

Governor News

A Publication of the Pierre Educational Foundation

December 2023

Over 200 Mini-Grants Award for Innovation in the Classroom

The Foundation awarded five mini-grant awards this Fall for classroom projects designed to support innovation on the classroom. The mini-grant program is funded with donations to the Foundation's general fund. The mini-grant program supports innovative ideas for the classroom to allow teachers to try new ways to teach their curriculum and supports innovative equipment requests that help students get hands on experience.

Over 200 mini-grant awards have been made to teachers and classrooms in the Pierre School District because of generous donations to the Foundation.

The most recent mini-grant awardees are:

Learning About Weather is a Breeze – Amber Stout, Jefferson Elementary School (\$350.00)

This project will integrate experiments about weather with other curriculum points to teach students about weather

while also learning about math, writing and language arts. The grant funds a variety of weather-related kits and experiments that can be replicated in the classroom.

Botley Robots Bring Coding to the Classroom – Jackie Richey, Jefferson Elementary (\$450.00)

This grant will bring 12 Botley robots to the school to be used to teach students coding to work together to solve problems, generate new ideas, and persevere to successfully code the robots to do assigned things. The project will be used in the 4th grade, but can be used by any grade level in the school.

Barnwood Clocks and String Art Boards – Joe Lehman, GMMS (\$750.00)

This grant funds 8 cordless drills and 8 random orbital sanders to expand the types of projects that can be done in the 8th grade STEAM class.

Read more about the mini-grant awards on page 3.



A mini-grant supported the Hydroponics Project in Amber Stout's classroom. The student learned about growing herbs and vegetables in a hydroponics lab while incorporating various curriculum points.

Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

Lindsey Riter-Rapp completed her final term on the Foundation Board in June. Riter-Rapp, a graduate of T.F. Riggs, served ten years on the Foundation, serving as President of the Board from 2017 to 2019. Riter-Rapp was instrumental in the development of the Foundation's Evening of Excellence during her time on the Board.

Doug Mikkonen joined the Board to fill Riter-Rapp's seat on the Board. Mikkonen, a graduate of T.F. Riggs, is Senior Vice President and Senior Trust Officer with Bridgeford Trust Company. He works with many of Bridgeford Trust Company's largest families and leads the company's activity and relationship management on the west coast while performing all trust administration from offices in Pierre and Sioux Falls. Mikkonen and his wife, Stephanie, have three children. Their oldest son is a 2021 graduate of T.F. Riggs and their twin sons are members of the Class of 2025 in Pierre.

Jessica Lewis, Pierre School Board member, joined the Foundation Board in June.



Doug Mikkonen and Jessica Lewis are the newest members of the Pierre Educational Foundation Board.

Read more about the new board members on page 3.



Pierre Educational Foundation

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jennifer@pefgovs.org
www.pefgovs.org

Board Members

Bob Lowery- President

City of Pierre Designee

Ann Schwartz - Vice President

At Large Trustee

Nick Marso - Treasurer

At Large Trustee

Betty Hanson - Secretary

At Large Trustee

Grace Beck - Director

Capital City Campus Designee

Doug Mikkonen - Director

At Large Trustee

Dennis James - Director

Pierre School District Board Representative

Jessica Lewis - Director

Pierre School District Board Representative

Gina Schuetzle - Director

At Large Trustee

The Foundation was established in 1995 with a gift from the Cora London Estate. Cora London was a successful clothier business owner and operator for many years in Pierre. Her generosity will encourage additional grants, gifts and endowments for educational purposes.

The Pierre Educational Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, community based organization committed to academic excellence in the Pierre Public School District.

The activities of the foundation are directed by a Board of Trustees representing business, education and the community.

The funds of the Pierre Educational foundation are currently being managed and held by the community-based Oahe Foundation.

A Note from the Foundation

Jennifer Stalley, Executive Director



As we come to the end of another year, the Pierre Educational Foundation has lots of things to be thankful for and lots to look forward to. This year was an exciting year for the Foundation.

We awarded more scholarships than ever before, recognized our largest group of Scholars of Excellence with the Class of 2023, welcomed new teachers to our school district, and supported our 225th mini grant for innovative projects in the classroom. That is a whole lot of excitement made possible by supporters of the Foundation.

