

WEF NEWS:

First of all, we need to take this opportunity to say, “Welcome Fall and Welcome Back Webster District Students and Staff!” To say the least, it has been an interesting 2020 so far. We applaud the hard work, resilience and commitment of our district leaders and staff, to carry on and provide the best educational environment possible for each of our students. We hope this finds you and your families healthy and safe during these very unexpected times.

Like most businesses and organizations across the nation, Webster Education Foundation has experienced a complete change and redirection of our energies and efforts over the past 9 months. Major fundraising activities for the entire 2020 season were cancelled due to the pandemic and because of our responsibility to keep this community safe. Over the past several years, Taco Bingo, the Memorial Day Arts and Crafts Extravaganza and the WEF Golf Scramble have been our major fundraising events, generating more than 90% of the revenue our organization depends on to carry out our mission to invest in the students in the Webster School District. All of those events were cancelled this past spring and summer. Again, we would like to take an opportunity to thank all of the local businesses and individuals that have supported these events in the past. We hope that you are all weathering this storm with support from this amazing community, and that we can all work together and get back on track in the coming year!

Back in March, Webster Education Foundation was able to give a \$5000 donation to the district to aide in the distribution of school lunches during the months of virtual learning at the end of the 2019-20 school year. We have been working along with the district, CESA-11 and the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, who provided a grant to both the Webster and Baldwin school districts for telecommunications (internet) access for non-profits in underserved areas.

Prior to the transition to virtual learning, in December, we were able to grant the Webster Middle school a \$3000 donation to ensure that each middle school student was given a snack in the afternoon to help them focus through the end of the school day. A \$300 donation was made to Mrs. Richison’s 3rd grade classroom for STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) kits.

In May, we awarded four scholarships to deserving 2020 graduates. Congratulations to Daniel Ingalls, Amanda Preston and Sydney Pavlicek! William Deblieck was awarded the Roger Anderson Memorial scholarship, honoring our WEF founder. Two alumni scholarships were also awarded to Amy Henry and Danielle Formanek.

We were able to pull together a really fun virtual 5K event in August. Over 80 virtual athletes participated and we raised almost \$1500 for our 2021 Senior scholarship fund. Thank you to all of our participants and a big shout out to the following businesses who sponsored this event: St. Croix Regional Medical Center, Hopkins Sand and Gravel, Yellow River Pharmacy, Community

Bank, Jensen-Sundquist Insurance Agency, Burnett Medical Center and Jimmy Formanek (for designing our 2020 "Go the Social Distance" t-shirts).

Because of forward thinking and planning on the part of the WEF board founders, and extremely generous support from Nexen Group Inc., our Foundation has been investing in endowment funds with the St. Croix Valley Foundation for several years. These accounts will grow and keep the Foundation strong and financially solvent for the long term. However, we are not to the stage being a self-funded organization yet. We still rely on regular fundraising and support from businesses and individuals. This year, more than any other, we will be looking for financial support from alumni, community members and businesses, to be able to meet our goals and fill the gaps for the 2020-21 school year. End of the year gifts to the Foundation will be extremely appreciated.

There is still a tax strategy that can keep both givers (at least those who are retirement age) and getters on course with charitable donations. Taxpayers age 70½ and older can use a qualified charitable distribution to donate up to \$100,000 annually directly from a traditional IRA to an eligible public charity without counting the donated amount as taxable income. Instead, it would count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) and reduce the taxable amount of your mandatory withdrawal. Using your RMD as a charitable contribution will exclude that amount from your adjusted-gross income (AGI) for the year, which means that in addition to reducing your income taxes, it also can decrease the amount of **Social Security that is subject to tax** and potentially lower your Medicare premiums. Please check with your financial planner and see if making a charitable contribution this year might be a win-win for all of us!

Please find the cut out donation form in this addition of The Bridge. Check out www.websteref.org for more information about our Foundation. Email wef@webster.k12.wi.us with questions or if you are interested in being a member of the Webster Education Foundation board.