



ANNUAL REPORT

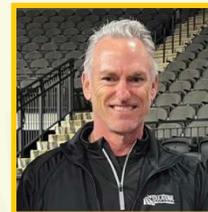
2023-2024

From the president

As

you will see in the stories below, it was quite a year for the U-46 Educational Foundation. There was record interest in our grants and scholarships, and we were able to reward and recognize some truly exceptional students and teachers. The accomplishments of our extraordinary students, often in the face of real hardships, as well as the commitment and innovation of our teachers, are truly inspiring. Accordingly, we at the Foundation are inspired to do more, and we've got ambitious plans to support our U-46 community during the 2024-25 school year. To help with those plans, we're thrilled to be partnering with the Gail Borden Public Library Foundation to host the El Trote De Las Calacas (The Skeleton Trot), a lively cultural event and certified 5K race on Nov. 2, 2024. We expect this to be a remarkable event for participants and provide broad exposure for event sponsors. If you'd like to participate, registration is open now ([click here](#)). Additionally, if you or your organization are interested in sponsoring this event (or other U-46 Foundation events or programs), feel free to send me a note at johntdevereux@gmail.com. You'll find many more details about ways to help later in this newsletter.

Thank you, as always, for your interest in the work that we collectively do, and for your support. ★



John Devereux

- John Devereux
U-46 Educational Foundation Board President

NEWS FROM THE PAST YEAR

Board changes

During summer 2023, the president of the Board of Education appointed Veronica Noland and Chanda Schwartz as the two new Ex Officio members to serve on the U-46 Foundation Board. John Devereux had chosen not to run for re-election, but remained a member-at-large of the Foundation board as he exited the BOE. He was asked to take on the role of vice president, and an email vote confirmed this appointment by president Bud Wilson. Not long after this, the board received the news that Bud Wilson had passed away, and they encouraged John to step up to fill the role of president, which he accepted.



Bud Wilson



Don Waters

In March 2024, board member Don Waters stepped down, assuring the new board president that it had been a “pleasure and honor to serve as a member for many years.” Don first joined the Board in 2016, and brought a wealth of institutional knowledge about educational foundations, having been a founding member of the Elgin

Community College Foundation Board and co-founder of the Elgin Leadership Academy. In his resignation, Don stated that he will “forever be interested in U-46 Educational Foundation news.”

As they look ahead the 2025 fiscal year, board members will appoint a new vice president, and have recently voted to appoint five new board members.

Fundraising throughout the year

Donations in honor of Bud Wilson poured in for several weeks following his death, and his family will work with the Foundation on how best to allocate those funds in the future. *Giving Tuesday* donations last November were doubled, thanks to a matching grant from an anonymous donor, and the Foundation received many generous financial gifts at the end of the calendar year from donors who were reminded in an email campaign of just how much their gifts help U-46 students and teachers.

The *Employee Giving* campaign, launched in February, brought in nearly \$5,000, and a *Teacher Appreciation Week* campaign raised nearly \$1,500 through messages that thanked teachers in personalized cards and emails sent via the U-46 Foundation on behalf of students and families who took part in this unique opportunity.



Donations to the various scholarship funds came in throughout the spring as the Foundation prepared a team of volunteers to read and score student applications, coordinated a networking event and evening reception for Superintendent’s Scholarship winners, and kept communications flowing to students, parents, staff, and volunteers. The largest donation toward scholarships came in the form of a grant from the Seigle Foundation, specifically for the Superintendent’s Scholarship winners, a group whose eligibility is primarily based on being the first in their family to attend college.

In total, \$117,600 in scholarship money, all of it donated, was awarded through 63 Foundation-related scholarships to 49 very deserving U-46 students from the Class of 2024. ★



As part of *Teacher Appreciation Week*, the Foundation hosted a fundraiser that allowed parents to send messages to a favorite teacher or staff member, based on donations of different levels. Some of the messages were personally delivered by Dr. Suzanne Johnson, District U-46 Superintendent.

U-46 FOUNDATION GRANTS IN ACTION

Projects, programs, and equipment funded by U-46 Foundation teacher grants are for innovative teaching tools and enhanced learning experiences that are not covered in the traditional School District U-46 budget.

Teacher / Staff Grants



Channing Elementary students can attend an after-school yoga club, using supplies — yoga mats, stretching straps, and foam blocks — funded by a U-46 Foundation grant.

