

Northwestern Mutual invests \$1.7 million in education programs in Milwaukee to improve reading proficiency

Foundation leads collaborative efforts aimed at Milwaukee third-graders

MILWAUKEE, July 20, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- It has been well reported that more than 84 percent of Milwaukee third-graders are not proficient in reading¹ — negatively affecting their chances of succeeding in school and beyond. This statistic is driving Northwestern Mutual to increase its investment in education in Milwaukee. As a company committed to improving the quality of life for residents and stimulating positive change in the community, Northwestern Mutual, through its Foundation, today is announcing \$1.7 million in grants to educational programs in the city.

The grants are aimed at preparing children to achieve third-grade reading proficiency and ultimately, college readiness by advancing reading strategies and innovative program support for literacy research.

"We want to help the community come together to ensure the success of our future leaders," said John E. Schlifske, chairman and CEO of Northwestern Mutual and co-chair of Milwaukee Succeeds. "We believe our commitment to education, both through time and financial support, will build measureable results that will improve education in Milwaukee."

"Our commitment to advancing third grade reading will play a pivotal role in our children's achievements both in the classroom and throughout their lives," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "Our strategy is based on a proven and collaborative approach – one that involves community members, educators and nonprofit leaders – to ensure each child is given the tools they need to be successful."

Northwestern Mutual partners with community groups and nonprofits to develop replicable and scalable education and training models in the Milwaukee area. The goal is to transform reading instruction, improve reading proficiency and bring key organizations together to provide a supportive atmosphere in schools to systematically create a deep and lasting impact.

Nearly half of the funding will support community collaborations, including programs such as Transformative Reading Instruction, in partnership with Milwaukee Succeeds, which provides real-time coaching and training for educators to support impactful reading instruction. Another program, coined the 5-in-1 Collaborative, works as a partnership between Milwaukee Public Schools, Schools that Can Milwaukee, City Year, Teach for America and Northwestern Mutual working together to effect positive change for school leadership and students at Carver Academy as a collective group.

Northwestern Mutual consulted national research, sponsored research on evidence-based programs, invested and participated in pilot programs and interviewed subject matter experts, advisory councils, foundation strategy teams and researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to develop its education strategy last year.

Funds also align with organizations that include outreach in three specific Milwaukee neighborhoods: Amani, Metcalfe Park and Muskego Way. These areas are the focus of Northwestern Mutual's neighborhood initiatives and part of the federal Building Neighborhood Capacity Program. Grants also support best in class mentoring programs which serve students from the three neighborhoods Northwestern Mutual focuses on, in many cases utilizing employee volunteers as one-on-one mentors.

All grant recipients are required to show measureable impact and results of their programs.

2015 Education Grant Recipients

Organization	Program
<i>Program Support</i>	
Arts@Large	Arts@Large: Developing Communities that Advance Literacy
Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee	SPARK Early Literacy Program in Metcalfe Park and Muskego Way

City Year	Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child
COA Youth & Family Centers	Improving literacy from Birth to Third Grade in the Amani Neighborhood
First Stage Milwaukee	First Stage Literacy Residencies
Marquette University	Milwaukee Summer Reading Project 2015
Milwaukee College Preparatory School	Literacy Coaching and Professional Development
Milwaukee Public Library Foundation	Super Reader Summer Reading Club
Next Door Foundation	Literacy intervention program
PAVE	Strengthening Neighborhood Schools through Volunteer-led Community Relationship-Building and Collaboration.
Penfield Children's Center	Early Education and Care
Schools That Can Milwaukee Inc.	Improving Third-Grade Reading Scores through Whole School Transformation
SHARP Literacy Inc.	Building Elementary School Literacy Skills
St. Marcus Lutheran School	St. Marcus Literacy Program Support
Teach for America	Teach For America - Milwaukee
Urban Day School	Reading Intervention for Third-Grade Proficiency
<i>Community Collaboration</i>	
Milwaukee Succeeds	Cradle-to-career initiative; Transformative Reading Instruction
Carver 5-in-1 Collaborative	5-in-1 Collaborative
Teachtown	Initiative strives to recruit and retain urban teachers in Milwaukee Public Schools
<i>Mentoring Programs</i>	
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Milwaukee	Mentoring program
Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee	College coaching program for Sponsor A Scholar
Notre Dame Middle School	Graduate support and mentoring programs
Unity in Motion	Mentoring program

In addition to third-grade reading proficiency, Northwestern Mutual is committed to improving the lives of Milwaukee children and families in need within its neighborhoods, childhood cancer program and making Milwaukee a great place to live and work.

About Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation is to improve the lives of children and families in need. The

Foundation has given more than \$274 million since its inception in 1992 and is designed to create lasting impact in the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. We accomplish this by combining financial support, volunteerism, thought leadership and convening community partners to deliver the best outcomes. Our efforts are focused nationally on curing childhood cancer, and locally on education, neighborhoods and making our hometown of Milwaukee a great destination.

About Northwestern Mutual

[Northwestern Mutual](#) has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for nearly 160 years. Our financial representatives build relationships with clients through a distinctive planning approach that integrates risk management with wealth accumulation, preservation and distribution. With more than \$230 billion in assets, \$27 billion in revenues and more than \$1.5 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.2 million people who rely on us for insurance and investment solutions, including life, disability and long-term care insurance; annuities; trust services; mutual funds; and investment advisory products and services.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI, and its subsidiaries. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a comprehensive approach to financial security solutions including: life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, annuities, investment products, and advisory products and services. Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, limited purpose federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company.

¹ Success for Every Child. (2014). *Milwaukee Succeeds Milestone Report 2014*.

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