

# Xtra-curricular

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH COUNTRY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Winter 2022

## FROM THE HELM

Not that anyone has been counting, but 2023 marks the 25th year since the incorporation of the South Country Education Foundation. And, we have been busy.

We have funded between 25 and 35 grant cycles in that time and given out upwards of \$1.1-million dollars. This money went directly to school classrooms and other organizations that promote the growth and development of young people in the South Country area.



Our board of trustees, usually 12 but expandable to 15, puts most of its efforts into reading as many as 40 grants in a cycle and gearing up for the SCEF annual cocktail party and fund raiser. We've auctioned off two vintage Mercedes, artwork by noted local talent including Malcolm Morley, Barry Rockwell, David Ebner, John DiNaro and Kate Madsen. On top of that, dozens of local restaurants and businesses have donated food for our guests and tens of dozens of items for our silent auction.

The late Art Cooley teamed with Tom Williams of Brookhaven and high school principal Bill Griffith to get SCEF started. My husband, Pete, incorporated the group as a 501(c)(3), a charitable organization, and we were off and running. The first five auctions were held at our home and then Chantal and Richard Berman offered their property to the event. The 2023 party will be the 20th at their Academy Lane home.

So the adage that it "takes a village" to foster success is demonstrated in the achievements of the South Country Education Foundation.

I hope you read through the nearly \$51,000 of innovative, perhaps life changing projects SCEF funded this fall that are listed in this newsletter. Also, look over the listing of hundreds of individuals and businesses that make SCEF achieve its goal of making ordinary days extraordinary days. If you name or business appears on the list, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Sincerely,

Robin Young Roe  
President

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR SCEF

For Chantal and Richard Berman, the request by Dava Stravinsky to host the annual SCEF Cocktail Party and Fund Raiser was an easy yes.



They had supported the previous five events both through attendance, solicitation of donations and auction purchases. "We liked the idea of it and enjoyed it very much," said Richard. Chantal added that she had long been involved with the Becker/Gambles Music Fund, a special committee that promotes all things musical such as local concerts, master classes in the schools and supplying instruments to students in need.

Though their own educations were different, the couple share their dedication to improving the classroom experience for young people. Chantal attended private school outside of Paris and Richard is the product of the West Islip public schools and the son of a public school Spanish teacher. Their own children, Laurence and Juliet, are both Bellport High School graduates.

*Continued on next page*

## WANT TO DONATE?

We hope supporters will consider the SCEF as they plan their annual gifts. Donations may be sent to SCEF, PO Box 512, Bellport, NY. 11713. Donations may also be processed at our website [sccfonline.org](http://sccfonline.org).

*Looking forward to seeing you at our 25th annual Auction and Cocktail Party on July 8, 2023!*

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR SCEF CONTINUED

The annual event – often referenced as “Chantal’s party” - has found a home at the beautiful bay front property of the Bermans. Grandchildren have also helped out with the eldest, Oscar, in recent years working at the oyster bar. “He doesn’t eat oysters but he shucks fast,” Chantal noted. Young grandchildren – Florence, Agatha, Henry and Elliot, pass trays of hors d’oeuvres to the guests, numbering more than 300 this year.

The auction has added to their personal possessions with the purchase of a Malcolm Morley painting, bistro chairs and table, plants and more including this year’s purchase of a violin crafted by Bellport High School graduate Karl Thorndike. They plan on turning the violin over to the Becker/Gamble Music Fund which will make sure it finds its way to the hands of a student in the district.

Chantal recalled memories of writing out invitations, making flower arrangements, seeking donations of food and auction items. “It was rewarding work and I hope we made a difference.”

## SCEF GRANTS NEARLY \$51,000 FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS

We are awarding a total of nearly \$51,000 in grants for this school year. We are proud to be able to support these grants with funds raised by our very generous community. These grants will reach a large population of students in the South Country School District.

### FORENSIC SCIENCES CLASS AT SUFFOLK COUNTY JAIL

\$450.00 | Kelly Gerolami and Cailey Williams | Bellport High School

Attend a class at Suffolk Jail to learn about how forensic science is used to catch and arrest criminals. Cost is for transportation only.

