



AURORA EAST EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

2024-25 Annual Report



Creating Opportunities for Excellence

Board of Director's Message

Dear Tomcats,

It is a time of transition for the Aurora East Educational Foundation (AEEF). Several of our board members have reached the end of their terms. President Ken Darby, Vice President Michael McCue and Secretary Carol Reiseck are retiring from the Board at the close of the school year. Moving forward they will continue to serve as AEEF Advisors, assisting with the transition of our new executive officers and various committees.

Under the leadership of Ken, Michael and Carol, there have been numerous structural and financial improvements to the AEEF, many of which they spearheaded:

Financial Improvements - Over the past four years, the General Fund Balance of the AEEF has grown from \$50,577 to \$181,543, an increase of \$130,966. The AEEF Endowments, earmarked for scholarships and special projects, and administered by the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley (CFFRV) has increased by \$97,040 from \$1,108,912 to \$1,205,953. We are pleased to report that over the last four years, our financial position has increased an impressive \$228,006.

Accounting Improvements - This year the AEEF has upgraded their financial accounting system. and software. We have transitioned to Quickbooks On-line, with multiple user licenses. This allows those members involved in the financial process to better access, generate and share annual budgets, monthly financial statements, and in depth reports.

Scholarships - Scholarships are the AEEF's top priority. We have steadily increased the number of scholarships awarded over the last eight years. Prior to 2017 only one scholarship was awarded annually. From 2017 to 2020, that number increased to 26 scholarships (\$26,000), and from 2021-2024, the AEEF awarded 92 scholarships (\$137,000). The AEEF's 2025 goal is to award 35 scholarships totalling \$70,000,

In addition, the AEEF is now connecting donors with scholarship recipients. It is reassuring to students that people from our community are investing in the future of East Aurora graduates. It is rewarding for donors to know who received the scholarship they funded. At our annual Giving Tuesday Celebration in November, it was wonderful to connect Tom Strong, who provides an annual scholarship, with Eddie Guerrero, a three-time Careers in Education recipient.

Lastly, the AEEF established the Careers in Technical Education (Trades) Endowment with an investment of \$25,000, which was matched by the CFFRV for a total endowment of \$50,000. The AEEF is proud to fund six CTE Scholarships for 2025.

Programs - AEEF's three biggest programs posted new highs for each event. The **AEEF Annual Golf Outing** netted \$27,639. The **Tom-A-Hawk Turkey Trot** netted \$26,385 and the **Annual Day of Giving** netted the Foundation \$40,765. Truly remarkable totals for 2025.

Though we can not give all the credit to Ken, Michael, and Carol, we are truly grateful for their years of service and outstanding leadership. It takes a team to achieve these kind of results and we are VERY thankful for the many volunteers, donors, sponsors and District 131 team members who contribute to the success of the AEEF.

Sincerely,

Aurora East Educational Foundation

Ken Darby, President
Michael McCue, Vice President
Mark Michelini, Treasurer
Carol Reiseck, Secretary

Angie Diaz
Pete Gonzalez
Kate Mesiacos

Jennifer Fearday
Julia Inostroza-Jackson
Saul Olivas

Darnell Gibson
Melissa Mercado

Robert Halverson, Ex Officio
Lisa Morales, Ex Officio

2024 AEEF Golf Outing



AEEF Golf Outing Revenues For Fiscal Years 2016 - 2024

| Year | Net Proceeds |
|------|--------------------|
| 2024 | \$ 27,639.00 |
| 2023 | 27,378.00 |
| 2022 | 23,895.00 |
| 2021 | 23,408.00 |
| 2020 | 23,074.00 |
| 2019 | COVID Cancellation |
| 2018 | 21,849.00 |
| 2017 | 17,421.00 |
| 2016 | 25,505.00 |
| 2015 | 10,996.00 |

Over the last nine years, excluding 2020, the AEEF has raised over \$173,000 through the support of the Tomcat community at the annual golf outing. This year, the golf committee netted the highest total to date, \$27,639. Our goal is to raise over \$30,000 next year. The Golf Outing provides the funds for the Annual Mini-Grant program. In 2024 there were four Corporate Gold sponsor donors, Annette Johnson, President of the D131 School Board, Stephen & Dierdre Morcos, Cordogan, Clark and Associates, and DJ Payne Corporation. The 2024 Golf Outing Committee included Ray Torres, Michael McCue, Ken Darby, Kate Mesiacos, Mark Michelini, and several others.

