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## Golden Apple Foundation Awards more than \$42,000 for Local Classroom Projects

(1/3/2024) Golden Apple Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of educators who received a total of more than \$42,000 for classroom projects – a record high and \$10,000 more than last year! More than 120 grant applications were submitted this year. Golden Apple Foundation and sponsor Collins Aerospace will recognize recipients at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16 at Anderson Japanese Gardens, 318 Spring Creek Road, Rockford. Projects selected focused on STEM skills; literacy; special education; Social Emotional and Sensory needs; comprehension; and student engagement. All projects feature creative ways to encourage student achievement. These projects were approved by the organization’s grant committee:

- **Todd Anliker**, Kinnikinnick School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$2500 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “STEM in Kinnikinnick” to purchase VexGo kits to introduce fourth graders to coding and engineering
- **Aubrey Barnett and Cara Wolfe**, Flinn Middle School/RPS205: \$2500 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for “Human Library Project” expansion to 7 middle schools and costs to bring project originator from Sweden to Rockford. In the Human Library, students “become books,” sharing their personal stories to foster empathy and tolerance.
- **Chris Magee, Kristine Caballero, Jessica Owens, Shelly Cascio and Jennifer Peterson**, Guilford High School/RPS205: \$2500 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “First LEGO League Explore Showcase” to host a STEM showcase for 4 RPS205 elementary schools to highlight the achievements of the first LEGO League Explore Programs, an international competition in which teams of students in 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grades focus on engineering fundamentals to real-world problems
- **Erikka Coletta**, Maple Elementary/Harlem CUSD 122: \$2500 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for “From Library to Learning Center,” to replace old seating with new, safe tables and chairs appropriate for elementary students
- **Lori Granite**, Rockford Christian Schools; \$2,496 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Construct, Collaborate and Code with Cubelets,” to purchase open-ended robot building system set and Motivated Makers packs
- **Chris Noble**, Harlem High School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$2,398 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Automation Station,” to buy a VexCell Workcell Kit which will allow students to learn about programmable robot arms and related components in an automated industrial workspace
- **Chad Reisen, Michaelle Yaeger, Shawna Sterling, Ramona Drozek, Lynette Nyren**, Harlem Middle School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$2,373 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Greenhouse STEM Grant,” to promote scientific understanding, sustainability and the use of technology to improve plant growth and sales profitability
- **Jared Young**, Belvidere North High School/Belvidere CUSD100: \$1,800 Meg & Rob Hodge grant for “Best Buddies Ski/Snowboard Crossover Tubing Trip,” an inclusion event for special education students to build relationships and diversity of understanding through play and activity with regular education students
- **Maria Bounthong**, Harlem High School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$2500 Walmart, Golden Apple Teacher Class of 2023 and Meg & Rob Hodge grant to supplement uniform, certification and equipment fees for low-income students to participate in the “Harlem CNA Pathway” with Rock Valley College
- **David Zimmerman**, Belvidere North High School/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$2500 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Light Up the Black Box” to replace and expand theatrical lighting in the sole performance space in the district
- **Dan Hallstrom and Emily Breakfield**, Harlem Middle School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$1,600 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Empowering Today’s Innovators: Funding the Bambu Lab X-1 Carbon Combo 3D Printer for STEM Excellence” to enhance students’ skills in 3D design and manufacturing

