



Grange Foundation supports basketball with Deaf Awareness Grant

By Joan C. Smith

Chairperson, Grange Foundation
and Carolynne Reed

Teacher, Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf

In 2020, the Grange Foundation awarded New Jersey State Grange and Carolynne Reed of Hamilton Grange #79 the \$1000.00 Deaf Awareness Grant for their project, which was delayed due to Covid-19. The money was banked until the deaf basketball camp re-opened for players.

With COVID-19 under control, the students from the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf of New Jersey (MKSD) could then register to participate in this Gallaudet University-sponsored 2023 Basketball Camp. The camp was paid for, in part, by this grant from the Grange Foundation, another non-profit organization, and the respective parents.

Mrs. Reed is a teacher at MKSD, which is in the West Trenton area. When she was 16, she attended a Grange Youth Conference where Wade Cadle, then an intern with the National Grange, who conducted a signing workshop of the song "Sunshine on my Shoulder", "it was then I decided that it was 'cool' and started moving forward in a career as a sign language teacher," said Reed. Carolynne received a Grange Foundation Deaf scholarship award in 1985 and continues in that career, now starting her 37th year of teaching at the

MKSD, serving as a coach and Athletic Director. She currently serves as the Lady Assistant Steward of the New Jersey State Grange and is also their Deaf Awareness Committee Chair.

This year, Carolynne Reed, Delia Yates, and Emmanuel Sterlin from MKSD supervised three girls and five boys from the Marie Katzenbach basketball team who signed up for the Gallaudet University-sponsored John Perry Boys & Girls Basketball Elite Camp hosted at the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut.

Gallaudet University is the oldest and finest school of higher learning for the deaf and hearing-impaired in the world offering liberal arts degrees. It offers undergraduate and graduate programs that are specifically designed for students who belong to the deaf community. The University has sponsored this camp for several years with students and coaches serving as role models for other deaf students across the country.

The Grange Foundation has an endowment program with Gallaudet, which supports higher learning of deaf students and those involved with deaf education. In the 2022-2023 school year, three post-graduate students took advantage of this opportunity and performed internships in special projects with the University.

In 1817, the first permanent school for deaf children opened in Hartford, Connecticut. At the time, most Americans still lived on farms or in small towns. The scattered population made it difficult to establish schools, especially for deaf children, who were few and far between. The founding of the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817 was a crucial milestone in the way society related to people with disabilities. The 2023 Gallaudet Basketball Camp was held at this location.

The camp's intensive basketball training was held July 5-9, 2023, under the coaching staff of the Gallaudet team, headed by Stephanie Stevens and Kevin Kovacs. The students performed drills, honed specific skills, played as teams, had social skill-building opportunities, and learned to be better communicators with their teammates and coaches. They were learning from deaf Gallaudet students and coaches using American Sign Language (ASL).

The five days of basketball camp were morning sessions that started at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 10:00 p.m., with only meal breaks. There were basketball players and students from all over the United States who came to learn how to improve their skills. The eight MKSD players supported by the



Carolynne (left) poses with Gallaudet Coach Stephanie Stevens (right), two of her student/coaches, and a coach from Pittsburgh.

Photo provided



grant worked hard learning new skills and drills that they can apply during their basketball season this coming year and beyond. Some of the MKSD players won awards either individually or on a mixed team from other deaf school students that they practiced with during the week.

Mrs. Reed says, "the MKSD players, the coaching staff, and I would like to send a BIG THANK YOU to the Grange Foundation for providing this awesome opportunity for our players to meet, learn, practice, and play with their deaf peers from other deaf schools and improve their basketball skills for this coming season."



Carolynne (aka Coach Reed) and the winning girls' team at the John Perry Boys & Girls Basketball Elite Camp in Hartford, Connecticut. Photo provided

Grange Foundation awards 2023 Partnership in Agricultural Literacy to Pennsylvania school

By Joan C. Smith
Chairperson, Grange Foundation

Each year, the Grange Foundation sponsors a search for an effort that has impacted Pre-K – 12th grade students, related to agriculture literacy. This effort is in conjunction with the USDA-funded National Agriculture in the Classroom (NAITC). Formerly the "Agriculture Advocate of the Year Award, the "Partnership in Agricultural Literacy" was restructured to allow for an organization to be the recipient, like a Grange, Lions Club, Rotary Club, FFA, or other club.

As reported in the previous issue, the Community Agricultural Partnership at Summit (CAPS) Elementary School in the Butler Area School District of Pennsylvania, was named the 2023 winner of the Partnership in Agricultural Literacy Award.

The focused school concept has seen students, teachers, staff, families and the community immersing themselves in a world of agriculture, both during the school day and at their homes.

Through the collaboration of the CAPS development team, a mission statement was generated to guide the implementation of the program. This mission statement reads:

CAPS is committed to

- Using an innovative agricultural focus to expand the walls of student learning by utilizing explicit instruction, paired with authentic experiences, to meet the needs of the whole of the child.
- Cultivating lifelong learners and informed citizens with respect and appreciation for conservation, agriculture, and the

outdoor environment.

- The ongoing development of lasting partnerships to ensure the long-term sustainability of this model program serving our school and local community.

Once the mission of the school was finalized, a school development team was convened to prioritize projects for the new school, leading to an initial three-year plan for the implementation of classroom lessons and activities on the campus. The school development team was comprised of school staff, parents, district administrators, state agricultural leaders, post-secondary educational institutions, local agricultural business owners, and community farm families. After the initial planning was completed, a school advisory council was established of community partners to help guide the implementation of agriculture into everyday classroom lessons.

Staff worked to design lessons for their classrooms centered around National Agricultural Literacy. Outcomes, utilizing resources and materials made available from the National Agriculture-in-the-Classroom program. Grade-level teachers worked together to develop agriculture kits for use within established curricula, allowing an agricultural overlay for classroom instruction. CAPS is also working with their local agricultural partners to offer authentic ag learning opportunities for the students, including lessons on pollinators, rain gardens, livestock ownership, fruit tree production, raised bed gardening, and many others. Each of these lessons helps students and families become more agriculturally aware and engaged in school activities.

CAPS works to use agricultural concepts as a pathway to learning. An integral piece of this program is leveraging