The competition was very fierce, awards went to:

Team McCue (Bobby, Michael, Billy, and Mary) winning the **Low Net Score Mixed Scramble** and **Team Johnson** (Mark Johnson, James Brown, David Piasecki and Dean Berres) winning the **Low Net Score Men's Scramble** at an impressive net of 57 strokes for each team. **Mary McCue** won the **Closest to the Pin** (women), **Roy Rodriguez** won **Closest to the Pin** (men) **Stephanie Kifowit** won the **Longest Drive** (women), **JD Dolan** won the **Longest Drive** (men) and **Juan Corona** won the **Longest Putt** on Holes 9 & 18!

Registration and other information for the 2025 Golf Outing can be found at <https://aeefgolf131.com>.

2024 Mini-Grants



The Aurora East Educational Foundation has awarded almost \$300,000 in Mini-Grants over the last 10 years. During the 2024-25 school year, the AEEF awarded 20 Mini-Grants to deserving educators totalling \$21,336.80. The table on page four indicates how the various grants were used; from the purchase of Place Value Disk Manipulatives; to the purchase of tents for the Special Olympics Team; and the purchase of non-fiction Spanish language library books. The AEEF is proud to fund these grants that were used to enhance the educational experience of nearly 3,000 students, which translates to one out of four students in District 131! (cont.)

2024 Mini-Grants (cont.)

One of the true honors of being an AEEF Board Member is visiting the schools to present checks to the award-winning teachers. In many cases, the warmth and excitement we bring to that classroom is shared by the administration, the teacher(s), and the students. It is quite festive, and very gratifying for everyone! Thank you to Mini-Grant Chair Michael McCue, Darnell Gibson, Kate Mesiacos, Carol Reiseck and Melissa Mercado who reviewed all grant requests and nominated the best projects to move forward.



| Title of Grant | School | Cost | Students |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Place Value Disk Manipulatives | Allen Elementary School | \$1,376.45 | 305 |
| Loved it in English? Try it in Spanish: Library Books | Allen Elementary School | 1,500.00 | 300 |
| Libros, Libros en Español | Bardwell Elementary School | 1,500.00 | 625 |
| Let's Explore the 900's | Bardwell Elementary School | 750.00 | 354 |
| Spanish Graphic Novels for Equity | Benavides STEAM Academy | 1.500.00 | 120 |
| Book in Bag - Read on | Benavides STEAM Academy | 300.00 | 24 |
| Brady is Empowering Spanish Readers | Brady Elementary School | 1,000.00 | 300 |
| Zamora | East Aurora High School | 1,500.00 | 100 |
| Special Olympics Tents | East Aurora High School | 1,450.02 | 50 |
| Mouthpiece Improvements | East Aurora High School | 1,500.00 | 50 |
| Westward Expansion Day | Fred Rogers Magnet | 500.00 | 90 |
| The National Honor Society Conference 2025 | Fred Rogers Magnet | 299.00 | 5 |
| Planting Seeds for Sensory Regulation | Gonzalez Child Center | 500.00 | 24 |
| Be WILD About Reading | Hermes Elementary School | 1,211.32 | 86 |
| Playing in the Reading Playground | Oak Park Elementary School | 1,000.00 | 30 |
| Library Enhancement | Oak Park Elementary School | 500.00 | 36 |
| To Our Spanish Speaking Students | O'Donnell Elementary School | 1,500.00 | 75 |
| Raising the Bar in 8th Grade Math | Rollins Elementary School | 1,500.00 | 150 |
| Red Oak Outdoor Educational Ecology | Waldo Middle School | 750.00 | 120 |
| | Waldo Middle School | 1.200.00 | 120 |
| | | \$21,336.80 | 3,084 |

2024 Tom-A-Hawk 5k Turkey Trot

The 4th Annual **Tom-A-Hawk 5K Turkey Trot** was a huge success with a record breaking 1,168 registrants representing eleven states and 74 cities in Illinois. The Tom-A-Hawk 5K Turkey Trot raised \$25,684.45 for the Foundation.

