstrated its unwavering support for quality education for all students of the Auburn Enlarged City School District. The dedication of each Director, the support of the administrative staff, the creativity of the many teachers whose funded grant proposals continue to expand opportunities for our students, the excellence of our students, and the generosity of our donors is arguably incomparable. It has been an honor to have served as President of the Auburn Education Foundation for the past 5 years. I am, indeed, fortunate and proud to be part of this endeavor.

I am most grateful for the members of the Executive Committee, Janie Hutchinson, Denise Pellegrino, Marianne O'Connor, Bonny Blair, and Bill Tenity whose wisdom, guidance, and hard work made everything possible. Congratulations to a new slate of board officers, elected during AEF's annual meeting held in June. The 2024-2025 Executive Committee is comprised of the following directors: Janie Hutchinson, President, Bonny Blair and Andy Tehan, Vice Presidents, Marianne O'Connor, Treasurer, and Denise Pellegrino, Secretary. I will continue to serve on the Executive Committee for the next year as the Immediate Past President.

A note of gratitude and appreciation for the years served on the board to "retiring" board member Kathie Collier. Kathie's contribution to the success of AEF over the past is immeasurable. Kathie always answered the call for help in her quiet, but effective way to make things happen.

Jeff Pirozzolo, Sarah Cupelli, Camille and Ken Johnson: Thank you! Your support to the Auburn Education Foundation's efforts to provide opportunities for teachers that enhance the learning experiences of the AECSD students cannot be understated. You made all things possible. I am eternally grateful. We look forward to working closely with Dr. Misty Slavic, AECSD newly appointed Superintendent of schools.

We have accomplished much since our inception. I was blessed to have followed Janie as President, and delighted to pass the baton back to her as AEF continues its efforts to support teaching and learning in the Auburn Enlarged City School District. I encourage everyone to check our website, auburneducation.org, visit our Facebook Page, or contact any member of the Board of Directors to find out more about the goals, mission, and projects founded by AEF. Look for the ever-popular Gobble 'n Go event in the fall, and the Hall of Distinction induction in the spring.

I am humbled by the honor of having served as president of AEF, and look forward to my continuous involvement with the board in the coming year.

Yours in education,
Miguelina Cuevas-Post

What we accomplished in 2023 - 2024

- As a full board, expanded existing fund raising opportunities and seeked out new ones.
- Continued to identify ways to make AECSD staff more aware of the educator grants program.
- Encouraged community involvement through community partners.
- Continued to grow the website and use of other media platforms.

Looking ahead: 2024 - 2025 goals

- Continuous expansion of AEF's grants available to teachers, and the district through its Signature Projects.
- Increase awareness of the AE's grant opportunities available to all staff by directly addressing the faculty and staff, particularly those new to the district.
- Continue lines of communication and cooperation with the new district superintendent.
- Review and revise the grants application process, to make it more teacher friendly.
- Continue to reach to the community through our website and other social media platforms.
- Regular review of all investments and policies as part of our fiduciary responsibility.

By the numbers:

Annual contributions for fiscal year
2023-2024: \$14,535.

Teacher grants and scholarships: \$31,393.
This includes \$1,500 donated through the
Prentice Family Charitable Fund for the
junior high musical, and \$4200 given out in
scholarships.

Approximately \$400,000 in teacher grants,
special projects and scholarships since
2003.

Number of donations: 108

Average donation: \$135

Total contributions, including foundations,
designated gifts, unrestricted gifts, and
in-kind donations: \$37,560.

Total number of grants funded in
2023-2024: 20

★ Fun Fact: half of the teachers at
Auburn High School (75 out of 150)
are Auburn High alumni.

Board of Directors

The board of Directors consists of 16 member volunteers. Through its volunteer force, and community partners, AEF implements its mission through teacher grants, administration of the LaDue and DeSoccio scholarships, Hall of Distinction to honor graduates of Auburn High School, as well as many other activities that enrich the educational opportunities of students in the AECSD.

