

Lifelike mannequins acquired with grant help students learn about health careers

Getting students practical experience in health care is tricky, partly because laws and other realities limit opportunities for children to work with real patients.

Sarah Stokke, a health careers instructor at the Career & Technical Education Academy in Sioux Falls, has effectively addressed the challenge by acquiring two, new simulation mannequins.

Stokke, who is also an experienced registered nurse, can program the lifelike mannequins to exhibit symptoms such as an unusual pulse rate to enhance learning opportunities in a safe environment. Fake blood can even be drawn from the mannequins.

Stokke earned a \$9,031 grant from the Education Foundation and convinced Laerdal, the company that makes the mannequins, to provide the school two for the price of one. The company agreed to the request.

Sanford Health, in turn, covered most of the cost of the grant, which helped the Education Foundation to fund additional educational projects.

"I'm just so grateful. This is huge," Stokke said. "I'm blown away that a grant would support a program like this. My



Instructor Sarah Stokke and Principal Josh Hall display one of the new simulation mannequins used in classes.

students will learn so much."

Stokke and other instructors at the academy use the two new mannequins and one the school previously acquired to help students become certified nursing assistants, which is a job-ready level of educational training.

The Career & Technical Education Academy gives students from 10 school districts opportunities to explore career-oriented learning in a variety of fields in addition to health science. Other fields include, for example, construction and hospitality.

"Our mantra here is learning by doing," said Principal Josh Hall. He praises how dedicated Stokke is to her students and how she effectively mixes her experiences as a nurse into her teaching.

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Education Foundation awards record grant total

(Story continued from Page 1)

Nancy Duncan, who coordinated the Education Foundation committee that reviewed applications for Innovation in Education grants, also is impressed by Stokke.

“She just blew the socks off the committee,” Duncan said. “She’s so passionate about what she does.”

The grant for the simulation mannequins is the single largest grant ever awarded by the Education Foundation. However, several other interesting educational projects also have been awarded grants for the 2017-2018 school year.

In all, 18 grants totaling a record high \$57,415 were awarded. The Education Foundation had received 72 applications that collectively requested about \$208,000 in funding.

Among other grants funded this year was one at Washington High School for a monthly newsletter to feature the talents, achievements and skills of Native American students. The grant for \$1,320 was earned by teacher Bruce Rekstad.

Here is a summary of this year’s other 16 grants:

- Shelly Pierson at The Outdoor Campus for a puzzle box learning project. \$1,213.
- Rhonda Begley at Pettigrew Elementary for a puzzle-box learning project. \$922.
- Katie Ristau at Pettigrew Elementary for an Osmo game system to help students learn mathematics. \$430.
- Mikaela Kavanaugh at Hawthorne Elementary for flexible classroom seating options. \$589.
- Autism team leaders Nicole Freeman, Heather Hinners, Cindy Brakke and Marlae Newman for resource materials to help students manage emotions. \$2,900.
- Jamie Hill of J.F. Kennedy Elementary for an Osmo game system to enhance interactive and tactile learning. \$1,120.
- John Laughlin of Memorial Middle School and Alexandra Hoffman of Patrick Henry Middle School for electronic mallet instruments to enhance student interest in music and performance. \$6,360.



Diane Josephson (right) of the Daughters of the American Revolution presents Principal Dan Conrad of Washington High with a grant from the Education Foundation for a Native News project.

- Cathie Vortherms of Pettigrew Elementary for UNICEF Kid Power classroom kits to help students learn about global malnutrition. \$836.
- Melissa Hittner and Mary Gail Monahan at New Technology High for a project that combines English and biology. Students will read *The Martian* and design a garden plausible to grow on Mars. \$2,551.
- Nathan Hofflander at Roosevelt High to enhance science and technology education through use of flying drones. \$3,264.
- Jared Hulstine at Bridges at Horace Mann Elementary and Sarah Winterscheidt at Lincoln High for a collaborative photography project. \$4,872.
- Jackie Beilke of Lincoln High for a project to help incorporate the use of digital media into art. \$3,045.
- Instructional coaches Stephanie Hage and Kim Poppenga-Smith to form partnerships to enhance student learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. \$5,763.
- Becky Worden of J.F. Kennedy for educational materials to help the Special Education team. \$2,748.
- Amy Miller at McGovern Middle School for robotic materials to enhance students creative and design skills. \$7,415.
- Erin Radway and Wade Helleeson at Lowell Elementary for a 3D printer to improve coding skills. \$2,551.



