

The Mars Planet Foundation

Summer 2023 Newsletter

marsplanetfoundation.org

THE HISTORY

Founded in 2009, as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable organization, the Mars Planet Foundation serves the Mars Area School District by providing opportunities to enhance and enrich the learning endeavors of each student.



Mars Planet Foundation Members:

- Board Members**
 Beth Ziegler- President
 Carol Knox- Vice President
 Amy Riggio- Treasurer
 Tricia Holland- Secretary
 Kevin Hagen
 Liz Porco
 Lee Ann Riner
 Jenn Stuber
 Doug Wolf
 Vickie Zaccari
- MASD Administration**
 Dr. Elizabeth McMahon

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Mission

The Mars Planet Foundation focuses on awarding Teacher Grants throughout each school year and inspiring teachers to bring innovative new ideas and programs to their students which ultimately enhances their learning capabilities. The Foundation also oversees scholarships and presents the same to graduating seniors at the annual Academic Excellence and Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

- Ambassadors**
 Jennifer Giesler
 Diana Jacoby
 Robin Parsons
 Bethany Ratcliffe
 Nicole Thurner

- www.facebook.com/MarsPlanetFoundation
- www.instagram.com/marsplanetfoundation/
- twitter.com/FoundationMars

Foundation hosts 31st Academic Excellence and Scholarship Awards Ceremony

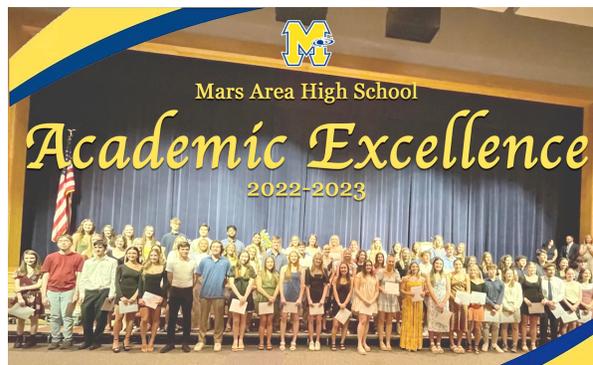
Scholarship Winners

- BC3 Pioneer Education Scholarship- Megan McSwain
- Belinda A. Terzich Memorial Scholarship- Taylor Hollern
- Helen Werner Anderson Memorial Scholarship- Hayley Goerl
- Jake Cooper Memorial Scholarship- Gwen Howell & Ethan Santom
- Katie Marie Nelson Memorial Scholarship- Kathleen Ford
- Kean Foundation Scholarship for the Arts- Kaitlyn Ames
- Kean Foundation Scholarship for STEM- Alex Jablunovsky
- Kimberly Young Memorial Scholarship- Callie David
- Lefcon Technology Scholarship- John Sutton & Samuel Schultz
- Mars Area High School Backstop Club Baseball Scholarship- Nolan Scott
- Mars Area High School Cheer Boosters Scholarship- Amber O'Niel & Kierstin Biro
- Mars Area High School Girls Basketball Scholarship- Alexa McDole
- Mars Musical Theater Boosters-Marlin Clay Memorial Scholarship- Sara Guentenspberger & Kaylen Lindenberg
- Mars Area High School Swimming & Diving Scholarship- Riley Connelly
- Mars Planet Foundation Education Scholarship- Lindsey Gourash
- Mars Planet Foundation School Spirit Scholarship- Samuel Schultz
- William R "Beel" Neel Scholarship- Mia Shterengarts
- Kristine L Schindler Memorial Scholarship- Olivia Wilson
- American Legion Scholarship-Madelyn Ostapchenko & Zachary Long

Every Spring the Mars Planet Foundation hosts a senior awards ceremony and reception to award scholarships and honor outstanding seniors. A special thank you to Just In Thyme Catering for making this year's banquet just a touch more special with hand-selected appetizers, treats, and tables to make sure the seniors had an evening as special as each of them.

If you have an upcoming senior, check out the various available scholarships on the website.

<https://marsplanetfoundation.org/scholarships>



Summer 2023

FOUNDATION FINISHES STRONG

Final summary of the 2022-2023 school year teacher grants

The Mars Planet Foundation awarded \$30,398.34 in Teacher Enrichment Grants this past school year- one of the largest years in the Foundation's history! The grants ranged from books to new technology. The students benefiting this past year were as young as the primary center all the way through the high school.