Mickie Cuevas-Post
President

Janie Hutchinson
*Immediate
Past President*

William Tenity
Vice President

Bonny Blair
Vice President

Denise Pellegrino
Secretary

Marianne O'Connor
Treasurer

Carmela Barbagallo
Kelly Gridley

Patti Festa
Jessica Wrench

Andrew Tehan
Terri Mahoney

Kathie Collier
Ben Susman

Kathy Rhodes
Allyssa DelPiano

Mark Divietro
Lisa Green

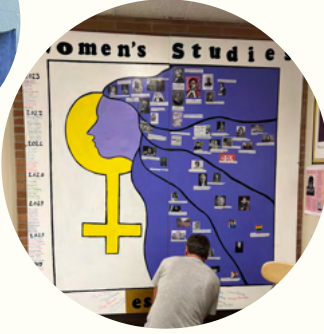
Ex-Officio
Jeff Pirozzolo
Ian Phillips

District Administration
Amy Mahunik
Sarah Cupelli
Tessa Crawford

Community Partners
Paul DelPiano

FALL GRANTS

Through a competitive grants process, Auburn Education Foundation (AEF) awards funding to educators who have creative project ideas that capture the attention and imagination of Auburn Enlarged City School District students, but which cannot be supported through the regular district budget. To date, AEF has funded more than 70 creative educational projects in grades K-12. During the 2023-2024 school year, AEF supported several projects that enable students to learn in unique and innovative ways. A few of these projects are highlighted below.



Casey Park Coffee Cart

Fifth grade students will create and manage the operation of a school-wide coffee cart. The cart will offer a variety of beverages and snacks for staff and will be available Friday mornings. Students will learn valuable skills in entrepreneurship, customer service, financial management, and teamwork.

Pyrography and New Technologies

5th and 6th grade student will learn about pyrography, a new form of artistic expression. Students will work in small groups to create an art piece using the pyrography pens, and will transition to learning about technologies that achieve the same style of art. They will learn about the software that is used to create art, and ultimately create their own designs.

Need a Break, Take a Break

Funding for this project will assist in creating a self-regulating, sensory space that will support students' sensory preferences and needs. This space will aid in providing students with the individualized sensory inputs they need to self-regulate, so they can be better prepared for learning and interacting with others within the school community.

AHS Women's Studies Mural

Women's Studies is a student driven course that includes historical analysis on women in society, government, and health. At the end of the semester, students will present their findings on a chosen topic as their final exam. This year's final project will be a collaborative mural displayed in the building, which will include QR codes with videos and information about the chosen subjects that students researched.

Raising Butterflies

This project will give second grade students at Genesee the opportunity to learn about a butterfly's life cycle. Students will be responsible for creating a habitat, providing food, and monitoring the butterfly's growth. Students will conduct research on the species, habitat and life cycle.

Journalism Project

This grant will fund the purchase of a Padcaster Starter Kit that turns an iPad into an all-in-one mobile video production powerhouse suite. Students will collaborate to develop a recurring news broadcast for the school while learning what it means to be a journalist. Students will create reports and highlight the things happening around the school and the district.

Addaptable Approaches for Learning

This grant will allow at-risk students access to writing, calming and sensory items that will enhance engagement, educational progression, and inclusion. The objective is to increase each student's daily living skills, mobility, self-esteem, and sense of belonging to the school community.

1st Amendment 1st Vote Summit

This program will offer high school girls a non-partisan opportunity to engage in the democratic process, and to imagine themselves in elected office or professional government related positions. Students will learn the process of campaigning, networking, public speaking and share the success and failures of their action plan for change.



SPRING GRANTS

Let's Go! Fitness, Friendship & Fun

This grant will fund the implementation of two new units into the High School's PE curriculum. Nine Square in the Air and Dot Ball 360 are innovative, engaging activities that enhance psychomotor skills, teamwork, and overall well-being. These activities will contribute to a comprehensive and enjoyable physical education experience for all students.

Read to Self Wiggle Seats

Wiggle seats are designed to help young children who have a hard time focusing and sitting still. These helpful self-regulation seating devices provide subtle movement input without getting up from your seat. These will be used during silent reading time to help students maintain focus and be better able to develop fluency, independence, and a love of reading.

Jarrett Krosoczka Evening Program Books

Jarret Krosoczka, New York Times Best Selling Author/Illustrator and National Book Award finalist, will be visiting Auburn, NY. During a presentation, Jarrett will tell families how he creates his graphic novels; he will give cartooning tips and will demonstrate a drawing. He will offer time for Q&A and will sign books.

