



# 2013 Annual Report

*"The Sparta Education Foundation has played a significant role in providing a variety of grants, resources, equipment and programming to enhance our education programs and our overall goal of providing the best education possible for our students."*

--Dennis Tobin, Sparta Township Superintendent of Schools



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The Sparta Education Foundation, established in 2006 as an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has its own mission, goals and by-laws that are organized and managed by an independent Board of Trustees. The Foundation is not connected to the Sparta Board of Education or the Town Council. The Board is comprised entirely of volunteers who are committed to encouraging philanthropic support of our five public schools. They are responsible for the organization of fundraising projects and other activities that benefit Sparta schools. During 2013, Sparta Education Foundation's "Efficiency of Funds" remained high at \$0.95 returned in Grants for each dollar collected.

## Our Mission

The **Sparta Education Foundation** is a non-profit, community based organization founded in 2006, whose mission is:

- To raise funds that will enable us to make ongoing charitable contributions that will enrich the educational experience of children in the Sparta Public Schools, and
- To promote pride and positive awareness in the Sparta Public Schools.

The **Vision** of the Sparta Education Foundation (SEF) is to engage the entire community in philanthropic giving that strengthens our public schools, supports our teachers, and inspires our students.

We believe that a strong community counts on strong public schools to prepare its children to become productive citizens, strengthen property values, and inspire civic pride. As such, the SEF is committed to raising funds to ensure continued excellence. Through the end of 2013 we have awarded grants totaling over **\$465,000**.

The SEF raises money through appeals for charitable contributions from individuals, foundations and businesses as well as through various fundraising events and projects including:

- Krogh's Turkey Trot -- Annual 5K run/walk held on Thanksgiving morning
- Casino Night-- Winter/spring event
- Pathways to Excellence--Engraved pavers at the Sparta Theatre complex
- Alumni Walkway – Engraved pavers at Sparta High School

The Board of Trustees reviews grant applications three times each year. Specific funding decisions are based on advancing the organization's goals to support curriculum-based projects equitably across all schools within the district.

Applications are reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Grants should have as broad an impact upon the educational needs of as many students as possible.
- Proposals must have the approval of both the school Principal and the District's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum.
- Grants should support educational programs not currently funded via the normal district budget process.
- All proposals should contribute to the district's overall mission.
- Grant requests for the following are not currently considered:
  - Individuals, including trips, training and non-curriculum based needs.
  - Activities or programs already funded by PTOs, Booster Clubs, etc.
  - or
  - Programs deemed too narrow in scope or impact.

The SEF is a member of the New Jersey Education Foundation Partnership and continually seeks new ideas and opportunities.



## **A Letter from the SEF President**

June, 2014

I am pleased to report that 2013 was another successful year for the Sparta Education Foundation (SEF). With the support of our many sponsors, contributors, volunteers, teachers, students and administration, the SEF met its mission of engaging the entire community in philanthropic giving while promoting pride and positive awareness in Sparta's public schools. As a result, the SEF has been able to provide substantial grants that have strengthened our schools, supported our teachers and inspired our students.

Krogh's Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot generated significant funds that allowed the SEF to fund twelve grants totaling \$149,286. After seven successful years, Turkey Trot continues to grow and has become one of the largest 5K runs in New Jersey; the 2013 run had over 2,000 runners and raised over \$70,000.

Based on revenue from the Turkey Trot and other fundraising events, our total contribution to the Sparta Public School District as of December 31, 2013 was over \$465,000. These grants-- which fund equipment and supplies for all of Sparta's public schools-- are described in greater detail later in this report. While charitable giving across all non-profit organizations is down, the Foundation was able to continue to raise funds to support our schools.

In 2013 we welcomed two new Trustees to the Board: Doug Layman and Gwen Donovan. These new leaders have given the SEF renewed energy and fresh ideas that will benefit Sparta and our school district for years to come, and we are very fortunate to have such talented people join us.

