

Press Clippings 01/11/2019

---The Courier-News---01/11/2019

Mini-grants to reward big ideas

District U46, educational foundation surprise 8 winners

By: Rafael Guerrero



- Centro de Informacion Director Jaime Garcia, left, and Hillcrest Elementary School Principal Teresa Winters, right, congratulate teacher/interventionist Rachel Pinkepank on Thursday with news that she won a mini-grant from the U46 Educational Foundation.

Hillcrest Elementary School educator Rachel Pinkepank was not expecting visitors Thursday as she finished her day teaching a first-grade class.

So when Principal Teresa Winters, Centro de Informacion Director Jaime Garcia and several School District U46 staff members poured into the classroom, she wasn't sure what was going on, she said.

"I was teaching here, and all of a sudden you just kept coming in," Pinkepank, a Title I teacher/interventionist, said of the group that gathered.

The occasion was to announce that Pinkepank was one of eight teachers to receive the first-ever "mini-grants" awarded by the U46 Educational Foundation. The grants, worth up to \$500, were presented during a series of surprise announcements Thursday.

Her grant will help fund the book club she wants to start for some of her students, Pinkepank said.

"I know I put in the application, but I was not expecting it because there were so many great ideas out there," she said.

The foundation typically funds larger-scale projects or programs, like the sky shows at the district's planetarium or the purchase of heart monitors for physical education classes. The mini-grants are intended to pay for smaller or short-term class projects and improvements.

"We wanted to get to the classroom level, which can be as small as a classroom book club," said Stephanie Doran, a foundation facilitator.

"Each of these grants will provide activities that enhance, enrich and complement existing opportunities in U46 for students, families and staff," foundation board President Bud Wilson said in a news release announcing the grant recipients. "We are excited to continue supporting innovative programs in U46 in the years ahead."

The eight winners were selected from 27 proposals were submitted during the application process earlier this school year.

The winning proposals cover a range of missions and subjects. An elementary school principal in Bartlett will be using the money to install sensory path decals to assist students with sensory processing disorders. A Hanover Park elementary school psychologist plans to buy standing desks, foot swings and other flexible seating for students who have trouble concentrating. An Elgin High School teacher will create monthly mentoring events for students dealing with traumatic life experiences.

Pinkepank's book club is for second- and third-grade students and their parents. Families will receive a copy of a book to read together and then will meet to discuss it over dinner, she said.

The plan is to start with one book, and then the program in the future, she said.

"I think this will promote a level of literacy at home and a parent connection, where (the parents) will feel empowered to read with their child and connect," she said. "I really want parents to see that they're partners with us here at school."

U-46 teachers, staff awarded grants for projects

By: Madhu Krishnamurthy

A family book club, a student mentoring program and high school biotechnology experiments are among the innovative ideas that earned eight Elgin Area School District U-46 teachers and support staff members grants to enhance student learning.

U-46 Educational Foundation board members surprised the winners Thursday at their schools with \$500 Innovation Mini-Grants for their creative teaching techniques.

"Each of these grants will provide activities that enhance, enrich and complement existing opportunities in U-46 for students, families and staff," foundation board President Bud Wilson said. Winners were selected from among 27 proposals. They are:

- Philip Church, Bartlett High School science teacher, for hands-on biotechnology experiments related to DNA and heredity.
- Sarah Rabe, principal of Centennial Elementary School in Bartlett, for the development of sensory paths to support students with a sensory processing disorder.
- Lisa Holbrook, Elgin High School multitiered system of supports lead teacher, for Maroon Mentoring Program helping students with traumatic life experiences develop relationships, social skills, and a sense of belonging.
- Heather Flick, science teacher at Eastview Middle School in Bartlett, for supporting Science Olympiad program participants with team supplies.
- Rachel Pinkepank, Title 1 teacher interventionist at Hillcrest Elementary School in Elgin, for establishing parent-child book clubs for second- and third-graders and their families.
- Michelle Esmenda, secretary at Glenbrook Elementary School in Streamwood, for an outdoor marquee to improve communications among students, families and the community.
- Haley Levitan, psychologist at Ontarioville Elementary School in Hanover Park, for providing flexible seating options, such as standing desks and foot swings, for students having difficulty concentrating.
- Martha Laskus, early childhood teacher at Horizon Elementary School in Hanover Park, for creating Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Program activities, such as a light table and related manipulatives to help students acquire skills in a play-based manner.