- **Jason Andrews**, Harlem High School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$1,504 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “PICO Oscilloscopes the future for Automotive Technicians” to learn to apply the technology to diagnose and repair real world projects the shop encounters
- **Kari Morris de Hernandez**, Guilford High School/RPS205: \$1,500 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for “Hydroponics and Our Food Supply,” to compare and contrast hydroponic systems versus traditional ones, to manipulate growing conditions and grow vegetables despite weather conditions
- **Kate Nickell**, West Middle School/RPS205: \$1,400 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for “Project YALL: Young Adult Literature in the Classroom” to add culturally diverse literature to the classroom library
- **Elaine Ahrens**, North Boone Upper Elementary/North Boone CUSD 200: \$1,000 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for “Decodables,” for level-appropriate decodable books and readers for special education class
- **Melissa Ford**, North Boone High School/North Boone CUSD 200: \$300 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant for student workbooks for special education readers
- **Ashley Banks**, Washington Academy/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$300 Walmart grant for books geared toward Socio-Emotional learning
- **Michelle Mershon**, Christian Life Schools; \$300 Walmart grant for sensory manipulatives for students struggling with socio-emotional issues; and a \$300 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for reading and math manipulatives
- **Jason Andrews**, Harlem High School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$300 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for External Laptop/Chromebook Cameras for students in small gas engine class to catalog their research of engine parts
- **Krista Heavin**, Roscoe Middle School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$300 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for age-appropriate, high-interest books
- **Chris Jones**, Rockford Christian Schools: \$300 Collins Aerospace STEM grant to replace classroom Chromebooks with updated technology
- **Consuelo Laredo**, Belvidere South Middle School/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$300 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for books to support 6<sup>th</sup> grade bilingual students in the dual language program
- **Ariane Easton**, Christian Life Schools: \$300 Collins Aerospace STEM grant to replace skeleton model to teach students about skeletal system
- **Donna Harvey**, Pecatonica Middle School/Pecatonica CUSD 321: \$300 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for building robotics
- **Elliot Ganet**, RPS205: \$300 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for equipment giving visually impaired students the opportunity to play an inclusive sport with their sighted peers, adding to their socio-emotional wellbeing
- **Rob Wesselhoff**, Belvidere High School/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$300 Ann Dooley Special Education grant for a coffee cart to display items for sale by students in the Essential Elements and Adult Transition Program to provide greater job opportunities for them
- **Bethany Weberpal**, Manchester Elementary/North Boone CUSD 200: \$300 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant for sensory pathway supplies to enhance students’ educational experiences and improve student outcomes
- **Alison Cunningham**, Keith School: \$299 Collins Aerospace STEM grant to purchase kits for hands-on science experiments
- **Steve Primrose**, Guilford High School/RPS205: \$298 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for calculators
- **Sandra Santamaria**, Washington Academy/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$298 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for resources to provide differentiated and appropriate learning centers and cultivate a love of Spanish and of learning in dual language classroom
- **Amy Kuo**, Roscoe Middle School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$297 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant for materials for neurodiverse students with ADD, ADHD, dyslexia and autism who need movement, sensory input or tools to help with focus
- **Kathryn Nickell**, West Middle School/RPS205: \$295 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for books for a learning unit by a premier YA author
- **Yasmin Fernandez**, Washington Academy/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$295 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for resources to provide differentiated and appropriate learning centers and cultivate a love of Spanish and of learning in dual language classroom
- **Jennifer Loomis**, Marshall Elementary/RPS205: \$295 Golden Apple Teachers Class of 2023 grant for concert ukeleles to provide a variety of sizes to fit students’ diverse needs and preferences

