

Press Release

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Contact: Andrea Pulling – Executive Director
Darlington County Education Foundation
Phone: 843-639-7239
Email: dcef@roadrunner.com

DARLINGTON COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANTS

Hartsville, SC – (May 29, 2015) – The Darlington County Education Foundation recently awarded eleven grants which totaled \$18,699.39.

The following grants were awarded:

- \$9,850- *Brunson Dargan Elementary School* - “YouthTouch” –This grant is a matching grant to enable the school to fully implement a flagship educational technology program that integrates robotics with curriculum. YouthTouch is a complete system of hands-on technology integration for learners in Grades 3-5. By integrating technology throughout the curriculum students are exposed to a wide array of technological tools and activities that promote problem-solving, decision-making, collaboration, and creative innovation. The goal is to expose students to the needed skills of the 21st century.
- \$415– *Darlington High School* – “Rustie Burlap Prints” – This grant is for advanced art students to learn the process of printmaking. The students will print images on fabric which will entail learning the process, personalizing a design and finally printing on the fabric. Students will receive hands on art experiences otherwise not afforded without this grant.
- \$1,316 – *Darlington High School* - “Learning Commons Kiosks” – This grant enables the Library Learning Commons (Library) to purchase two computers to create available computer stations. The library has 30 computers to accommodate scheduled classes. Classes are scheduled 139 out of the 180 days of school which leaves not enough computers for students from other classes or at lunch to do any research, typing or printing because of the lack of available computers. The two computers will allow two computer work stations to be created for students not in the scheduled classes.
- \$1,498 – *Darlington High School* - “Making Math Real” – This project impacts 1000 students and asks students to design and create models using a 3D rendering program and then creates a real model using a 3D printer. This is designed for students on all math levels. Jennifer Cooper, the author of the grant, wrote, “A 3D printer in the math department could open the door to incorporating engineering concepts and applications into the classroom that we haven’t been able to use before. Having a 3D printer could allow students to take their passion and interest to the next level.”
- \$1,150– *St. John’s Elementary* – “It Takes A Village” – The purpose of this grant is to establish a lending book bag program for the children in the special needs preschool. Currently, they have found there is a discrepancy between what the children are learning and receiving in school and their home environment. It takes a village to support and advocate for the children. The school wants to provide the students with multiple opportunities to generalize their skills. The program will incorporate school

professionals, families and the community. The lending book bags will include a variety of educational activities that will reinforce what the students have learned in school and use it within the home and community environment. The students who participate will achieve significant gains in their speech and language skills and their academic performance.

- \$500 – *Mayo High School* - “Water for HOPE” – This grant enables the school to switch their irrigation for the HOPE (Helping Others Providing Encouragement) Community Garden from soaker hoses to a micro-drip system. The new system will save a lot of water and assure the water gets to the roots of the plants as needed while increasing the yield of the garden. The garden was created in 2013 to teach students the history of family gardens, composting, irrigation, fertilization, and cultivation of crops. Another goal was to provide fresh vegetables to the community and students free of charge. The garden is very successful and benefits neighbors, bus drivers, janitors, staff, and students. Firemen have even come to the garden to pick peppers for a spaghetti dinner.
- \$589.71 – *Pate Elementary* – “Soothing Sensory Supports” – The purpose of this grant is to address the needs of children who have sensory issues. According to the Center for Disease Control, 1 in 6 children is diagnosed with a developmental disability such as ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorders, etc. In all of these types of disabilities, children are experiencing concerns with either being over or under-stimulated. This grant will allow for a section of the guidance room to be developed into a sensory support area. This will give students a safe place to calm down and find sensory equilibrium when having sensory issues in the classroom. Some of the items for the sensory area will be: bean bag chair, room divider, floor lamp, large therapy ball, noise machine, weighted bag set, lava lamp, classroom light filters, sand tray kit, and a bop bag.
- \$497.17 – *Pate Elementary School* – “Research Ready Readers” – This grant provides money for a variety of texts to be purchased for a second grade classroom. Second grade is a vital year for the students at Pate as they prepare to advance to their new school for 3rd grade. The variety of texts that will be purchased will enable Miss Hanlin’s classroom library to be leveled and expanded. According to American Library Association classroom libraries should include a minimum of 300 titles as a permanent collection in order to maximize success for students.
- \$1369.93 – *Pate Elementary School* – “I Can Write Like That” – This grant will benefit all second graders at Pate Elementary School. The project will enable all second graders to dive into the wondrous world of authorship by learning how to write from the experts – the best of published authors via collections of expert mentor texts. Students will be able to learn writing techniques from top authors by reading their published works. These books will not just be an inspiration for their writing, but a guidebook as students experiment and react to new worlds within their own stories, learning the power of the pencil.
- \$533 – *Darlington Middle School* – “Read to Achieve” – This grant impacts 8th grade ELA students. The purpose of Project Read to Achieve is for students to reach to achieve greater comprehension and understanding of written literature and to achieve a lifelong love for learning. The grant will provide 8 classroom sets (30 per set) of the following Bluford Series novels: *The Gun*, *No Way Out*, *Schooled*, *Breaking Point*, *The Test*, *Pretty Ugly*, *Promises to Keep* and *Survivor*. Each month, a novel from the Bluford Series will be read in class. Each day a chapter will be read aloud. At the conclusion of each chapter, students will compose a one-page summary of what was read. At the completion of the novel, students will take the computerized Accelerated Reading Test. The Bluford novels were selected because each novel focuses on relevant topics that engage students’ real life experiences.
- \$979.66 – *Carolina Elementary School* – “Our Sensory Nook” – This grant impacts the children in the Autism/self-contained classroom in grades 1-3. The project will address the sensory needs exhibited by the students by providing them an area in the room where that focuses on helping them calm down and process everything going on in their environment. Sensory integration has been researched and proven to help individuals with autism overcome some of the daily struggles they face due to the environment. The items in the sensory nook will be light filters, hopper balls, chew stems, weighted lap pads, cozy

canoe, body gloves, fidget keeper, pressure foam roller, concentration rocker, modern ball chair and slippery squares and spheres.

The Darlington County Education Foundation was founded in 1998 by a group of Darlington County parents and business and community leaders determined to provide support for and increase public recognition for the jobs educators do in the classroom every day. The DCEF awards grants for projects and programs that enhance the learning experience for children in the Darlington County School District.

Andrea Pulling, Executive Director, added, “It is never an easy process to select our grant recipients and we appreciate all of the teachers who took the time to submit an application. We are excited about the scope of projects we were able to fund this grant cycle which range from a robotics program, a 3D printer, computers to establish work stations, an art class to learn printmaking, sensory nooks, texts, a reading program, and a writing program. DCEF is honored to be able to help fund grants for teachers in the Darlington County School District. bThe grants are enhancing the education our children receive and I love being a part of an organization that helps ensure our educators have every tool available to be the best teachers for our children.”

For more information about the DCEF, visit www.thedcef.org or our Facebook page.

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