

Westerly Education Endowment Fund

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Peggy Friend Business & Professional Development Directed Giving Fund

by Gina M. Laudone

Recently, I had the opportunity to sit down with WEEF's president, Phil Friend. Phil has been a board member for four years and president for three. Phil recently committed \$10,000 to WEEF's Business and Professional Development Fund in memory of his wife, Peggy. In an effort to learn more about Phil and the Directed Giving Fund, I asked him the following questions:

What does "Directed Giving" mean and why did the board come up with the Directed Giving concept?

Directed Giving enables a donor to contribute funds to a particular type of WEEF grant. The board wanted to provide the opportunity for donors who are passionate about a specific interest to make contributions which will encourage its growth in our schools. To that end, WEEF has set up five different Directed Giving funds: Science & Technology, Literacy, Student Initiative, Performing Arts, and Business & Professional Development. Donors may contribute to the fund of their choosing, or they may make donations to the General Fund for more open-ended giving.

As WEEF president, can you tell me a little bit about the concept of a "naming opportunity" for our Directed Giving Funds? Can others take part in a naming opportunity?

Often when people give to organizations such as ours, they like to do so in memory or in recognition of someone. The naming opportunity is open to those who will make a commitment of \$10,000 or more, and there are multiple opportunities available. More than one name can be added to a specific directed giving fund.

Tell me about your personal commitment.

Unfortunately, I've lost someone whose memory I would like to keep alive, my wife of 25 years, Peggy. I have committed \$10,000 to the Business & Professional Development Fund over three years so that awards from this fund will carry her name.

Tell me a little bit about Peggy.

Peggy not only had a knack for raising four children, she was very busy at the same time in another capacity assisting with her parents' business. She later worked in the real estate business, where she was a very successful real estate agent. To do all of this and simultaneously battle breast cancer demonstrated a level of courage that was not only remarkable, but extraordinary. A graduate of URI with a BA in business, Peggy was also a strong supporter of education. I felt it fitting to name something in her memory which reflects all her hard work and values.

Why did you choose to name a Directed Giving Fund in her honor?

For many years in Peg's memory, I gave a \$1000 scholarship to a graduating senior in her honor. Our best friends Tommy and Nadine DiPaolo also contributed to that scholarship—we did it together. We were pleased to be giving scholarships, but I began thinking that I wanted this effort to have greater perpetuity. When the WEEF board came up with the naming concept, it seemed like an appropriate thing to make a commitment to place her name on the Business and Professional Development Fund.

What kind of impact are you hoping these grants will have on WPS students?

My hope is that grants from this fund will help students develop some of the attributes my wife had: good common sense, business sense, extraordinary sales ability, communication skills, and the ability to close the deal.

Why might someone else choose to participate in the naming opportunity?

The mission of WEEF is to help as many students as possible by enhancing existing programs and encouraging innovation in education. Community members who want to support specific programs, and, especially, WHS graduates who want to honor their roots—these are some of the people who may want to take advantage of the naming opportunities our directed giving program provides. Families who have a passion for the arts or literacy may wish to establish a fund which carries their name. Creating a named fund fosters a sense of community and establishes a legacy of giving.

What do you like best about being a WEEF board member?

The ability to work with people who have similar goals. The board pulls together for a common cause—an investment in the future. You can't lose when you work with people who have that as a shared goal!

Grants Awarded for 2010 to 2011

Twenty-one grants totaling \$21,525.48 have been awarded for the 2010 to 2011 school year. With a record number of requests (34) totaling over \$100,000, the grant committee had a tough job on their hands. The following grants were partially or fully funded:

Yamaha Keyboards: to provide all 6th-8th grade music students the opportunity to explore musical elements of beat, rhythm, tempo, meter, harmony, and form.

Student Ambassador Program: to provide “teacher toolkits” for grade 4 students who assist primary grade students in the improvement of reading skills.

Lego Robotics Project: to offer second year WMS robotics students the necessary tools to discover, investigate, and apply Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) concepts.

Summer Family/Community Involvement and Library Program: to fund summer field trips whose focus is to prevent academic regression over the summer in math, reading, and writing. Children will be required to complete a weekly academic packet to participate in the trip.

Values through History: to bring to life events, historical figures, and life in the Revolutionary War period through a multidisciplinary approach which instills the history and privileges of citizenship. This program enhances the current 5th grade curriculum.

Computers on Wheels: to assist in the purchase of a computer cart with netbooks and wireless capability to improve computer access for students during class time.

On-line Vocabulary: to purchase netbooks for innovative vocabulary instruction which incorporates online conversation/instruction and develops responsible online behavior.

I Have a Dream—College: to expose fifth-grade students to the college environment. Students will visit the URI campus, where they will interact with faculty and students.

Books on Tape: to provide books on tape, cassette players and book bags for transportation to reluctant readers who need support with nightly reading requirements.

Boston Freedom Trail: to help fund a guided walking tour of Boston’s Freedom Trail, including the State House, Granary Burying Ground, King’s Chapel, Old South Meeting House, the Boston Massacre site, Faneuil Hall, Old North Church, the Paul Revere House, and Bunker Hill Monument and Museum.

Inspiring Students to Read and Write Poetry: to maintain high interest in 10th graders while studying the type of poetry found on NECAP tests through poet David Madden’s book *Sprung from the Soil*.

Home to School Partnership: to provide children with a variety of *Think Fun* games to play at home with caregivers to foster stronger problem solving strategies and strengthen the home/school connection.

Westerly Middle School Library Gets Digital: to purchase e-books for students to use on or off school campus.

Author/Illustrator in Residence: to cover the cost of books for a two day presentation about writing,

researching, and illustrating books by author David Biedrzycki.

Community Outreach Efforts: to fund early intervention tools and resources for parent/community volunteers to use with small groups of students for math support.

Civil War Presentation: to provide 6th grade students with a meaningful presentation on the Civil War by Battery B 1st RI Light Artillery Unit, including authentic Civil War memorabilia.

Thanks for the Memories: to purchase three Panalogue systems with headphones to be used for a sixth grade multi-disciplinary, integrated unit on 20th century concepts.

Visual Arts Technology Project: to purchase ELMO equipment to enhance the classroom art education experience for 550 students in grades K-4.

Primary Autism Program Technology Suite Venture: to incorporate technology across all areas of curriculum and daily living for young students with autism spectrum disorders.

Parents Advocating for Excellence in Education: to support PAEE initiatives, including visiting hands-on science units, Destination Imagination competition, and extension of the GOAL program to community

Build-a-Book Literacy Program: to provide students with tools and techniques to enhance their creative writing skills and generate excitement about the writing process, empowering them to meet or exceed current writing standards.



Our 3rd Annual Comedy Caravan was held in October at the Knickerbocker. Great food, many laughs and a silent auction made for a fun night out for a great cause. Special thanks to Jane Holdredge for chairing this event. Pictured above on the left are Bob & Barbara Miller and Dr. Roy Seitsinger. Enjoying the show is Anne Sculco.

If you would like to learn more about WEEF check out our website at www.weefri.org or email us at weef@cox.net to join our mailing list!

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Our 8th Annual Golf Tournament was a huge success! Special thanks to all our sponsors and players. The winners pictured on the left were, Lou and Steve Laudone, Pete Stefanski and Bob Laudone. Funniest Picture 2nd year in a row goes to Tony Spino, Joe Cranwell, Paul Gencarella Jr. and John Conti. Special Thanks to Joe Celico for chairing the event!