The U-46 Educational Foundation was started in 2006 by a group of community leaders and district supporters. Its mission is to enhance the quality of education for U-46 students.

A 16-member board oversees the nonprofit, which has distributed nearly \$500,000 to district programs since its inception. That includes purchasing heart rate monitors for physical education students, granting more than \$20,000 to the U-46 Planetarium for its full-dome shows, and supporting U-46 middle school and high school teams competing in the Illinois Science Olympiad.



- Lisa Holbrook, a multitiered system of supports lead teacher at Elgin High School, was among eight recipients Thursday of U-46 Educational Foundation's new Innovation Mini-Grant program. Chandler Swan, a foundation board member, presented Holbrook with a \$500 check to support her Maroon Mentoring Program, which helps students who have gone through traumatic life experiences.

SPORTS

---The Courier-News---01/11/2019

Stepping up under pressure

Ashley Miller takes over for Brianna Young, lifts Larkin past Elgin in Elgin City Classic

By: Paul Johnson



- Larkin's Brianna Young, left, slips past Elgin's Sarah Moskow on Wednesday in the second game of the Elgin City Classic.

Junior guard Brianna Young, one of Larkin's best players, was out of the game with an injury and the Royals were losing at halftime Wednesday night to rival Elgin in the Elgin City Classic.

Larkin coach Steve Knapp was looking for some players to step up.

Ashley Miller answered the call.

The junior forward scored a team-high 15 points and hit the go-ahead basket with 5:05 left in the third quarter as the Royals rallied for a 62-54 victory.

St. Edward picked up a 67-38 win over Westminster Christian in the first game of the doubleheader.

“We had to do it for ‘Bri’ because she’s one of our strongest players,” Miller said. “We needed to get the hang of it, pick it up and win. I have faith in my team.”

Elgin (4-16) led 30-28 at halftime, but Miller’s layup gave the Royals (6-13) a 34-32 lead.

After Elgin cut the deficit to 35-34, Miller converted a pair of free throws, sparking a 17-4 surge that pushed Larkin’s lead to 52-38 early in the fourth quarter.

“We had a couple players step up,” Knapp said. “We started going to a little transition after ‘Bri’ went out. Ashley played really well. Janelle (Clements), she’s like a spark off our bench.

“When one of your better players goes down, somebody else has to step up, and they did.”

Kiara Villa scored 13 points and Clements added nine for Larkin. Young had seven points before being injured with 4:55 left in the second quarter.

“It’s not a for-sure, official thing, but it’s probably a broken finger,” Knapp said. “We have to hope for the best — that she can make it back for the playoffs.

“It’s going to be a big blow for us, but we have some other players that need to step up now.”

Elgin put together a 9-2 burst to end the game, but it was too late. Kamiya Harvey scored a game-high 18 points. Sarah Moskow added 14 points and Emily Graves had 12.

Moskow and Dajha Cooper, Elgin’s best inside players, each fouled out. That allowed Larkin to control the offensive rebounds.

“Our post players got into foul trouble, so offensively that really limited what we could do,” Elgin coach Nick Bumbales said. “We just didn’t do a very good job on the boards. That was basically the big key, and we got beat down the floor a little bit, too.”

Westminster Christian (3-10) led 20-14 in the second quarter of the opener before St. Edward (8-11) started making some shots.

The Green Wave put together a 17-0 run to take a 31-20 lead early in the third quarter and never looked back. St. Edward added an 18-1 spurt in the fourth to pull away.

Brooke Biggins led all scorers for the Green Wave with 19 points. Samantha Ottinger added 17 and Madeline Ellsworth had 13. Keely Frens led Westminster with 16.

"We were missing some shots early and had a couple too many turnovers," St. Edward coach Michelle Dawson said. "The plan was just to keep our defensive pressure up, work to get some stops, and come down and score. I liked the intensity we showed."

---Daily Herald---01/11/2019

Glenbard East turns result around against Streamwood

By: Scott Schmid

Having lost to Streamwood on the road early in the season, the Glenbard East boys basketball team was hoping to extract some revenge Thursday night.

And the Rams did just that with one of their most complete performances of the year, leading from start to finish in an eventual 71-57 victory in Lombard.

Glenbard East improved to 8-10 overall with a 4-5 mark in the Upstate Eight Conference. The Sabres fell to 7-11 and 3-6.

"A lot came down to our defense," said Glenbard East junior guard DaRon Hall, who led the Rams with 18 points. "At their place they beat us so we had to come back home and get our revenge on them.

