

U.S. Steel donates \$60K to educational foundation

BY PATRICK CLOONAN

Schools in the Mon-Yough area and across greater Pittsburgh are beneficiaries in the latest rounds of Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.

In ceremonies this week in McKeesport and Washington, companies were cited for their work with the Bridge Educational Foundation, an entity serving more than 10,000 families in 59 counties.

On Thursday, U.S. Steel made a \$60,000 presentation at an event hosted by Serra Catholic High School.

"Providing these scholarship funds to the children and families of local schools is one more way for U.S. Steel to get involved and make a positive and lasting impact on the communities where we do business," said Emily Petrovich, manager of government affairs and public policy at U.S. Steel.

U.S. Steel has been a frequent contributor to the EITC program, with gifts of \$60,000 last year and \$44,000 in 2011.

It will go toward students at Serra and 13 other Allegheny County institutions.

The list locally also includes St. Agnes School in West Mifflin, St. Clare of Assisi Montessori Preschool and Tender Care Learning Center in Clairton, East Catholic School in Forest Hills and Monroeville United Methodist Church Preschool in Monroeville.

"The scholarships are a great example of how government, businesses and schools can work together to increase educational opportunities for our children," said state Sen. James Brewster, D-McKeesport, one of the public officials attending the Serra event.

"Many of us on a bipartisan basis support



COURTESY OF BRIDGE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

U.S. Steel made a \$60,000 presentation at an event hosted by Serra Catholic High School. Accepting the gift from U.S. Steel representative Chris Masicantonio, center, are Bridge Educational Foundation founder Joe Gerdes, left, and state Rep. Marc Gergely, D-White Oak.

this program," said state Rep. Marc Gergely, D-White Oak. "We're proud to have partners like U.S. Steel which make this commitment to the Mon Valley."

Other Allegheny County beneficiaries are Northside Catholic and St. Sebastian schools, Good Shepherd Christian Preschool and St.

Mary of the Mount Childcare Center in Pittsburgh, Family Development Center Preschool in Wexford, St. Bonaventure School in Glenshaw, St. James School in Sewickley and St. Malachy School in Coraopolis.

"Our partnerships with forward-thinking corporations make it possible to help thou-

sands of families each year with tuition aid," said Joseph Gerdes, a Bridge founder.

On Wednesday, Chesapeake Energy and Waste Management made a \$41,000 presentation in Washington that will benefit six Washington and Greene county schools including Madonna Catholic Regional School in Monongahela.

"The Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program in Pennsylvania is a win-win, benefiting both the company and the community," said Rich Mogan of Waste Management, which has contracts in several Mon-Yough communities and a hauling facility in North Huntingdon Township.

Other Washington-Green beneficiaries are St. Patrick School in Canonsburg, Calvary Chapel Christian School in Fredericktown, Open Door Christian School in Waynesburg and John F. Kennedy Catholic and First Love Christian schools in Washington.

EITC has programs for pre-kindergarten, as well as kindergarten through 12th-grade programs. The pre-K initiative provides companies with a tax credit equal to 100 percent of the first \$10,000 contributed to a pre-K scholarship organization and 90 percent of any additional amount contributed during a taxable year, up to a maximum of \$200,000.

The K-12 program provides a 75 percent tax credit for a one-year commitment, 90 percent for a two-year commitment, for up to \$400,000 donated to approved, nonprofit scholarship or educational improvement organizations.

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