

Munster Education Foundation
Annual Meeting – Year in Review
June 19, 2019
School Town of Munster
Administration Building
9:00 a.m.

Munster Education Foundation (MEF) is a nonprofit organization that serves as a vehicle to solicit and allocate funds to enrich the programs, activities and facilities of School Town of Munster.

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Dedicated to Quality Education in Our Community

Dear Community Member:

Thank you for your interest in Munster Education Foundation and for supporting our organization's efforts. The following report summarizes the organization's activities for the 2018-2019 school year as well as provides insight into our committee's goals for the near future.

Since our inception in 1992, MEF has awarded over \$300,000 in grants to teachers, administrators and community members throughout the five School Town of Munster schools for new and innovative education experiences beyond what the current school budget can support.

MEF also administers the Teacher of Merit Awards to eligible teachers each summer. This five year program began in 2015 as an initiative to retain our highly effective teachers. Over the first three years of the program, a total of \$750,000 has been awarded to our teachers through this program which is primarily funded by 1974 Munster High School alum Joe Mansuetto. Additional community contributions are greatly appreciated and necessary, especially as we have more teachers qualify each year.

It is our hope that his report will provide you with useful information and also motivate you to support (or continue to support) Munster Education Foundation.

Thank you again for your interest.

Sincerely,

The Munster Education Foundation Board of Directors

Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee includes current officers as well as one additional board member that has served as president in recent past years. This year's committee consisted of Michael Sowards, president; Tricia Shelton, vice president; Ken Schoon, secretary; Lynn Eplawy, treasurer and Deb Milne, a recent past president.

The main purpose of the executive committee is to help guide the activities of the organization as well as provide assistance to the committee chairs in between monthly meetings.

This year, our officers presented the board with a budget for approval which included insurance, tax preparation as well as web site management/database system costs. The executive committee also addressed concerns regarding new marketing needs as well as strategic planning initiative.

The executive committee also represents the organization at outside events as needed. This past year, Mike Sowards spoke to School Town of Munster staff at their welcome back event. Mike also represented the board at monthly roundtable hosted by Superintendent Hendrix and participated in an interview with NW Indiana Times which resulted in an article on the organization's efforts. Tricia spoke to a group of Purdue NW marketing students in regards to the organization's efforts and challenges in marketing.

Lastly, in an effort to ensure MEF continues to work in cooperation with School Town of Munster, we honored the tradition of the ex-officio positions ensuring that both the administration and the school board had representation at our table. This past year we appreciated the dedication of both Superintendent Hendrix and School Board Member Melissa Higgason. Both helped serve in advisory capacities so that our independent work is still in alignment of the overall goals of the district.

All members of the Executive Committee were honored to serve MEF in our respective leadership roles and we are all committed to continuing to serve the organization for the benefit of School Town of Munster staff and students, which in turn benefits our entire community.

Respectfully submitted by Tricia Shelton, Vice President

Finance Committee Report:

The Financial Committee includes Kristen Smith, Dan Glavin, Nancy Hamblin, Michele McKechnie, Dr. Jeff Hendrix and Lynn Eplawy

This past year MEF's Finance Committee spent time considering options for the excessive money in the organization's operating account. The committee ultimately recommended putting cash into a liquid interest earning account at First Merchants Bank.

The committee also discussed and agreed to recommend that the financial policies should be reviewed as a part of the strategic plan process that the board will be attempting during the next school year. We need to ensure proper handling of endowment and operating funds within broader commitments to the money on hand.

MEF has outsourced preparation of our 2018 Fiscal Year End June 30, 2019) federal and state business income tax returns to Homer, Wilson & Company, Ltd. Certified Public Accountants of Munster. Full financial report will be provided at the August MEF Board meeting.

MEF continues to grow and mature financially and the Finance Committee is committed to ensuring procedures are followed and transparency is always at the forefront of all our transactions.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Eplawy, Treasurer.

Fundraising Committee Report:

The Fundraising Committee includes the following members leading our fundraising efforts: Deb Milne, Ellen Byrne, Ann Bochnowski, Lynn Eplawy, Adam Keefner, Candice Logue, Michelle McKechnie, Paul Rotatori, Tricia Shelton and Kristen Smith.

The school year began with MEF's annual donation solicitation. A social media blitz took place but had low response. Tricia Shelton and Paul Rotatori then coordinated with the help of Kristen Smith and Lynn Eplawy a physical mailing to donors of the past five years.

The annual event took place on January 25 at the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster. The event was co-chaired by Deb Milne and Candice Logue. Members of the fundraising committee were instrumental in accomplishing the following offerings:

- Craft Brew Tasting
- Three Bar Options
- Tailgate Themed Buffet
- Entertainment by live musicians
- TV Raffle
- Brew Bus Tip Board
- Craft Brew Bottle Cap Raffle
- Silent Auction and Seed Raffle Items

The event was profitable and the goal for next year is to increase business sponsorships by 10 percent.

Honor an Educator program was once again overseen by Ann Bochnowski and Ellen Byrne. This opportunity to provide a teacher with an apple pin for recognition was promoted before the holiday break as well as at the end of the school year. Flyers were distributed through the schools with the option to submit purchase back to school office or to simply go to MEF website and purchase on-line.

The above efforts are all individually recorded in the end of year financial report.

Respectfully submitted by Tricia Shelton, Vice President.

Governance Committee Report:

The Governance Committee includes Ken Schoon, Sandy Baker, Ann Bochnowski, Nancy Hamblin, Sue Lazar, Lyn McHie, Carol Moore and Ken Wilke.