"And Coach (Scott Miller) is always saying that if you get teammates open and get open shots, that's how you win games. And we did that tonight."

Indeed, the home team shot the ball well throughout, jumping out to a quick 11-1 lead and eventual 18-9 margin after the opening eight minutes.

That margin swelled to 33-18 at half and as many as 19 points in the third quarter before Streamwood mounted a mini-comeback behind Division I recruit Keenon Cole.

Cole scored 22 of his game-high 28 points in the final two quarters, including a pair of dunks, the latter of which was a breakaway windmill. The senior helped his team close to within 11 on three occasions in the fourth, but the visitors could not get the deficit into single digits.

Glenbard East closed out the contest at the free-throw line, making 11 free throws in the final period. Alijah Nelson hit seven of those and finished with 18 points.

"In practice we always talk about making free throws," Nelson said. "In games we've lost a couple of times because of missed free throws.

"We recently had a players meeting and we talked about becoming one unit, becoming one family. Today we became a family. We were up for each other and clapping for each other. We came out, shared the ball, got open shots and we were hitting them. It was a good game all-around."

Four Rams finished in double figures, with Antonio Davis contributing 11 points and 12 rebounds and Deon Cook scoring 10 points.

"We feel like we are getting better," Miller said. "We came out with a lot of energy, Antonio really gave us a spark early. Our defense is getting better and offensively, we are starting to run the offense a lot better. We are getting that open shot, being more unselfish."

Nikola Sinik added 10 points for Streamwood.

Huber scores 25 in Glenbard East win over Streamwood

By: Matt Le Cren

Glenbard East hasn't had a lot of success this season, but the Rams do have something any team would want.

Sophomore guard Lauren Huber is a foundation piece the young Rams can build around. The varsity rookie has scored as many as 35 points in a game. On Thursday she poured in a game-high 25 in a 59-37 Upstate Eight Conference girls basketball win over Streamwood in Lombard.

"She's definitely huge," Glenbard East senior Sophie Moore said. "She always gives her best effort every single game.

"It's really helpful knowing that she's on my side. She controls the game."

The host Rams (6-17, 4-8) were in control from the start thanks to the play of Huber and Moore, who had 12 points and 5 assists. The pair came up with big plays whenever the Sabres threatened to make things interesting.

Huber tallied 7 points during an opening 15-2 run and had 13 points by halftime to give the Rams a 23-12 cushion. She and Moore combined to sink five of their team's six 3-pointers.

Huber made 9 of 11 shots, including her final 5 and went 4 for 6 from the free-throw line. But she made an impact at both ends, adding 5 rebounds, 5 steals and 3 assists. She turned 4 of her steals into points at the other end.

"It's exciting to have this caliber of player," Glenbard East coach Nicole Miller said. "It's bright for the future.

"She's really growing and learning how to control a game. She knows when to step it up and defensively she's a great defender."

Huber demonstrated that in the third quarter after the Sabres (4-16, 3-7) had cut the gap to 25-20 following a three-point play from guard Mandy Mien.

The Rams led 32-26 when Moore sank a jumper that triggered an 11-0 run. Moore was on the bench with 4 fouls for most of it, but Katie Mulatz found Huber for a 3-pointer.

Jillian O'Brien then made a 3-pointer and Huber followed with a steal and layup, then sank a free throw on the ensuing possession to extend the lead to 43-26.

Vivian Sumoski halted the run with two free throws for the Sabres, but the Rams answered by scoring the first 6 points of the fourth quarter. Morgan Pederson and Hayden Dudek sandwiched a pair of free throws around an inside basket from Lisa Stanski.

"I think the key was really to swing the ball around, to use all of our players and just to look inside and outside," Huber said. "We just had to keep our mindset positive and just know that this is our home court and we should be controlling the pace of the game.

"The other team had a great night. They kept fighting and stayed in it."

Indeed, the Rams had trouble controlling the slashing drives of Mien, who finished with 12 points, 9 rebounds, 3 assists and 3 steals. But she scored only 2 points in the fourth quarter.

Glenbard East has only three seniors, so there is hope for the future. But Huber said veterans like Moore have helped her transition to the varsity level.

"It's been a lot of fun to be with the girls," Huber said. "Sophie has kind of been my role model as far as leadership.

"When she leaves next year, I can take what she's taught me throughout the season and keep giving it to the team."