

2019-2020

Cobleskill-Richmondville

Education Foundation

Year in Review



The **Cobleskill-Richmondville Education Foundation** is a not-for-profit organization founded to support, enhance and promote exceptional education opportunities for students in the Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District that are *innovative* and *supplemental* to the school budget. The foundation was established through the inspiration and guidance of Samuel A. Shevat, who served as superintendent of schools from 1987 to 2007.

For the 2019-2020 school year, the Foundation awarded a total of \$15, 478.81, including the Leadership College Scholarship, 62 rapid access grants (\$4685), a special request (\$110), 8 larger grants (\$5833.81), and the Brighten The Day Special Project (\$4,850), resulting in several outstanding academic, socio-emotional, and physical developmental opportunities that are supplemental to the school budget for C-R students. Major projects that were funded include:

- **High School Italian Language Learners' Trip to the American Italian Heritage Museum.** This grant was awarded to Francesca D'amico-Bailey so that her students could learn about immigration from Italy, as well as contributions from Italians and Italian Americans. This experience fostered authentic connections to what students learned in Italian class. They studied exhibits and artifacts to make inferences about Italians and immigration from Italy and learned how Italians shaped and influenced neighboring communities, as well as their own. This trip to the Italian Heritage Museum was an innovative, enrichment experience, as it provided a unique opportunity for students to investigate this topic outside of the typical high school learning environment.
- **The Road Text for Personal Finance for High School Business Students.** Funds for this program were awarded to Mary Bristol. *The Road Text for Personal Finance* is a hands-on, online program that applies all major areas of the Business curriculum to real life scenarios. Students take on the role of an individual and have to make important life choices. These choices include living by themselves or with roommates, buying insurance, deciding the amount of money to be set aside into a 401K, and opening bank accounts. This program ties together budgeting, insurance, retirement, checking accounts, using credit, and student debt management, and more. Its use demonstrates innovation in education by allowing high school students to learn by doing, thus helping them truly understand the importance of savvy personal finance skills.
- **Middle School Maker Space.** These grants were awarded to Elizabeth Agen and Margaret Corrigan in both round 1 and 2 grant cycles, respectively. Funds awarded purchased a class set of 8 Lego WeDo 2.0 ReadyGo Student Packs, which are Lego robot kits used to explore and

create while integrating science, technology, engineering, art, and math, or STEAM. These robot kits come with access to lesson plans and open ended activities aligned with state standards for STEAM. The kits also support the CRCS strategic plan; in that, they offer opportunities for students to connect with each other, as well as faculty and staff. Funds awarded also helped in the reorganization of the underused Library Reading room into a collaborative makers' space, where students can continue to develop hands on creativity and problem solving. In addition, Maker Kits are available for other teachers to sign out of the library and utilize in their classrooms in collaboration with Library Media Specialist, Margaret Corrigan, in order to support STEAM learning. The Makerspace is an innovative way to foster student interest in the STEAM subjects, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration among teachers, staff, and students at Golding Middle School.

- **Visiting Historians and Civil War Research at Radez Elementary.** Funds for the Visiting Historians project were awarded to Laura Gagnon and the Fifth Grade Team. This project brought in local published historians to share their expertise, primary documents, and time and energy. They spread their joy and excitement for the research process to the entire 5th grade student body. Fifth graders visited with the historians, completed library lessons in researching primary documents about the Civil War, including pension papers, diaries, and letters, as well as explored local history related to the Civil War. This project was an inventive and engaging way to foster an appreciation in intermediate students for historical research about the Civil War.
- **Project Positive Affirmation in Radez Elementary Restrooms.** This grant was awarded to Lydia VanEvera at Radez, so that she and her team could turn the student restrooms into havens of inspiration, motivation, and peace. Since school bathrooms have a reputation where mischief and bullying can happen, Project Positive Affirmation is a creative way to transform the bathrooms into a place where all students read at least one positive message every day. This, in turn, fosters positive attitudes and socio-emotional health in intermediate learners.
- **Sensory Path Project, Radez Elementary.** Funds were awarded to Jennifer Rightmyer and the Radez *Leadership Through Service Team* to purchase stencils in order to create sensory pathways in the halls and on the walls at Radez Elementary School. Sensory paths are interactive pathways made with stencils or stickers and serve as a platform which allows students to release stress and cope with different emotions. The *Leadership Through Service Team* is a team of fifth graders who applied to be a part of this leadership group and wish to be leaders within their own school community. The team will create the paths inside of Radez and then will create sensory paths outside for students to use at recess. The stencils will also be shared with Ryder Elementary School. These pathways are a new and fresh way to allow energetic elementary students to improve their focus for success in the classroom.
- **Wireless Probes for Increased Learning in High School Science.** This grant was paid to the high school science department to allow Cobleskill- Richmondville high school students to collect and share data with their classmates in a more effective and authentic way.
- **Sweethearts and Heroes.** Golding Middle School and Cobleskill-Richmondville High School students were awarded this grant in order to make their schools a place for Sweethearts and

Heroes, which is also a program designed to educate people about the impact of bullying on society. Presenters Tom Murphy, Rich Yarosh, and Jason Spector teach action plans for all members of the bullying cycle which empowers students to change their school climate, including bystander empowerment, empathy, and leadership. Through an interactive presentation, students learned about the Five Bully Buttons and were called to action to be a sweetheart, as well as a lesson in overcoming adversity in order to be a positive change agent. Sweethearts and Heroes day was February 26, 2019 and included both middle and high school assemblies for all students in grades 6-12, as well as focused, 45 minute break out sessions for selected and at risk students. The program also included after school sessions for athletes, faculty and staff.

- **Best Buddies Leadership Conference.** This grant was awarded to Paul Brosious, Lynne Bramski, and Nicole Culver in order to send C-R High School students Grace Baker and Madelyn Weiss to the Best Buddies Leadership Conference at Indiana State in the summer of 2019. Best Buddies is an international nonprofit organization, the mission of which is to broaden inclusion for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living. Cobleskill-Richmondville High School established The Best Buddies Club last school year. CR students, Grace Baker and Madelyn Weiss attended the Best Buddies Leadership Conference at Indiana University this past summer, where the theme was “Inclusion Lives Here.” The conference curriculum focused on these student leaders sharing their ideas, leading the discussions, and participating in smaller groups to improve upon and expand their ideas in order to bring them back to their clubs to implement. Ideas that Baker and Weiss brought back included organizing a local friendship walk, Best Buddies Ball, and other ideas to share time with one’s best buddy in order to spread the friendship.
- **Special Project- Brighten the Day.** With a seed donation from regular Foundation supporters, Paul and Diana Praus, funds were earmarked for this special project and increased from private donations from the Board of Trustees and then matched by the Foundation. Funds totaling \$4,850 went to providing games, puzzles, crafts, and sports equipment to more than 175 C-R students participating in the Backpack and Joshua Projects. Items to “brighten the day” during the COVID closure and shift to remote learning were delivered to 83 families in June.

The Cobleskill-Richmondville Education Foundation is excited to have funded these innovative projects and events, thereby fostering the intellectual, socio-emotional, and physical growth of Cobleskill-Richmondville students.