

VAE NEWSLETTER

FALL/WINTER 2021-2022

This is an Exciting Time for Valley Alliance for Education!

The grant application process is about to begin! VAE offers up to \$1500 grants for teachers in Staunton City, Augusta County, and Waynesboro City. The grants are designed to support the SOLs in new and imaginative ways. Teachers are encouraged to “think outside the box” and look at ways to continue the amazing job they do to motivate and inspire students. The grant application will be available December 15, 2021 on the Valley Alliance for Education website (vaeva.org). The grant window closes March 15, 2022 at midnight. If you have questions about the grant application, please contact Patricia Devitt (Padevitt@gmail.com).



OUR MISSION

We engage community partners to promote educational excellence in Augusta County, Staunton, and Waynesboro Public Schools.

To see a full list of winners, please visit

<https://www.vaeva.org/recipients/>

Want to get involved? Contact us!

vae@lumos.net

SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTE by Dr. Bond

The 2021-2022 school year is well underway. While this year has provided its challenges, ACPS is pleased to back to instruction five days per week! Students and teachers are collaborating to re-establish routines and stamina lost over the past 18 months of hybrid learning. The return to learning has provided many opportunities for our students to return to fine arts performances, athletic events, club-sponsored activities, and daily instruction. One area of focus continues to be our preschool (PK) program. Providing services to our youngest students, we have added an additional three-year-old classroom, increasing our PK enrollment to 295 students. A huge "thank you" to our teachers, parents, and students who are working together to return to our "new normal".

Dr. Eric W. Bond, Ed. D.

Division Superintendent

Augusta County Public Schools



PASSING THE REINS by Andrew Deitz

VAE Friends & Family,

Early in my career, the CEO for the international organization that I worked for used to say “Eat change for breakfast, it happens every day.” That quote has stuck with me since that time as a testament to the reality that change happens and it is usually less of a big deal than we sometimes, and very naturally, make it out to be. Well, I would say we have all been “eating change” for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks in between, since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. I, personally, am very hopeful that by the time we move into Spring of 2022, we will be seeing a very bright, proverbial light at the end of this pandemic tunnel. Educators, Administrators, Staff and those shaping the minds of our young ones, certainly have felt the pains of this pandemic, more than most, but handled it with grace and compassion towards the students and families they support, while working to safely continue the education they are called to do. I, along with all of VAE, applaud each of you. This is part of the reason it has been a great joy of mine to have led VAE during this time. We exist to help each other Imagine the possibilities, to bring Innovation to the classroom, to Inspire each other, but especially the children, and Invest. Invest in our community, invest in our educators and invest in our students. An investment that we all strongly believe will pay great dividends over time. I couldn't be more pleased to pass the reins of leadership of VAE over to Katie Ford. Katie has been an inspirational leader in her time on the Board and in the role as Vice President, bringing great, new ideas that will help drive VAE into the future. I look forward to being a part of the growth of this organization under Katie's leadership. I hope to see each of you soon, but until that time, eat change for breakfast.

All the best,
Andrew Dietz

A NEW SEASON by Katie Ford

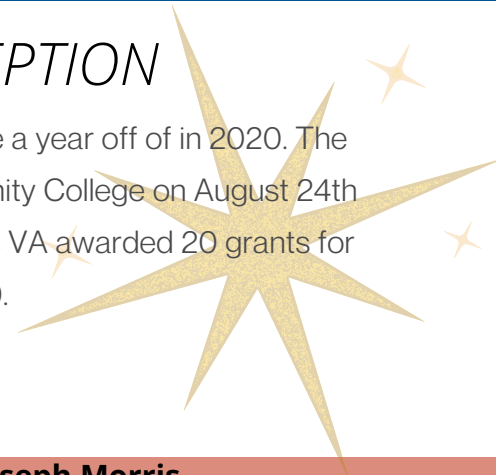
In 2012, I won my first Creative Classroom Grant for a set of cameras my English students could use to create short videos based on their writing. I was so impressed with the process and organization that I encouraged my colleagues to write their own grants for classroom materials, and when I was later invited to represent Waynesboro Public Schools on the board in 2018, I knew I was hooked. I loved the mission and energy of the group and couldn't wait to provide the teacher perspective and help the organization grow. Now, nearly 10 years after my first introduction to the VAE, I am honored to serve as the President and play a role in our future. One of our goals as we move forward is to be more present in our communities. This means you're likely to see us at local events such as Staunton's Arts in the Park over Labor Day weekend and the upcoming Holiday Market in Waynesboro on December 4th. We would love to meet you, and share more information about us and how you can help local students and teachers. Any educator (past, present, and future) or community member interested in getting involved with this incredible organization is welcome to join us as an event volunteer, grant reviewer, or donor. Your investment in us directly impacts our most important local resource: our students.