We firmly believe that strong communities and strong schools go hand in hand. We are proud of what we have accomplished, and equally proud to be a part of a community that cares about our children's education.

The SEF will continue working for Sparta's children, and we are confident that your assistance will enable us to award grants that enrich the educational experience of our teachers and students. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Don Cutshall  
2013 SEF President



## **Sponsors and Contributors**

The Sparta Education Foundation would like to thank our contributors and event sponsors. A special mention is given to our title sponsor, Krogh's Restaurant & Brew Pub, for their continuing support of the Turkey Trot. It is the generosity of contributors and sponsors that makes our mission possible. We continue to be grateful to our in-kind contributors, which help us to stretch every dollar raised.

### **Event Sponsor**

**Krogh's Restaurant & Brew Pub**

### **Platinum Sponsor (\$5,000 or greater)**

**School Craft Studios**

**Lake Mohawk Country Club**

### **Gold Sponsors (\$2,000 or greater)**

**Thorlabs, Inc.**

**Eastern Propane**

**Silver Sponsors (\$1,000 or greater)**

**Coldwell Banker – Julie Killen**

**Helen Morgan/ Alpine/Mohawk Avenue School Staff**

**Fogarty & Hara, Counselors at Law**

**Highpoint Solutions**

**Honeywell**

**Dykstra Associates, PC**

**Krave Café & Caterers**

**Liquor Factory**

**Newton Medical Center / Atlantic Health Systems**

**Pine Cone Chiropractic**

**Realty Executives**

**RE/MAX – Dan Corrigan**

**Residential Home Funding Corp**

**Verizon**

**Villa Capri**

**Viridian**

**Bronze Sponsors (\$500 or greater)**

**Augie's Brooklyn Bagels & Deli**

**Royal Coachman Worldwide**

**Bimbo Bakeries USA, Inc.**

**St. Moritz Grill**

**C3 Workplace Above & Beyond**

**Selective Insurance**

**First Hope Bank**

**Sharpe Plumbing & Heating**

**Gabriel Perry Salon**

**Skyland's Medical**

**Highlands State Bank**

**Soldovari Foundation**

**Inspire Fitness**

**Sparta Athletic Center**

**Intrepid – Crossfit, LMS**

**Sparta Driving School / Ais Kae**

**Laddey, Clark & Ryan LLC**

**Sparta Junior Woman's Club**

**PNC Bank**

**Sussex Bike & Sport**

### **Bronze Sponsors continued**

The Fit Experience                      Town & Country Realty – Nicole Pacich  
Weichert, Realtors, Dawn Corbo, Ruth Linn  
Wellness Pediatrics                      Wells Fargo  
Younique Yoga

### **Sponsors and Contributors**

Greene's Beans Cafe  
McKinley Scientific  
Sobel & Co.  
Sparta Administration Association  
Sparta Education Association  
Sparta Elks Lodge 2356  
Sparta Volunteer Ambulance Squad  
Stop & Shop  
Trellis  
Wyndham Worldwide

**We need your continued support to make a difference!** Please explore our website <http://www.spartaeducationfoundation.org> for more information about what we do and how you can get involved. **Again, thank you to all our contributors and supporters who have made the following 2013 grants totaling \$149,286 possible.**



## 2013 Grants and Awards



### **Leveled Classroom Library – 10,000+ Books**

**\$53,304**

In grades K–5, the Sparta Township Schools are committed to implementing “Reader’s–Writer’s Workshop” within a Balanced Literacy Framework for the instruction of language arts. Balanced Literacy is a comprehensive program of language arts acquisition. It contains all the components necessary for students to master reading, writing, and oral communication. The supervisors and teachers in grades K-5 requested this grant to buy leveled classroom libraries in order to build balanced literacy leveled libraries as part of the overall Balanced Literacy Framework.

