

FOUNDATION REPORT



The Education Foundation of South Brunswick Township, Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT • VOL. 2, FALL 2020

Joanne Kerekes Arts Grant



Joanne Kerekes devoted over a quarter of a century to the South Brunswick School District, guiding the district to be the high achieving and innovative district it is today.

In recognition of Joanne's contributions to our district and in keeping with her special affection for the arts, the South Brunswick Education Foundation created the Joanne Kerekes Arts (JKA) Grant. Since 2016, this grant has awarded annual awards of up to \$1,000 for a projects and programs. Starting in 2020, the grant will now be used to support the District's annual Student Art Gallery, also named in Joanne's honor.

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Participants in the Inaugural EFSB Adult Spelling Bee Challenge

THE BUZZZZZ ABOUT THE EFSB ADULT SPELLING BEE



The Ed. Foundation's Inaugural "Adult Spelling Bee Challenge" was held on February 20 at the South Brunswick High School Auditorium. The evening was full of excitement, surprises and lots of fun, as teams comprised of three teachers from five district schools battled it out to take home the coveted Champion Spellers trophy. Our event hosts, South Brunswick High School teachers, Dr. Negraval & Mr. Dentler made the evening a fantastic success.

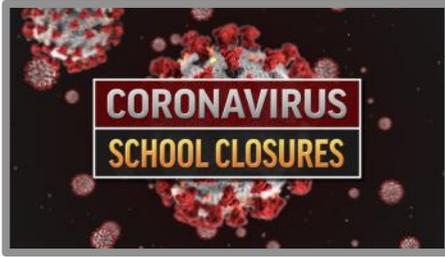


The Bee teams and participants included, South Brunswick H.S. (SBeeHS-T-E-A-M) with Alison Miller, Roberto DeBari and Eileen Cartwright, Cambridge Elem. (Notorious B-E-E) with Sarah Shadell, Heather Ruina-Isaacs and Jenny Plebani, Brunswick Acres Elem. (Smart Mouths) with Rafael Bortello, Michelle Morris and Jennifer Durkin, Monmouth Junction Elem. (The Junction Jaguars) with Deb Buonocore, Donna Daley and Carly Rabby and Constable Elem. (Constable CubBEES) with Ellen Gehringer, Crystal Huau and Francois Suhr.

Congratulations to our 2020 EFSB Adult Spelling Bee Challenge Champions — the SBeesHS-T-E-A-M!



SBeesHS-T-E-A-M Champions with our hosts Mr. Dentler & Dr. Negraval



CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC COULD RESHAPE EDUCATION

Within a matter of weeks, coronavirus (COVID-19) changed how students in South Brunswick and around the country were educated. Those changes have given us a glimpse at how education could change in the future.

The swift action to mitigate the spread of the virus led almost 50 million students in the U.S. into 'home-schooling' situations. These changes have certainly caused a degree of inconvenience, but they have also prompted new examples of educational innovation. Although it is still too early to judge how these reactions to COVID-19 will affect education systems, there are signs suggesting that it could have a lasting impact on the course of educational innovation and digitalization.

EDUCATION - PUSHED TO CHANGE - COULD LEAD TO SURPRISING INNOVATIONS

The pace of change in academic institutions is usually slow. However, COVID-19 has become a catalyst for educational institutions to search for innovative solutions in a relatively short period of time.

Asynchronous online learning tools (such as Google Classroom), were augmented with synchronous face-to-face Zoom video instruction.

With 5G technology becoming more widespread in the U.S., we will see learners and solution providers truly embracing the 'learning anywhere, anytime' concept of digital education in a range of formats. Traditional in-person classroom learning may be complemented with new learning methods - from live broadcasts to virtual reality experiences. Learning could become a habit that is integrated into daily routines - a true lifestyle change.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS COULD GROW IN IMPORTANCE

Throughout the pandemic, we have seen learning groups and alliances taking shape, with diverse stakeholders - including government, publishers, education professionals, technology providers, and telecom network operators - coming together to utilize digital platforms as a temporary solution to the crisis.

