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Classroom Project Funded Through New MRTA Program

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Poplar Bluff, MO - A Eugene Field teacher has received a dozen STEM kits with hands-on building manipulatives for students to ‘go beyond the basic skills’ in the subject areas through a new grant program rolled out by the Missouri Retired Teachers’ Association.

First grade teacher Michelle Adams recently had her \$458 request funded in large part by the teacher organization through its inaugural Cash for Classrooms program, with a match from hands2mind, a school supply company. The set of science, technology, engineering and math bins contain unified cubes, straws and connections, and task cards.

“It always means so much to me to receive help for my students, but receiving it from retired teachers makes it that much more special,” wrote Adams on Tuesday, Aug. 24, via DonorsChoose. “I will use these STEM bins to inspire students’ creativity and love for learning so that maybe one day I will get to be the retired teacher supporting one of their classrooms.”

Under MRTA Cash for Classrooms, the Butler County Retired Teachers and School Personnel unit pledged \$119 for the project, which was matched in part by the state organization with another \$20 coming from an anonymous donor. The total contribution was doubled by hands2mind in a company promotion Adams initially became aware of when she listed her project online.

The BCRTSP selected Adams' entry through DonorsChoose, and requested approval under the new MRTA program, which offered \$15,000 in matching funds of up to \$100 per local unit, with a chance for another \$100 on a first-come, first-serve basis if funding is still available. Grant proposals must be submitted via the national nonprofit, which is the No. 1 classroom funding website for public school educators.

(Adults, left to right) Eugene Field counselor Esther Luna; Kadi Dare, Patty Reed and Linda Surber of the BCRTSP; teacher Michelle Adams; and students Tucker Chance Lakin and Maci Ray.

Photo and article by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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