

May 2015

By Erich Thurow, Chairman D200 Education Foundation

Many of the grants provided by the District 200 Education Foundation only partially fund the project. With our funding budget limited primarily to the funds raised in our major fundraising event, the Groundhog Day Dinner and Auction, we are not able to fully fund many worthy projects. Knowing our limitations, the Foundation encourages groups to seek additional sources of income, and many groups do find other funds to support their programs.

Today's featured project, one that benefits hundreds of students in District 200, is one that we were only able to fund in part, yet the group has found additional sources of income to make the project happen. This fall Woodstock North High School's Theatre continued a program they call "Theatre for Young Audiences," and presented a production of "Charlotte's Web" in the school's theater which entertained hundreds of children and adults in our community.

In her statement, theatre director Letitia Lyon pointed out, "Exposing a child to the wonders of live theatre can create a life-long love of the performing arts." She also points out that both last year's Children's show, "Alice in Wonderland," which was also partially funded by the Foundation, and this year's show are tied to the district's reading curriculum. The book "Charlotte's Web" is very popular with elementary students, and two schools brought students to WNHS to enjoy this year's production.

Third grade students from Mary Endres Elementary School, all children in the district's Life Skills program, and the entire student body of Valley View Elementary School in McHenry were among the more than 2,200 people who enjoyed the magic of this timeless tale at one of its seven performances. Ms. Lyon pointed out that many of the students wrote thank you notes to the company. One student wrote, "My favorite character was Charlotte because she had emotion and got really into her character. I thought all the actors have potential and will go places someday!"

Letitia Lyon thanked the Foundation for assisting the theatre program "to continue to enrich the lives of theatre students by encouraging them to participate in the creative process, to value the Arts and to bring joy to others through live theatre." I, in turn would like to thank all of the people in our community who continue to support the Foundation, so that we can continue to reach for our goal of "making things happen that ordinarily would not."

This is just one of the 80 projects the Education Foundation funded in whole or in part this year. While our Groundhog Day event is over, donations to support our programs are always welcome. Donations received can add to the funds available for next fall's grants. If you would like to contribute, please send a check to the District 200 Education Foundation, P.O. Box 172, Woodstock, IL, 60098.