A balanced literacy plan is most effective when children are given direct instructional support and a variety of daily reading and writing experiences that are needed in the complex process of becoming independent readers and writers.

“This leveled library complements the district’s balanced literacy curriculum.”

“These new books have created excitement and enthusiasm among the students and teachers. There is a 50-50-balance of fiction and non-fiction books. Subjects include math, science and social studies, plus chapter books, novels and even joke books.”

*Marybeth Kopacz, Elementary Literacy Supervisor at Helen Morgan & Mohawk Avenue Schools*

## **Pianos – Sparta High School**

**\$28,000**



The primary purpose of this grant is to update our classroom and concert performance capabilities. Currently, our performance and practice room pianos require constant reconditioning and shortly after return to a less than adequate state. With this grant, student groups will be able to perform individual recitals and concerts.

The entire high school population will benefit from this purchase. Over the course of four years, more than half the student population enrolls in music, performs in dramatic and musical productions, or takes private lessons for voice and instruments requiring piano accompaniment.

## **Britelink Interactive Projectors – Alpine School**

**\$18,109**

To expand the use of BriteLink Interactive Projectors and Erase Marker Boards to replace SMART Board models that are no longer functioning properly.

This grant will allow the district to continue to utilize technology to enhance instruction and allow the district to expand its use of instructional technology to best meet the demands of the new curriculum.

This technology enables teachers to take students on virtual field trips, interact with lessons in all content areas and do hands-on math with the new Envision Math Program.

Grant will upgrade 7 classrooms



**Robotics Program-Year 3**

**\$ 11,500**

**Robotics Benches**

**\$ 5,125**

This year two grants support the Sparta High School Robotics and Pre-Engineering curriculum providing funds for hardware, software and supplies. With SEF funding, the school will offer both first-level and advanced-level Robotics Engineering courses for students from grades 9-5. The SEF approved year three of the five year grant for the Robotics Engineering program, contingent upon satisfactory annual reports and the district’s continued commitment to the robotics curriculum.

“The Robotics Program and Robotics Classroom here at Sparta High School have been equipped with VEX and Lego robotic kits as well as workbenches and tools provided through a 5 year grant from the Sparta Education Foundation. The use of Robotics at the high school has been an invaluable tool in advancing Sparta students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math. It also has serves to advance their overall technological literacy. The Sparta Education Foundation has been an integral part of the continued success of Robotics Education at Sparta High School.”

*Mark Meola, Robotics and Engineering Teacher, Sparta High School*

## **Physical Education Equipment**

**\$7,658**

This grant will purchase a variety of equipment so that PE teachers will be able to offer a functional approach to fitness training. Health and PE are an integral part of the total educational program. Health information provides students with the development of attitudes, skills, and behaviors conducive for becoming physically, socially, and emotionally fit. Physical Education promotes the values of healthy choices and responsible decision-making that leads to the development of a healthy lifestyle. The goal of Physical Education is to develop students physically, educate them, and provide the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need in order to enjoy a lifetime of health and physical activity.

## **Photo Studio**

**\$6,017**

This grant will support the educational tools needed for a thorough curriculum in the development of the Photography and Graphics program at Sparta High School. It will further enhance their knowledge in photographic processes in digital communications and 'real' world techniques by demonstrating complete understanding of high tech equipment.

Students will learn important skills and techniques needed in the digital age here at Sparta, and will know how to run and use a professional studio. This studio will allow our high school to have a progressive photo and graphics department and create many opportunities for students to obtain photographic scholarships, compete in competitions, create college portfolio applications, and experience other photographic opportunities to share with the community and their families.

## **Sculpture Garden**

**\$5,000**

This Grant allows Advanced, Intermediate, and AP Sculpture students to collaborate with local artist Ricky Boscarino to add a permanent bench, fountain and planters to the existing sculpture garden.