The Foundation has come a long way in the last decade. Many thanks for this work go to the Board members who volunteer their time to guide the work we do. Lindsey Riter-Rapp finished her second term as a board member this summer. She gave 10 years of her time and experience to the Foundation. Lindsey was instrumental in bringing the Foundation's Evening of Excellence forward as our premiere event. Dan Cronin, Pierre School District School Board member, also contributed to the Board during his time on the Foundation Board. Dan brought a unique perspective as part educator and administrator, parent of TF Riggs alumni, and member of the school board. Dan brought insight and suggestions to our mini-grant program that allowed us to achieve our milestone award this year.

We thank Lindsey and Dan for their time and welcome our new Board members Doug Mikkonen and Jessica Lewis. We look forward to them leading us in another great year!

One of the most exciting things the Foundation does is support teachers in the classroom. We do that by providing new teachers with funds to set up their classrooms and providing funding for innovative ideas in the classroom. Your donations directly support these efforts and allow us to help make the Pierre School District a place where teachers feel welcome and supported. We encourage you to support the Foundation that will help fund the next innovative classroom idea.

A close second on the list of exciting things done by the Foundation is awarding scholarships that have been set up by donors to honor family members, promote students in certain fields of study, and help offset the cost of higher education. A scholarship can be started with a small donation and grown over time to sustain an annual scholarship or with a lump sum. You can start a scholarship or contribute to one of the nearly twenty funds the Foundation manages. As you consider your year-end giving, I hope you will consider helping the Foundation create another exciting year for the students and teachers in the Pierre School District.

Thank you for letting the Foundation do exciting work with your support. Here's to a wonderful 2024!



Class of 1974 – 50th Reunion

September 27 – 28, 2024

For more information or to update your contact information, contact

riggsclassof74@gmail.com

New Foundation Members

cont. from page 1

Jessica Lewis takes the place of Dan Cronin, who previously served as the Pierre School Board member the Board. Lewis is a member of the team as Reinke Gray Wealth Management. Lewis and her husband, Sean, have three children attending the Pierre School District.

The Foundation thanks Riter-Rapp and Cronin for their service to the Foundation and welcome Mikkonen and Lewis to the Foundation Board.

Mini-Grant Awards

cont. from page 1

Adding these tools would cut down on the wait time for students working on a project in the class and expand the types of projects the class can take on to teach STEAM.

Making the Dough – LaKisha Jordan, TF Riggs, (\$1100.00)

This grant funds a dough machine for the culinary class to make fresh pastry/dough for various labs in the Foundations of Foods, Nutrition and Wellness classes. The machine will allow the classes to bake fresh dough and the project calls for the students to share their products with staff and the community through the King Arthur's Bake for Good Program.

Circle of Friends – Angela Boddicker, GMMS (\$275.00)

This grant funds a variety of wall size games for the middle school that can be used to help stimulate socialization and interaction for students to participate in inclusive activities with all students. The project's goal is to promote interactions that break down barriers to inclusion.

Evening of Excellence Held to Honor Top Graduates

The Pierre Educational Foundation hosted its 7th annual Evening of Excellence to recognize the top scholars of the 2023 graduating class. Each of the Scholars of Excellence achieved a 3.75 grade point average or better throughout their academic career. Sixty-seven Scholars of Excellence and twenty-five Educators of Excellence were recognized at this year's event. Megan Deal was recognized as the 2023 BankWest Educator of Excellence. Ms. Deal was nominated by this year's Scholars of Excellence for her impact on her students.

Sponsors of the Event included:

- Black Hills Federal Credit Union
- Brittney Schiefelbein Agency – American Family Insurance
- Brakke Financial Services
- Cathy Sonnenschein Properties
- Clausen and Rice
- Delta Dental of South Dakota
- Edward Jones – Carol Gengler
- Maher Dental Clinic
- May Adam
- Riter Rogers, LLP
- Slumberland Furniture
- Matt Fuller Photography

2023 Scholars of Excellence

Hudson Allen
Robert Arnold
Hattie Baldwin
Danielle Beck
Landon Bertram
Madilyn Brakke
Kasey Broers
Andre Carbonneau
Chase Carda
Rylan Derry
Danielle DeVaney
Alexis Dilges
Jackson Edman
Amberly Gates
Elias Gilk
Karly Harris
Arthur Hodges
Elli Hughes
Emma Hunt
Autumn Iverson
Lincoln Kienholz
Brecken Krueger
Jenna Kruger

