

THE EXCLUSIVE PUBLICATION CONNECTING THE RESIDENTS OF RUMSON, NJ

RUMSON

L I V I N G

AUGUST 2025

RUMSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

The REF Marks a 30-Year Milestone

30

YEARS

OF

IMPACT

POWERED BY
BVM
BEST VERSION MEDIA

PHOTO BY THERESE WAGNER PHOTOGRAPHY

THE REF MARKS A 30-YEAR MILESTONE

BY REGINA MOLARO-FISH

PHOTOS BY THERESE MARIE WAGNER PHOTOGRAPHY



This year, The Rumson Education Foundation (The REF) celebrates 30 years of success! Congrats to the Board—past and present—for making a difference in the lives of so many students.

No idea is too big or small. That is one of the driving principles of The REF, which encourages every voice to be heard in its effort to enhance the educational experience for students in the Rumson Public School District.

The nonprofit organization's history can be traced back to 1995. That's when a group of dedicated parents united over a mission to raise funds to benefit every student at Deane-Porter Elementary School and Forrestdale School.

Throughout the decades, approximately 300 grants and \$3.8 million has sparked a range of projects. "I am so proud that The REF has reached this milestone of serving our community and enriching the lives of our children. From our very first meeting in 1995, I had high hopes and goals. I was understandably nervous but worked with a group of Rumson residents like myself who wanted the best for our children," said Robbie Matthews, who was among the founding members and served as President of The REF during its inception.

"Our support grew every year, and I knew in my heart that future Boards would carry on its success. I was always thrilled to hear from friends and neighbors that the Board continued to thrive. Carry on, our future generations will continue to benefit from your hard work."

The Grant Process

Since its inception, REF's mission and operation has remained true to its roots. Funding is achieved via an annual grant award process that encourages faculty, staff, students, and community members to present ideas. The revenue seeds innovative projects, as well as initiatives and equipment.

Funding impacts all areas of student life—from academic programs in math, science, and literacy to fine art, the performing arts, and physical education.

Over the years, The REF has celebrated many big wins. Examples include a \$250,000 science lab; \$300,000 smart board initiative for every classroom; \$600,000 disbursement for laptops for every student; and \$800,000 expenditure that outfitted classrooms with furniture to enable flexible learning environments.

The REF is proud of its history of achievements and ability to make a difference in the lives of so many students.





Pride in Partnerships

Beyond what The REF has achieved through the community, it is grateful for support from its partnerships with Dr. John E. Bormann, Superintendent of Schools for the Borough of Rumson, and the Board of Education.

"The Rumson School District has shared an effective partnership with The REF since its inception. I have had the fortunate experience of working with this organization for the past 10 years and because of their commitment to Deane-Porter and Forrestdale Schools, it is no surprise this partnership has enabled our students, staff, and community to exemplify what a strong education can and does look and feel like," said Dr. John E. Bormann,

Superintendent of Schools for the Borough of Rumson.

"This has been done through the efforts of The REF in enabling the Board of Education to extend its impact beyond a thorough and efficient education to one that is simply innovative and cutting edge. This has been done by directly supporting the creative ideas of our staff with grant funding for new programs and opportunities and indirectly supporting the district's budget by awarding grant funding that frees up financial resources to be used elsewhere. I look forward to our continued work together in igniting the potential of this amazing school district and community."

Creating a Unique Culture

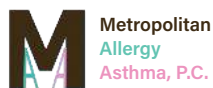
A current Board member weighed in on the power of The REF. "The REF has empowered parents and community members to take an active role in shaping their children's learning environment—not only by directing donations and funding to the schools, but also by submitting grant ideas that often support specific needs in their child's own classroom. This has fostered a strong connection between the school and the community, creating a dynamic, engaged, and forward-thinking educational culture in Rumson," said Holly Ostrow, President, The Rumson Education Foundation.



Is It a Cold... or Something More?

Congestion. Cough. Sore Throat.
Don't just guess — get expert answers.

Metropolitan Asthma & Allergy
FERYAL HAJEE, MD



34 Sycamore Ave, Suite 1A
Little Silver, NJ 07739
732-383-5554 Tel.
MetroAsthma.com
Find us on Facebook!

- Personalized allergy & asthma care
- Testing & treatment for kids and adults
- Compassionate, board-certified doctor

**Breathe easy —
we're here to help.**

Throughout the decades, approximately 300 grants and \$3.8 million has sparked a range of projects such as this one.



The REF fosters engagement among the students

A Glance Back: Q & A with Robbie Matthews, Founding Board Member and Past President of The Rumson Education Foundation

Q. Why was this mission so important to you?

A. Our mission was to provide extra funding for projects that often fell through the cracks or fell short in funding through the school budget. We were able to pick up the pieces, fund special projects, and fulfill many teachers' dreams. Each fundraiser we held meant that more requests could be filled. The simple goal was to provide more.

