

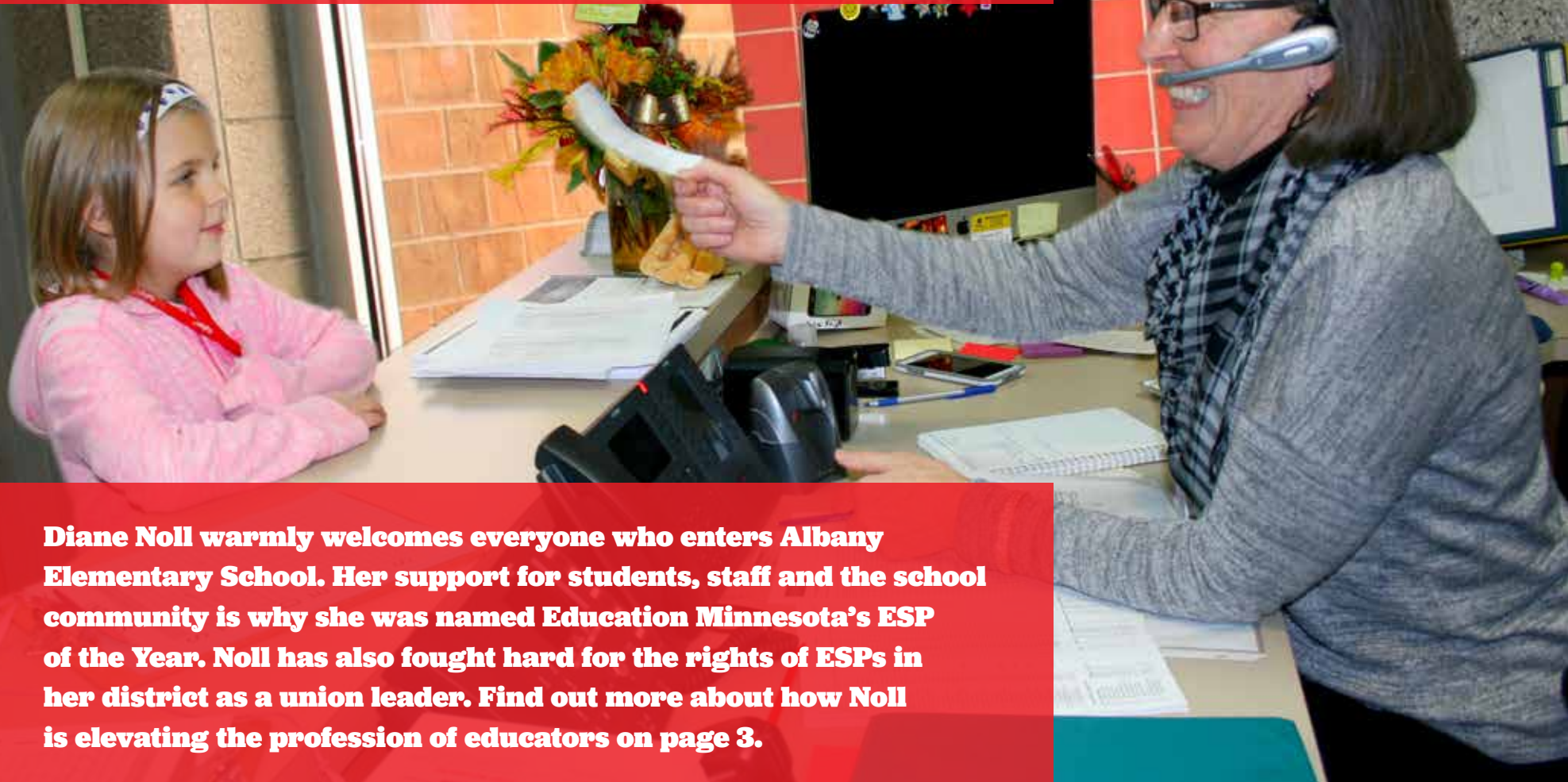


MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

A publication for the members of Education Minnesota

December 2017

2017 ESP of the Year



Diane Noll warmly welcomes everyone who enters Albany Elementary School. Her support for students, staff and the school community is why she was named Education Minnesota's ESP of the Year. Noll has also fought hard for the rights of ESPs in her district as a union leader. Find out more about how Noll is elevating the profession of educators on page 3.

Voters overwhelmingly support schools on Election Day

Voters across Minnesota overwhelmingly supported their local school districts through levies and referendums on Tuesday and voted for school board members who will put students first.

According to the Minnesota School Board Association, 41 districts went out for a bond or capital project levy this November. Measures passed in 28 districts and failed in 13. The amount of money passed totaled over \$1.3 billion

Fifty-three school districts asked for an operating levy referendum this fall, with 44 districts passing a question

and nine failing.

One district that saw a bond referendum pass was St. Francis.

"Our schools have not passed a bond in over seven years," said Ryan Fiereck, Education Minnesota St. Francis vice president and Education Minnesota governing board member. "The changes (to buildings) will help revitalize learning spaces for our students. It also allows us to revisit the education goals of these spaces and make sure they are meeting the needs of our students."

Across the state, union-supported school board

candidates were elected.

The Saint Paul Federation of Teachers endorsed Marny Xiong, Jeannie Foster and John Brodrick and all three won.

Education Minnesota/Edina endorsed five candidates for the four open seats on their district's school board and saw three win.

The Dakota County United Educators endorsed three candidates, including moving support from a previously-endorsed incumbent to a challenger. According to the local, it is estimated that 1,200 labor votes moved from the incumbent to the endorsed challenger and all

three of the local's endorsed candidates won.

The Duluth Federation of Teachers endorsed four candidates and saw them all elected. The wins in the at-large and District 4 races over incumbents was a major victory for the local union.