Hattie Larson
Hannah Lemieux
Jason Maciejczak
Margaret Maher
Diana Makepeace
Jacob Mayer
Jack Merkwon
Sarah Mohr
Brooke Morris
Cameron Morris
Raileyn Myers
Tate Nesladek
Hans Nixon
Ellie Noyes
Madison Oedekoven
Remington Price
Taya Rattling Leaf
Emma Reitzel
Nicholas Roggenbuck
Kendra Rounds
Angela Rowse
Lily Sanchez
MaKenna Schlekeway

Cordell Schlichenmayer
RhyAnna Schoenhard
Owen Seibel
Timara Short Bull
Marlee Shorter
Maya Shorter
Oliver Smith
Sydni Snyder
GiannaMaria Stangeland
Gavin Stotts
Olivia Strand
Madison Swenson
Joshua Switzer
Sydney Tedrow
Alec Venner
Kyra Wallace
Kourtney Walti
Tyler Want
Kara Weiss
Michelle Weiss
Jayden Wiebe

2023 BankWest Educator of Excellence Nominees

This year's BankWest Educators of Excellence finalists, at the school they were teaching for the Class of 2023, were:

T.F. Riggs High School

- Rodd Bauck
- Terry Becker
- Kim Bierle
- Charis Blanchette

- Jenny Hodges
- Shawn Lewis
- Mackenzie McKeithan-Jensen
- Christina Schaefer
- Daniel Youmans

Georgia Morse Middle School

- Nichole Bowman
- Guy Hunter
- Joseph Lehman
- Michelle Strand

Buchanan Elementary

- Jennifer Allen
- Betty Hanson
- Chad Kringle

Jefferson Elementary

- Amber Stout
- Paula Weeldreyer

Washington Elementary

- Megan Deal
- Brenda Hardwick
- Kim Livermont
- Denise Overweg
- St. Joseph Elementary
- Becky Kitts
- Teresa Madsen
- Rebecca Walsh

2023 Foundation Scholarships Winners

The Pierre Educational Foundation awarded over \$80,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors at the Foundation's annual Evening of Excellence. These scholarships are made possible by donations to the Foundation.

Shaw Family Scholarship

The Shaw Family Scholarship Fund was established in 2020 in memory of Mike and Marilyn Shaw, longtime Pierre residents who were impactful servant leaders in their community. The scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate faith-driven, servant leadership and intend to remain in or return to South Dakota upon post-secondary graduation. Three scholarships, in the amount of \$1,000 were awarded this year.

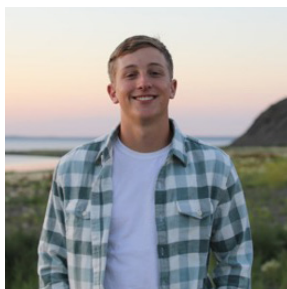
The 2023 Shaw Family Scholarship was awarded to Hudson Allen, Madilyn Brakke, and Jacob Mayer.



Hudson Allen plans to attend South Dakota State University to major in pre-med and pursue a medical career.



Madilyn Brakke plans to attend South Dakota State University majoring in Business Economics and pursue a career financial planning.



Jacob Mayer plans to attend South Dakota State University to major in civil engineering.

Swan Family Scholarship

The Swan Family Scholarship was established by Aaron Swan to support Native American students pursuing education beyond high school. The scholarship provides financial assistance to help students be successful in the next step of their educational path. The Swan Family Scholarship is \$2,000 and awarded to two students each year.

The Swan Family Scholarship was awarded to Robert Arnold and Mason Dell.



Robert Arnold plans to attend Dakota State University to major in computer design. He has a goal of designing computer games highlighting his Native American heritage.



