

September 2015

By Erich Thurow, Chairman D200 Education Foundation

The District 200 Education Foundation has received nearly 90 requests this month from teachers and staff for grants for this year. A committee of our trustees is in the process of reading and evaluating the requests and we will vote to award grants later this month and announce the grant recipients at an assembly on September 30 at Woodstock North High School. We will again be awarding nearly \$25,000 in grants to fulfill our goal to “make things happen that ordinarily would not.”

Now that the grant program is nearly completed, the Foundation turns its focus to awarding the Sue Palmore Award of Excellence. Sue Palmore was a former School Board member and served for many years as the Board’s liaison to the Foundation. The Palmore award is given each year to someone in the community who has shown exemplary service to the students of District 200.

The first winner of the award was Harlow “Bud” Swarhout. “Bio Bud” was a career teacher and coach at Woodstock High School and the Foundation was proud to start our annual award program with recognizing Mr. Swarhout in 2011. The following year, the Foundation presented the award to Barb Banker. Ms. Banker worked for many years as the district’s Director of Community Service and was invaluable to the Education Foundation from its inception until her retirement that year.

Retired Greenwood principal Bill Schuette was the recipient of the award in 2013. One of the most beloved educators in District 200, we were thrilled to present Bill with the award and many of his former staff and students were on hand at our dinner to celebrate Bill’s award. Jim Campion, long time Foundation board member, was the honoree for 2014. Jim’s leadership of the Foundation and his continuing efforts for years after his retirement from the Board, made him an outstanding candidate for the Award.

We were delighted last year to honor Miguel Rodriguez as the fifth annual award honoree. Miguel’s work with students at Woodstock North High School and his efforts to form and work with the Future Latino Leaders group at WNHS made him a perfect fit for our award which is designed to recognize “an individual whose contributions have resulted in significant improvement to education in District 200.”

The Foundation is now in the process of searching for our 2016 recipient, and that’s where we need the help of the Woodstock community. On our website (www.d200edfoundation.org) we have a nomination form and more information about nominating a deserving candidate for the award. The award will be presented at this year’s annual fundraiser dinner being held February 6 at the historic Starline Factory in Harvard. The deadline for nominations is in October, so now is the time to consider the people who have contributed to education in the district and nominate. If you have any questions, please contact me at ekthurow@owc.net and plan on joining us to celebrate the 2016 Award of Excellence recipient in February.