"We needed to step up to the plate," said DFT president Bernie Burnham. "Having a school board that can cooperate and work together is vital to move forward and work through the hard issues we all face."

The local unions in Duluth and St. Francis worked with Education Minnesota's local elections assistance

program and our partnership with the Area Labor Councils (ALC).

"Elections are an act of people," said Fiereck. "Our relationship with our ALC made our pool of resources, both people and tools, bigger and stronger. Without them, our reach would not have been expansive or effective."

Burnham hopes those connections can remain strong moving into 2018.

"People saw the community working with the DFT, labor organizations and Education Minnesota," she said. "This is a partnership, and the work that you put into it pays off."

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Read the article about the online professional development and collaboration program, ConnectED. Then answer the question, "How do you connect, learn from and collaborate with colleagues or other educators?" and send it to us via email, Twitter or Facebook to be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Target gift card.

Email us at educator@edmn.org or post on Twitter or Facebook using #MNEducator. Find us on Facebook at Education Minnesota and on Twitter @EducationMN. Answers will be run in next month's Minnesota Educator.

Congratulations to last month's contest winner, Noelle Carlson of St. Francis.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Education Minnesota President Denise Specht talks about the local election successes this fall and how to build on the momentum of those wins for the 2018 election. **Page 2**

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Winning election campaigns are fueled by the Power of We

When local unions report they are running out of lawn signs or need more telephones for their phone banks in the final days of a levy campaign, we take it as a very good sign.

The auspicious omens appeared about a week before Election Day this year, but no one at Education Minnesota predicted the success we would have when the votes were finally counted.

Voters in 28 of 41 districts passed a levy for a bond or building project. Forty-four of 53 districts passed at least one question of their operating levy request. Altogether, voters raised their taxes by more than \$1 billion for their local schools.

The victories reminded us Minnesotans are more likely to actually vote after they personally hear from an educator. Students win when educators unite and tap into



Denise Specht, president

the Power of We.

The victories may also tell us public opinion is swinging back in favor of the institutions that unite communities, including public schools. The politics of division may be losing their potency.

For example, consider two

locals that persuaded voters to approve levies in 2017 after losing elections only a few months before.

In Prior Lake-Savage, about 62 percent of voters approved both a \$109 million bond referendum and a 10-year operating levy. That's quite a turnaround considering the voters narrowly rejected another bond referendum and a technology levy in May 2016.

What happened in between? Volunteers personally shared the story of the schools to 5,000 local parents. The phone banks were full every shift and more than 120 people volunteered on the final weekend to get out the vote.

There was a similar story in the La Crescent-Hokah District in southeast Minnesota. The voters in 2016 rejected a levy and left

the district with a nearly \$500,000 hole in its budget, forcing cuts.

But a year later, the supporters of public education roared back and passed, with 68 percent of the vote, a 10-year, \$850-per-student operating levy that will raise about \$1 million a year for local students.

Local educators joined with concerned parents and ran an old-fashioned campaign with lots of neighbors talking to neighbors, usually over the telephone.

Mark Twain once wrote, "Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example," but I'll take my chances and point to the winning campaigns of 2017 as the keys to success next year.

The 2018 election will be a turning point for Education Minnesota and the union

movement in our state. The governor we elect may expand the freedom of working people to come together in union and negotiate a fair return for their work, or the new governor could snatch that opportunity away.

The 2017 election results give us hope for a better future for our students and our families, but only if we work together in the next campaign. We must all reach out to our neighbors with a call on the phone or a knock on the door.

Together,

Twitter: @DeniseSpecht

What professional development opportunity or training would you like to see your union start to offer or offer more?

In last month's *Minnesota Educator*, we continued the "we want to hear from you" contest and received responses from all over the state via email and Twitter. Here is a selection of the answers. Look on page 1 for this month's question and how to submit an answer. Your answer enters you into a drawing for a \$25 Target gift card!

"I would like to see the union offer professional development opportunities on reading and math interventions to use with students, as well as classes on ENVOY training."

— Noelle Carlson, Education Minnesota St. Francis

"I'd like to see more professional development opportunities about guided reading #meetingstudentneed #MNEducator"

— Niki Rowland, Education Minnesota — Wrenshall

"I would love to see my union offer more professional development opportunities in the area of literacy. Students need to learn reading strategies in order to be successful in school and beyond."

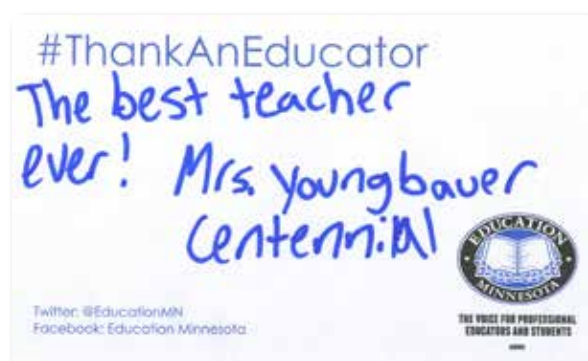
— Debbie Cain, Fridley Education Association

"I would love to see some training opportunities especially designed for school psychologists. We are left to our own devices to come up with ongoing training and professional development. We are union dues-paying members, yet our need for training during MEA conferences are overlooked and always have been."

— Christine Garklavs, United Teachers of South Washington County

Thank you, educators!

Every year at Education Minnesota's State Fair booth, thousands of kids and adults thank educators who were influential in their lives. We will feature a selection in each issue of the *Minnesota Educator* this year. Keep an eye out for your name!



MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

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Phone: 651-292-4805

By web: www.educationminnesota.org and choose the Contact Us link to send a change of address.