The unique collaboration between the A+ Foundation and the Aurora East Educational Foundation is truly remarkable. In just four years, the group has raised \$129,537 for Aurora's public school children on both sides of town. The entire Aurora area community comes together to support this endeavor. We hope it continues for years to come!



The dedicated Turkey Trot committee is comprised of: Shane R. Gillespie, Chairman, East Aurora Coach; Erica Kegarise, VP at West; Michael Nelson, City of Aurora; Ingrid Roney, A+; Bill Deligiannis and Ken Darby of the AEEF.

2024 Giving Tuesday

The Foundation's Giving Tuesday event was held on December 3, 2024, at the Spartan House on Prairie Avenue in Aurora. The Giving Tuesday event has evolved into a celebration of all things accomplished over the year by the Aurora East Educational Foundation. We especially want to thank our donors (who contributed over \$40,000 in scholarships) as well as the many volunteers who worked AEEF events - our 32nd Annual AEEF Golf Outing, the Tom-A-Hawk 5k Turkey Trot, the Giving Tuesday event and the 2024-25 Scholarship Committee.



This year, we were fortunate to have Eddie Guererro, an Aurora East graduate and three-year Careers in Education Scholarship recipient, in attendance at the event. Eddie spoke a little about the impact the AEEF has made to his educational journey. It was very gratifying to see that our efforts are having a positive effect on student lives, and we hope to see this trend continue and expand in the future.

Kudos to Ken Darby and Dianne Thomas who coordinated the event, Michael McCue for registration and ticket sales, and Trina Zinzer for providing many of the wonderful raffle prizes.

NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH • NEWS FLASH

Dr. Robert Halverson Named as New Superintendent

The East Aurora School District 131 Board of Education announced the appointment of Dr. Robert Halverson as the new superintendent at the school board meeting on Monday, March 17, 2025.

Throughout his career, Dr. Halverson has taken on various roles both in the classroom and in leadership. Most recently, Dr. Halverson served as the Executive Director of Finance and Grants at East Aurora School District 131. His expertise in budgeting and operational management allowed him to support strategic initiatives that align with district goals, promoting fiscal responsibility while improving educational outcomes.

"I am genuinely excited to serve as the new superintendent in the community where I grew up. It will be an honor to serve this community of students and their families, and I will do everything to make sure they receive the educational support they need and deserve to succeed," expressed Dr. Halverson. "I am committed to sustaining academic growth for all students and focusing on fostering a climate and culture centered on trust, open communication, and shared objectives among all stakeholders. I also look forward to strengthening partnerships with local non-profits, political leaders, businesses, and other school districts to provide comprehensive support for the holistic development of our students.

Dr. Halverson is married to Ruby Halverson, who also has over 20 years of experience in education. Together, they are proud parents to three sons: RJ, Vicente, and Fernando.

2025 Annual Donations

The AEEF is very fortunate to have so many wonderful donors. The AEEF accepts donations and allocates them to one of three Scholarship Endowment Funds managed and administered by the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley.

The three AEEF Scholarship Endowments are:

- 1) Academic Excellence
- 2) Careers in Education
- 3) Careers in Technical Education

Scholarships in the above categories are awarded to deserving East Aurora High School students at the Honors Night program in May of each year.

In 2025 there were fourteen annual donations of \$1,000 or more into the Academic Excellence Endowment; nine into the Careers in Education Endowment; and six into the Careers in Technical Education Endowment. In addition, there were over fifty families who donated lesser amounts that were added to these endowments.

Of significant note was the death of Richard “Dick” Paul, long-time coach and educator at East Aurora High School. The outpouring of support in memory of Dick Paul was overwhelming and we are sure the Paul Family appreciates all of the kind cards and comments that were received.