- **Sarah Dulaney**, Pecatonica Elementary/Pecatonica CUSD 321: \$294 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for materials to improve speaking, language and motor skills, and strengthen socio-emotional skills
- **Betsy Dohm**, Stone Creek School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$294 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant for interest and level-appropriate books for special education students to learn to enjoy reading
- **Emily Wykes**, Poplar Grove Elementary/North Boone CUSD 200: \$294 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for books to reinvigorate the bilingual class library and the bilingual reading group offerings; to increase the confidence in the Spanish language and allow children to check out books to share with Spanish-speaking family members; to offer books of high-interest to students and affirm their identities; and to replace lost or damaged books. There is no public library in Poplar Grove so this is the only place these students will have access to fresh reading material.
- **Rachel Garbutt**, Whitman Post Elementary/Rockton CUSD 140: \$292 Ann Dooley Special Education grant for sensory tools for students who struggle to process information from their senses and need more sensory stimulation to support their socio-emotional success at school
- **Meghan Hembrough**, Parker Center/Harlem CUSD 122: \$291 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant to buy print books that come with an attached reader for students who are not yet independent readers to follow along and see appropriate speech modeling or for multi-language speakers to experience spoken English language outside the classroom or with their family members
- **Abigail Crose**, Summerdale Early Childhood Education Center/RPS205: \$290 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for sensory and learn-through-play products to encourage students' imagination and creativity through hands-on activity
- **Kristy Topalovich**, Roosevelt CEC/RPS205: \$289 Collins Aerospace STEM grant to buy materials for the Plastics Lab to repurpose shredded plastic into STEM sensory bins for early childhood classes
- **Marisa Viel**, Pecatonica Middle School/Pecatonica CUSD 321: \$286 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for calculators to replace lost or outdated supply and to ensure all students have access to calculator
- **Mandi Plock**, Ledgewood School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$283 Collins Aerospace STEM grant to expand numeracy materials and differentiate math instruction in classroom and ensure all students can access material for hands-on learning
- **Laura Easton**, Stone Creek School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$282 Walmart grant for classroom comfort corner and materials to provide more options and resources for students as they identify and regulate emotions during class so they can safely re-center and re-focus to get back to learning
- **Bonnie Treder**, Kinnikinnick Elementary/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$275 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for decodable books for special education students to be able to sound out and blend words and apply phonics instruction
- **Annette Bottum**, Kinnikinnick Elementary/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$275 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for decodable books to provide real books for struggling Kindergarten and first grade students
- **Lorri Clevenger**, Maple Elementary School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$258 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant to buy a document camera, projector and screen to make learning more visual and engaging
- **Robert Ullrich**, North Boone Middle School/North Boone CUSD 200: \$250 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant to buy a classroom set of books as an interdisciplinary study between social studies and English to cover the topic of antisemitism
- **Destiny Anliker**, Meehan Elementary/Belvidere CUSD 100: \$215 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant to buy leveled and of-interest books for dual-language readers to improve reading skills
- **Christine Meadors**, Hononegah Community High School/Hononegah CUSD 207: \$163 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant to buy posters used as visual aids to support instructional-level math classes for students who are struggling
- **Niki Milazzo**, Parker Center/Harlem CUSD 122: \$160 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant to buy teacher phonics program manuals to use with new literacy intervention groups to improve reading skills
- **Dr. Teresa Kruger**, Belvidere North High School/Belvidere CUSD100: \$149 Golden Apple Foundation grant to purchase DVD for classroom unit about students' constitutional rights to life, liberty and property, and how effective their voices can be in creating social and political change
- **Melissa Baker**, Belvidere North High School/Belvidere CUSD100: \$137 Ann Dooley Special Education Grant to buy books and materials to address critical needs in independent living, job readiness and financial literacy for students with disabilities. The books will provide real-world activities and scenarios accessible at their comprehension levels.
- **Steve Bergler**, Roscoe Middle School/Kinnikinnick CUSD 131: \$127 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for digital balances to be used in hands-on labs and STEM experiences

- **Cody McDonald**, Winnebago Middle School/Winnebago CUSD 323: \$95 Meg & Rob Hodge literacy grant for a VocabClass membership to improve student reading comprehension
- **Kimberly Tenner**, Shirland School/Shirland CUSD 134: \$72 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for a caterpillar voucher and butterfly pavilion for unit about the lifecycle of a butterfly
- **Joy Bogdonas**, Windsor Elementary/Harlem CUSD 122: \$59 Collins Aerospace STEM grant for a pro-subscription to GimKit which provides activities and questions about multiple unit topics for students and result-driven data for teachers through a high-interest, engaging website
- **Cheryl Zarn**, Harlem Middle School/Harlem CUSD 122: \$59 Ann Dooley Special Education grant for a pro-subscription to GimKit which provides activities and questions about multiple unit topics for students and result-driven data for teachers. This will provide special education students who enjoy gaming to participate in learning in a game-like way.

Golden Apple Foundation opened the application process to enhance the learning of PreK – 12th grade students throughout Winnebago and Boone counties for projects that would go unfunded by school budgets. Grant sponsors include Collins Aerospace, Meg & Rob Hodge, the Ann Dooley Estate, Walmart and the Golden Apple Teacher Class of 2023. Since its inception, Golden Apple Foundation has provided funding for 353 projects totaling more than \$280,800.

*Golden Apple Foundation inspires, celebrates and supports educational excellence in our community.*

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