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Phone: 800-652-9073 or 651-227-9541

For information about union activities, work and resources, go to www.educationminnesota.org.

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The *Minnesota Educator* is published for members to share news about education issues and training opportunities for educators as well as union and political news that affects public education in Minnesota.



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Noll brings smiles to all who enter school

Anyone who enters Albany Elementary School is greeted by the smiling face of Diane Noll.

That positive, supportive, welcoming attitude is part of why Noll was named Education Minnesota's 2017 Education Support Professional of the Year.

But as an administrative assistant, Noll does much more than sit at the front desk.

"It's amazing how fast the day goes, because there is always something to do," said Noll.

Whether it's doing the daily attendance and announcements or fixing the copier, Noll is up for the challenge.

She files the Staff Automated Report (STAR) with the Minnesota Department of Education, helps out in the nurse's office, orders supplies, sorts the mail, gets the lunch count to the cafeteria staff and takes phone calls from parents. All of this goes into a normal day for Noll, on top of helping with the ever-changing needs of the school's growing staff and student population.

Albany Elementary is home to 600 students and 90 staff, all who know and rely on Noll.

"Every staff member has their needs that they come and ask me questions about," she said. "They ask about the copier, needing more construction paper, why is a kid sick or just come down and vent about something."

Every student walking in the door knows Noll, and loves her, said Carla Bauer, president of the Albany

Education Assistants & School-Related Personnel local union.

"She's an important person, the first person we see in our building," Bauer said. "But she's also an important person for our ESPs, because she is out there fighting for us all the time."

Noll served as the local's president before Bauer and continues to work on behalf of her colleagues, fighting for support staff training opportunities and better benefits.

"We wouldn't have holiday pay or sick time without the union fighting for it," said Noll. "We have a 403(b) now that we didn't have before, and the amount being submitted is more than before. Because we're a unit, we can fight for that. It's also important to have another set of ears when there's a problem."

And when the district sent out the staff development calendar for the year, Noll spoke up about what was missing.

"There's nothing for support staff," she said. "I went to the school board and told them they need to give us every opportunity to succeed."

Noll is humble about being named ESP of the Year, but is glad to shine a light on the work of administrative assistants.

"The last few years, it's been given to a para," she said. "They do great work, but it's important for admins to get recognized too."

She said the work of an administrative assistant can be stressful, especially in a



Diane Noll, Albany Elementary School's administrative assistant, often stops into the lunchroom to say hello and get a hug from students. Noll's connection to her students and her commitment to her work and local union is all part of why she was named the 2017 Education Minnesota ESP of the Year.

small school, where you are working alone.

"We're alone in our field because we're not in the classroom," she said. "This is a high-stress job. We have to keep track of everything going on in the school."

Noll hopes to not only share more about the role of administrative assistants with her title, but the work of everyone in ESP positions.

"If the bus drivers weren't here, the kids wouldn't get here, and it's important for

them to say good morning to help the kids start their day," said Noll. "The cooks feed kids, sometimes the only meal they get all day. Paras working one-on-one with kids with so many needs. These paras do an amazing amount of work to help our teachers. Janitors are unsung heroes. We take for granted that every morning the garbage is empty."

"All these things the support staff group does can go unnoticed. These

are all things to help the teachers teach. Having ESPs is important for our teachers to succeed and our students to succeed."

For winning the award, Noll receives a \$1,000 honorarium and an iPad, plus an expense-paid trip to the National Education Association Education Support Professional National Conference next spring.

School raises more than \$1,000 for Puerto Rico relief

When Brooklyn Center teacher David Schorn heard about the devastation in Puerto Rico caused by Hurricane Maria, he knew he had to help.

Schorn, a sixth- and 10th-grade history teacher, himself had fallen in love with the island on his travels there, but he also knew he had students originally from Puerto Rico who were affected by the tragedy.

"We have a few students who are from Puerto Rico," Schorn said. "Kids in school were hurting. Other kids came up with the idea to help out their fellow students."

So, Schorn and another teacher, Kerry Gautsch, started collecting money.

"I put out a jar in each of my five class periods," said Schorn. "I told students that for two weeks, we're going to collect money in these jars and if you feel comfortable, you can put in any amount."

Schorn started tracking the amounts from each class period, so it quickly became a competition for students.

"It was pretty special to

see," he said. "Our school is in a pretty impoverished area. These kids are giving well beyond what they have."

The students even came up with a slogan for the fundraiser, "Shine a light on Puerto Rico." Schorn also created a GoFundMe page for people outside the school to contribute.

As of press time, the Brooklyn Center fundraising campaign had collected \$1,600 in donations.

Some of the money was used to purchase an airplane ticket for two students' brother who was still living in Puerto Rico. He will be coming to Minnesota in December.

Schorn will travel to Puerto Rico for five days at the end of November to bring the rest of the supplies purchased with the money.

"We bought 30 LifeStraws, which can filter over 200 gallons of water to make it safe and drinkable," he said. "We also bought some battery-operated radios, batteries and dried foods. Some people donated clothes

as well."

Schorn plans to donate the supplies to University High School in San Juan, but also rent a car and drive to the remote village where one of his student's grandmother lives.

"People are stuck in villages and no one has gotten to them yet," he said.

Delta Airlines donated four luggage tags for Schorn to use, so he doesn't have to cover the cost of multiple checked bags.

"I'm just amazed at how kind my students are," he said. "I'm really proud of everyone."

Schorn's GoFundMe page is still active and he will continue to take donations even after his trip. If you would like to donate, go to www.gofundme.com/shine-a-light-on-puerto-rico.

The National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers are also raising money to support the citizens of Puerto Rico. Go to www.nea.org/harvey or www.aft.org/operation-agua for more information.



