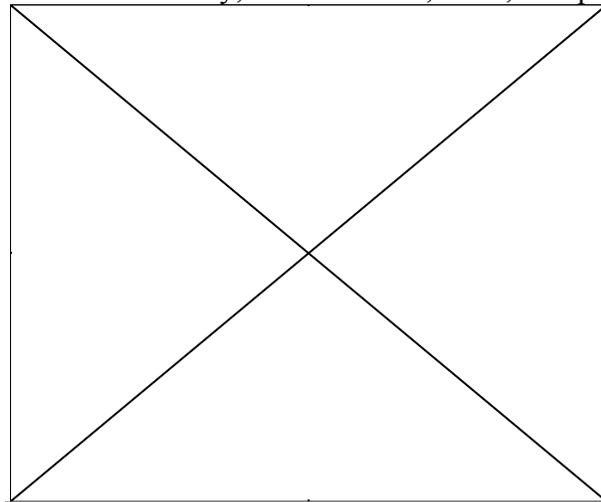


# Firms help Bridge Educational Foundation give \$98K to needy students

Philadelphia Business Journal by Carl O'Donnell, Special to the Business Journal

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Low-income families struggling to keep their kids in top-notch schools were given some much needed aid on Oct. 24 from Bridge Educational Foundation.

The Harrisburg-based nonprofit, which raises funds through Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, provided \$98,416 in scholarships worth about \$1,000 each to nearly 100 Philadelphia families.

The EITC encourages business to fund education foundations like Bridge by letting them write off 90 percent of scholarship donations' costs from their corporate or capital franchise taxes. Local firms BDB Co., CSX Transportation, Enterprise Holdings and United Savings Bank used this opportunity to make a two-year commitment to financing Bridge's scholarships. "Using EITC, businesses can pay their taxes by helping out families with kids in local schools," said Natalie Nutt, executive director of Bridge.

All these firms have donated to Bridge before. Both Enterprise and CSX have been supporters for at least the past seven years, and BDB and United Savings have helped out for at least the past three, Nutt said. “All these companies are huge believers in giving back to the communities they serve through education,” she said.

Bridge Educational Foundation allocates about \$2 million in scholarships each year to low-income families in 55 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties. Roughly 40 percent of the nonprofit’s funds help students within the Philadelphia region attend Catholic, Jewish, nondenominational and other K-12 schools.

The EITC allows firms to choose which schools to fund and then Bridge works with school administration to match funds with students who need help most. “Parents often get scholarships from us as well as other groups like the Catholic Diocese and then piece the funds together to make it all work,” Nutt said. “It’s really inspiring to see how important education is to these families who work so hard to keep their kids in an environment they think is best.”