Educational innovation is receiving attention beyond the typical government-funded or non-profit-backed social project. In the past decade, we have already seen far greater interest, and investment, coming from the private sector in education solutions and innovation. Corporations like Microsoft and Google, are awakening to the strategic imperative of an educated populace. While most initiatives to date have been limited in scope, and relatively isolated, the pandemic could pave the way for much larger-scale, cross-industry coalitions to be formed around a common educational goal.

RISK OF WIDENING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Most schools are finding stop-gap solutions to continue teaching, but the quality of learning is heavily dependent on the level and quality of digital access. After all, even in a more affluent township like South Brunswick, around 9% of the households do not have online access.

The less digitally capable individual families are, the further their students are left behind. When classes transition online, these children lose out because of the cost of digital devices and data plans.

Unless access costs decrease and quality of access increase in all households, the gap in education quality will be further widened. The digital divide could become more extreme if educational access is dictated by access to the latest technologies.



RESILIENCE MUST BE BUILT INTO OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

The rapid spread of COVID-19 demonstrated the importance of building resilience to face various threats, from pandemic disease to extremist violence, and even, yes, rapid technological change. The pandemic is also an opportunity to remind ourselves of the skills students need in this unpredictable world such as informed decision making, creative problem solving, and perhaps above all, adaptability. To ensure those skills remain a priority for all students, resilience must be built into our educational systems as well.

2020 FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Foundation has added two additional general scholarships for 2020.

The Foundation now awards up to four general scholarships and one Dr. Gary P. McCartney Scholarship (for student pursuing an education career) per year to graduating South Brunswick H.S. seniors. The value of each scholarship is \$2500 over 4 years (\$1000/\$500/\$500/\$500). Funding for these scholarships comes from a direct donation from Chartwells and Dr. Gary P. McCartney.

Dr. Gary P. McCartney Scholarship:

Jillian Ryan

Foundation Scholarships awarded to:

Luke Barglow, Alexa Maiorano, Cindy Ruan and Sarina Zapparde

The Education Foundation of South Brunswick Township, Inc.

SPARK of INNOVATION Grant Program

The Spark of Innovation Grant Program assists teachers and their students in creating new opportunities for teaching and learning not funded through the normal school budget process. The continuing goal of this program is to spark innovation in our schools and to give teachers an opportunity to put their creative ideas to work in the classroom.

18

grant applications
submitted in 2019-20

16

grants awarded
totaling **\$7,713**



**CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR
2020 RECIPIENTS**

Beam of Light

The Teachers & Staff of the South Brunswick School District

Mr. Gordon Barnes

Math Teacher • South Brunswick High School

Ms. Beth Caruso

1st Grade Teacher • Monmouth Jct. Elem. School

Mrs. Pamela Hernandez

Principal • Constable Elementary School

Mr. Paul Keller

Custodian • Cambridge Elementary School

Mr. Robert Masterton

Math Teacher • Crossroads North Middle School

Mr. Kyle Niemis

Science Teacher • Crossroads North Middle School

Mrs. Sweeti Tailor

Social Studies Teacher • Crossroads South M.S.

Mr. Alan Wish

French Teacher • Crossroads North Middle School

Mr. Gary Yeppez

Math Teacher • Crossroads South Middle School

Visit EFSB.org for details on how you can send a "Beam of Light" to honor a special person in the South Brunswick School District.