Photo courtesy of David Schorn

Teacher David Schorn gives a check to two students so they can purchase an airplane ticket for their brother, still living in Puerto Rico, to come to Minnesota.

Summit brings technology workshops to students

For the past five years, Pine City Media Specialist and District Technology Integrationist Dihanna Fedder has attended and presented at Google Summits and other technology conferences and thought there was a missing piece—students.

“I am always seeing staff there when I feel like the students need to have some of this same information, so we’re all on the same playing field,” said Fedder. “We started using iPads and Chromebooks and the biggest frustration for teachers is that students don’t know how to use the devices.”

Fedder started developing a student-focused version of a Google Summit, and with the help of a technology grant from the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, held the first annual event for grades 7-12 last fall.

“I got survey results from students on what their needs were,” she said. “I surveyed the teachers on what topics they thought should be covered.”

Suggestions from the school staff included topics like expectations for students using the devices and how to create documents. Suggestions from students ranged from how to organize



Pine City students tried Google Expeditions virtual reality goggles during the school’s technology summit.

a Google Drive to how to play chess online.

Once she determined what breakout session topics might be offered, Fedder asked teachers to present, but also students.

“Our student leaders jumped at the chance to show their peers what they knew,” she said. “They paired up with a teacher as a mentor, but there were four or five classrooms with students doing the presenting.”

Nineteen different breakout

sessions were offered. Topics ranged from apps to 3D printing to making videos with Chrome to interactive videoconferences.

“We had an interactive videoconference watching doctors do an autopsy,” said Fedder. “Our College in the Schools biology teacher had his students go to it. Students were able to watch, ask questions, have the doctor hold things up and show them.”

A panel presentation by

district staff talked about the school’s technology expectations for students, what is available in the school’s media center, what plagiarism-checking software does and how to avoid copyright issues.

“After talking about the expectations, I’ve had fewer problems with forgotten devices,” Fedder said.

Fedder used some of the grant money from Education Minnesota to help fund outside presenters and

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

keynote speaker Ben Friesen of EdTechTeam. Friesen is a Google Certified Innovator and director of professional development at EdTechTeam, a partner with Google for Education.

“He talked about finding your passion and following through on it,” she said. “He talked to them about his path from science to technology.”

Other presenters included staff from TIES, other technology integrationists in the area and community members, including someone who runs a drone service.

Fedder organized much of the conference over the summer, but she said other educators should not shy away from the idea if they think it is a lot of work.

“If you’ve attended a TIES event or a Google event, use that model,” she said. “You can easily have a keynote speaker. Then use the messages that the teachers want to get across to plan the other sessions.”

The reaction from students and staff has been extremely positive, said Fedder. She is already looking at how to improve the event for next year.

TEAM UP WITH CALIFORNIA CASUALTY

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Give your athletes a sporting chance with a Thomas R. Brown Athletics Grant. Apply to receive **\$1,000 to \$3,000** for your middle or high school’s team.

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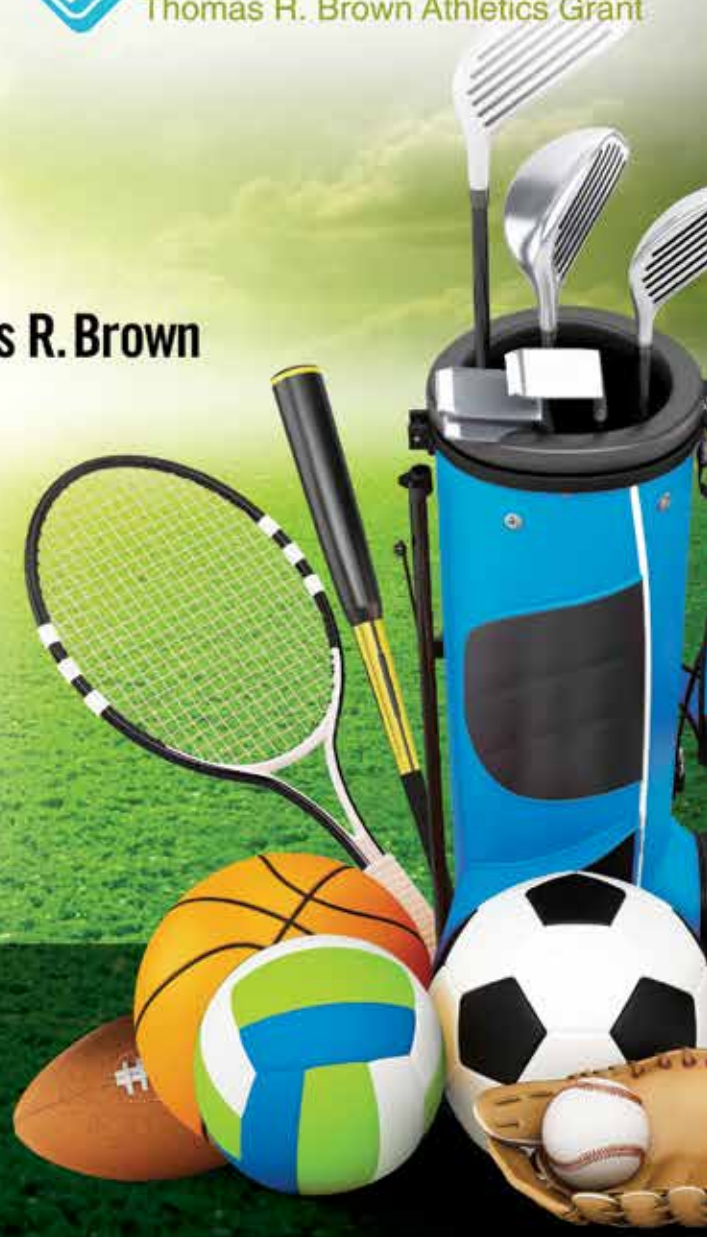
As an employee of the school and a member of the National Education Association (NEA), you can apply for a grant award for your school’s sports program.