Foundation adding executive director, raising fundraising goals for programs

For several years, leaders and supporters of the Education Foundation have wanted the organization to do more to help teachers and students in public schools.

Their optimism and detailed planning are beginning to pay off.

About July 1, the Education Foundation will add a full-time executive director to its staff. The primary responsibility of the executive director will be to raise more money for the organization's grant programs.

The Education Foundation annually awards grants to teachers for innovative teaching projects not funded by tax dollars. The organization gives first-time teachers grants to help them buy classroom supplies.

This year, the Education Foundation awarded a record high \$57,415 in 18 Innovation in Education grants. However, that was only enough to fund about a fourth of the grant applications. Board members want the organization to do more in the future.

For the past few years, the volunteers who serve on the Foundation Board and govern it have only been assisted by two part-time employees: a coordinator and a media assistant.

"We have a great board that has spent a lot of time fundraising. But we've all got other jobs. We really haven't been able to dedicate time to getting out in the community and tell our story," said Stephanie Gongopoulos, who chairs the Education Foundation Board.

"We decided if we are going to take that next step and really grow the grant



Stephanie Gongopoulos

programs as well as our endowment, we needed to add a full-time person," Gongopoulos said.

A subcommittee of Board members was interviewing finalists for the position in late May.

Creating the position has the support of Superintendent Brian Maher and the Sioux Falls School Board. Initially, the School District will help fund the position. The executive director will work out of an office at the Instructional Planning Center but will report to the Education Foundation.

"This is a huge step for us, a very exciting step. It's something we've been working toward for the last several years," Gongopoulos said.

"Our goal is to triple the amount we're fundraising over the next three years with this new position, and continue to increase the total after that," she said.

The Education Foundation wants to raise \$100,000 in 2018, \$200,000 in 2019 and \$300,000 in 2020. The vision for 2035 is to be raising \$1 million a year for the organization.

Gifts help make our schools better

Tax-deductible gifts to the Education Foundation are welcome and appreciated.

Contributions from businesses, organizations and individuals fund the Education Foundation's grant programs for teachers and students. The money is used for educational projects not funded by tax dollars.

The Education Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization endorsed by the Sioux Falls School District.

More information about the Education Foundation is available on its website, www.SFEducationFoundation.org.

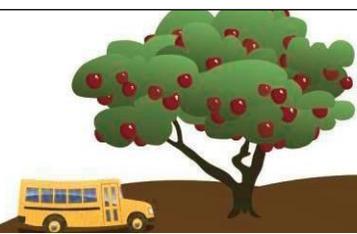
Questions about programs may be directed to SFEducationFoundation@gmail.com.

Questions about donation options may be directed to the Sioux Falls Area Community Foundation, phone (605) 336-7055.

Breakfast to be Aug. 9

The Education Foundation's annual Innovation in Education Breakfast for donors and supporters will be held Aug. 9 at the Holiday Inn City Centre. Superintendent Brian Maher will be among the featured speakers.

If you'd like to attend, please write SFEducationFoundation@gmail.com.



Solving ‘delightful challenge’ will require buildings

By Vernon Brown
Facilities Task Force co-chair

Drive around Sioux Falls and you can see the growth. Businesses, restaurants and homes pop up on our landscape seemingly overnight. Yet, we haven’t built a new high school in Sioux Falls for more than 25 years.

Enrollment numbers clearly demonstrate the need. Many of our schools are already at or over capacity. If you put today’s kindergarten through third grade population into our three public high schools, we are 1,144 students beyond what our high schools can hold. Similarly, enrollment in kindergarten through second grade is 478 students beyond capacity of our five middle schools.

Neither of those student overages account for continued community growth, and we’re seeing about 5,000 people move to Sioux Falls area annually.

Our west-side schools already feel the pinch. Roosevelt High School is more than 400 students over capacity; Memorial Middle School is equally over capacity.

The Sioux Falls School Board has appointed a 30-member Facilities Task Force to recommend solutions. I’m pleased to co-chair it with community advocate Nan Baker. In just a couple meetings, the task force has concluded some important points for effective public education:

- Maintain the current district student-to-teacher ratio of 24.3 to 1.
- Cap enrollments at 600 students per elementary, 1,000 per middle school and 1,800 per high school.
- The above tenets translate into an additional high school and middle school by 2022 under a normal construction schedule. But, in truth, we need the extra space by 2021, and an additional elementary by 2024.