The AEEF is very proud of our donors and looks forward to continuing the tradition of giving for many years to come!

| Annual Donation | Sponsor |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Academic Excellence | |
| Cordogan Clark & Associates | Cordogan Clark & Associates |
| HUB International | HUB International |
| Annette Johnson | Annette Johnson |
| DJ Payne | DJ Payne |
| In Memory of Cam Leadbetter | Dan Platt / Platt Electric |
| Mark & Debbie Michelini | Mark & Debbie Michelini |
| Bob & Judy McCue | Michael, Bobby, Ron & Mary McCue |
| In Memory of Terry Shoup | Dr. Susan Cooper |
| In Memory of Cynthia and Michael Reiseck | Carol & Rick Reiseck |
| The Cruz Family | Rich and Marge Fazio |
| Rich and Marge Fazio | Rich and Marge Fazio |
| In Memory of Lalo and Efigenia Cruz | Rich and Marge Fazio |
| The Fazio Family | Rich and Marge Fazio |
| In Memory of Del Dufrain | Diana Dufrain-Embry |
| Malcor Roofing of Illinois | Scott Theisen |
| Dr. John Struck | Dr. John Struck |
| Celebrating East Aurora Schools | Mike Lee, CEO of KCT |
| In Memory of Dick Paul | Various donors |
| In Memory of Dick Paul | Various donors |
| In Memory of Dick Paul | Various donors |
| Careers in Education | |
| Class of 1983 | Class of '83 |
| In Memory of Dick Paul | Greg & Patti Paul |
| In Honor of Patricia Readey Keaton | Dr. Park |
| In Memory of Frances Heimsath Strong | Thomas Strong |
| In Memory of Thomas G. Strong | Thomas Strong |
| In Memory of Genevieve Kennedy | Merry Carey |
| Celebrating East Aurora Schools | Dick Schindel |
| In Memory of Terry Shoup | Dr. Susan Cooper Rolled into 2026 |
| In honor of Patricia Readey Keaton | Ken Sanjestke Rolled into 2026 |
| Careers in Technical Education (CTE) | |
| In Memory of Mario and Shirely Fazio | Rich and Marge Fazio |
| In Memory of Chris and Diamoto Mesiacos | Ted & Kate Mesiacos |
| In Support of Funding Trade Programs | Grace United Methodist Church |
| In Support of Funding Trade Programs | Kane County Juvenile Justice Center |
| In Support of Funding Trade Programs | CFFRV |
| In Support of Funding Trade Programs | Dick Schindel |
| Re-occurring Scholarships | |
| 2025 Four Year | Carol Thompson |
| 2024 Four Year | Carol Thompson |
| 2023 Four Year | Carol Thompson |
| 2021 Four Year | Carol Thompson |

Connecting Donors and Students

At long last, the Aurora East Educational Foundation has achieved its goal of connecting donors with scholarship recipients. At the Class of 2025 Honors Night Presentation held in May, we were delighted to connect long-time donor Tom Strong with Ms. Jocelyn Salinas.

Tom, a wonderful educator, and a long-time teacher in East Aurora School District 131 is the sponsor of the Frances Heimsath Strong and Thomas G. Strong Memorial Donation. Through the generous support of educators like Tom, Ms. Salinas will be pursuing a teaching degree.

The AEEF was very gratified to arrange this meeting and looks forward to connecting many more donors with students as time goes on.



2025 Scholarships Awarded

2025 was a banner year for the AEEF Scholarship Program. We were able to fund 20 Academic Excellence Scholarships, 8 Careers in Education Scholarships, 6 Careers in Technical Education (CTE) Scholarships and one 4- Four Year Scholarship. An all-time high for the three endowments the AEEF maintains, for a grand total of 35 scholarships!

Over the last ten years, the AEEF has offered scholarships and awards to 164 students. (Prior to 2025, CTE students were awarded funds by the AEEF. This process has been replaced by the CTE Scholarship Endowment.) In just the last four years, 103 scholarships and 16 CTE awards were granted. It is encouraging to see the growth in our programs over these most recent years.

The AEEF is working on growing the scholarship program by connecting with student recipients throughout the year at various events, including Honors Night, the Tom-A-Hawk Turkey Trot and inviting them to attend our Giving Tuesday Event where they can connect with donors and be recognized for their efforts.