Applications received through January 12, 2018 will qualify for 2018 consideration. Recipients will be announced in April 2018.

To apply for a grant, go to:
CalCasAthleticsGrant.com

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Grants not available in AK, HI, MA, MI, NY and WI. Please visit CalCasAthleticsGrant.com for full program rules.
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EDUCATION MINNESOTA MEMBER HONOR ROLL

Molly Fox from Mankato Public Schools was named the 2017 Minnesota School Social Worker of the Year.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees named their 2017 Award for Excellence in Teaching recipients. The award acknowledges exceptional accomplishments in teaching:

- **Joan Bernard**, computer careers/information systems instructor, Hennepin Technical College
- **Thomas (Gill) Creel**, English instructor, Minneapolis Community and Technical College
- **Carol (Kari) Frisch**, communications instructor, Central Lakes College
- **Maran Wolston**, philosophy instructor, Minneapolis Community and Technical College

The Minnesota Council of Social Studies named their 2017 Teachers of the Year:

- Elementary Teacher of the Year: **Lisa Wiener**, New Prague
- Middle School Teacher of the Year: **Mandy Kraus**, Wayzata
- High School Teacher of the Year: **Heather Loeschke**, Cannon Falls
- Lifetime Achievement: **Patricia Bauer**, Retired

The Art Educators of Minnesota named their 2017 award winners at their recent fall conference:

- Art Educator of the Year: **Nichole Hahn**, Elk River
- Secondary Art Educator of the Year: **LeAnn Atchison**, MACCRAY

Devon Vojtech from Forest Lake was named the 2017 Environmental Educator of the Year by the Minnesota Association for Environmental Education.

The Minnesota School Counselors Association honored their 2017 award winners:

- Elementary Counselor of the Year: **Amy Paton**, Osseo
- Middle School Counselor of the Year: **Craig Bell**, Stewartville
- Secondary Counselor of the Year: **Christina Cox**, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose
- Multi-level Counselor of the Year: **Christine Lundin**, South Koochiching-Rainy River
- Administrative Support Award Recipient: **Barb Turek**, Tri-City United

The Minnesota Council on Economic Education honored their 3M- and Thrivent Financial-sponsored award winners. The following educators were honored:

- 3M Economic Educator of the Year Award: **Jamie Shaw**, Anoka-Hennepin
- 3M Innovative Economic Educator Award: **Melissa Turk**, St. Paul, and **Kristan Nalezny**, Hopkins
- Thrivent Financial Personal Finance Leadership Award: **Kristine Somerville**, St. Paul
- Thrivent Financial Personal Finance Educator Awards: **Ruth Krider**, St. Paul, and **Eric Hjelden**, Willmar



Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Rural Educators Association

The Minnesota Rural Educators Association honored their 2017 Educators of Excellence at a banquet Nov. 13. The honorees are (from left) Melissa Klapperich from Cannon Falls, Angela Hartman from Underwood, Roger Ebnet from Benson and Susan Akre from Deer River.

Rural educators awarded

The Minnesota Rural Education Association announced its second annual Educator of Excellence Award honorees. The award was created to recognize, reward and promote excellence in education that achieves the highest outcomes for greater Minnesota students.

Four awards are given out each year, one to each of MREA's membership zones—north, south, north central and south central.

The four honorees were selected earlier this year and honored at a banquet in mid-November. They include:

- **Susan Akre**, the teaching, learning and assessment coordinator for the Deer River School District.
- **Angela Hartman**, a business teacher and academic advisor at Underwood High School.
- **Melissa Klapperich**, a sixth-grade teacher in Cannon Falls.
- **Roger Ebnet**, a second-grade teacher in Benson.

Read more about the honorees and why they were selected, as well how to nominate an educator for the 2018 award at www.mreavoice.org/awards/#educators-of-excellence.



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FILING FORM FOR NEA RA STATE-CREDENTIALLED DELEGATE

This form must be filed with the Office of the Elections Committee of Education Minnesota.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

I, _____, hereby submit my name for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held June 30-July 5, 2018, in Minneapolis, MN.

OR

I, _____, wish to nominate _____, for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held June 30-July 5, 2018, in Minneapolis, MN.

I further certify that the nominee is eligible for state credentials as a delegate from:

Active Member _____ Election District _____
(K-12; statewide affiliates; and school related personnel)

Category 2 _____
(inactive NEA life member and not an Education Minnesota Retired member)

Please complete the following information:

Name: _____

Local: _____

Home Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

School Phone: _____

School Email: _____

Personal Email: _____

(Optional information for internal use)

_____ American Indian/Alaskan Native _____ Caucasian (not Spanish origin)
_____ Black _____ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
_____ Hispanic _____ Other
_____ Asian

First Time Delegate? Yes _____ No _____

PreK-12 _____ Higher Ed _____ ESP _____

DEADLINE: DEC. 8, 2017 (11:59 P.M.)

Return completed form by fax to: 651-767-1266, or mail to: Office of the Elections Committee, Education Minnesota, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103, or scan and email to elections.committee@edmn.org.

If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within seven days after submitting, inquire by email to elections.committee@edmn.org.

Note: Education Minnesota includes an insert of all candidates for each election district in the Minnesota Educator published prior to the election. Candidates may submit a photo and statement for inclusion in this publication and on the Education Minnesota website. The photo and statement must be submitted using the online submission form at www.educationminnesota.org. Statement and photo must be submitted by Dec. 20, 2017.