- The Governance Committee determined that a monthly meeting as needed would be held prior to the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors. As it turned out we meet 6 times throughout the year. The entire committee found this most useful as it clarified our committee's tasks
- The Board Member Responsibility form, the Conflict of Interest form, and Whistle-blower policy were distributed for signing and collected at the September meeting.
- The By-Laws and Articles were also distributed with the strong recommendation that each Director become familiar with their content.
- Sign-up sheets for Committees were circulated whereupon Directors indicated their preferences for serving on which committees.
- The Committee structure was revised to better reflect a chain of communication. This still needs work with more discussion in order for this to be a clearer document.
- A form to use when recommending a new board member is in the making and will be reviewed at our August meeting to present to the MEF Board later in the year.
- A calendar was established for the Governance Committee to more easily reflect past, current and future deadlines and discussions. This has been a most helpful tool.
- Attached is the calendar used for 2018-2019. It will be revised as needed.
- The committee reviewed the current list of board members whose terms were to expire June of 2019. There were seven: Dan Glavin, Sue Lazar, Lyn McHie, Michele McKechnie, Margaret Nierengarten, Paula Nellans , and Mike Sowards . All were contacted. Three elected not to serve another term. Those individuals were Paula, Margaret, and Michele. This left three vacancies to fill. As it turned out three names were submitted with short biographies to this committee. Though other potential appointees can be presented the day of voting in June, because biographies were received by May 1, these were the names recommended by the Governance Committee. These people are Mike Jez, Holly Jones, and Kay Rogan.
- Bios for new Board members were asked to be submitted to the Governance committee by of May 1. Those nominees were presented to the board at the May meeting. As required by the By-Laws the bios were sent to the Board members a minimum of 5 days prior to the June meeting. Anyone was welcomed to present a new nominee from the floor. No one did. A vote was taken at the June meeting and all candidates recommended by the Governance Committee were accepted.
- Officers for 2019-2020: The committee recommended a slate of candidates for 2019-20 offices in May. They were Tricia Shelton/President, Paul Rotatori/Vice President, Ken School/Recording Secretary, Lynn Eplawy/Treasurer. All graciously accepted being nominated and with no nominations from the floor the slate of officers we voted into office at the June meeting.
- Lyn McHie was appointed by president to chair Governance Committee for 2019-2020.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn McHie, Governance Committee Chair.

Grant Committee Report

The Grants Committee includes Deb Milne, Lynn Eplawy, Candice Logue, Michelle McKechnie, Tricia Shelton and Kristen Smith.

In total for the 2018-2019 school year we approved 13 grants for a total of \$23,113.13. (\$8018.60 10/2018 and \$15,094.53 3/2019)

The committee met in October and March in order to review the grants submitted. We asked clarifying questions of the teachers submitting the grants when necessary to formulate well thought out recommendations to the full board at upcoming meetings.

After each grant cycle, all applicants were provided with an email notifying them of their approval with an invitation to accept their check at the upcoming school board meeting. New this year was a grant lapel pin also being awarded to each recipient. Grant applicants that are not approved are provided an email with an explanation of why their program or project was not able to be approved at this time.

A press release detailing our approved grants was distributed to the local newspapers which resulted in coverage within The NW Indiana Times in early November and late March.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Milne, Grants Committee Chair.

Marketing Committee Report

The Marketing Committee includes Paul Rotatori, Michael Sowards, Tricia Shelton and Kristen Smith.

The marketing committee was responsible for social media and website support for all MEF activities. These efforts were led and managed by Paul Rotatori.

The committee also worked on a few opportunities to bring more awareness about our organization through a booth at Night Out Against Crime, speaking at PTO meetings and sponsorship opportunities with an MHS "walk of fame" brick, breakfast sponsorship at South Shore e-conference for teachers and advertising in MHS yearbook and Band Backers competition programs. We ended the year with presenting a new partnering with Small Town Coffee which was approved by the board and will be developed for the 2019-2020 school year.

Teacher of Merit Award Committee Report:

The Teacher of Merit Award steering committee consists of a separate group of citizens who meet monthly and are responsible for fundraising specifically for the Teacher of Merit Awards. Members of the committee include Nina Arzumanian, Ann Bochnowski, Julie Compton, Kyle Dempsey, John Friend, Bob Grow, Matt Maloney, Kerry Meyer, Paula Nellans, Ingrid Schwarz Wolf, Kathy Sharpe and Cheryl Zeck. Lisa Morris of Peoples Bank provides account support, Steve Tripenfeldas provides invaluable support handling all the paperwork with the teachers, Kristen Smith as MEF treasurer also handles Teacher of Merit Award finances and Tricia Shelton serves as a liaison between the MEF board and the steering committee.

During the 2018-2019 school year, approximately \$60,000 was raised to be added to the \$200,000 base money provided by 1974 alum Joe Mansuetto. In addition to donation solicitation through mailed letters, a Roaring 20s Murder Mystery event was also held. The committee will end its efforts for this awards cycle with a garden viewing to be held in July.

A total of 193 teachers qualified for the awards this year and will receive their award check of \$1,300 at an August 13th awards ceremony. We are pleased that our district continues to employ so many highly effective teachers. The committee would like to thank all the donors to the program as well as MEF for taking this initiative under its organization's umbrella. It is the groups' mission to show strong support for all teachers, media staff and counselors and we can't do that without the communities support.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Yorke, Teacher of Merit Awards Steering Committee Director.