6th Grade - STEAM and Physical Education classes	Miniature Golf Grant Collaboration	\$884.82
5th & 6th Grade STEAM Classes	20 Finch Robots	\$2,196.00
Centennial School	15 new iPads for Centennial Library Classes	\$5,769.25
New Course at the High School - Video Game Design	25 Corsair Gaming Chairs	\$4,500.00
Mars Area High School - Robotics Class	8 Vex V5 Robot Kits	\$5,488.51
2nd, 3rd, and 4th Grade - Rocket Readers Program	Expansion of Rocket Reader program - Books	\$1,275.21
1st Grade	Lower Case pop-its to enhance reading curriculum	\$464.85
Centennial - Battle of the Books	Replacement of all 125 books in the program with Bound to Stay Bound books, which include a lifetime guarantee.	\$3,479.70
MAE Music Classes	5 Year license of Quaver Music Digital Tools to enhance the Music program	\$4,095.00
Mars Area High School	New 3D printer	\$2,245.00



Blasting Off to Read

Galactic Greats Clash in the Epic Battle of Books

A fun way to get students to engage with stories is to make a battle so naturally when the grant request came in to fund additional books for this year's program through Bound to Stay Bound Books the Mars Planet Foundation couldn't say no. Students in several fifth-grade classes tested their knowledge of various fantasy novels as part of an annual "Battle of the Books" reading competition. The winning team was the "Over Achievers," made up of students Liv Adams, Adrian Heinemann, Matthew Klug, Owen McEvelly and Avery Polito (team leader). It was held in the Centennial gym and involved four classes.

After a heated battle, "The Overachievers" came out on top, with "The Colony of Weirdos" coming in second, and "The Prehistoric Teletubbies" taking third.



Upcoming Mars Planet Foundation Board Meetings

All MPF Board Meetings are held in the MASD Board Room starting at 6:30pm.

- Tuesday, August 15th
- Tuesday, September 19th
- Tuesday, October 24th
- Tuesday, November 21st
- Wednesday, January 10th, 2024

Board Member Needed

The Mars Planet Foundation is seeking individuals interested in volunteering with the Foundation. If you believe you have skills to offer the Mars Planet Foundation, please send a letter of interest to admin@marsplanetfoundation.com.

Ambassadors Wanted

The Mars Planet Foundation is seeking individuals interested in volunteering with the Foundation. Ambassadors are non-voting members who assist the Foundation Board at their level of availability and interest. This role is perfect for those who want to be involved but need flexibility in terms of their commitment. Ambassadors are vital to the Foundation's success!

If you have any questions, please e-mail us at admin@marsplanetfoundation.com



Dear Planet Foundation, I wanted to extend an additional thank you for the donation to my classroom last year. We have a reading reward program that was in need of new books. Our last school year, we had 25 students participate. This year, we had 80! Our book giveaway went from 51 to 197! Thank you for helping us motivate these readers!!!

Thank you, Amy Zollner Reading Support

Support the Mars Planet Foundation

The Mars Planet Foundation relies on the generous donations of the community and local businesses to provide teacher grants, student scholarships and overall support to the growth of students. There are many ways in which you can get involved. Please consider volunteering your time, making a personal donation, or making a corporate donation.

To donate please go to marsplanetfoundation.org

Give a little. Help a lot.

Parents, alumni and friends can maximize personal contributions to the Mars Planet Foundation with corporate matching gifts. By taking advantage of a company's matching gift benefit, you may be able to double or even triple the amount of an individual contribution. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, please check with your HR department.

MUSIC TO THEIR HANDS

Music app brings music education to the students' hands

The Mars Planet Foundation awarded Mrs. Brydon \$4,095 to purchase a five-year license of QuaverMusic. This wonderful music resource will enhance the music curriculum at the Mars Area Elementary School. "Ever since being introduced to QuaverMusic, I have been a huge fan. Their groundbreaking approach to acquiring music literacy is superior to any other music resource." Susan Brydon, music teacher

QuaverMusic is packed with 1,200+ songs that engage students. A team of animators, graphic artists, audio engineers, songwriters, developers, and more helped create the original QuaverMusic content.

The Mars Area Elementary School students have been enjoying fun and interactive games that bring learning to life with individual Quaver Student Accounts on Quaver Street. "Note and Rest Grab" is one of the many activities that engage students in learning. There are also composition tools, the Metro Station with a tour of famous musical venues, and much more. Whether it is time for a brain break or free time, our students can explore the wide world of music from anywhere with an internet connection.



Walk Around Mars

2nd Bi-Annual Walk ended in another success

With the support of the community and businesses, the Walk Around Mars 2023 campaign raised \$36,034.59, enabling the Mars Planet Foundation to continue to fund unique teacher-created educational opportunities & facilitate the management, selection, and awarding of nearly two dozen scholarships for graduating seniors.

In addition to the campaign to raise funds, it is always fun and exciting to get the community to join in fun contests such as the school with the highest participation. This year, the Primary Center stole the trophy from the Elementary School. Among some other great competitions were Finding Marty, sports themes, and photos with pets. We hope to see you all again in 2025!





Thank You

to all our great

Walk Around Mars sponsors!