FILING FORM FOR NEA RA STATE-CREDENTIALLED DELEGATE-STUDENT

This form must be filed with the Office of the Elections Committee of Education Minnesota.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

I hereby submit my name as a candidate for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held June 30-July 5, 2018, in Minneapolis, MN. I further certify that I am eligible for state credentials as a delegate from:

_____ **Student**
(must be an Education Minnesota Student Program member)

Please complete the following information:

Name: _____

College: _____

School Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

School Phone: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

School Email: _____

Personal Email: _____

Summer Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

(Optional information for internal use)

_____ American Indian/Alaskan Native _____ Caucasian (not Spanish origin)
_____ Black _____ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
_____ Hispanic _____ Other
_____ Asian

First Time Delegate? Yes _____ No _____

DEADLINE: FEB. 15, 2018 (11:59 P.M.)

Return completed form by fax to: 651-767-1266, or mail to: Office of the Elections Committee, Education Minnesota, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103, or scan and email to elections.committee@edmn.org.

If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within seven days after submitting, inquire by email to elections.committee@edmn.org.

Note: Candidates may submit a photo and statement for inclusion on the Education Minnesota website. The photo and statement must be submitted using the online submission form at www.educationminnesota.org. Statement and photo must be submitted by Mar. 2, 2018.

Delegate selection for 2018 NEA RA

The National Education Association Representative Assembly, the major decision-making body for the NEA, will take place June 30-July 5 in Minneapolis.

“Delegates bring their voices to the representative assembly and shape the actions and policies of the NEA,” Education Minnesota President Denise Specht said.

“The convention celebrates excellence in our profession and provides an opportunity to connect with educators from across the country.”

All active Education Minnesota members are eligible to run for a state-credentialed delegate position to the NEA RA. Filings close Dec. 8.

Elections will take place in local districts during the 15-day window beginning Feb. 5 and ending Feb. 23. Elections will be held on weekdays only during this period.

Ballots will be mailed the last week of January to all local presidents in districts where an election is necessary.

Nominations for state-credentialed student delegates close Feb. 15. Elections will take place on a date to be determined in April, if necessary.

Funding information for state-credentialed delegates

To receive funding, state-credentialed delegates must be in attendance for the entire Representative Assembly, beginning with the June 30 caucus meeting through adjournment the night of July 5. State-elected delegates

are expected to attend all caucus meetings and to be on the convention floor for all proceedings.

Funding includes: One double occupancy standard room at the delegation hotel for an authorized number of nights, hotel parking, reimbursement for meals and other convention-related expenses, up to \$490 (with original, itemized receipts). Substitute costs for state delegates working in year-round school settings will be covered as outlined in the Education Minnesota Financial Policy for Governance and Members.

Mileage to and from the assembly is reimbursable at 20 cents a mile.

No funding is available for those who are retired, inactive members or Category 2 delegates (NEA Active members who are supervisors, NEA Retired Life members, NEA Staff Life members and NEA Active members for life who are past presidents of the association and who do not meet the requirements for membership).

Filing forms for state-credentialed and student delegates are printed on this page.

Funding for small locals

This is a funding program aimed at helping locals with 150 or fewer members send a delegate to the Representative Convention or the American Federation of Teachers Convention. Local presidents will receive information and details about how to apply.

Volunteers needed for 2018 NEA RA

With the 2018 National Education Association’s Representative Assembly being held in Minneapolis, June 30-July 5, volunteers are needed to help the event run smoothly.

Members can learn more and register for volunteer shifts at <https://goo.gl/6Cnpab>. Members can also contact the host committee at neara2018@gmail.com.

A training will take place prior to the event on June 29.

Volunteer opportunities include:

Delegate Services

The delegate services committee provides services for delegates with physical challenges.

Information and Registration

The information and registration committee provides volunteers for information booth and registration area.

NEA Fund for Children

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education is charged with soliciting voluntary contributions from NEA members, their family members, and NEA and affiliate staff for use in the campaigns of candidates for federal office.

RA Telephone Network

The RA telephone network committee is responsible for staffing and operating the microphone and telephone system used by delegates to communicate with the presiding officer and the assembly in order to participate in the association’s business.

Event Services

The event services committee includes volunteer opportunities such as ushers, floaters, host committee room monitor for meals, HCR dinner, joint conference and other special event help as assigned.

Legal benefits of Education Minnesota membership

In your work as an educator, you are frequently exposed to situations that may give rise to legal entanglement. One of the many benefits of Education Minnesota membership is access to certain legal services when those situations occur.

When talking about legal benefits of membership, it is helpful to think about the five categories where the need for legal services can arise: employment, maltreatment, licensure, criminal and civil. The Education Minnesota Legal Services Policy (LSP) and the NEA Educators Employment Liability Program (EEL) provide important benefits and services when facing legal scrapes in any of these categories.

Discipline and termination are the most common employment consequences for alleged wrongdoing. A grievance is the proper way to challenge discipline and some termination actions. However, the continuing contract and tenure laws provide a statutory termination process for teachers covered by those laws. Members are entitled to legal representation through that process. If a member is facing a termination or discipline action, he or she

should contact their local union representative or field staff representative.

The Minnesota Department of Education is charged with assessing or investigating allegations of child maltreatment in public schools. County social services agencies are charged with assessing or investigating allegations of vulnerable adult (students over 18) maltreatment in public schools. Maltreatment investigations may involve allegations of physical harm to a student or neglect. Maltreatment investigations for neglect have included allegations for failing to let a child use the bathroom, failure to supervise a student and placing a student on the wrong bus.

When an Education Minnesota member is notified that they are under investigation for alleged maltreatment in the course of his or her work as an educator, that member should contact a local union representative or field staff representative and an attorney will be provided to represent the member throughout the investigation.