Katie Ford
VAE President



2021 VAE GRANT AWARDS RECEPTION

Valley Alliance for Education held its annual reception after having to take a year off of in 2020. The event themed *VAE Education Superstars* was held at Blue Ridge Community College on August 24th 2021. Thanks to our generous classroom grant sponsors and loyal donors VA awarded 20 grants for the 2021-22 scholastic year totaling \$27,478.00.



AWARD WINNERS

Kristen Beery

Valley Career and Technical Center
Are You Kidding Me??

Erin Hagedorn

Kate Collins Middle School
Making Movie Magic With Claymation

Karen Hays & Danelle Moran

Riverheads Elementary School
MYOB: Mind Your OWN Business With Watchminders
Sponsored by Atlantic Union Bank

Beth Teachey

Valley Academy
Growing Together: A Horticulture and Community Project
Sponsored by River Hill Farm – Ronnie and Linda Young

Karen Marx

Beverly Manor Middle School
Rocket Design: BLASTOFF!!!

Megan Carroll

William Perry Elementary School
Diverse Books for Diverse Students

Martha Mikell

Stuarts Draft High School
Backyard Brain Kits

Ben Wyrick

S. Gordon Stewart Middle School
Student-Built PC Workstation for Flight Simulation

Tessa Buchanan

Riverheads Elementary School
Seeing is Believing

Sponsored by Jamin Fund

Joseph Morris

Wilson Memorial High School
Exploring Problems With Probes

Morgan Rowzie

Beverly Manor Middle School
Bringing Life to the Classroom
Sponsored by Valley Star RISE Foundation

Rachel Swisher & Meredith Boggs

North River Elementary School
Sounds All Around

Cheryl Sams

Wilson Memorial High School
Interacting With Wacons

Erin Hagedorn

Kate Collins Middle School
Designing My Future!

Heather Smith Reeps

McSwain Elementary School
Building Understanding by Building What You Learn
Sponsored by Jim and Pam Huggins

Ben Wyrick

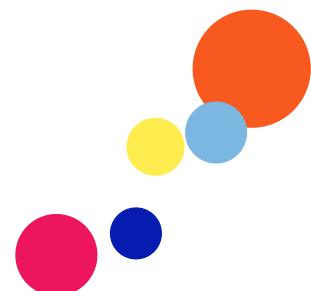
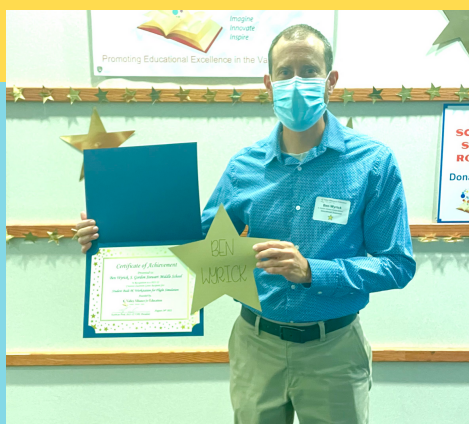
S. Gordon Stewart Middle School
3-D Printing Architecture

Jessica Herr

Staunton City Public Schools – Technology
Quest for Knowledge
Sponsored by Dr. Richard Bolstein and Ms. Sharon Adams

Katie Ditchen

Dixon Educational
Schoolyard Garden/Wildlife Habitat
Sponsored by Ntelos Wireless Foundation



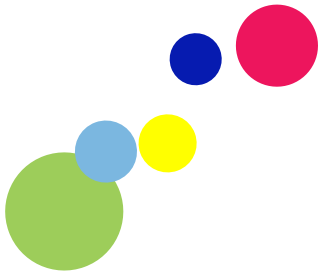
2021 TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Sponsored by Ntelos Wireless Foundation

All Staunton City Public School Educators

Beth Teachey - Waynesboro City Schools

Erica Cason - Augusta County Public Schools



CHRISTMAS DISPLAY AT GYPSY HILL

Valley Alliance for Education has installed a Christmas display this holiday season at Gypsy Hill Park. Several Board members and volunteers joined in to assist in the construction and installation. If you have the opportunity, take time to drive through the park and enjoy the light display of many area businesses, organizations, and non-profit agencies.



Valley Alliance for Education

*Imagine
Innovate
Inspire*