- ◆ Melissa Bermudez & Angela Fasanella (Crossroads North Middle School)
- ◆ Debbie Bevan (Greenbrook & Brunswick Acres Elementary Schools)
- ◆ Melyssa Boucher (Crossroads South Middle School)
- ◆ Carol Clark & Carolyn Hayward (Greenbrook Elementary School)
- ◆ Kelli Craparotta & Carrie Friedman (Dayton Elementary School)
- ◆ Patricia Del Guercio (Indian Fields Elementary School)
- ◆ Erica DeWitte (South Brunswick High School)
- ◆ Ellen Gehringer (Constable Elementary School)
- ◆ Karen Gordon & Melissa Griffin (South Brunswick High School)
- ◆ Pam Hernandez & Kristin Ippoliti (Constable Elementary School)
- ◆ Kristine Kaufman-Marut (Indian Fields Elementary School)
- ◆ Karen Kinsey (Indian Fields Elementary School)
- ◆ Tatiana Median (Indian Fields Elementary School)
- ◆ Catherine O'Keefe (Crossroads North Middle School)
- ◆ Engy Shaaban (Indian Fields Elementary School)
- ◆ Terri Wells (Indian Fields Elementary School)

Visit EFSB.org for more details and the complete list of grant recipients.

140 grants awarded since 2011 totaling **\$90,696**

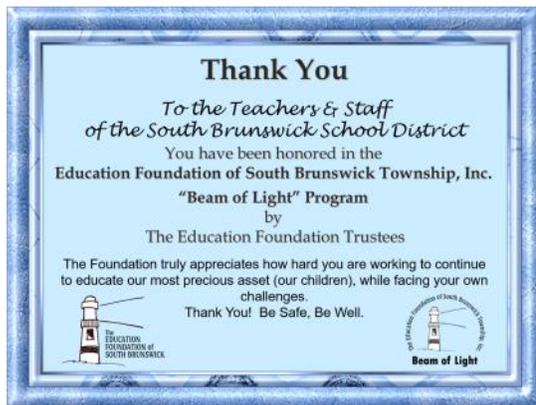
GRANT PROGRAM CHANGES FOR 2020-2021

Starting with the 2020-2021 session the Spark of Innovation Grant Program will be changing its format. Block grants will be awarded to each school based on enrollment. Schools will then submit their applications for Foundation approval. Details on the new format will be available on the Foundation website (EFSB.org) in September.

With students learning at home and teachers working hard on remote lesson plans the Ed. Foundation partnered with South Brunswick High School - Peer Leadership program to create *Storytime*.



Thanks to program teachers Mr. Gregory Scher and Mr. Jeffrey Tuliszewski, twenty-nine Peer Leadership students volunteered their time to video themselves reading their favorite children's stories. The Foundation released the stories over eight weeks (April 21 thru June 8) on our website. Storytime was a great success with over 830 stories viewed. Visit EFSB.org to enjoy a story.





At the 2019 Taste for Education event, the Education Foundation was proud to present the Distinguished Alumni Award to Lt. Gene Rickle who grew up in South Brunswick and graduated from South Brunswick High School in 1986.

Lt. Rickle began his 24-year career in law enforcement in 1995 when he was certified as a police officer. He has served in Patrol, Evidence Technician Unit, DARE Unit, SRO Bureau, Traffic Safety Bureau, and the Community Policing Bureau. Currently, he commands the Community Policing Division, which includes the School Resource Officer Bureau and the Community Policing Bureau.



Lt. Rickle has worked with National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch, Citizens Police Academy, Youth Police Academy, Child ID Day, the Blue Angel Program, Senior Citizen outreach, CRT, Municipal Alliance, and many crime prevention and community-building programs.

Lt. Rickle wrote the SAFE Program, our current drug prevention program designed for 5th and 6th-grade students.

We thank Lt. Gene Rickle for making a positive difference in the South Brunswick community especially through his work with our students.

For more information and previous Distinguish Alumni Award recipients visit EFSB.org.

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The Education Foundation of South Brunswick Township, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation (Tax I.D. 32-0258888). Gifts are deductible to the full extent of the law.



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Contact Us

The Education Foundation of South Brunswick Township, Inc.
 P.O Box 644
 Monmouth Jct., NJ 08852

info@edfoundationsb.org

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 or efsb.org

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