

Winter 2024

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ST. ANN'S

Since 2018, Mt. Carmel St. Ann's has been a generous supporter of the WEF, donating \$50,000 over the last five years to support grants, Grow & Glow, and the Westerville Student Education Foundation. Thank you, Mount Carmel St. Ann's, for your unwavering commitment to supporting the WEF.

#### New WEF Sponsors

- Aqua-Tots Swim Schools
- CME Federal Credit Union
- GridIron Football Columbus
- Kemba
- T. Marzetti Company

**Support our teachers & students!**

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## WESTERVILLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Innovate • Educate • Inspire



*Pictured: McVay Elementary students line up in the hallway giving peace signs and thumbs up before singing on stage at the 2nd Annual Grow & Glow Festival in September of 2023.*

#### Grow & Glow 2023

The WEF is delighted to share the success of the 2nd annual Grow and Glow community festival, held at Minerva Park Middle School. With more than 2,000 students, parents, educators, and community members in attendance, the event was a vibrant celebration of community spirit. Festivities included captivating student performances, a variety of food trucks, and engaging educational activities led by more than 40 exhibitors. The festival exemplified the power of community collaboration and the shared commitment to fostering a thriving and inclusive environment.

#### Special thanks to our Grow & Glow Sponsors:

- CME Federal Credit Union
- Columbus Design Company
- COPC Sports, Spine & Joint
- Coutanya Combs
- GridIron Football Columbus
- Kemba
- Maloney + Novotny LLC
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- The Collins Family
- The Piatt Family
- The Weinhardt Family
- Westerville Sunrise Rotary

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Donate at [WestervilleEducationFoundation.com](https://WestervilleEducationFoundation.com)





Photo: Book cover of "THE ONES AMONG US: Memoirs of Culturally Diverse High School Students in America," featuring portraits of four students on a multicolored background.



Photo: WCHS student sits for portrait by Otterbein University student.



Photo: WCHS student sits for portrait by Otterbein University student.

### 2023 Grant Spotlight



Photo: Deb Jones, WCHS ESL Teacher, and Sr. Pablo Chignolli pose in front of student portraits at Otterbein University.

In Spring 2023, WEF proudly funded Sr. Pablo Chignolli's grant to create an autobiography book, "THE ONES AMONG US: Memoirs of Culturally Diverse High School Students in America." Inspired by "OUT OF MANY, ONE" by George Bush Jr. and "Outcast United" by Warren St. John, this project celebrates diversity and resilience at Westerville Central High School (WCHS).

Featuring students from Nepal, Colombia, Rwanda, Honduras, Brazil, Ukraine, Japan, Kazakhstan, El Salvador, Haiti and more, each story contributes to the rich cultural tapestry at Westerville Central. The project aims to foster unity, understanding, and a more inclusive school environment.

The initiative involves interviews, writing, photography, and a collaboration with Otterbein University's Art and History Department for painted portraits created by Otterbein students. The book will be printed before the school year ends, with at least 50 copies distributed for free within the school community.

Sr. Chignolli's project is currently being featured at Otterbein University's Art Gallery. He will present on the project to a Sociology of Immigration class at The Ohio State University in February, and the entire student and teacher project team is invited to a private tour to meet representatives from The Center for Latin American Studies at OSU.

View the portraits in person on February 29 at Westerville Central's Culture Day.

Get ready for the unveiling of "THE ONES AMONG US: Memoirs of Culturally Diverse High School Students in America," a powerful testament to the strength found in embracing differences at Westerville Central High School.



### Fall 2023 Grant Awards

WEF takes immense pride in championing educators throughout the district by providing grants to fuel innovative projects across a diverse range of subjects. This fall, WEF awarded more than \$12,000 in funding, empowering educators to bring creativity and excellence into their classrooms and throughout the community.

**Calming Space** - Melia Stock, Kathy Kosinski, Krista Mathews and Laura Miller at [Genoa Middle School](#). \$500 to create a calming space in the school office dedicated to student wellness.

**STEM Challenges** - Angie Health at the [Gifted Ed Department](#). \$612 to provide games for enrichment sessions with gifted students.

**Wellity/Yoga Club** - Bethany Hendricks at [Minerva Park Middle School](#). \$299 to provide yoga mats for a new school yoga club.

**Mock Grocery Store** - Cass Lawson at [Best of Both Worlds](#). \$1,653 to provide equipment for a mock grocery store to create job training experience for students.

**Building District and Poetry Slam** - Hailee Cook at [Minerva Park Middle School](#). \$2,290 to provide resources and materials for building-wide poetry slam at Minerva Park and a district-wide event where all schools are invited.