The Fine Arts curriculum at Sparta High School is considered very strong, but lacks practical and realistic applications of real world career paths in art. This grant shows the students the accomplishments and artistic creation of a working artist.

“Thank you so much!!! I'm so excited and truly grateful for everything the SEF has done to enhance the Art program in Sparta! You really are giving these kids a once in a lifetime experience and allowing them to leave their mark in the high school as proud Sparta Spartans!”

*Jennifer Kucher-Csatlos, Art and Sculpture Teacher, Sparta High School*

## **Document Cameras**

**\$4,788**

This grant provides 12 document cameras for use in grades 1-3 at the Alpine School and should impact all students. The intent is to enhance technology at the elementary level.

"My class and I were so excited when we got the document camera! I began using it immediately and it's been very easy to work with. I've already been able to utilize it in multiple subjects giving students a great visual to further their understanding. I love that there are so many ways to use the document camera and enhance the students' learning. It's a valuable classroom tool that all can benefit from." *Brittany Luckich, Third Grade Teacher, Alpine School*

“Thank you so much for the SEF support. We love our document cameras here at Alpine. I use mine for many lessons each day. It is an amazing classroom tool!”  
*Michelle Telischak, Third Grade Teacher, Alpine School*

## **I-Pads**

**\$4,068**

This grant is for six I-Pads and additional music apps for the Helen Morgan music department to enhance existing instruction. It will also provide the opportunity for additional musical experiences not currently possible with existing technology.

## **STEM Curriculum – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**\$2,485**

This grant will enhance the existing STEM program for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades and expand the STEM program to include the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It teaches students to explore and investigate, to collaborate until a solution is found to the problem and encourages hands-on activities to engage learners of all abilities.

“The Sparta Education Foundation has been very supportive of the middle school STEM program. Classroom supplies for a new 8<sup>th</sup> grade elective have been made available through an SEF Grant. The Sparta Education Foundation made the transition between the submission of the grant, the approval of the grant, and the acquiring of supplies a quick and easy process. These supplies enable me to share my passion for project-based learning and inspire the students by making connections between the classroom and the real world. I look forward to working with the Sparta Education Foundation again in the future.”

*Christine Collister, STEM Teacher, Sparta Middle School*

## **Studio Easels & Sketch Boards**

**\$1,745**

The grant will supply the art department with 15 Studio Easels and 15 Blick Sketch Boards at Sparta High School. Students in all levels of 2D Drawing and Painting classes will have the opportunity to work on a larger scale for their portfolio development, district exhibition, competitions and scholarships.

## **Pre K Classroom Library - Mohawk Avenue School**

**\$1,488**

This Grant requested funds to purchase children’s literature that will supplement daily activities and interest areas in the classroom.

Early childhood is the period when language develops most rapidly. It is imperative that young children are provided with a variety of developmentally appropriate literary experiences in the classroom. Pre K teachers will use this grant for support in literacy development.

# **2013 Fundraising Events**

## **Casino Night, February 2013**

Casino Night was held in February, transforming the Lake Mohawk Country Club into a fundraising gala featuring Las Vegas-style games.

Attendees enjoyed gaming favorites like Blackjack, Crap, Roulette and Texas Hold'em. The professional dealers made the games fun for everyone. The evening also featured a raffle, silent and live auctions with unique and one-of-a-kind items.

## **Turkey Trot, November 2013**



### **The Tradition Before The Tradition**

The Sparta Education Foundation was proud to present the seventh annual Krogh's Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. The one-mile Fun Run and 5K race has become known as "The Tradition Before the Tradition."