### 3RD GRADE CERAMIC TILE WALL

\$600.00 | Kiara Braithwaite | Kreamer Street Elementary School

Provide all graduating 3rd grade students with a ceramic tile to paint with a favorite memory, hobby, or activity.

### CADET CORE

\$2,000.00 | Bill Langhan | Bellport High School

Purchase authentic military equipment as part of their cadet core program. Will help ensure it’s accurate and real-life. Funding will go towards the purchases of rucksacks and wooden marching rifles.

### SPORTS GRANT

\$2,000.00 | Bill Langhan | Bellport High School

Use grant money to purchase a gaming system for Varsity eSports teams in order to help them compete for scholarship money.

### UNPLUG AND FALL IN LOVE WITH READING AGAIN

\$1,971.28 | Shawana Vega | Bellport Middle School

In-class reading library equipment and books.

### BUILDING AND FLYING DRONES

\$1,990.00 | Jeremy Freeman | Bellport Middle School

Work in groups of 2-3 students to learn how to build and fly quadcopters / drones using math, computer science, and other skills.

### FLEXIBLE SEATING AND TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

\$1,841.41 | Krista Albrecht | Bellport High School

Provide a variety of flexible seating options for students with disabilities to help them learn to either stimulate or relax depending on their individual needs

### WOODWORKER’S PROGRAM

\$1,065 | Pete Cisek | Frank P. Long Intermediate School

Pete Cisek will cut and prepare “wooden kits” for 80 students in grades four and five including bird feeders, birdhouses, flower pot holders and book holders. They will complete 240 projects throughout the 2022-2023 school year working cooperatively on hands-on projects. This will help students improve motor skills, learning measurements, following detailed instruction and completing projects they can take home and be proud of. Note: Mr. Cisek implemented a woodworkers program more than 20 years ago and returns each year to continue the project with current students.

### FOR THE LOVE OF READING

\$1,149.25 | Dusty Deery | Frank P. Long Intermediate School

Dusty Deery is requesting 25 PlayAway audio books to build her own PlayAway library for her inclusion class. Students will utilize the books during independent reading, Reader’s Workshop, and book clubs. Playaway books give any student the ability to read (and listen to) any book. While the students are listening to the audio book, they follow along with a hard copy, thus building comprehension skills. Students with disabilities and learning challenges will have more opportunities to interact with higher level texts as well as with their peers.

### COMMUNITY CONNECTION: HOW TO MAKE A PIZZA

\$600 | Deirdre Wittman, Katherine Frankie, Michelle Drucker and

Alissa Walters - Kindergarten | Kreamer Street Elementary School

To provide a real world experience that kindergarten students can write about in their How-To Unit, 5 classes of kindergarten grade classes and 2 self-contained classes and chaperones will walk through Bellport Village and then go to Cafe Castello to make individual pizzas. Each class will work with an adult chef, smelling and tasting the different ingredients and following step by step directions in a recipe. Students will each write their own How-To books about the process of making a pizza and will discuss with their teacher the photographs of the trip and the activities, enhancing the district’s continual focus on the Common Core standards.

### COMMUNITY CONNECTION: HOW TO MAKE PIZZA

\$510 | Gina Benzie | Kreamer Street Elementary School

To provide a real world experience that first-grade students can write about in their How-To Unit, four first grade classes and chaperones will walk to Café Castello in Bellport Village through Bellport Village to make pizzas. Each class will work with an adult chef, smelling and tasting the different ingredients and following step by step directions to make their own pizza, following a recipe. The students will write their own How-To book about the process of making a pizza and will discuss with their teacher the photographs of the trip and the activities, enhancing the district’s continual focus on the Common Core standards.