**Supporting EL Students Through a Family-Oriented English Program** - Heather Sunday at [Minerva France Elementary](#). \$649 to provide materials for new weekly after-school practice language sessions with English Learner (EL) families.

**Around the World with Food** - Jennifer Cole at [Heritage Middle School](#). \$400 to provide food associated with countries and cultures 6th grade students learn about in social studies lessons.

**African-American Read In** - Lee Rutherford at [Blendon Middle School](#). \$800 to support the district's annual African-American Read-In event.

**Educational Resources for Emergent Language Learners** - Tina Shirey and Danielle Whitehead at [Cherrington Elementary](#). \$1,030 to provide learning resources to help EL students build and strengthen their language acquisition skills in the classroom.

**Sensory Space** - Heather Scheurer at [Mark Twain Elementary](#). \$1,400 (partially funded) towards sensory equipment to help students of all ages and all cognitive abilities to self-regulate.





Grow & Glow Event  
Photos



Photos: Parents and children doing crafts at a table.



Photo: Children reading music and singing on stage.



Photo: Children standing on a small stage while doing a yoga pose with their hands in the air while teacher instructs.



Photo: Boy smiling with a magnifying glass in front of his eye.



**Golden Butterfly Campaign**

Running through the month of February, WEF will raise funds through the Golden Butterfly Campaign to support the following projects. WEF will match up to \$1,000 of funds raised by the community and businesses.

**Genoa Middle School Fossil Garden**

- With a goal to raise \$3,642, Deb Bergman hopes to install the LaFarge Fossil Garden at Genoa Middle School which will make Ohio natural history immediately available to the 700 sixth through eighth graders at Genoa MS and 600 primary grade students at Fouse Elementary School. An authentic paleontology experience will be just a short bus trip away from our district's 15,000 students and accessible to the entire Westerville community.

**Celebrating World Cultures with Music, Movement, and Art**

- Jennifer Hall at Robert Frost Elementary hopes to raise \$3,600 to provide art supplies and drums for Robert Frost's second annual World Cultures Night where families and educators come together to share unique aspects of their culture with the greater school community.

**Support the Golden Butterfly Campaign at**  
[westervilleeducationfoundation.com/ways-to-give](http://westervilleeducationfoundation.com/ways-to-give).

Select "Fossil Garden" and  
 "World Cultures Night" in the dropdown.

**Dr. George Tombaugh Fund**

Generously sponsored by the Dr. George Tombaugh Fund, in honor of the former Westerville City Schools superintendent, Julie Koontz, Monica Thuman and Sarah Davis's will receive a grant for a **Fully Inclusive Accessible Adapted Playground** (\$1,011). Funding will purchase alternative communication boards to support exploration and increased ease of access for students with severe speech/language impairments, lack of fine motor control and delays in motor planning at Westerville City Schools' preschool program.



**Fall Teacher of the Month Awardees:**

**Julie Chance**  
*Westerville North*

**Tom Cook**  
*Academic Enrichment Center*

**Zoe Mieras**  
*Westerville Central*

**Heather Ivery**  
*Mark Twain Elementary*

**Jennifer Pugh**  
*Emerson Elementary*

**Kelly Balaz**  
*Hanby Elementary*

**Elizabeth Hafner**  
*Whittier Elementary*

**Lauren Sefton**  
*Westerville South*

**Teacher of the Month**

WEF is proud to recognize teachers who go above and beyond in Westerville City Schools. Each month, WEF receives nominations from students, parents, and district staff to recognize excellence in the classroom. Award recipients receive a Nothing Bundt Cake, certificate, and \$100 in their teacher’s account.



Photo: Lauren Sefton holds Teacher of the Month certificate standing next to WEF Board Members and WCSD administrators.

**Nominate your favorite teacher!**  
[westervilleeducationfoundation.com/teacher-of-the-month/](https://westervilleeducationfoundation.com/teacher-of-the-month/)

**Westerville Student Education Foundation**

WEF is thrilled to unveil the revitalized Westerville Student Education Foundation (WSEF), dedicated to empowering students, cultivating collaboration, and sparking positive transformation within the Westerville school community.

Determined by students, the WSEF will center its efforts on three essential pillars: sustainability, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and mental health. These initiatives involve direct engagement across all three high schools, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

Throughout the school year, students will participate in valuable leadership development, and WEF board members will guide the students through a dynamic proposal creation exercise, designed to ignite ideas, foster leadership skills, and encourage collaboration.

These initiatives will serve as the cornerstone for crafting impactful student-led projects intended to contribute to the enhancement of the Westerville community.