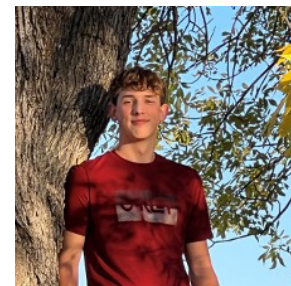
Mason Dell plans to pursue a mechanical engineering degree at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

Spilde Family Scholarship

The Spilde Family Scholarship is a scholarship offered to a T.F. Riggs High School graduating senior in need of financial assistance to further their education beyond high school. The scholarship was established by Max and Jeanne Gozenbach. Mrs. Gozenbach is a graduate of TF Riggs high school. The Spilde Family offers two scholarships - one to a student attending a technical college and one to a student attending a university. The Spile Family Scholarship was awarded to Sydney Tedrow and Tyler Payer.



Sydney Tedrow plans to attend South Dakota State University to pursue a degree in mathematics with an emphasis in financial/actuarial science.



Tyler Payer plans to attend Mitchell Technical College to enroll in the powerline and construction program.

Charles "Lindy" and Shirley Feeney Scholarship

The Charles "Lindy" and Shirley Feeney Scholarship is to assist a dedicated T.F. Riggs track athlete in higher education costs. This student must have participated in track & field for at least three years, and must be accepted to an accredited college, university or technical school.

The 2023 Charles "Lindy" and Shirley Feeney Scholarship was awarded to Maya Shorter.

Maya Shorter plans to attend Minnesota State University Mankato to pursue a degree in exercise science with a goal of a career as a physical therapist.



2022 Scholarships Awarded Continued

(continued from page 4)

Herbert and Irene Emde Family Scholarship

The Emde Family Scholarship is awarded to a T.F. Riggs High School graduating senior who is pursuing a degree in education. The scholarship is in memory of Irene Emde, a long-time teacher in Pierre, and is to support a student's efforts to become a teacher in an elementary, middle school, high school or university setting.

The 2023 Herbert and Irene Emde Family Scholarship was awarded to Kara Weiss.



Kara Weiss plans to attend Northern State University and major in education.

The Pierre Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship

The Pierre Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship Fund was established in 2019 by the members of the Pierre Hospital Auxiliary. This scholarship is intended to go to a graduating high school student who will enter the medical field.

The 2023 Pierre Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship was awarded to Brecken Krueger.

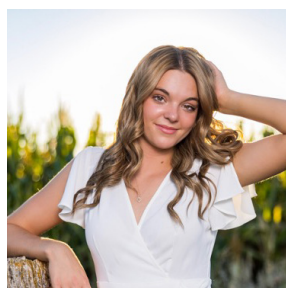


Brecken Krueger plans to attend the University of Nebraska – Lincoln for his undergraduate degree and then hopes to pursue a medical degree and become an ophthalmologist.

Edith and Richard Warder Scholarship

The Edith and Richard Warder Scholarship Fund was established in 2020 by Robert and Jo Anna Warder. This scholarship is intended to go to a graduating T.F. Riggs student who has an interest in political science or law.

The 2023 Edith and Richard Warder Scholarship was awarded to Madison Oedekoven.



Madison Oedekoven plans to attend Dakota Wesleyan University to double major in Criminal Justice and Psychology with the intent to go on to law school.

Dennis and Shirley Eismach Scholarship

The Dennis and Shirley Eismach Scholarship Fund was established in 2022 to recognize high school seniors who have demonstrated a high level of commitment to volunteer service in their community. Both Dennis and Shirley were dedicated to serving their communities at the state and local level throughout their lives and this scholarship honors that commitment.

The 2023 Dennis and Shirley Eismach Scholarship was awarded to Autumn Iverson.



Autumn Iverson plans to pursue a degree in business with a minor in accounting at South Dakota State University.

Marjorie and Fritz Forney Scholarship

The Marjorie and Fritz Forney Scholarship was established by Richard and Dianne Warder to support a student pursuing a degree in engineering or finance at either the University of South Dakota or the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

The 2023 Marjorie and Fritz Forney Scholarship was awarded to Skyler Ruth.



Skyler Ruth plans to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at the South Dakota School of Mines. He has a goal of going into operations for a space flight after obtaining his engineering degree.

Mortenson Family Scholarship

This scholarship honors the memory of the Mortenson family's grandmother, Margaret Claymore, who grew up in the early 1900s on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation and received only an 8th grade education. The Mortenson family has always recognized the value of a quality education and provides this scholarship to help a Native American student continue their education beyond high school.

The 2023 Mortenson Family Scholarship was awarded to Khalan Smart.