Twenty-six years ago, Washington High cost \$18 million. The price tag on a new high school today is an estimated \$84 million; a middle school is \$43 million and an elementary almost \$18 million. In total, district staff has identified \$278 million of construction needs.

We can’t afford to do it all, so now the Task Force will



“While many cities struggle to grow school enrollment, Sioux Falls has an opportunity to invest in its youth and grow our economy.”

- Vernon Brown

prioritize the list and decide a proposed range for a general obligation bond to finance construction, which will require a 60 percent margin in a public vote as soon as September.

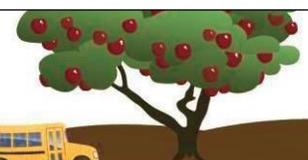
I’m pleased the Task Force takes this community investment seriously. Members are determining a feasible property tax increase to pay back the bonds. I’d ask you to consider what your education and the next generation’s education is worth? Are you willing to pay \$2 to \$5 more a month for that investment in our community’s economic future? Even with that small increase, the Sioux Falls School District’s tax levy would be the second lowest of 10 neighboring districts.

Superintendent Brian Maher calls the growth our “delightful challenge.” Is there a better way to put it? While many cities struggle to grow school enrollment, Sioux Falls has an opportunity to invest in its youth and grow our economy.

Board members

In addition to serving on the School District’s Facilities Task Force, Vernon Brown is the vice chair of the Education Foundation Board. Other members of the Education Foundation Board are: Reece Almond, Peggy Baney, Callie Beisch, Catherine Dekkenga (secretary), Jackie Dumansky (treasurer), Nancy Duncan, Stephanie Gongopoulos (chair), Nancy Hagen, DeeAnn Konrad, Deb Koski, Cynthia Mickelson and Kiki Nelsen.

Board members currently are assisted by two part-time employees: Foundation Coordinator Angie Kuiper and Newsletter Editor Rob Swenson.



Nancy Hagen taking leadership post at different school

After nine years as the principal at John Harris Elementary School, Nancy Hagen is taking on a bigger challenge in the Sioux Falls School District.

Effective July 1, she will be the principal at Memorial Middle School, which is the fourth largest public school in the district and the sixth largest in South Dakota.

The only bigger schools in the state are high schools: Roosevelt, Washington and Lincoln in Sioux Falls, and Central and Stevens in Rapid City.

Saying goodbye to her work family at John Harris is difficult, she said. But she is excited about getting to know faculty members and students at Memorial.

"I'm looking forward to getting know a whole new school," she said.

Hagen is succeeding the retiring Carrie Aaron at Memorial. Kersten Dobberpuhl, an administrative intern at Hayward Elementary, will take Hagen's place at John Harris.

Hagen has worked as a teacher or administrator in Sioux Falls for 22 years. Before that, she worked as a teacher for three years in Jasper, Minn. and for two years in the Chicago area.

She grew up in Waubay, S.D. She earned an undergraduate degree in elementary education at Northern State University and a master's degree in administration at South Dakota State University.

In addition to working as a school administrator, Hagen has served since February 2016 as a volunteer member on the Education Foundation Board.

"It's another way to positively impact students. That's why I like serving on the Board," she said.



Nancy Hagen, principal at John Harris Elementary, is moving to Memorial Middle School. She also serves on the Education Foundation Board.

Stephanie Gongopoulos, who chairs the Education Foundation Board, said Hagen has been a great member.

"She brings an educator's perspective. She has really provided us with some great insights and feedback as we've put together our strategic plan," Gongopoulos said.

Hagen is thrilled that the Education Foundation is adding a full-time executive director to help raise more money for grants for teachers for innovative projects. "It's an exciting time for growth and for advancing the cause of the Education Foundation," she said.

Our mission

Members of the Education Foundation Board recently updated the focus of the organization. Here are its niche and mission statements:

Niche

We raise funds to support teachers and their impact on students.

Mission

We champion teachers and students by encouraging, promoting and funding creative and innovative teaching strategies in order to enhance and enrich education in all Sioux Falls Public Schools.

