



March 2023 Newsletter

Dear Friends of Private and Independent Education,

Join us for the **2023 Private and Independent Education Awards** on April 30 at Mendakota Country Club to celebrate our slate of honorees. Those recognized below reflect the remarkable people and programs that inspire students and enhance school communities. Thanks to the generous sponsors listed below that support this event, which is the only fundraising event MINNDEPENDENT conducts each year. Interested in sponsoring this celebration and recognition? Please contact **Lisa Vosbeek** for more information.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) released official school enrollment figures for 2022-23. There remains very positive news for nonpublic schools with a growth rate of 3.5% to 72,478 students. There was growth in every grade level (K-12), except for grade seven. We extend a heartfelt congratulations to all leaders, educators and staff that continue to build strong school communities after an uncertain couple of years.

I had the privilege of attending the spring meeting of **Council for American Private Education (CAPE)** this past weekend. CAPE is a coalition of national organizations and state affiliates (MINNDEPENDENT is the Minnesota state CAPE) serving private elementary and secondary schools. While delayed due to COVID, the attendees celebrated the 50th anniversary of CAPE's founding. Maureen Dowling, director of the Office of Non-Public Education (ONPE) from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) came to extend congratulations on the anniversary on behalf of USDE and Secretary Dr. Miguel Cardona.

MINNDEPENDENT has negotiated a discounted rate for member schools interested in participating in the **#SocialSchool4EDU Membership Program**.

[READ MORE](#)

MINNDEPENDENT Member Network

[READ MORE](#)

MINNDEPENDENT Jobs Board

Member schools can post job listings for free.

[READ MORE](#)

Hats & Mittens is a 26-year-old all volunteer Minnesota non-profit. Their curriculum, focused on volunteering and philanthropy for students of all ages, is being offered free of charge to schools, churches, and youth organizations. To learn more and find out **how you can use this in your school**, **Click here**.



Thank you for your commitment to our students and our schools.

Tim Benz, President

SHARE THE LINK!

Be sure your school's faculty and staff have subscribed to our newsletter!

Important information about STEM grants, Professional Development sessions, advocacy, conferences and more.

[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

The MINNDEPENDENT Newsletter is sponsored by





Webinar: Simple Website Strategies to Generate More Inquiries

During the webinar, you will learn how to optimize your school's website to effectively market your school to prospective families. We will share examples from other private school websites and teach you easy and effective strategies that anyone can implement, regardless of their technical expertise.

By the end of the webinar, you will have a clear understanding of how to create a website that stands out from the competition and attracts the right families to your school.

We believe that this webinar will be valuable for you and your school.

[Register now](#) and take the first step to boost your private school's enrollment.

Wednesday 3/29
12-1pm Central Time

[REGISTER HERE](#)

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2023 Private & Independent Education Awards Recipients



Behind the Scenes Award

John Fischer

St. John Paul II Catholic School

Community Champion Award

Donal (Don) Mulligan

Aim Higher Foundation



Concordia
ACADEMY

Program Award

Concordia Cohorts

Concordia Academy

Honor Teacher Award

Jessi Weakley

St. John Paul II Catholic School





Honor Teacher Award

Anita Haas

Franklin Academy

Leadership Award

Bridget Kramer

*Community of Saints
Regional Catholic School*



Leadership Award

Jake Mulvihill

Legacy Christian Academy

**Join us for the
Private & Independent Education Awards**



Sunday, April 30, 2023
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Mendakota Country Club, Mendota Heights

MINNDEPENDENT is honored to host this annual celebration of private and independent education. Come celebrate with us, and other advocates and supporters of private and independent schools.

REGISTER HERE

2023 Awards Sponsors

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**Chuck &
Mary Killian**

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**Josh & Sue
Killian**

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**Teri & Kevin
McCloughan**

Table Sponsor

Kelly Regan

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goes each month and how YOU can free
up money to SAVE more.



Mention MINNDEPENDENT when registering



Save the Date 2023 STEM Education Conference Tuesday, August 1, 2023

Host School:
Heritage Christian Academy

15655 Bass Lake Road
Maple Grove, MN 55311



CALL FOR PRESENTERS

MINNDEPENDENT would like to invite individual teachers and groups of teachers, leaders, and students from **member schools** to submit proposals for breakout sessions for the **2023 STEM Education Conference**. This conference provides an opportunity for educators to share effective resources, expertise, lessons, and strategies to advance teaching and learning. We know from conference evaluations that attendees value presentations that include innovative and practical ideas and resources they can implement in their classrooms. **We also love featuring programs and projects that have received MINNDEPENDENT STEM Grant funding.**

We welcome breakout session proposals that focus on one or more of the STEM disciplines or link them with other subject areas such as language arts, creative arts, social studies, and more. In addition, we are interested in sessions that connect STEM with topics such as innovation, social entrepreneurship, social-emotional learning, social justice, and preparing students for college and careers. We are also eager for session proposals that incorporate Minnesota's new science standards in direct and meaningful ways. **Breakout sessions are one hour in length with participation limited to 25 attendees.**

All interested presenters must complete the SESSION PROPOSAL FORM before March 31, 2023, so we can provide a complete conference program when registration opens on May 8, 2023.

STEM Scoop



K-12 STEM Demos: Engineering Student Projects

- Do you need a STEM DEMO for your classroom? The University of St. Thomas needs your project!