The Turkey Trot has grown in the past seven years from 1,300 to over 2,000 registered runners and is one of the largest 5K races in New Jersey

## Runners brave the chill to continue Thanksgiving tradition

Posted Wed, Dec 4th, 2013 Sparta Independent by Gwen Donovan



SPARTA — Those arising before dawn were not up to put the bird in the oven. They were getting up to tend to pre-race rituals and head to Sparta for an annual runners' rite of Thanksgiving — the Krogh's Turkey Trot. More than a race, the event is an early morning holiday bond with family and friends in the context of a healthy yet often quite frigid morning run to welcome in the day of thanks (and perhaps also justify that extra piece of pie later on). The out-and-back, 3.1 mile course includes both hills and on days like last Thursday, a cold wind whipping off a white-cap-topped Lake Mohawk. Those

approaching the turnaround cone at the half way point were greeted by a light flashing, horn blowing four-wheeler coming the other way leading two runners who were battling for the win. In first place was High Point sophomore, Joe Dragon, and behind him, former Pope John and Georgetown University student, Justin Scheid. The chase "At the start I looked around and didn't see either of them there," Scheid said, then as the race started someone Scheid didn't think he knew got off the line very well and gapped him slightly as they climbed the first hill. "Before cresting the hill I was on his heels, and I felt the race was between the two of us as the footsteps of trailing runners did not sound close," Scheid said. He realized Joe Dragon was a camper at the local X-Treme Running Camp had already made a name for himself as a stand-out Jersey runner. "As we rolled downhill toward the turn-around I saw a clock was set-up," said Scheid. "This may be the first race I have seen a clock at the half-way point of a 5K. The clock flashed 8:08 as we rounded the cone. I trailed [Dragon] up the steepest hill just before the 2-mile mark. At the top of the hill I moved to the lead and tried to pick-up the pace." As Dragon settled in behind Scheid, he continued pushing the pace through the last mile, up the final climb, and down toward the finish line. "Dragon fell back a few steps over the last half mile, but he was coming off a tough effort at the Meet of Champions and I am well aware how grueling Holmdel Park can be," Scheid said. Scheid beat Dragon 16:01 to 16:13. In the women's race, Nicole Falcaro of New York City was the champion, running 18:53. Claudia Disomma, of Sparta, was second in 18:59, and Carly Zinner, of Sussex, was third running 20:01. The race was directed by Sabrina Lucas. The Trot is the Sparta Education Foundation's largest annual fundraising event, and the foundation has awarded more than \$410,000 in grants to all five of Sparta's public schools since 2007. Besides Krogh's, Lakeland Bank and others, one of the race's sponsors is Eastern Propane, which made a presence at the event with a sea of yellow as more than 100 team members donned their bright shirts and competed. As for Scheid, he summed it up best. "The Turkey Trot has always been special for [my family] because it takes place in our hometown and there is a tremendous amount of pride having grown up in Sussex County," Scheid said. "The race is an opportunity to say thank-you and spend time with the community that has blessed us with so much. Of all the competitions I participate in each year, the local races are the most memorable because each one feels like a homecoming." Scheid hopes to one day settle in Sussex County and raise a family, but for now, "the local races provide as good of an excuse as any to drive up Route 15 and visit the old stomping ground."



## Alumni Walkway

An ongoing fundraising program started in 2013 by the SEF that allows individuals to purchase a brick engraved with the name of an alumni. Completed bricks are installed in the walkway outside the cafeteria entrance at Sparta High School.