### PAPERCRAFT WITH TIFA CHII VISITING ARTIST RESIDENCY

\$2,000.00 | Lealand Richard | Verne Critz Elementary School

Tifa Chii, a Hong Kong born, New York City trained paper artist, will present and share her work in person to all art classes at the Verne W. Critz Elementary School. The student population at V.W.C. School is approximately 265 students, and all will benefit from meeting a professional artist in small groups, seeing her work in person, and asking questions about her career path. During her residency, she will present to each classroom for a 40-minute period. After her residency, art teacher Lealand Richard will work with the students on a 4-5 class period art project in collage and cut-paper inspired by the techniques and whimsical style of Tifa Chii’s work. These may include paper castles inspired by 2050’s Disney imagery (one of Tifa’s great inspirations), animals, and nature themes. These projects will then be displayed at the end-of-year art shows, both district-wide and building specific.

### ROBOTICS CODING: AN UNFORGETTABLE STEM EXPERIENCE

\$1,043.00 | Mary Pettit with Jack Burke, SC Steam Director

Frank P. Long Intermediate School

As society innovates and technology advances, the need for professionals who understand how these technologies work and who can propose practical solutions continues to grow. This program will give students in the primary grades experience with a curriculum that is enriched and integrated with STEM activities. (STEM education helps to bridge the ethnic and gender gaps sometimes found in math and science fields. Initiatives have been established to increase the roles of women and minorities in STEM-related fields.)

Fifth grade students will have the opportunity to explore and experience STEM activities that connect to their lives and inspire and motivate them to pursue the growing field.

They will work with a partner to use coding and design to build, program and test a robot.

In addition, students will engage in productive struggle as they make multiple attempts, take risks, engage in discourse with other classmates, and use innovative ways to redesign and test their model. Finally, this project can be shared with other fifth grade classes as the robots can be reprogrammed and coded again. Each student will create a digital presentation to be used as a self-assessment of their learning which can be used when presenting our experience to the board when we are finished.

### **HOME SWEET HOME CENTER**

**\$305.93 | Deirdre Wittmann | Kreamer Street Elementary School**

Home Sweet Home will be a play-based educational center in the classroom. The students will build vocabulary, improve their problem-solving skills and review some math skills. The purpose is to create a positive environment where students will think outside the box. The center will change monthly and will include a pizza shop, a restaurant, and a bakery. The materials include fake food, a cash register, and money, as well as accessories for the center. These activities will align with our social, emotional curriculum as well as building the children's vocabulary and math skills.

### **SENSORY PLAYGROUND**

**\$1,569.09 | Aimee Volk | Kreamer Street Elementary School**

This grant proposal is for a sensory playground that would provide students a hands-on interactive multi-sensory activity, supporting imaginative play and social skills. The plan is to set this interactive play up in an enclosed outdoor courtyard area. This sensory playground would include the following areas: music in nature, a dinosaur dig, hands on exploration and nature games. The outdoor learning environment would be designed to be a safe, inclusive and organized place for all these areas of play, music, learning and fun.

### **TEEN THEME BOOK CLUB**

**\$1,375.70 | Kim Livingston | Boys and Girls Club of the Bellport Area**

This grant provides for a nine-month book club that would meet weekly, including summer months, to assist with ongoing socialization and academic literacy outside of the school environment. Outreach for the program will be done between the Boys and Girls Club of the Bellport area's social work interns and the Bellport High School Librarian and social work staff, identifying those students who would benefit from peer social interaction, literary skills, and processing of trauma and developmental challenges faced by youth today. Teen Book Club will be led by Phatima Mitchell, a certified school librarian and educator, through her non-profit, A Journey With Words.

### **LIFE SKILLS FIELD TRIPS**

**\$1,932.78 | Justin White | Bellport High School**

This grant would provide students in the 12:1:1 and the 12:1:4 classes at the high school, the opportunity to develop educationally, socially and professionally outside the classrooms by attending field trips to the following locations: Coram Bowling Alley, Cafe Castello, and Coastal Steward Marine Education Program at Cedar Beach. The 12:1:1 and 12:1:4 classes offered at the high school are designed to develop and maintain necessary skills for the students to be functioning members of society. The experiences these students would gain attending these field trips, compliment the academic studies and address the NYS Standards of Career Development, Integrated Learning, Universal Foundation Skills, and Career Majors.

