

Metro East K-12 Teachers Invited To Submit Classroom Projects By April 18 For Possible Grant Funding

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ST. LOUIS – To show appreciation for area K-12 educators who have been forced to adapt to new styles of teaching throughout the pandemic, WGU Missouri has announced the return of its “Fund My Classroom” initiative, pledging up to \$125,000 in grant money for K-12 teachers who need help funding their innovative classroom projects. Teachers can submit proposed projects online at wgu.edu/fundmyclassroom for the opportunity to receive full or partial funding. Applications are being accepted through April 18, and selected classroom projects will be announced during Teacher Appreciation Week, which runs May 3- 7.

K-12 educators can request funding for any type of innovative classroom project they believe would provide an enriching classroom experience for their students – from books, supplies and equipment or technology to classroom experiences and field trips. To be considered, proposed projects must include a description, detailing how much funding is needed and how the proposed project will benefit students. Both public and private school teachers are encouraged to apply.

“Over the last year, we have seen just how dedicated our teachers are to ensuring our children receive an enriching and fulfilling educational experience, and providing grant funding through this initiative to help make their classrooms more engaging for their students is just one way we can show our appreciation,” said Dr. Angie Besendorfer, Chancellor of WGU Missouri. “I look forward to seeing the amazing projects our teachers have planned.”

This is the third consecutive year WGU Missouri is making the “Fund My Classroom” initiative available for teachers in Missouri. In 2019, the nonprofit, fully online university donated \$10,000 to 15 schools across Missouri, and in 2020, awarded a total of \$15,000 in grant funding to 29 classroom projects in Missouri and parts of the Kansas City, Hannibal-Quincy and St. Louis metro areas extending into Kansas and Illinois. This year, the university was able to increase the funding for grants through this initiative to up to \$125,000 and hopes to fund dozens more projects throughout Missouri and all of Kansas and Illinois.

Some of the previously funded projects through WGU’s “Fund My Classroom Initiative” include the following: training for two therapy dogs at Royal Heights Elementary in Joplin, Mo., where approximately 22 percent of students suffer from some sort of trauma-related symptom that impacts their success at school; an effort to bring pedal exercisers to the library media center at Blades Elementary in St. Louis in hopes of sparking an enthusiasm for reading; the creation of a STEM Lab at Greenfield Elementary School in Greenfield, Mo; a 3D printer at Frontier STEM High School in Kansas City, Mo., which provides students at this high-poverty school with the opportunity to learn many abstract chemistry concepts; alternative seating options at Elliott Middle School in Boonville, Mo.; technology that will allow students at El Dorado Springs Middle School in Cedar County, Mo., to create and record podcasts over information covered in class as an alternative to traditional tests; and a Butterfly Garden at East Elementary in the Jerseyville Community School District, located in Jerseyville, Ill.

Anyone interested in nominating themselves, colleagues, family or friends can fill out the short application available at wgu.edu/fundmyclassroom. Nominees must reside in Missouri, Illinois or Kansas.