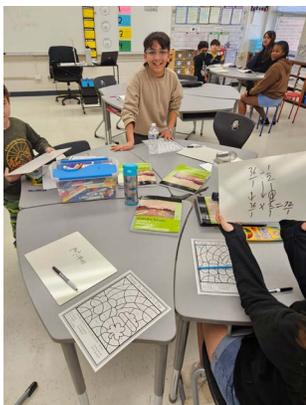


A mini Zen Garden and Fidget Boxes supply students at Canton Middle School with whatever they may need to help with focus.



“The students all commented on the overhead light cover panels and said they really like how the lighting is so much better. I am so grateful for the grant.”

- Donna Kielbasa, Canton Middle School Science teacher



Willard Elementary School students worked with new math sets and enjoyed alternate seating choices, thanks to the grant their teacher received from the U-46 Foundation.



“I love being able to use the yoga balls as an option for our special chair for the day or when it is really needed on a day when I have a lot of extra energy.”

~ Willard Elementary School student, 5th grade

U-46 FOUNDATION GRANTS IN ACTION

Larkin High School's Visual and Performing Arts students had fun and learned a lot from their *Broadway in Chicago* workshop, funded by a U-46 Foundation grant.

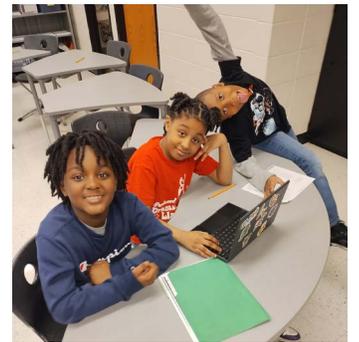


"I had a great time in Aaron Kaburick's workshop! I learned a lot about the reality of what goes on in a professional theater environment. I learned that it's okay to make mistakes, and how to fix them, which made me feel a lot more comfortable with improvising."

~ Leesa S.,
Larkin High School VPAA student



Parkwood Elementary School's *Drama Llamas* performed *Tacky the Penguin*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, and other short stories and plays using their new sound equipment. These kids love to perform!



5th graders at Fox Meadow Elementary worked on their coding using the Dash Robots and the Blockly coding app on District iPads. This is a way for students to practice coding skills such as sequencing, loops, and conditionals. Pictured at left, students worked in teams to create a maze for their robots and then code it correctly from start to finish.



4th graders at Fox Meadow Elementary used the newly purchased kits to create their own stop-motion animation videos, working with partners. They used the Stop Motion app on District iPads as well as the kits, to snap each frame and create videos. The students did a gallery walk to watch the videos from each group when they finished.

Each year, teachers and teaching-related staff members have the opportunity to apply for grants through the U-46 Foundation. Grant recipients are chosen by Foundation board members with oversight by the U-46 administration. Teachers who receive the grants follow up at the end of the school year with photos, testimonials, and other data or information that shows the impact of their project, equipment, or program.

The U-46 Foundation spent approximately \$16,000 on grant materials this past school year. The following chart shows which schools received grants and how the funds were used..

2023-24 Teacher/Staff Grants awarded	
School	Grant description
Channing Elementary	After-School Yoga Club supplies
Bartlett High	Grounds beautification supplies
Elgin High	Custom dry-erase boards
Willard Elementary (two different grants)	Diverse culture book sets; Soft Start activities supplies
Fox Meadow Elementary	Dash robots / stop-motion animation kits
Laurel Hill Elementary	Sensory integration materials
Nature Ridge Elementary	Digital tablet for elementary art class
Canton Middle	SEL Fidget supplies
Ron O'Neal Elementary	STEM supplies
Horizon Elementary	Garden Club seeds and tools
Dream Academy	Phoenix Lounge gaming supplies
Timber Trails Elementary	Seussical the Musical production costs
Larkin High (two different grants)	Art Institute field trip; <i>Broadway in Chicago</i> workshop
Otter Creek Elementary	Podcast walking kits
Glenbrook Elementary	Future Problem Solvers of America fees
Parkwood Elementary	Sound equipment/shirts for <i>Drama Llamas</i>

Community Partner Grants



TalentFest, an annual event held at Elgin's Hemmens Auditorium, is coordinated by volunteers and funded entirely with grant and sponsorship money. Pictured above are the 2024 winners, EHS pianist Sebastian Siwiek (3rd place), BHS vocalist Victoria Smutek (2nd place) and SEHS dance duo Colin Fredricks and Isa Huynh (1st



The EPFL Calendar (left) provides parents with a daily plan to help prepare them and their children for a lifetime of learning during the approximately 2,000 days between birth and kindergarten. The U-46 Foundation has contributed to this project for several years.

