



The Community Foundation
for South Central New York

COMMUNITY *News*

Grants Promote STEM Education

Educational programs in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) serve two important goals: to nurture talent the world needs to move us into the future, and to prepare young people for rewarding careers.

At the Community Foundation, we've been pleased to support STEM programs in our region with several recent grants.

Robots in Franklin

One of those grants gave \$5,000 to the Franklin Community Education Foundation to support the popular Robotics Club in the Franklin Central Schools. Matching that sum from its own budget, the Education Foundation will use the money to expand the club's collection of Lego Mindstorms EV3 robot kits

and buy add-on modules such as temperature sensors and cameras.

The club is open to students in grades four through 12. Working with the robots helps members develop skills in coding, math, problem solving, communications, and leadership, says Steven Cox, a biomedical engineer and school volunteer who leads the club.

Student teams might, for example, program their robots to roll 30 inches, turn left, roll ten inches, turn right and roll 20 inches, a task that includes calculating the rotation of the tires based on their diameter. "This is similar to the challenges NASA experiences with something like the Mars rover," Cox says.

With more robotics kits, the club can accommodate more students, while the add-ons will let students take on more complex challenges.

Mobile Labs for K-6

In the Waverly Schools, all elementary and middle school

students will enjoy science presentations this year, thanks to a \$7,800 grant from the Community Foundation to the Regional Science and Discovery Center (SDC). This Elmira-based organization brings STEM programs to schools across the Twin Tiers.

More than 700 Waverly students in grades pre-K through 6 will receive visits from SDC's mobile lab, with a program tailored to each age group. Potential topics range from "Animals in Spring" for pre-K to "Planets and the Solar System" for older students.

SDC will also bring a one-hour science show to each of

Waverly's two elementary schools. It's not yet certain which shows will go to Waverly, but all of them include audience participation. "One of the things we do is the Science of Toys, which uses sound, light and chemistry," says Patricia Dann, the SDC's executive director. Another show looks at fire and tornadoes to teach about air pressure and chemical reactions.

SDC's educators work closely with teachers to make sure their presentations dovetail with the school's own science lessons, Dann says. "There's a considerable effort to connect with the

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Erik Leonard's electric motorcycle at Triple Cities Makerspace

STEM Education *continued from page one*

classroom curriculum at the time. I think that makes a big difference in the learning.”

Science and the Mill

Another outreach program will send educators from the Hanford Mills Museum into several classrooms in Otsego County.

The idea for this program grew out of some visits that museum educators have made to area schools in recent years through the BOCES Creating Rural Opportunities Program (CROP), says Liz Callahan, executive director at the Hanford Mills Museum.

In the new series, teams of educators will visit five schools, presenting six programs in each one. A program for younger

students might, for example, use music to teach about the different activities that go on in the museum’s historic, working mill.

With older kids, educators might work on math and engineering skills while discussing how people make decisions about how to use natural resources. “Sometimes they’re challenged to build ice houses, to see which one is most effective for maintaining the ice and not letting it melt,” Callahan says. Students might also work with circuits and build pulley systems to learn about power generation.

Like SDC, Hanford Mills will work with teachers and administrators to tailor its programs to the needs of individual classrooms.

Wood Work

School isn’t the only place for developing one’s knowledge of STEM (or STEAM, if you add art to the mix). In Binghamton, people go to the Triple Cities Makerspace to practice wood and metalworking, computer coding, audio and video production, 3D printing, pottery, sewing and other skills.

Makerspace also partners with other organizations to promote STEAM in the community. “For example, we’ve partnered with the Broome County Library to teach robotics classes for children,” says Stephen Musok, the organization’s treasurer.

The Community Foundation recently gave Triple Cities Maker-

space \$3,356.10 to install a dust collection system in its woodshop. This will let participants work with wood throughout the year, rather than only in the warmer months when they can use saws outside or leave the door open for ventilation. Makerspace members are customizing the new apparatus with sensor-based controls that automatically turn it on when an authorized individual powers up one of the woodworking tools.