Sparking a Flame of Curiosity: Illuminating Science with Black Lights

This grant will equip the Owasco teaching staff with a multiple set of black light kits and basic, luminescent tools that will transform science classrooms throughout the building into captivating learning environments. These black lights will not only enhance existing lessons, but also unlock entirely new avenues for interactive and engaging science exploration.

Flexible Seating to Increase Student Engagement

Flexible seating is important as it allows students to adapt to a new classroom environment, actively engage in learning, and can lead to a decrease in dysregulated students. Flexible seating allows students to move around and learn at the same time. Types of seating include yoga balls with bases, yoga balls with legs, donut balls, wobble stools, wobble cushions and padded stools.

Sensory Play in Kindergarten

This grant will purchase a sensory table for each Kindergarten classroom and one set of sensory items for the four classrooms to share. Learning through sensory play helps children retain more information than simply completing worksheets. According to the Cleveland Health Clinic, sensory play also helps with "cognitive growth, fosters social interactions, and encourages experimentation".

Author Visit with Jason Reynolds

This grant will fund a dynamic and interactive session with acclaimed author Jason Reynolds. Reynolds, renowned for his young adult novel Long Way Down, will engage students in an immersive experience aimed at deepening their understand of the book while fostering critical thinking and diverse skill sets. The program will be for students in grades 10-12.

Solar Eclipse

The elementary STEM teachers will implement special solar eclipse activities at each grade level to commemorate and educate students about the solar eclipse in which Auburn falls within the area of totality.

☆☆☆ Teacher Reports

Total teacher grants and scholarship amount: \$31,393

The Auburn High School PE department received the Dot Ball 360 equipment that you funded and they have been a huge success! Participating in this activity has already **improved our students' physical fitness, teamwork, coordination skills, agility, and tactical thinking.**

Nine Square is the other activity that was purchased and implemented during our yard games unit. During each new mod, students would walk into the locker room asking about this new Nine Square game the previous class was talking about. This made the students **eager to come to class** and learn a new activity.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to offer and engage our students in **new and exciting activities.**

Sincerely,
Jason Birchard

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for awarding my kindergarten team a grant that allowed us to purchase a literacy kit called Versatiles. We chose this kit because we felt that this would be a **great supplemental resource** to use during our Extended Learning time.

These are great tools as they can be used individually as well as in a small group. The special education students **loved the language and vocabulary activity** because it was hands on and made them use problem solving skills.

Our students at William H. Seward Elementary are very grateful and excited to be able to continually use this tool to become **stronger readers.** Thank you again for your generosity.

Sincerely,
Melissa Chapman

14 students were able to participate in the 1st Amendment 1st Vote's 5th Annual Leadership Action Summit on March 26-27, 2024 in Auburn, New York.

Due to your generous gift, both myself and students appreciated the opportunity to **meet with 150 students from around the state** and listen to the tips our civil service leaders shared with us.

A testimony from presenters and students: Glad the conference was successful, and **happy to have played a small part** -- thank you!

Maria Coleman, William H. & Frances Seward Family Historian



We Gratefully Acknowledge Our Partners, Sponsors & Donors

We are grateful to all of our sponsors, partners, funders, and in-kind donors. Auburn Education Foundation relies on the success of its fundraising efforts, private donations, and foundation support. Since 2003, your generosity has made it possible for AEF to thrive as a viable organization committed to providing creative, innovative, and enriching opportunities for students in the Auburn Enlarged City School District.

Foundation Support

Stanley Metcalf Foundation
DE French Foundation
NAYGN Foundation
Prentice Charitable Fund

Business and Community Support

Wegmans
Hilton Garden Inn
Jacobs Press
Big D's Limousine
The Citizen
SWBR
Buffington & Hoatland CPAs, PLLC
Kate Vitale Design

Hall of Distinction

In early December 2023, a committee of nine foundation members met to complete an extremely challenging task; that of selecting the Class of 2024 Auburn Alumni Hall of Distinction inductees. After much deliberation, the following seven remarkable Auburn alumni were selected, bringing the total honored to 67:

General James Rafferty, 1969 (East High): A retired 2 star general who enlisted as a private after graduating from S.U. with a history degree, Commanding General of Joint Munitions Command, overseeing 16,000 military, civilians and contractor employees.