It is common for students to receive tremendous support upon high school graduation but struggle to obtain funding in subsequent years. We intend to help bridge that gap by offering past recipients the opportunity to reapply as undergraduates. Currently, the Academic Excellence Scholarship Endowment is a one-year award available to graduating EA seniors only. The Careers in Education and CTE Endowments allow undergrads to re-apply annually.

| Student | Major |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Academic Excellence | |
| Jaqueline Adame Reyes | Dentistry |
| Mayra Alejo | Neuroscience |
| Suzelle Alzate | Veterinary Medicine |
| Samuel Bails Stewart | Business |
| Fawaz Bello | Computer Science |
| Keyly Castaneda Sandoval | Health Science & Research |
| Mariah Cromwell | Nursing |
| Josie Franck | Political Science |
| Fallina Fulse | Undecided |
| Jesus Gonzalez | Architecture |
| Luis Hernandez | Computer Science |
| Rebecca Hiliard | Architecture |
| Dwayne Hudson | Business |
| Isaias Maravilla | Forensic Science |
| Audrey Naster | Environmental Engineering |
| Nereida Padilla | English |
| Karina Perez | Engineering |
| Erick Rodriguez Torre | Political Science |
| Yarecci Salmeron | Radiology |
| Mariela Sosa | Undecided |
| Careers in Education | |
| Evan Alsassa | Education |
| Eddie Guerrero | History/Secondary Education |
| Dorothy Pike | Education |
| Kimberly Rodriguez | Early Childhood Education |
| Jocelyn Salinas | Education |
| Yasmin Uribes | Elementary Education |
| Erica Vazquez Gutierrez | Early Childhood Education |
| Careers in Technical Education (CTE) | |
| Juliana Gomez | Web Design |
| Iseal Llamas Torres | Massage Therapy |
| Fernando Ramirez-Lopez | Industrial Trades |
| Kerby Saavedra | Computer Science |
| Yamely Sanchez | Cosmetology |
| Luis Umana | Heating & Air Conditioning |
| Four Year Giving | |
| Geovanny Gonzalez | Mechanical Engineering |
| Daisy Martinez | Nursing |
| Jocelyn Mariana Espinoza-Villa | Human Resources and Management |
| Abigail Callinan | Business |



We are grateful to the AEEF Scholarship committee - Melissa Mercado, Carol Reiseck, Darnell Gibson and Mark Michelini for their hard work in putting this information together.



Thank you For Supporting My Journey!

Submitted by Stephanie Perez

Graduating from Aurora University in May 2025 with my bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, along with a minor in Spanish and ESL Bilingual Endorsements, has been one of the proudest accomplishments of my life. As a first-generation college student, attending a university wasn't just about earning a degree, it was about opening a door for my entire family, especially my younger sisters, to believe in the power of education. My parents always reminded me of the importance of studying; my mom would say my only job was to focus on school and get good grades. Those words stayed with me and gave me strength through every challenge.



Being the oldest and first daughter, I've always carried the responsibility of leading by example. College was intimidating at first, and I didn't know what to expect or who to turn to. Thanks to my mom's friend, an AU alum, I found the courage to apply, was accepted, and fell in love with AU. I gained valuable knowledge in my field, built lifelong friendships, and was supported by mentors like Mariza Rocha, Director of Student Initiatives. Mariza made my experience unforgettable by connecting me with inspiring opportunities like USHLI and bringing Latino artists and authors to campus, helping us see the power of our culture and our voices.

Having a college degree means everything to my family. It's a symbol of their sacrifices and my determination to make their dreams and mine come true. It's also a promise to give back, especially through teaching. I chose to become an educator because I know firsthand how deeply teachers can impact their students' lives beyond academics.

I am also incredibly thankful to the donors and organizations [AEEF] who provide scholarships to students like me. Your generosity gave me the opportunity to focus on my education without being burdened by financial stress. Because of you, I was able to thrive, not just survive. I hope one day I can do the same for future students. I'm proud to say that I will soon be serving as a dual language 5th grade educator in District 131, East Aurora. I'm grateful to be back in my home community, where I can give back and inspire the next generation, just as so many have done for me.

A Path to Success

Submitted by Assyria Belfour

I am so thankful to be chosen for one of the AEEF scholarships, it truly is a honor. I am grateful for this opportunity, and I want to thank my mother and Mrs. Stewart, the Director of the College Resource Center at East Aurora High School. My mother, for always for pushing me to get my scholarship applications done and Mrs. Stewart for always giving me the latest applications to look over and fill out. And finally, to the CFFRV and the AEEF for selecting me.