Licensing boards, like the Minnesota Board of Teaching (soon to be the Professional Educator Standards and Licensing Board), the

Minnesota Board of Nursing and the Minnesota Board of Social Work take on the role of regulating licenses, professional practice and ensuring compliance with ethical obligations. A violation of accepted practices or ethical obligations could result in disciplinary action against a license, which may include suspension or revocation.

Legal representation throughout a licensure investigation is another member benefit. If an Education Minnesota member receives a letter initiating an inquiry into conduct that may warrant disciplinary action against a license, the member should contact their local union representative or field staff representative. An Education Minnesota attorney will represent the member in that process pursuant to our LSP.

The most common source of criminal investigations for educators are physical interactions with students, especially in the special education context.

When members are the subject of a criminal investigation for alleged conduct in the course of their work as educators, they will be provided with a criminal defense attorney during the

investigation and prior to a decision on whether to issue a criminal charge.

If a member does end up being charged with violating a criminal statute in the course of his or her employment, the member must cover any attorney costs from that point forward. However, the member is eligible for reimbursement of legal fees and other legal costs up to \$35,000 if the charges are later dismissed or the member is exonerated. If you are contacted by law enforcement, including a school resource officer, contact your local union representative or Education Minnesota field staff representative and he or she will connect you with legal representation.

Although less common than licensure, maltreatment or criminal investigations, there are, on occasion, civil lawsuits brought against educators. These actions are typically brought up by parents on behalf of students. If the civil proceedings are brought against a member for actions that arise out of his or her work as an educator, the NEA EEL Program provides insurance benefits. The benefits include payment of court-ordered liability and legal costs up to the policy

LEGAL BRIEFS

limits. If you are interested in learning more about the coverage through the EEL Program, please contact Education Minnesota for a copy of the plan documents.

You may think that you will never be in need of the legal services discussed in this article because those types of things only happen to “bad” educators. I can assure you that is not the case. No one believes they are going to be in a situation where they need legal representation to protect their livelihood, but, unfortunately, it happens too often to ignore.

The legal services discussed in this article are a small, but important, sampling of the many benefits of being a member in your local union and Education Minnesota. If you are interested in more information about the Education Minnesota LSP or the NEA EEL Program, contact your Education Minnesota field representative.

♦ **Nicole Blissenbach**
Blissenbach is a staff attorney for Education Minnesota.

MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW

IDENTITY THEFT RECOVERY PLAN FOR MEMBERS



Peace of mind, made simple

Register today for the complimentary Securus ID plan or other plan options at educationminnesota.securusid.com

You've probably heard about the recent data breaches, so we just wanted to let you know that we are here to support you.

The most recent breach occurred at Equifax, one of the three primary credit reporting agencies. Equifax has stated this breach includes the records of more than 143 million Americans. To support you during this time, here are a couple tips to help you protect yourself:

- Check your credit reports regularly to keep an eye on any unauthorized activity
- Monitor your online bank and financial accounts for early signs of fraud
- Register for the identity theft recovery plan* courtesy of Education Minnesota ESI Member Benefits (if you have not already done so)
- Determine online if you are included in the Equifax data breach at www.equifaxsecurity2017.com

*Complimentary plan for active teachers and support professionals (ESP). Families and members such as retired, student, and reserve, may purchase plans at negotiated discount rates.



SECURUS

Helping Education Minnesota members since 2010



41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 651-292-4856 800-642-4624 esi.educationminnesota.org esi@edmn.org

Paid for by ESI, not by dues. ESI is self-supporting; revenue provide benefits, service and consumer education for members. What do YOU want to know? Send questions to esi@edmn.org.

EDUCATION MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITIES

SHARE, CONNECT, COLLABORATE THROUGH CONNECTED

Education Minnesota’s Minnesota Educator Academy is home to a web-based learning network called ConnectED.

ConnectED is a digital home for all your professional needs as an educator, such as learning, collaborating and file sharing.

This digital network provides statewide professional development opportunities designed to engage educators in innovative digital learning, modeling equitable learning practices that can be easily translated to local classrooms and communities.

Join ConnectED to find other groups of Minnesota educators who share your professional interests – or create your own groups to fit your specific needs. You will also be instantly linked to a nationwide network of educators and resources, through the NEA Connected

Communities platform.

ED communities is a crowdsourcing approach to professional development, where participants drive the content, can share resources, ideas and questions.

Educators serve as moderators and are excited to see what can happen when colleagues connect from around the state.

Existing ConnectED groups include:

- MEA ConnectED Home
- MEA Special Education Support
- Minnesota NBCT Network
- NextGen EdMN
- Education Minnesota Foundation Grantees

- Racial Equity Community of Practice
- Literacy in the Digital Classroom
- Making the Most of Data and Assessments
- MEA FIRE: Fighting Inequities and Racism in Education
- Teacher Support: Induction and Mentoring
- Degrees, Not Debt

Education Minnesota is always looking for ideas of new groups and interested moderators. A \$1,000 stipend is available for committed group moderators.

Register at mynea360.org and join our MEA ConnectED Home community or go to www.educationminnesota.org/resources/minnesota-educator-academy/ConnectED for more information.

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The Minnesota Educator provides opportunities listings on this page as a member service, highlighting the free and low-cost professional development the union provides. The page also lists conferences, training and resources of possible interest. Readers interested in pursuing an opportunity should check it out carefully. The Educator tries to include only legitimate, useful opportunities that support education practice.

To submit an opportunity:

- Send a complete description of your opportunity to educator@edmn.org.
- Send your item by the first Friday of the month to be considered for the next month’s Opportunities page. Include daytime contact information.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regional youth engagement trainings

Trainings held around the state will offer participants a chance to learn how to engage youth on local community issues. The trainings are hosted by the Minnesota Regional Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention Coordinators. They’re scheduled in the following communities: Sauk Rapids–Dec. 5-6, Mankato–Dec. 7-8, Duluth–Dec. 12-13 and Detroit Lakes–Dec. 14-15.