The worldwide makerspace movement started out with a heavy emphasis on technology, but its vision has broadened, Musok says. “At our makerspace, we try to be really diverse and offer a variety of outlets.”

Supporters Toast Foundation’s 20 Years

Friends from throughout our five-county region came together at the Broome County Regional Farmers Market on October 20 to celebrate a happy milestone—the Community Foundation’s 20th anniversary. Guests enjoyed locally-produced food and drinks, heard State Senator Fred Akshar deliver a congratulatory proclamation, and saw us mark the occasion with a special \$20,000 grant to the Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR).

Kerstin Driscoll, one of our Board members who helped produce the party, was especially pleased with the venue. “I think a lot of people felt that it was different and fun,” she says. Harvest-themed decorations added to the charm, as did the beer on tap, the wine selections and the food, which came mostly from local producers. “It was important to us to use local sources for as many things as possible,” she says.

To Board president Patrick Doyle, the presentation to FUDR was one of the evening’s high points. “They do really important work, and



Left: Farmers Market ready and waiting for our over 200 guests. Right: Sherri Resti Thomas and Jeff Skelding of FUDR receive their \$20,000 “check” from Patrick Doyle and Diane Brown of the Community Foundation.



they do it on a shoestring,” he says. “They were so gracious and excited about the grant.”

We’re grateful to all the sponsors who contributed to our party, and to the volunteers who spent a year making it happen. Along with Board members and staff, three Board alumni—Debbie Gouldin, Elysia Gudas and Callie (and Chris) Demtrak—planned the festivities and spent hours on setup and cleanup. Thanks to everyone who helped us celebrate, and here’s to our next 20 years of community philanthropy.

Board Welcomes New Member



Elizabeth Horvath

The Board is pleased to welcome our newest member; Elizabeth Horvath of Cooperstown. Currently a senior project manager with Delaware Engineering of Oneonta, Elizabeth has a long history in business and economic development in Otsego County and Washington D.C. A graduate of Harvard and the University of Sydney, Australia, Elizabeth also sits on the boards of the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, the Cooperstown Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Otsego Planning Board and the Brookwood School. Please join us in welcoming Elizabeth to the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation!



Left: Public access computers at Harris Memorial Library (Otsego)

Below: Chair lift at Town Hall Theatre (Chenango)



Summer/Fall 2017 Competitive Grants from the Community Fund and Special Funds

Grant Funding for Capital Projects, Programs and Operating Support

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Twin Tiers \$8,750 for expansion of the program (*Broome/Tioga*)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Binghamton—Broome \$2,272 for an updated time clock system (*Broome*)

Binghamton Imaginink \$2,500 for the Invention Convention (*Broome*)

Broome County Council of Churches \$5,000 to expand Chop and Chat, a nutrition and socialization program for senior citizens (*Broome*)

Broome County Urban League \$10,000 for the summer camp program (*Broome*)

Broome Tioga Workforce \$10,000 for the Opportunity Impact Program (*Broome/Tioga*)

Carantouan Greenway \$5,000 for a Youth Lyme Disease and Tick Awareness Program (*Tioga*)

Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga \$5,000 for emergency assistance for families (*Tioga*)

Delaware Valley Humane Society \$3,000 for capital improvements at the shelter (*Delaware*)

Eric D. Dettneider Memorial Fund \$4,000 for a program providing adaptive recreational programs to kids with developmental and physical disabilities (*Otsego/Delaware*)

Earlville Opera House \$15,000 for their capital campaign (*Chenango*)

Empire State Special Needs Experience \$5,000 to upgrade their phone system (*Tioga*)

Family Planning for South Central NY \$5,000 to upgrade their server (*Broome/Chenango/Delaware/Otsego/Tioga*)

Family Service Association \$1,777 for Family Development Facilitator Training (*Broome/Chenango/Delaware/Otsego/Tioga*)

Franklin Education Foundation \$5,000 to expand the school robotics program (*Delaware*)

Town of Guilford \$5,000 for an accessible pedestrian walkway over the gorge at Kent Creek (*Chenango*)

