

The MILFORD DAILY NEWS

Bank donates \$50K to Medway education foundation

By Mike Gleason

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MEDWAY - The Medway Foundation for Education (MFE) is celebrating the largest donation in its history, and is hoping to use the money to further supplement learning in the schools.

The group announced this month that it had received a \$50,000 gift from the Middlesex Savings Bank, part of a series of donations the bank is making to similar foundations. Brian Gray, president of the Medway foundation, said that amount equals what the group would typically receive over several years of fundraising.

“It was pretty amazing when we got the news,” he said. “Fifty thousand dollars, for us, is very big.”

Susan Olson, the MFE’s vice president, said the group’s mission is to enhance instruction in the town beyond what is provided in the school budget. Teachers approach the foundation to fund worthwhile educational activities, and it awards grants based on the application it receives.

Olson said the foundation has funded such programs as the “Science Olympiad” and “Beebots,” which are used at the McGovern School to teach programming basics to young children.

“When Chris Herren (the former Celtic who speaks to students about drug addiction) came to town, the PTO brought him to the schools, but the MFE funded a parent and community night with him,” she said. “We helped start ‘science Saturdays for girls.’ We funded the first year and, since then, the school budget has taken over the program.”

Gray said other foundation-funded initiatives had followed similar paths.

“I view it almost like we’re venture capitalists,” he said, as the group can often provide seed money to establish a continuing program. “This money from Middlesex Savings makes it easier for us to work in that capacity.”

“We’re always looking for ways to help students learn more effectively,” he added.

The donation, said Olson, likely won't be spent all at once, since the foundation typically awards between \$15,000 and \$18,000 in a given year. A portion of the money, she said, may go to the group's endowment, to ensure it is able to continue offering future grants.

In a statement, Middlesex Savings Bank President and CEO Michael McAuliffe noted the benefits wrought by local education foundations.

"They work hard to support projects and programs that foster learning and creativity," he said. "We hope these donations will make their jobs easier this year, and are excited to see their existing academic programs flourish or new ones come to life."

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