



BERRIEN
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
For Good. For Ever.™

Berrien County Gives Back

Be A Voice Not An Echo

T.E.A.M. hosts Poetry Slam Workshop

When asked, "What are some of the crucial issues facing young people today?" Teens across Berrien County put **pressure to achieve** and **dealing with anxiety** at the top of the list. They also indicated they wanted more leadership skills training to help them handle the pressures they face.

In response T.E.A.M. (Teens Exhibiting Able Minds - the Berrien Community Foundation Youth Advisory Committee) hosted "**Be A Voice, Not An Echo**" a youth leadership workshop using the poetry slam art form to let your voice be heard. The March workshop was led by spoken word artists and motivational speakers, Gabe Giron and Kirk Latimer of Kinetic Affect.

During the workshop, they discussed the importance of each student being aware of what is important and critical, if they want to be an out-spoken leader. They handed each student a note card and asked them to anonymously write down something that troubles them about their personal life or their community. Answers ranged from grades to drugs to peer pressure. (See inset)

After this honest sharing of concerns, Kinetic Affect helped them turn their thoughts into poetry slam style speech and invited them to come forward and read what they wrote to the group.

At the end of the evening, Kirk and Gabe encouraged the students to keep being courageous enough to use their voice for the good and the students all seemed encouraged to do just that. "This workshop was amazing" said T.E.A.M. member Bailey Bickel, a student at Niles High School. "I had no idea it was going to be so moving and I'm so glad we did this."



Above: Students from all over Berrien County at the end of the workshop. **Left:** Gabe Giron speaks to students over dinner.

What Kids Worried About

"I am worried about my little sister being bullied because she likes books more than boys."

"I think society is more worried about status than with each other."

"I am worried that I can't stay clean and not start using (drugs) again."

Taking On Cancer Care At Home



Deb, a nurse with BCCS takes care of Ann during a home visit.

When Ann was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer her very devoted daughter quickly found it was difficult to maintain her work schedule and make all of the necessary doctor appointments. A grant from the Berrien Community Foundation to Berrien County Cancer Services helped provide mileage reimbursement for nurses who could come to Ann at her home. BCCS nurses provided care between clinic visits, nutrition, and items from the loan closet that helped make her journey easier for both Ann and her daughter.

"My nurse, Deb, is the most tender-hearted of my nurses." Ann's daughter exclaims, "It was such a blessing to have the BCCS nurse come between clinic visits and take care of my mother."

www.berriencommunity.org
269.983.3304
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Music, Art, Latin & Legacy

The Willging-Reed Scholarship Fund

Ron Willging was an icon at St. Joseph High School. The beloved Latin, History and Economics teacher, fondly known as “Ging,” was also a consummate supporter of the orchestra and the fine arts department at the school. Many attribute Willging’s impassioned speech and letter to the school board in the early 1980’s as the reason the school maintained it’s orchestra program during tough budget times.

Steven Reed is a legend in his own right at St. Joseph Schools. The long-time orchestra director built the impressive program from the ground up. He challenged and pushed students. He took them around the world. “It’s so important for you to see other orchestras that are better and challenge yourselves to be the best you can be,” he says.

The two school icons were also great friends. When Willging passed away in 2013 his family wanted to do something that would honor his

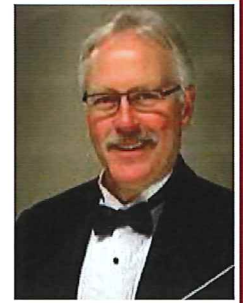
legacy. Steven Reed wanted the same. Reed and Ron’s wife Joy combined forces to create the Willging-Reed Scholarship Fund at the Berrien Community Foundation to provide summer camp opportunities for St. Joseph High School band and orchestra students every year - forever.

“That’s what legacy is about,” Reed said. “This is a way to keep his name and his influence alive. We will hear about who Ron was once a year when we announce scholarships. It will be the same for me.”

A legacy tied to music and education was important to Reed and wonderful way to give back to the school and community he loves.

“It is also an honor for our names to be hooked together,” he said. “He was a great man.”

The first scholarship awards will be given in May 2019. Thank you for creating such an amazing legacy.



Steven Reed



Ron Willging

For Good. **FRIDAY**

Congratulations TEACHERS! It was For Good Friday where BCF got to surprise classroom teachers in their classrooms with their Golden Acorn Classroom Mini Grants. The grants are for up to \$500 for creative classroom projects. The

BCF prize patrol traveled to schools in Bridgman, River Valley High School, Eau Claire, and St. Joseph. Keep a look out! **Who knows where we will go next!**



Top Left: Scott Christy from Bridgman Elementary was awarded funds for First Lego League. **Top Right:** Eau Claire High School teacher Chad LaRowe started a classroom library. **Left:** River Valley’s Anne Hawkinson purchased books to teach about Japanese Internment camps, a part of her personal family history

How to Apply

Do you know an awesome, creative Berrien County teacher? Encourage them to apply for Golden Acorn Classroom Mini Grants at www.berriencommunity.org/grants. We review grants twice a year. The next deadline is June 8. They could get the next surprise visit!