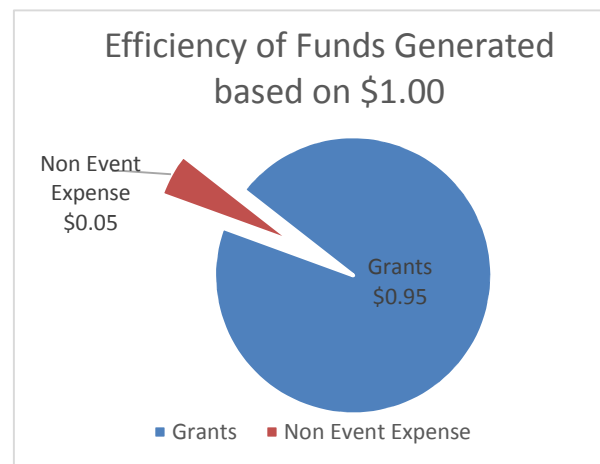
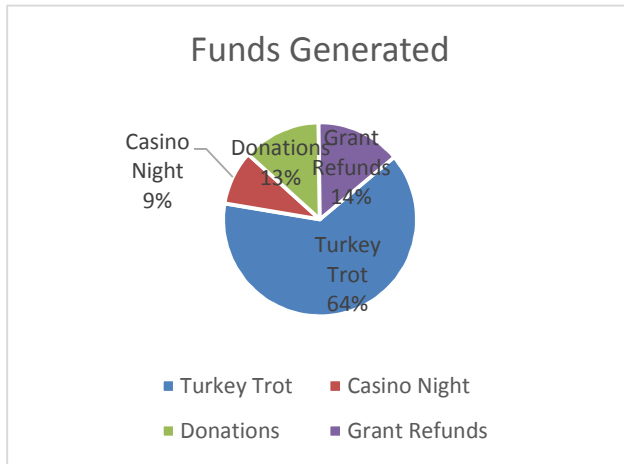
## Pathways to Excellence

An ongoing fundraising program for the SEF in the Sparta Theatre Center. Similar to the Alumni Walkway, individuals are allowed to buy bricks of various sizes to commemorate family and friends. All engraved bricks are installed in the walkway at the Theatre Center building.



# 2013 Financial Statement

Funds available start of 2013		\$116,758
Funds generated in 2013		\$162,865
Event Revenues	\$120,521	
Contributions and Other	\$ 20,424	
Grant Funds Returned	\$ 21,920	
Grants provided		\$149,286
Event expenses		\$ 38,411
Administrative expenses		\$ 8,293
Funds at year end 2013		\$ 83,633



# **2013 Board of Trustees**

Don Cutshall, President

Danielle Dykstra, Vice President

Erik Hein, Secretary

David Bridge, Treasurer

Gwen Donovan, Trustee

Ken Johnson, Trustee

Dorothy LaBeau, Trustee

Doug Layman, Trustee

Nancy Purnell, Trustee

Kevin Pollison, BOE Liaison

## **Committees**

### **Executive Committee**

Administer to the needs of the organization between board meetings.

### **Fund Development**

Develop, plan and elicit support in raising funds to carry out the mission of the SEF. Execute fundraising events and programs such as the Turkey Trot, Casino Night, Pathways to Excellence and new initiatives.

### **Marketing**

Oversee the development and maintenance of the website, publications, ad campaign, video, road show and public relations.

### **Community Relations**

Identify, develop and strengthen partnerships that assist in achievement of our mission. Emphasize partnership-building with the BOE, PTOs, local businesses and non-parental groups.

Work on a close and continual basis with the teachers, school administrators and the Superintendent's office to identify educational equipment, programs, projects and supplies that enhance curriculum and learning within all schools.

## **Alumni**

Committee is charged with alumni fundraising, partnership-building, homecoming, and alumni pride campaign.

## **Governance**

Oversee finance, compliance to the by-laws, information technology, Board of Trustee nominations and recruitment, and general administrative housekeeping.

## **In Appreciation**

Special thanks to Sparta School District Superintendent of Schools Dennis Tobin, Business Administrator Linda Alvarez, Assistant Superintendent-Director of Curriculum Dr. Melissa Varley and the generous support of our volunteers, teachers and students.

We would like to express our appreciation to the following groups for their continued contributions to advancing Sparta education and thank them for their support.

**Sparta Music Boosters**

**Mohawk Ave PTO**

**Alpine PTO**

**Helen Morgan PTO**

**Sparta Middle School PTO**

**Sparta High School PSTO**

**We need your support to continue making a difference!** Please explore our website <http://www.spartaeducationfoundation.org> for more information about what we do and how you can get involved.