Light breakfast, snacks and lunch are provided. Registration fees range from \$50-\$75. For more information or to register, go to <http://rpcmn.org/events>.

Youth Leadership Council workshops

The National Youth Leadership Council will host professional development opportunities for educators throughout the next year. The workshop “Climbing the Ladder to Meaningful Youth/Adult Partnerships in the Classroom” will take place Dec. 7 from 4-6 p.m. at the TIES building in St. Paul. The workshop is free and will focus on promoting youth voice and choice in the classroom that will lead to better educational experiences for young people. Go to <https://nylc.org/events> for more information about the training.

The National Service-Learning Conference will take place in St. Paul March 11-13. This event provides the tools, resources, ideas and support educators need to make positive changes in your schools and communities. For more information about the conference and how to register, go to <http://servicelearningconference.org/2018>.

TIES education technology conference

The TIES Education Technology Conference will be held Dec. 11-12 at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, with preconference workshops being held Dec. 9-10. Over the course of four days, attendees will have access to information and resources covering hundreds of educational technology-related topics. From Makerspaces and Google apps to professional development and digital portfolios, TIES 2017 workshops and seminars shed new light on innovative classroom technologies.

For more information about the conference, keynote speakers, registration fees and how to apply, go to <http://ties2017.ties.k12.mn.us>.

Relicensure workshops offered by St. Paul Federation of Teachers

The St. Paul Federation of Teachers Teaching & Learning Center is offering multiple professional days of learning where educators will choose from a variety of courses that meet Minnesota relicensure requirements.

Courses offered on specific dates are:

Jan. 13–Identifying Student Mental Health (includes suicide prevention requirement), Accommodations & Modifications, Digital Technology Strategies in the Classroom.

Feb. 10–Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies, Supporting English Learners in the Classroom, Reading Preparation Seminar.

March 17–Supporting English Learners in the Classroom, Accommodations & Modifications, Identifying Student Mental Health (includes the suicide prevention requirement), Digital Technology Strategies in the Classroom.

For more information or to register, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/professional-day-of-learning-tickets-37874620008>.

Online guide for classroom, after-school activities

Reach for the Stars is a guide for academic enrichment programs and activities to supplement classroom learning. This online catalogue features information on six types of statewide programs: challenges and competitions, awards and recognitions, conferences and institutes, classroom enrichment, leadership development, and out-of-school enrichment.

To see the complete guide, go to www.synergyexchange.org and click on the link to download the PDF.

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Education Minnesota foundation grant deadlines approaching

The Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has professional development and classroom-focused grants available for members, with application deadlines in December. Classroom-focused grants are intended for licensed personnel who work with students and wish to improve their practice and student achievement. There is also a second-year grant available for those wishing to continue a previously funded project. Members can request up to \$3,000 for both grants. The Bruce Vento Science Educator Professional Development Grant supports educators who teach science as part of their day and want to acquire and share new skills and knowledge. Members can request up to \$1,500. Applications for all of these grants are due Dec. 8.

For more information or application materials, go to www.edmnfoundation.org.

Financial education grants available from United Educators Credit Union Foundation

The United Educators Foundation is offering grants to educators, departments or schools who are promoting financial literacy to their students. Grant funds will be awarded via a check of up to \$500. Submitted applications should support instruction

of content related to budgeting, credit, money management, economics, saving and investing or other personal finance topics. All grade levels and subjects are eligible to apply, and the application deadline is Dec. 15. Funds will be awarded in early 2018 to be used during the 2017-18 school year.

For additional details and to download an application, visit www.uecu.coop/scholarship.

Scholarships for educators, students, dependents of members from United Educators Credit Union

The United Educators Foundation is accepting applications for its annual educator, education major and high school student scholarship awards.

One \$2,000 scholarship will be awarded to a United Educators Credit Union member and current educator for the purpose of professional development. Applicants must have worked a minimum of six months in the field, and must plan to attend an accredited institution within one year of receiving the award.

One \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded to a student majoring in education and entering their junior or senior year in the fall of 2018. Applicants must be attending an accredited college or university in the state of Minnesota or be a United Educators Credit Union member or the child or grandchild of a member. This award is available to non-UECU members.

Three \$1,000 college scholarships will be awarded to graduating high school seniors who are United Educators Credit Union members or the children, grandchildren or other dependents of members. Applicants must be planning to attend a university, college, community college or technical college in the fall of 2018.

Applications are due Feb. 2, and are available online at www.uecu.coop/scholarship.

DIGITAL RESOURCES

Bill of Rights Institute lessons, webinars

The Bill of Rights Institute, a nonprofit educational organization that develops resources and programs on our country’s founding principles, has a variety of free resources for educators to use in the classroom. Some of the resources include student contests, free lesson plans and curriculum, copies of founding documents, Constitution Day resources and professional development opportunities.

Go to www.billofrightsinstitute.org to see all of the offerings.

Environmental education resources

Population Education is a program with a strong emphasis on curriculum and professional development for K-12 educators that focuses on human population issues.

The website offers a new middle school curriculum called People and the Planet. This is an online curriculum organized into seven comprehensive units of lesson plans, student readings, infographics, a glossary and sources for further research.

Population Education also offers teaching materials for grades K-12 including lesson plans, background readings for students and teachers, wall charts and the video animation, World Population.

Go to <http://populationeducation.org> to see all of the offerings and <http://populationeducation.org/store/people-and-planet-lessons-sustainable-future> to learn about the People and the Planet curriculum.