

Foundation gives teachers grants

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The Education Foundation of Sarasota County has awarded a total of \$169,670 in grants for 193 projects developed by teachers.

Presentations were made at the 24th annual Classroom Grant Awards ceremony Wednesday at Michael's on East.

Added to the 51 grants totaling \$73,513 presented earlier this fall, teachers have received a record \$243,183 to date in Education Foundation Edge of Excellence and Exploration Grants.

Roxie Jerde, president and CEO of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, awarded an additional 19 Exploration Grants to teachers, totaling an extra \$51,688 from her organization.

"In Sarasota, we have all the ingredients for educational magic," Sarasota County School Board Chairwoman Jane Goodwin told the audience during her opening remarks. "Motivated students, involved parents, talented and creative teachers, and an enormously supportive community with a shared obsession with excellence."

Argosy University sponsored the reception and presented the Argosy Principal's Award for the sixth year. The award honors the principal whose school submitted the most grant proposals by faculty size.

Dr. Sandra Wise, president of Argosy University-Sarasota, presented a check for \$500 to Cranberry Elementary Principal Linda McCloud of North Port.

Rotary Club of Sarasota President Dr. Tim Herring closed the ceremonies with a final drawing.

Sharon Hermanson of Toledo Blade Elementary School received the Rotary Club of Sarasota's Jim & Jean Henry Teacher's Award, a no-strings cash gift of \$500.

Cheryl Gordon, chairman of the Education Foundation's board, recognized Beverly Koski as a past board chairwoman and one of the founders of the group's classroom grant programs.

All Sarasota County kindergarten through 12th grade public school teachers are eligible to apply



Teachers Judy Aquila, Sandy Waite and Ginger Rosenberger accept their Edge of Excellence grants from donor and Education Foundation board member Jason Swift. COURTESY PHOTO

for awards of up to \$500 through the Edge of Excellence Classroom Grants program.

The Education Foundation raises the money, sponsors workshops for teachers, and organizes grant-reading sessions during which more than 125 volunteers score the teachers' requests each fall.

Teachers are also eligible to apply for larger awards through the Education Foundation's Exploration Grants program. These "explorations" are posted on a public website, EdExploreSRQ.com, which was launched in August 2011 by Sarasota County Schools and The Patterson Foundation's Cultural Connections initiative. Grants of up to \$1,500 or \$5,000 are awarded to teachers who develop the most compelling proposals based on EdExploreSRQ.com experiences.

The Education Foundation's Grants Committee is led by Chairman John LaCivita and includes Carlotta Cooley, Jerry Kaplan, Lisa Kates, Wendy Katz, George McGonagill, Helen C. Martin, Susan Morris, and Loretta Naylor. Program director is Michelle Frau.

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