Khalan Smart plans to pursue a degree in psychology from Black Hill University to become a psychologist or social worker.

2022 Scholarships Awarded Continued

(continued from page 5)

James and Gertrude Mueller Scholarship

The James and Gertrude Mueller Scholarship was established in 1997 to support the education of a T.F. Riggs graduate pursuing a career in the medical field. The scholarship is intended to support educational efforts towards a career in the medical field.

The 2023 James and Gertrude Mueller Scholarship was awarded to Hudson Allen.

Hudson Allen plans to attend South Dakota State University and major in human biology with an emphasis in pre-medicine.

Schliessmann Family Scholarship

The Schliessmann Scholarship is offered to a T.F. Riggs High School graduating senior planning to enroll in an accredited college or university to pursue a career in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. While academic success is considered, the scholarship's purpose is to support a student with a high likelihood of success in a STEM field. This scholarship is in the amount of \$1,000 and is renewable for up to 3 years, for a total award of \$4,000.

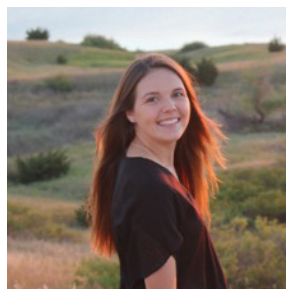
The 2023 Schliessmann Family Scholarship was awarded to Skyler Ruth.

Skyler Ruth plans to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering at the South Dakota School of Mines. He has a goal of going into operations for a space flight after obtaining his engineering degree.

Brabander Family Scholarship

The Brabander Family Memorial Scholarship was established by Cindy Brabander, a 1979 alumna of T.F. Riggs. The scholarship is committed to helping young women succeed through education.

The 2023 Brabander Family Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Emma Hunt.



Emma Hunt plans to attend Dakota Wesleyan University to pursue a degree in accounting.

Alvin Benesh Engineering Scholarship

The Alvin Benesh Engineering Scholarship is a new scholarship this year. This scholarship is for a student pursuing a career in engineering. In honor of Alvin Benesh, a federal highway engineer, the Alvin Benesh Engineering scholarship provides a scholarship totaling \$4,000 to a student pursuing a degree in engineering.

The recipient of the inaugural Alvin Benesh Engineering Scholarship was Jacob Mayer.

Jacob Mayer plans to attend South Dakota State University and major in civil engineering.

Evelyn Benesh Music Scholarship

The Evelyn Benesh Music Scholarship is a new scholarship to be awarded this year. This scholarship is for a student studying or emphasizing music in their post-secondary education. Evelyn Benesh was a conservatory-trained pianist. She built a studio in her home where she taught piano to numerous students in Pierre over the years. This scholarship will provide a total of \$40,000 to the recipient.

The recipient of the inaugural Evelyn Benesh Music Scholarship is Tyler Want.



Tyler Want plans to attend the University of South Dakota to pursue a degree in secondary music education.

Scholarship Applications

Applications for Pierre Educational Scholarships are accepted each year until March 31st.

Applications for each scholarship are available on the Foundation's website, at the T.F. Riggs Counselor's Office, or by contacting the Foundation's office. The requirements and intentions of the scholarship are detailed on each scholarship application. Over \$80,000 in scholarships will be awarded in May 2024.

To view the scholarship applications visit the Foundation's website at www.pefgovs.com or contact the Foundation's office at jennifer@pefgovs.com.

New Pierre Teachers 2023-2024

The Pierre School District welcomed fourteen new teachers for the current school year. The Foundation provides each new teacher with a \$100 welcome gift to help with supplies for their classroom.



Front Row (L to R): Andrew Wulf, Gage Ruhlman, Molli Hubbell, Katy Adams, Callie Morris, Haylee Kappenman, and Misty Roberts.

Back row (L to R): Ben Caven, Halle Gronlund, Gene Riedinger, Teresa Madsen, Sabrina Johnson, Tye Johnson, and Leslie Thurber.

Class of 1973 Celebrates 50th Reunion



Pictured above: The Class of 1973 recently celebrated their 50th class reunion.

Reunion planned?

Contact the Foundation for current class lists and to list your Reunion on our website, Facebook page and next newsletter.

Gifts Anyone Can Afford!