Event Sponsor

\$5000

Rhoads Orthodontics Specialist
Cranberry Twp, PA

School Trophy Sponsor

\$2500

Mars Bank
Mars, PA

Diamond Sponsor

\$2500

PNC Bank
Mars, PA

Platinum Sponsor

\$1000

American Natural – Mars, PA
Pawlowicz Dentistry – Mars, PA
Refresh Dental – Mars, PA
Thomas & Williamson LLC – Pittsburgh, PA

Dillon McCandless King Coulter & Graham LLP – Butler, PA
Pelles Heating & Cooling Services – Mars, PA
Vogel Disposal Services – Mars, PA

T-Shirt Sponsor

\$500

Cashdollar & Associates, LLC – Grove City, PA
Dave's Country Meats – Valencia
Dinsmore & Shohl LLP – Pittsburgh, PA
Gilliland Vanasdale Sinatra Law Office – Cranberry Twp, PA
Harper & Hodge Wealth Management – Mars, PA
Intensity Dance Academy – Mars, PA
Karski & Spokane Orthodontics – Seven Fields, PA
Little House Learning Center – Mars, PA
NexTier Bank – Cranberry Twp, PA
Orange Settlement Services – Zelienople, PA
Planet Mart – Mars, PA
Saint John's Lutheran Home – Mars, PA
Ziegler Legal PLLC – Mars, PA

Gold Sponsor

\$250

Clear Vision Family Eyecare – Mars, PA
Crawford Heating & Air Conditioning – Valencia, PA
Dented Keg Brewing Company – Mars, PA
Douds Bros. Landscape Construction Inc – Mars, PA
Fun Slides Carpet SkatePark – Pittsburgh, PA
Giant Eagle – Seven Fields, PA
Heartland Homes – Valencia, PA
Just In Thyme Catering – Gibsonia, PA
Kaclik Builders – Mars, PA
Macri Floral – Mars, PA
Moe's Southwest Grill – Cranberry Twp, PA
No Offseason Baseball – Valencia, PA
Twelve Oaks Mansion – Mars, PA

Other Sponsors

BeBe Kakes/Hot Mamas Pierogies – Mars, PA
Bellisario Dentistry – Valencia, PA
Elite Chiropractic & Wellness – Mars, PA
Fleming Tire – Mars, PA
Grand Avenue Salon – Mars, PA
Mars Agway – Mars, PA
Pfeifer Hardware – Mars, PA
Seven Fields Dental Care – Seven Fields, PA
Flying Squirrel Trampoline Park – Zelienople, PA
Serene Hair Studio
BEAR Playgrounds – Mars, PA
Beer Towne – Gibsonia, PA
Classic Automotive – Mars, PA
Finn Chiropractic – Mars, PA
Glossy Nails – Valencia, PA
The Learning Village – Mars, PA
Mars Brew House – Mars, PA
Second Sole – Seven Fields, PA
Stick City Brewing – Mars, PA
Mars Pizza – Mars, PA

SWAG Bag & Prize Donors

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh
Big Shot Bob's
Breakneck Tavern
Eat N' Park Cranberry
Fun Fore All
Johnston Tea House
Keystone Wellness Programs
Loafers
Mars Farmhouse Café
Mars Popcorn
Pittsburgh Steelers
Social Club Barbershop
Yoga On Mars
Nothing Bundt Cakes
AnytimeFitness
Bloom Café
Chick-Fil-A Cranberry
7-Eleven
Grand Avenu Grille
Juniper Grill
Kochers Flowers
Lucky Fins
Massage Envy
Seven Fields Veterinary Hospital
The Print Shop
Slippery Rock University Foundation
Yoga On Mars
Chipotle



ESTATE PLANNING

LEAVE A LEGACY USING ESTATE PLANNING

Impact the lives of Mars Area School District students with the life you've built! By directing a gift to the Mars Planet Foundation, you create a lasting legacy to enhance education in the Mars School District. Bequests and planned gifts of all sizes make a difference in the lives of our students.

Leaving a legacy is simple. Include a charitable bequest in your will or trust or designate the Mars Planet Foundation as a retirement or investment account or insurance policy beneficiary. You can positively influence the future of our young students through your gifts of:

- Stock and Bonds
- Retirement Assets Cash
- Insurance Policies
- Real and Personal Property

Types of Bequests

With the help of an advisor or your attorney, you can include language in your will or trust to leave a gift to the Mars Planet Foundation.

There are several ways you can make a bequest to the Foundation:

Specific Bequest: leaving a particular dollar amount gift or a specific asset.

Percentage Bequest: designating a percentage of your overall estate.

Residuary Bequest: giving what remains in an estate after expenses, debts, and any specific or percentage bequests have been paid. It is common for a residuary bequest to involve leaving a percentage of the residue of your estate.

You can also designate the Mars Planet Foundation as a partial, contingent, or sole beneficiary of a retirement, investment or bank account, or life insurance policy. We recommend seeking the professional guidance of an estate planning attorney to make decisions regarding a planned gift but invite you to use this information to aid you in your discussions with your attorney. Please contact us with any questions you may have at admin@marsplanetfoundation.com.