### **LIFE SKILLS FIELD TRIPS**

**\$1,714.12 | Jane Quatralo | Bellport High School**

This grant would fund field trips for the 12:1:1 and the 12:1:4 classes at the high school, by providing a variety of opportunities for the students to develop educationally, socially and professionally outside of their classrooms. A field trip to the Smithaven Mall, where students would participate in a scavenger hunt, enabling them to work in groups, communicate with each other, utilize map reading skills and public navigation. In addition, students will be reading and ordering lunch from a menu at California Pizza Kitchen. A trip to Bayport Flower House would involve a tour and observation of the day to day operation of this business. Students will be given the opportunity to create a bouquet of flowers to bring home. This program will complete academic activities by addressing the following NYS standards: Career Development, Integrated Learning, Universal foundation Skills, and Career Majors.

### **JOURNALING FOR SELF CARE AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

**\$794.71 | Stephanie Pirozzi | Bellport High School**

The use of journaling for self-expression is a positive way for students to work within the writing process. It is also a way to help students to identify negative thoughts and behavior, and is used as a vehicle to de-stress and wind down. This grant would fund materials such as personal journals, markers and inspirational and motivational stickers to be used by the students to express creativity in their own personal journals.

### **CULTIVATING MULTICULTURAL REPRESENTATION AND BILITERACY IN DUAL LANGUAGE LIBRARIES**

**\$1,994.71 | Jessica Weinberg | Brookhaven Elementary School**

This grant would fund the purchase of literature for the Dual Language program at Brookhaven Elementary School. The literature would include Spanish leveled readers non-fiction books, and literature series highlighting multiculturalism within the Hispanic heritage. There are currently 160 K through 3rd graders in the Dual Language program that would benefit from these materials, while supporting unity and diversity within the classroom.

### **BELLPORT HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE MASTERCLASS AND PERFORMANCE AT THE JAZZ LOFT**

**\$1,597.73 | Angelina Wasson | Bellport High School**

This grant would fund the Bellport High School Jazz Ensemble, a field trip to tour the historic Jazz Loft in Stony Brook Village and attend a masterclass with Dr. Tom Manuel, Artist in Residence Chair at Stony Brook University on jazz ensemble and improvisation techniques. In addition, the students will have the opportunity to perform for friends, parents and community members in this historic venue. Through the funding of this grant, students will have the opportunity to learn more about the jazz community on Long Island and hopefully be more immersed in the experiences that the Jazz Loft offers.

### **KIDS IN THE GARDEN**

**\$805.00 | Sarah Rauch | Verne W. Critz Elementary School**

This grant would fund the building of a raised garden bed frame to be filled with compost for the students to plant a variety of seeds. The students will learn to care for the garden, track the growth of the plants in their science journals, and eventually harvest the vegetables to eat. In addition, the students will learn how to prepare the soil for the different seasons, based on the types of vegetables they are planting. This project would serve as a great hands-on experience for all grades at Verne W. Critz.

### **BELLPORT HIGH SCHOOL CTE CULINARY ARTS ACADEMY COOK AROUND THE WORLD COOKING COMPETITION**

**\$2,000 | Camille Masem | Bellport High School**

This grant would help the students at BHS attend the "Cook Around the World" culinary competition at Disney World. The grant funds would be used to help defray the cost of the experience. Students will compete against teams from around the country and around the world in a manner similar to the popular TV show "Chopped". Each team is assigned to a region of the world and must create dishes that exemplify the flavors and culture of that region.

### **ENHANCED LUNCH AND RECESS EXPERIENCES FOR ALL BMS STUDENTS**

**\$1,212.10 | Kevin Glynn | Bellport Middle School**

The goal of this grant is to provide all BMS students an enhanced lunch and recess experience by providing each cafeteria a cart of games, sports equipment, board games and movies. Staff members are looking to promote socialization through play and provide constructive activities during outdoor recess and free time in the cafeteria. Funding will be used to purchase equipment, games, walkie talkies (to communicate between the 2 cafeterias) and 2 storage carts.