Karen Macier, 1972: Tireless community advocate, volunteer, and recently retired director of Cayuga County United Way; also served in the armed forces.

Sean and Beth Lattimore, 1986: As a young couple, purchased the historic Springside Inn, and have dedicated their energies to improving and sustaining this iconic community treasure.

Marc Petrosino, 1993: Emmy nominated puppeteer and founder of Monkey Boys Productions whose work has been seen on Sesame Street, and is regularly featured on Saturday Night Live.

Gary Mann, 1999: Once a homeless teen, a tireless advocate for the homeless, is now the Syracuse Area Rescue Mission Director and was instrumental in building Merriman Circle, temporary housing for homeless in Auburn; accomplished and award winning musician.

Eric Emmanuel, 2008: Young visionary who has created what is now a wildly successful sports fashion brand, and has opened 3 brick and mortar stores in New York City and the Hamptons, supports educational opportunities through his philanthropy.

On Friday, May 19, we welcomed this accomplished group of Auburn alumni for a day and evening of celebration beginning in the early morning at Auburn High School, where each inductee shared their tales of struggle, self-doubt, determination and success, and answered questions posed by a class or two of attentive juniors and seniors. Following that, we enjoyed a beautifully catered luncheon at Willard Chapel that gave inductees and foundation members a chance to chat informally and get to know each other. Finally, that evening, **approximately 150 friends, family and honored guests and dignitaries gathered at the Hilton Garden Inn**, to enjoy a heavy hors d'oeuvres and dessert reception, where upon introduction, each honoree was gifted with an acacia wood engraved pen and pencil set in a matching wood presentation box. After the ceremony, guests often remark how inspirational each inductee's acceptance speech was, as they are delivered straight from the heart - filled with sentiment, humor and Auburn pride, followed by a rousing standing ovation!

Perhaps this partial quote sent to AEF by Class of 2024 inductee, Beth Lattimore, best captures the spirit of the day: "Thank you for a fantastic morning, noon and night. We were so impressed with every bit of it, and it is a memory that will always be with us. We are still in disbelief that we were part of **such an amazing group of people, all so different, and all so accomplished.** Thank you for everything that was so carefully planned to perfection. But most of all, thank you for making us all feel so welcome and appreciated, and for making time at the luncheon for each of us to tell our "school days" memories because that made us feel like we've all known each other forever. That made everything extra special, and we will never forget it."

Gobble 'n Go!

On October 21, 2023, a day predicted to be rainy and cold, over 200 Gobble 'n Go ticket-holders braved the elements to stroll through our beloved downtown area, enjoying delicious food and drink specialties prepared by 14 generous local venues...on what turned out to be an overcast and mild day!

For the first time since the inaugural Gobble 'n Go fundraiser, we completely redesigned the tickets, posters and event-day maps, giving them an exciting, fresh vibe, thanks to the talents of new board member, Allyssa DelPiano, who specializes in marketing and graphic design. Additionally, we were able to add two new participating venues, three new sponsors and raised over \$9,000.

The funds raised directly support innovative, hands-on projects and learning approaches in our public schools. These innovations go beyond regular school funding, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to learn, thrive, and reach their highest potential. Keeping that in mind, we are anticipating the most successful Gobble'n Go yet, which will take place on Saturday, October 19th! Hope to see you there!

Front row, left to right: Beth Lattimore, Sean Lattimore, Karen Macier;
Back row, left to right: Eric Emmanuel, Major General James Rafferty, Gary Mann, Marc Petrosino



HOD Recipients



Who We Are

Founded in 2003, the Auburn Education Foundation mission statement seeks to support an enriched learning environment for Auburn Enlarged City School students through collaboration, gifts, and grants. We value diversity, support educators who have creative and innovative ideas that capture students' attention and ignite their imagination; and celebrate the accomplishments of students and alumni.

A copy of AEF's latest annual financial report may be obtained from the Attorney General's Charities Bureau Website www.charities.com, or from AEF by mailing a written request to AEF at 78 Thornton Avenue, PO Box 592, Auburn, NY 13021.

A registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that provides significant resources to champion enrichment programs which elevate the educational experiences of Auburn Enlarged City School District students from average to extraordinary.

Look for the annual Gobble 'n Go event on Saturday, October 19th, and our Hall of Distinction (HoD) on Friday, May 16, 2025!