Looking back on my journey from East Aurora High School to becoming a college graduate, I reflect on important steps on my path. One of those was becoming a part of the Upward Bound East program. Mrs. Stewart took us on College Campus visits, and many trips to Waubensee Community College's downtown campus. A couple of the advisors were EAHS Alumni, which is one of the reasons I decided to attend WCC. I also have to thank Mrs. Renaud and Ms. Savino for their help and support in my years at East High. These two teachers played impactful roles not only in my life, but they made it easy for me to choose which career path I wanted to take.



As of today, I am proud to say that I will graduate from WCC next spring with my AS degree in Psychology and a certificate in early childhood education, after which I aim to complete a four-year degree in Child and Adolescent Psychology at Northern Illinois University.

In closing, I would like to thank the Aurora East Educational Foundation for having faith in me and getting my journey underway with that very first scholarship. It meant so much for me to know that others took an interest in my future.



SCHOLARSHIPS

\$5,000 and Above

Carol Thompson
Rich and Marge Fazio

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Cordogan Clark & Associates
HUB International
Annette Johnson
DJ Payne
Dan Platt/Platt Electric
Mark & Debbie Michelini
Michael, Bobby, Ron & Mary McCue
Dr. Susan Cooper
Ken Darby
Carol & Rick Reiseck
Diana Dufraim-Embry
Scott Thiesen
Dawn Kaine, Class of '83
Greg & Patti Paul
Thomas Strong
Merry Carey
Dr. John Struck
Dick Schindel
Dr. Park
Ken Sanjestke
Mike Lee, CEO of KCT
Ted & Kate Mesiacos
Grace United Methodist Church
Kane County Juvenile Justice Center
Community Foundation of the
Fox River Valley

Under \$1,000

DLA Architects
Sandy E. Kelly
Dennis & Laura Baumann
Margaret Doud
Debbie Michelini
Bruce & Mary Larson
Paul & Peggy Miller
Katarina Beyer
Albert Doud
Carolyn Hopkins
Wayne Welten
John Roesch
Mickey & Arida Harris
Tom & Patti Bonifas
Jim & Liz Jensen
Jeff & Caroline Yasuda
Bernie Parr
Frank & Judy Babbich
Terri Peterson
Josie Mendoza
Mark & Marsha Thom
Roxanne & Steve Byers
David & Karla Lorenz
Gary & Barbara Wynn
Margaret & John Pfeiffer

Larry & Susan Johnson
Laura O'Connor
Carol Churchill
Leanne Dammann
Yvonne & Dewey Hollingsworth
John & Arline Koomjohn
John Fester
Sue & Jim Skelley
Lois Freiheit
Anastasia Vardouniotis
Greg & Julie Ann Thomas
Claudio & Melissa Mercado
Lou Hernandez
Beton
Linda Olson-Roach
Sonia Rodriguez
Anne Tuma
Bill Suhayda
Rich & Sandy Schwartz
Susan King

AEF ENDOWMENT FUND

Edna M. Rollins
Don & Betty Brownson

AFFINITY PROGRAM

Over \$5,000
Kane County Teachers Credit Union

TOM-A-HAWK 5K TURKEY TROT

\$5,000 and Above
Dunham Foundation
Organic Life

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Fox Valley Park District

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Factor 75, LLC

Under \$1,000

City of Aurora -
Alderman Ron Woerman
Alderman Juany Garza
Alderman Ted Mesiacos
Alderman Dan Barreiro
Alderman Mike Saville
Alderman Bill Donnell
Old Second National Bank
Rush Copley Medical Center
Dick's Mini Donuts
Aurora Area Retired Teachers Assoc.
Bill Deligiannis
Llamas, St. Joes, LLP
Fairview Dental - Dr Emmanuel Llamas
Fairview Dental - Dr. Salvado Cardenas
Waubensee Community College
Crawford, Murphy & Tilly
Aurora Fastprint

Community Foundation of the
Fox River Valley
Oxie Affordable Optical
21st Century Real Estate/Marth Carral
Thomas Pump Company, Inc.
Kane County Teachers Credit Union
RENEWME, Inc.
Dunham Foundation
Rotary Club of Aurora Foundation

Tom-A-Hawk 5K Turkey Trot Volunteers

Ingrid Roney
Bill Deligiannis
Shane Gilespe
Mike Nelson
Erica Kergarize
Ken Darby