### **TAKE ME TO THE MOON AND BACK... TO THE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER**

**\$1,842.94 | Shannon Kulick | Frank P. Long Intermediate School**

Take Me to the Moon and Back...to the Media Center will help create a dedicated reading nook in the FPL library media center. This reading nook will give students a comfortable place to sit, read, learn and discuss ideas. Adding moon chairs to the reading nook will give students a flexible seating choice while in the FPL library media center. Funding will be used to purchase 4 moon chairs and 2 side tables for the reading nook.

### **SWINGS FOR ALL**

**\$1,357.37 | Aimee Volk and Erin Cawley | Kreamer Street Elementary School**

Swings for all is to provide students with an inclusive playground that can be enjoyed by all students. Currently, the kindergarten playground does not have a swingset. Many of our special education students use this playground. A swing frame will be added with an adaptive swing and a bench swing. In addition, an adaptive swing will be added to the current swing set on the grades 1-3 playground. Funding will be used to purchase a swing set frame and 2 swing seats

### **LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD WITH PLAYAWAY TABLETS**

**\$1,265.05 | Aimee Volk | Kreamer Street Elementary School**

This grant will make it possible to purchase Playaway Tablets and audio books for children to use in the classroom. The Playaway Tablets help kids master verbal, reading and writing skills. It will also help kids gain the knowledge they need to transit from learning to read to reading to learn. The preloaded audiobooks make it possible for each child to choose his/her own mode of learning which increases confidence. Funding will be used to purchase 4 Playaway Tablets and a small library of audiobooks.

### **CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE AT BHS GOES TO COLLEGE**

**\$1,650.00 | Nicole Colao | Bellport High School**

The Center for Excellence is a club at BHS for students on track for college but do not have a person in their lives to help guide them on that path. The club provides experiences and support for these students throughout high school and beyond. They are asking for funding for a series of trips to various local colleges/universities for their students. Students will learn about programs and college life through visits to St. Joseph's College, Suffolk Community, and Stony Brook University. Funding for this grant includes the cost of busing.

### **LONG ISLAND AQUATIC LIFE AND LOCAL VALUABLE ESTUARIES**

**\$11,483.60 | 5th Grade Teachers at Frank P. Long Intermediate School**

**Frank P. Long Intermediate School**

Fifth graders will attend a field trip to the Long Island Aquarium where they will be engaged in interactive displays and programs, get a behind the scenes tour and attend an educational program called "Our Valuable Estuary".

Students' imaginations will be unleashed as the field trip emphasizes the importance of marine life and environmental preservation. We will be attending an educational program titled Our Valuable Estuary where they will recognize estuaries as critical for the survival of many species that depend on the estuary as places to live, feed and reproduce. They will learn about our own Peconic Estuary which has been designated an "Estuary of National significance."

Funding for this field trip includes the cost of busing, entrance into Long Island Aquarium, a behind the scenes tour and an educational program for all 5th grade students. There are 299 students in the fifth grade at this time.

### **CHROMEBOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM**

**\$1,529.00 | Jamie Calise and Lisa Salpietro | Bellport Middle School**

Provide chromebooks for 7th and 8th grade students in the integrated co-taught classroom. In speaking with Jamie, these additional chromebooks are being requested because students have lost or broken their existing chromebooks in some cases and do not have the ability to get access to another. All classes have 1 loaner Chromebook, but that has not been enough.

# Thank you to our 2022 Donors

If you don't see your name here, we apologize. Please send info to [robinyoungroe@aol.com](mailto:robinyoungroe@aol.com)

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*The foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization committed to improving opportunities for all students in the South Country School District. Its mission is to promote educational initiatives by providing supplemental financial support for projects and programs that fall outside of the District budget.*

# Appeal Newsletter

**HELP US INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN [WWW.SCEFONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.SCEFONLINE.ORG)**

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### **APPEAL NEWSLETTER**

Samantha Fassman, Robin Young Roe & Diane Zanazzi, *Editors*

Searles Graphics, *Production and Printer*  
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