District Grants



U-46 Foundation District Grants cover partial costs for the Leadership Entrepreneurship Action and Design (LEAD) Magnet Program at Streamwood High School. This includes funds for legal work, business supplies, and more. Program participants prepare for "Pitch Night," when they make a professional presentation before a panel of judges and the audience, to explain why their business/product is going to be popular and profitable. This year's winners and their mentor (above) are hoping their invention of the "Bowie" hair tie will be the next big thing.

NEW U-46 FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The U-46 Educational Foundation has sponsored the Superintendent's Scholarship since 2012, providing a portal for student applications, volunteers who score their answers and essays, and also hosting a networking event and evening reception for the student winners and their families. It is the main scholarship of the U-46 Educational Foundation. But the Foundation also manages several other scholarships, and this year added two new ones.

Carolyn's caring spirit lives on

Carolyn Van Slyck graduated from Elgin High School in 2000, attended ECC and University of Illinois, and went on to become a principal software engineer for Microsoft. Carolyn was a daughter, wife, sibling, and aunt who had a soft spot for the underdog. After she tragically passed away in 2023 in an accident, her family started the Carolyn Van Slyck Memorial scholarship in her honor.



Carolyn Van Slyck played tennis at Elgin High before going on to college and then starting her career in computer science.

In its first year, there were 108 applicants, and two students received the \$1,000 award. Elgin High graduate Hannah Kolakowski will pursue studies in kinesiology at University of Minnesota, and Streamwood High grad Alexis Serrano will attend University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he will study biomedical engineering.

Three Men and a Scholarship

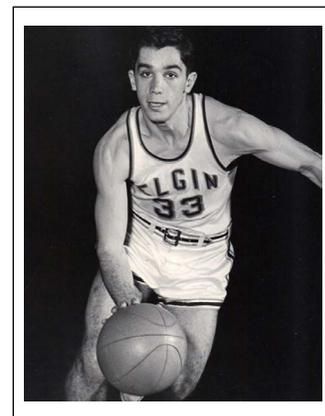
Due to a chance conversation, the John Krafft scholarship was added to the U-46 Foundation this year. This scholarship, named for the former Elgin High School coach, who is in the Illinois Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame, as well as the Elgin Sports Hall of Fame, was started in 1984 by one of his past players, Ron Weisner, and was awarded through the EHS Athletic Department for many years.

Last year, one of Ron's friends paid him a visit, bringing news about a recent winner of the scholarship. Ron was 91, and expressed surprise and joy that his scholarship was still helping Elgin High School students. The friend who had visited was Richard Renner, who himself sponsors a scholarship through the U-46 Foundation. He had promised Ron that he would check up on the status of the Krafft scholarship for him.

This past May, when Ron Weisner passed away, Mr. Renner spoke at his funeral, and told the story of Ron starting the scholarship that has helped 40+ young people further their educational dreams. What he didn't say was that the scholarship had run out of money just in the past year, and would have ended if not for Mr. Renner making a large donation to the U-46 Foundation and arranging for the Krafft scholarship to continue.

This generous gesture in memory of his friend meant that Emelia Rodriguez was able to receive the John Krafft Scholarship this year, which will help pay tuition as she pursues studies at Stetson University in the fall. Mr. Renner had this to say:

"This picture of Ron, from more than 70 years ago, captures the energy and enthusiasm he always had as one of Elgin's finest athletes. I regret that I won't be able to update him on the scholarship he started in honor of his coach, and its latest recipient, but I do know that he had been pleased to learn that his scholarship still existed and would be continuing. Ron was extraordinarily devoted to his family and high school. 92 years of Maroon Pride." ★



If you want to donate to the U-46 Foundation, or any of its scholarship funds start by scanning the QR code.



U-46 Educational Foundation Board

as of July 31, 2024

John Devereux, President

Michael Baggot, Secretary • Mike Lee, Treasurer
Marlene Daubert • Jaime Garcia • Veronica Noland
Matthew Punnoose • Chanda Schwartz
Velma Sept • Chandler Swan • Jerry Turnquist

Dr. Suzanne Johnson, Ex Officio

COMING UP



MARK YOUR CALENDAR SATURDAY, NOV. 2, 2024

The U-46 Educational Foundation will once again be holding a 5K race this fall.

We have teamed up with the Gail Borden Public Library Foundation to host El Troto de las Calacas - the Skeleton Trot! This event highlights our community's celebration of Mexican culture, and the race is patterned after the very popular Carrera de los Muertos® in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, and is a certified 5K race.

REGISTER TODAY!

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We invite you to make a tax-deductible donation to the U-46 Educational Foundation so we can continue to provide scholarships and grants for our deserving U-46 staff and students.

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Foundation@u-46.org • U-46.org/foundation