GOLF OUTING

\$2,500 and Above
Cordogan Clark & Associates
Dierdre & Steven Morcos
Annette Johnson
DJ Payne Corporation

\$1,500 - \$2,499

DLA Architects

\$1,000 - \$1,499

Troop Contacting, Inc.
Lou Hernandez Agency
Alderman Ted Mesiacos
City in Schools - Aurora
Platt Electric
John & Janet Avendano
F. H. Paschen

Under \$1,000

Trane
Dolan & Murphy
Debbie & Mark Michelini
Sodexo
Himes, Petrarca and Fester
Earthmover Credit Union
In Memory of Bill Gardner
Vance Pool Company
Michelle Gumz
Fox Valley Park District
Vance Family
Old Second National Bank
Halol-leaf Sauna Studio
Alderman Juany Garza
O'Malley's Premiere Irish Pub & Eatery
Brandon Tolliver
Premier Tint
Kane County Teachers Credit Union
Alderman Bill Donnell
Aurora Tap House
Josie Gehler
Thomas Pump

McCue Builders
Aurora Fastprint
Alderman Edward Bugg

Golf Outing Raffle Prize Donations

Lux Tasting for 4
Chipotle
Gyro Pit
Basil's Greek Dining
Lou Malnati's Pizza
Craft'd
Open Range Southwest Grill
Burnt Barrel Social
Fireside Grill
Harner's Bakery
Grandma's Table
Mother's Pancake House
Turf Room
O'Malley's Premier Irish Pub & Eatery
Syrup
Vai's Entourage

Golf Outing Volunteers

Michael McCue
Matt Keibles
Ken Darby
Ray Torres
Saul Olivas
Kate Mesiacos
Di Mesiacos
Diane Thomas
Merry Carey
Cynthia C. Martinez
Melissa Mercado
Jennifer Fearday
Trina Zinzer
Pete Gonzales

Giving Tuesday Volunteers

Ken Darby
Diane Thomas
Michael McCue
Trina Zinzer
Carol Reiseck
Angie Diaz
Ingrid Roney

AEF Board Members

Ken Darby - President
Michael McCue - Vice President
Carol Reiseck - Secretary
Mark Michelini - Treasurer
Angie Diaz
Jennifer Fearday
Darnell Gibson
Pete Gonzales
Julia Inostroza-Jackson
Melissa Mercado
Kate Mesiacos
Saul Olivas

Meet our newest AEEF Board Members



Jennifer (Jaquez) Fearday, born and raised on Aurora's East side is a graduate of East Aurora. She earned her degree from Northern Illinois University and began her career in public health, working with government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Jenny is passionate about giving back to her community. In her free time, she coaches Track and Field in District 131, sharing her love for running and helping to inspire a positive culture for children going into the sport.

Jenny is a member of the League of Women Voters of the Aurora Area, and a member of the Northeast Neighbors Community Group, where she plays a key role in organizing the National Night Out for her neighborhood on Church Road. She is committed to serving Aurora.



Angie Diaz is an alumna of the East Aurora High School and has worked for the Kane County Teachers Credit Union since 2015 where she has advanced to Branch Manager at the Indian Trail location. Angie brings a financial management perspective to the Foundation and is familiar with all facets of banking for both corporate and nonprofit entities.

Angie has been instrumental in providing bilingual banking education and services to the East Aurora Community. One of her many volunteer activities is presenting at the East Aurora High School College and Career Fair, providing financial literacy seminars to students, and providing community outreach for KCT as well as the Aurora East Educational Foundation.



Julia Inostroza-Jackson, an East Aurora High School and Aurora University alumna, has close ties with Aurora East School District 131 where she completed a college internship resulting in her first job. Julia spent several years at the Dist. 131 Administrative Center, but her love of teaching drew her back to the classroom, and to her current management position with Huntington Learning Center.

Julia is also the President of the East Aurora Alumni Association. Julia and her team manage the East Aurora Distinguished Alumni program and add support to class reunions requesting assistance for their events. We look forward to exploring the partnership opportunities that Julia brings to the table to connect AEEF with alumni.