Have you ever wished you could help PEF in our work, but thought you couldn't afford to make a charitable gift? Here are two ways you can give today while still preserving your assets for retirement and providing for your family:

Gifts from a Will or Trust

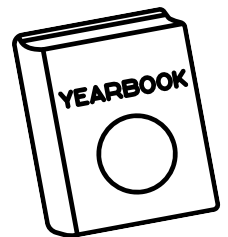
Designating PEF as a beneficiary in your will or trust is a simple way to commit to our mission, and it will not affect your cash flow during your lifetime. In addition, it's easy to revoke this type of gift if your situation or goals change.

Beneficiary Designations

Naming PEF as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, financial account, or annuity is another easy way to help our mission. You can continue to benefit from these assets during your lifetime. A beneficiary designation may also be changed at any time.

Cleaning out your closets?

PEF is looking to build upon our collection of T.F. Riggs yearbooks. If you have any Gumbos from 1950-1975 and would like to donate to PEF, please contact us at 605-224-9016.



Don't forget to like us on Facebook @ Pierre Educational Foundation!

Buchanan Elementary Renovation and Addition

Buchanan Elementary got an \$8.5 million update. The renovation and addition to the school provided the elementary school with a larger lunchroom, intervention rooms for individual and small group session, a larger gym, outdoor classroom space and direct access to the

parking lot. Buchanan is already putting their improved space to good use with a Family Bingo Night in the new gym space.

Congratulations to the students and staff on your renovations and additions.



Far Left: Work on the Buchanan Elementary School's renovation and additions wrapped up this year. (Photo credit: KCCR News)

Left: Buchanan Elementary students and families celebrated their larger gym space with a great turnout at Family Bingo Night. (Photo credit: Buchanan Parent Group Facebook page)

Happy
Holidays

from the
Pierre Educational
Foundation



Update your contact info for the New Year!

If you changed your address or email this year, don't forget to share it with us to stay up to date on Pierre Educational Foundation news.

Update any changes by emailing jennifer@pefgovs.com

Thank You

The following is a list of donors to the Pierre Educational Foundation from January 1 - October 1, 2023. Every effort was made to ensure accuracy of the donor list. If your name was omitted or misspelled, please accept our apologies and contact the Foundation with corrections at 605-224-9016 or via e-mail at jennifer@pefgovs.org.

Brakke Family Scholarship Fund

Matthew Brakke

Emde Family Scholarship Fund

Jeffrey & Nadine Amy, William & Tanya Hoppes

Evelyn Benesh Music Scholarship Fund

Evelyn Benesh

Marjorie and Fritz Forney Scholarship Fund

Dianne Warder

Pierre Educational Foundation General Fund

Cindy Brabander

Delta Dental of South Dakota

Linda Fischer, from the Class of 1961

Connie Halverson, in Honor of Kim Bierle

John & Deann Nystrom, in Memory of Jerry Parkinson

Jerry & Deb Parkinson

Wage Pogany

Robert Riter, Jr., in Memory of Jerry Parkinson

Jay & Anne Schwartz, in Honor of the Class of 2023

Harry West

Evening of Excellence

BankWest

Black Hills Federal Credit Union

Brakke Financial Services

Brittney Schiefelbein Agency - American Family Insurance

Riter Rogers, LLP

Carol Gengler - Edward Jones

Cathy Sonnenschein Properties

Clausen & Rice, Inc.

Delta Dental of South Dakota

Maher Dental Clinic

May, Adam, Gerdes, & Thompson LLP

Slumberland Furniture

Schliessmann Family Scholarship Fund

Sally Munger

Shaw Family Scholarship Fund

Christopher & Christine Shaw

Pierre Educational Foundation Contact/Donation Form

First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name _____

Maiden Name (if applicable) _____ Riggs Grad Year _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone (_____) _____

Spouse's Name _____ Riggs Grad Year _____

News or Comments: _____

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

This gift is in: memory of honor of _____

Designated toward: General Donation New Teacher Welcome Program

Scholarship/Enrichment Fund (please specify): _____

Evening of Excellence Event

Please make checks payable to Pierre Educational Foundation. Thank you!

Mail to: Pierre Educational Foundation, PO Box 94, Pierre, SD 57501



Pierre Educational Foundation

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Pierre, SD 57501

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