

Local high school students with disabilities raise \$500 to support Kelan's Swing Project

November 30 2017 4:49 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Community Foundation (ECF) recently received a \$500 donation from Edwardsville Tiger Den Cafe students. The money was raised by the students to support Kelan's Wheelchair Accessible Swing Project at Edwardsville Township Community Park.

Kelan Masinelli was diagnosed with a rare brain disorder, Lissencephal, when he was 4 months old. Through the help of the Edwardsville Community Foundation, his family created a community support fund to raise the \$35,000 necessary to build a wheelchair accessible swing at the park. The project will include a play pad, safety fence, shaded structure, bench and plaque.

The Tiger Den Cafe is an onsite vocational training center for students with disabilities at Edwardsville High School. The cafe serves snacks, cookies, hot chocolate and coffee to students and faculty between 7:30 and 10:15 a.m. each day. Functional Life Skills Teacher Susan Converse said that when she and her students heard of plans to raise money for a wheelchair accessible swing at Edwardsville Township Community Park, they knew this was a project they wanted to contribute to.

"The students and myself were very proud to be a small part of this initiative. Part of our philosophy at the Tiger Den Cafe is that we are creating an environment where everyone belongs. We have made donations to several individuals and families in the community over the past year, but this one was particularly close to our hearts," said Converse.

Edwardsville Community Foundation Executive Director, Pam Farrar, said that this project exemplifies part of the mission of the Foundation, which is to help shine a light on important community causes.

"I, personally, was so touched when I received the check in the mail from the Tiger Den students. What a wonderful contribution from this great group of EHS students! I think this is a project that, once completed, will highlight the true need in our community for a swing like this," said Farrar.

Kelan's Wheelchair Swing Project is expected to be completed within the next two weeks. For more information about the Edwardsville Community Foundation, go to their website at www.edwardsvillecommunityfoundation.org or call Jessica Williams at 618-772-2349.