Q. What memories stand out most for you?

A. Our first fundraiser had me shaking my head and asking if this would work and if people would come. Would enough residents understand that we were not just asking for donations but providing the spark in science class and the computers that were so needed. They came, supported, and helped us grow. In this process, we saw individuals and businesses help us, and The REF grew and thrived.

That first Board, and all others that followed should pat themselves on your back and realize that they did this!

Q. What would you like to see for the future?

A. The future of The REF has been marching along, finding success, and continuing to serve our children. Keeping future generations in the spotlight and giving them opportunities for growth and continued learning is my wish for their continued success.

For more about The REF and the grants they've funded over the last several years, visit <https://rumsonedfoundation.org/>. As The REF celebrates 30 years, stay tuned for more details on how it plans to celebrate this exciting milestone.

CRYSTAL POOL & SPA^{INC}

*"It's the Service After
the Sale That Counts."*



Contact us today!

Office: 973-599-0205

Cell: 201-618-6917

 @crystalpoolandspa

 crystalpoolandspainc.com



2024-2025 GRANTS

During this timeframe, The REF awarded nearly \$160,000 across nine grants to the Rumson School District. They include:

Innovative Book Vending Machine:

A Book Vending Machine, including a two-year supply of books, will be used by Deane Porter teachers and faculty as part of their student incentive programs that recognize individual accomplishments such as positive decision making, kindness, academic growth, and leadership. This grant was submitted by Dr. Matthew Miranda, Forrestdale Art Teacher; Dr. Erin O'Connell, Deane Porter Principal; and Vera Ridoux, Supervisor of Curriculum.

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) School Store Kiosk

The NJHS School Store Kiosk will be a mobile kiosk transported between Deane Porter and Forrestdale and managed entirely by the students of NJHS. Overseen by their advisors, students working the store will gain hands-on experience in skills such as carrying out transactions and inventory management. They'll also develop crucial soft skills such as teamwork, responsibility, leadership, and customer service. The store will be stocked with essential school supplies. This was submitted by Brittaney Flynn, District Wide Assistant Principal; and the NJHS advisors.

A Virtual and Augmented Reality Classroom

ClassVR (Virtual Reality) is an immersive virtual reality platform. Leveraging the power of VR will help to transform traditional science education into engaging and interactive experiences. ClassVR allows students to conduct virtual experiments that would be impractical or dangerous in real life. Students will witness firsthand the wonders of the universe, from the surface of Mars to the depths of the ocean. Training costs will be supported by the PTO innovation fund. This was submitted by Jesse Johnson, Forrestdale Science Specialist.



This Book Vending Machine is used by Deane Porter teachers and faculty as part of their student incentive programs.



The REF succeeds in its effort to enhance the educational experience for all children in the Rumson Public School District.

Creating Timeless Interiors that Always Reflect Our Client's Taste.



Samantha Cole & Company
Interior Design

ASID

Rumson, New Jersey • San Francisco, California

(732) 222-7493

samanthacoleinteriors.com

Serving You in
Rumson and
the Rest
of NJ

'We Do It All'

Handyman & Construction Corp.
Remodeling Alterations and Repairs

Trust Is Just One Of The Things We Build Well
Elliot 917-992-9330 • NJHandymanService.com

elliottbendayan@gmail.com

Call or Text 24/7 for a Free Estimate • Open 7 Days a Week

FOLLOW ME ON



- Appliance Installation
- Back Splashes
- Bathroom Remodeling
- Cabinets
- Carpentry
- Caulking & Grouting

- Ceiling Repair
- Cement Brick and Stone
- Ceramic Tile
- Clogged Drains
- Concrete Installation/Repairs
- Counter Tops
- Curtain Hanging
- Deck Installation/Repair

- Door & Window Installation
- Dock Building & Repair
- Doorbell Installation/Repair
- Drywall Install & Repair
- Electrical
- Fans & Fixtures
- Fascia & Soffit Repair
- Faucets Install and Repair
- Fences & Gates
- Flood Lights
- Flooring, Hardwood, Vinyl, Tile
- French Drains
- Furniture Assembly
- Garbage Disposals
- Gutter Repairs & Cleaning

- HVAC Duct-Work
- Insulation
- Kid's Closets
- Kitchen Remodeling
- Landscaping
- Light Switches
- Local Moving
- Locks & Knobs
- Mail Boxes
- Masonry Brick & Stone Repair
- Molding & Trim
- Painting & Staining
- Pavers Install & Repair
- Picture Hangings
- Plumbing
- Power Washing
- Property Management
- Roofing

- Sheetrock
- Shelving
- Shower & Tub
- Siding
- Sinks
- Sump Pumps
- Tile
- Toilet & Vanity
- Tree Trimming
- TV Installations
- Walk in Master Closets
- Wall Paper Hanging
- Water Heaters
- Water Leaks
- Weather Stripping
- Window Washing
- Windows
- Wood Repair & Rot



Since 2001

Fully Licensed & Insured

LIC#13VH09886800

.... All Of It & Much, Much More!