Melissa Meisch-Mercado joined the AEEF Board late last summer after retiring as the Executive Director of the Fox Valley Music Foundation. Melissa is a proud Tomcat ('82), and a University of Illinois graduate. She pursued a career in marketing and graphic design, and has more than 20 years of work, volunteer and board experience in non-profit arts and education.

Melissa has served the Aurora community as a board member of the Aurora Public Art Commission, Aurora Downtown, Aurora Cultural Creatives, Aurora Art Walk, Blues on the Fox and the Fox Valley Music Foundation. She brings a wealth of marketing, design and development experience to the AEEF, and is passionate about improving student outcomes in District 131.



[Facebook.com/AEEF](https://www.facebook.com/AEEF)

Help us in making Aurora East Schools GREAT!

Ask a board member how YOU can support the Aurora East Education Foundation. Scan the QR Code, or
Email: information@aeef131.net



Financial Statements

Aurora East Educational Foundation Income Statement For the year ending June 30, 2025

| | Jul 1 2024 - Jun 30 2025 |
|---|--------------------------|
| Income | |
| AEEF Scholarships | \$42,964.36 |
| Annual Programs | |
| Alumni Association Revenues | 100.00 |
| Giving Tuesday | \$763.04 |
| Golf Outing | \$40,802.56 |
| Tom-A-Hawk Rev | \$38,230.07 |
| Unrestricted Donations | 1,349.86 |
| Total for Annual Programs | \$81,245.53 |
| Corporate Giving | \$15,037.38 |
| Interest Income | 3,278.43 |
| Total for Income | \$142,525.70 |
| Expenses | |
| Administrative Overhead | \$3,729.75 |
| Annual Program Expenses | |
| Giving Tuesday Expenses | 2,265.05 |
| Golf Outing Expenses | \$19,089.28 |
| Tom-A-Hawk Expenses | \$14,095.61 |
| Annual Program Expenses | \$35,449.94 |
| D131 Grant Program Expenses | \$20,338.80 |
| Student Scholarships | \$74,477.00 |
| Total for Expenses | \$133,995.49 |
| Net Operating Income | \$8,530.21 |
| Net Income (Cash Provided by Operations) | \$8,530.21 |

Aurora East Educational Foundation Statement of Financial Position For the year ending June 30, 2025

| | As of June 30, 2025 |
|---|---------------------|
| ASSETS | |
| Bank Accounts | |
| Cash Accounts | \$6,903.21 |
| Total for KCT Investments | \$34,147.43 |
| Total for Old Second Investments | \$148,671.95 |
| Total for Bank Accounts | \$189,722.59 |
| Other Current Assets | \$366.05 |
| Total for Assets | \$190,088.64 |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITIES | |
| Liabilities | \$0.00 |
| Total for Equity | \$190,088.64 |
| Total for Liabilities and Equity | \$190,088.64 |



AURORA EAST EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Aurora East Educational Foundation (AEEF) was established in 1993 and is a not-for-profit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation. Organized under the laws of the State of Illinois, the AEEF provides funds and resources for the enhancement and enrichment of the educational programs and activities of East Aurora School District 131. The AEEF attracts private funds and resources to support programs and services not funded with tax dollars.

The AEEF is directed by a group of private citizens, many of who are graduates of East Aurora High School or are district residents who serve without compensation. The efforts of AEEF are supported by the Board of Education.

Executive Board Members

Kenneth Darby, Chair
Michael McCue, Vice-Chair
Mark Michelini, Treasurer
Carol Reiseck, Secretary

Directors

Angie Diaz
Jennifer Fearday
Darnell Gibson
Julia Inostroza-Jackson
Melissa Mercado
Kate Mesiacos
Saul Olivas

Advisors

Josie Gehler
Merry Carry
Ray Torres
Bill Deligiannis
Tom Madden

Aurora East Educational Foundation
310 Seminary Avenue, Aurora, IL 60505
Email: information@aef131.net
www.d131.org/aurora-east-education-foundation



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• SAVE THE DATE • SAVE THE DATE • SAVE THE DATE •

Help us to help the kids! Participate, Donate, Attend, Volunteer!
Mark your calendars for these AEEF Fun(d)raising opportunities:



Saturday, November 15, 2025



Tuesday, December 2, 2025



July 2026 Date TBA