Freshmen undergraduate engineering students take Intro to Engineering Design. In small teams, students complete a hands-on project in which they follow the engineering design cycle with a goal of building a STEM demo for a K-12 classroom.

BENEFITS FOR TEACHERS:

- Delivery of final designs and prototypes at the end of the semester with **no cost to you!**
- Opportunity for design, prototyping and testing of a STEM demo or equipment for your classroom.
- Fabrication and laboratory resources: 3D printing, laser cutting, machine and wood shops.
- Submit project ideas by May 1st for Fall semester inclusion.

LEARN MORE - <https://minndependent.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/STEM-Demo-Project-Request-2023.pdf>



Summer Programs Application - Deadline is March 24

Girls Who Code is offering **9-12 GRADE GIRLS** two **FREE programs** this summer: the **virtual Summer Immersion Program** and the **Self-Paced Program**. Applicants can

apply for BOTH programs, if eligible, using this [application](#). However, students can only participate in one summer program.

The virtual Summer Immersion Program (SIP) is a live, virtual, 2-week introductory computer science course for currently eligible 9th, 10th, and 11th grade US students and international students ages 14-18. Through our new curriculum focused on Game Design, SIP participants will learn beginner to intermediate computer science concepts, UX design basics, and more – all while getting an inside look into the tech industry through incredible company partners. In addition to a completely free program, we offer grants up to \$300 and tech support for qualifying students.

The Self-Paced Program is a 6-week flexible computer science course for currently eligible 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade US students and international students ages 14-18 who prefer not to adhere to a set schedule. Self-Paced Program participants can choose to earn beginner-level badges in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript for web development or an intermediate-level badge in Python for cybersecurity or our new data science track. Students will also have the opportunity to build community through live advisory events and other Girls Who Code engagements.

Summer Programs Application Party Opportunity

For the next few weeks, educators are invited to host an exclusive Summer Programs Application Party with Girls Who Code! During an Application Party students will receive step-by-step application support and free GWC buttons and pens. Application Parties can be run by a member of your community

using a pre-recorded webinar or virtually hosted by a Girls Who Code staff member.

[LEARN MORE about hosting a Summer Programs Application Party.](#)

Make sure that you indicate that you are affiliated with MINNDEPENDENT on the application.

Inspiring the Next Generation of STEM Pioneers

Abbott's Women in STEM employee network creates children's book to encourage tomorrow's problem solvers, "What Does STEM Look Like?"

In "What Does STEM Look Like?" readers can follow Anna's journey as she discovers how her interests in animals, art and space could lead to professions in biology, astronomy, or geometry – or any of the STEM fields.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the children's book created by Women in STEM at Abbott. Network members hope the book will help break stigmas around what "STEM" looks like – STEM workers can be anybody!

The book is [available for free download here](#).

Freebies for Science and STEM Teachers: Preschool and Elementary

The Genius of Play's STEAM Playbook - Play is how kids learn the skills they need for success in school and in life, and STEAM is no exception. NGCP partnered with The Genius of Play to bring you this collection of play ideas and ready-to-use activities to help you spark a child's interest in these important subjects. Every play idea includes tips for making the activity simpler or more complex, so you can easily modify it depending on the child's age. Best of all, the play ideas are easy to set up and use common materials you can easily find around the house

<https://ngcproject.org/resources/genius-plays-steam-playbook#:~:text=The%20Genius%20of%20Play%27s%20STEAM%20Playbook>

Freebies for Science and STEM Teachers: Elementary and Middle Level

All About Elephants Video -Visit the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) YouTube channel, WWF Wild Classroom, to watch the latest in the All About Species video series, All About Elephants. Targeted for grades 3–8, the approximately five-minute video features information and fun facts about elephants, their habitats, and what can be done to protect them. Other species highlighted in the video series include polar bears, sea turtles, Monarch butterflies, and tigers.

<https://www.nsta.org/resources/freebies-and-opportunities-science-and-stem-teachers-march-14-2023#:~:text=All%20About%20Elephants%20Video>

Voya Unsung Heroes Grants

The program awards \$2,000 each to 50 educators to fund innovative classroom projects, and presents three top awards of \$25,000; \$10,000; and \$5,000. All K–12 educators, teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or classified staff who have effective, innovative projects that improve student learning at accredited public or **private schools** in the United States are eligible. Apply by April 28.

LEARN MORE -

<https://apply.scholarsapply.org/unsungheroes/information.php>

Nonpublic Equitable Services for Nonpublic Officials

May 11, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Description: Join members of the MDE Student Access and Opportunity Division for a training on nonpublic equitable services in ESEA Title programs. This session will address consultation topics and new guidance documents from MDE.

[Link to join](#)

Who's Transporting Your Kids?

Information from the Minnesota State Patrol regarding annual school bus inspection certification [can be found here](#). For more information, contact Lt. Brian Reu, Minnesota State Patrol, Office of Pupil Transportation at brian.reu@state.mn.us

Important Dates

Sunday, April 30, 2023:

*Private and Independent Education Awards
Mendakota Country Club*

Tuesday, August 1, 2023

*STEM Education Conference
Heritage Christian Academy, Maple Grove*

September 25-27, 2023:

School Leadership Conference, Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge

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