Harris Memorial Library \$5,000 to replace outdated public access computers (*Otsego*)

Jericho Arts Council \$5,000 for the Town Hall Theatre accessibility project (*Chenango*)

Kali's Klubhouse \$5,000 for operating expenses (*Tioga*)

KNOW Theatre \$10,000 for a part-time executive director (*Broome*)

Literacy Volunteers of Broome-Tioga \$13,250 for the Building a More Literate Community Program (*Broome/Tioga*)

Livestock Foundation \$3,000 for an exhibit on Bovina's dairy history (*Delaware*)

Mom's House \$1,500 for a motorized retractable awning for the outdoor playground (*Broome*)

Oneonta World of Learning \$2,190 for roof repair (*Otsego*)

Oxford Community Youth Center \$10,000 for a summer program for children (*Chenango*)

Regional Science and Discovery Center \$7,500 for STEM activities in the Waverly schools (*Tioga*)

SEED Planning Group \$500 for a holiday meal program directed at minimum-wage families (*Broome*)

Special Olympics \$2,743 for Special Olympics teams (*Broome/Chenango/Delaware/Otsego/Tioga*)

Tioga Central School District \$5,000 for a fence for the Tiger Farm School and Community Garden Project (*Tioga*)

Tioga Central School District \$15,000 for the Tiger Farm School and Community Garden Project, irrigation and shelter (*Tioga*)

Tioga Opportunities \$5,000 for the summer lunch box program (*Tioga*)

Tri-Town Youth Club \$13,000 for operating expenses (*Delaware*)

Triple-Cities Makerspace \$3,356 for a wood-shop ventilation system (*Broome*)

Truth Pharm \$15,000 for the Garden of Hope weekly support program (*Broome/Tioga*)

Truth Pharm \$5,000 for a program to target healthcare providers treating opioid addicted patients (*Broome*)

Total: \$219,338



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for South Central New York

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Celebrating 20 Years 1997-2017

The Community Foundation for South Central New York serves Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego and Tioga counties.

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Sixth in a series of columns from our professional advisors

Charitable Giving and the New Tax Act

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (The "TCJA"), the official name of the new tax law signed by President Trump and effective this year, preserves in its entirety the charitable deduction for donations to qualified charities, such as the Community Foundation for South Central New York. And yet, it is projected that the TCJA may have a profound impact on charitable giving.

As under prior law, gifts to qualified charities under the TCJA are deductible as itemized deductions. People who opted to itemize their deductions (previously around one-third of all taxpayers) would total up their itemized deductions and subtract them from their adjusted gross income to arrive at their taxable income.

The reason most experts agree that charitable giving may now be reduced is the significant increase in the standard deduction provided to taxpayers. The 2018 standard deductions are about double the 2017 amounts. For married couples, the 2018 standard deduction is increased from \$12,700 to \$24,000, and for individuals it is increased from \$6,340 to \$12,000. Because of the increase in the standard deduction, it is estimated that only one in ten of all taxpayers will still itemize, down from one-third. It is projected that up to 30 million more Americans will use the standard deduction beginning in 2018.

This means that the tax incentive for making a charitable gift will be eliminated for most taxpayers. Additionally, the federal estate tax deduction is now \$11.2 million per person, so the estate tax benefit of charitable giving has been eliminated for all but the wealthiest individuals. The use of planned charitable giving techniques, which generally are designed to reduce estate taxes – such as charitable remainder trusts or unitrusts, or gifts of a remainder interest in real estate to charity – may decline as well.

As a result of these statutory changes, local charities, which tend to receive support from a broad base of people, may feel the impact more than national charities and educational institutions. Nonprofit organizations, such as the Community Foundation for South Central New York, remain hopeful that many people out of the goodness of their hearts will continue to support their favorite charities despite the less favorable tax benefit. We will have a much better understanding of the impact of all this on charitable organizations twelve months from now.

*Wilbur (Bud) Dahlgren and Mark Gorgos
Coughlin & Gerhart LLP*