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CONTACT

Morgan Cole
Public Relations Specialist
(206) 628-5788
Morgan@inspirusCU.org

5200 Southcenter Blvd. • Seattle, WA 98188

**Teachers receive classroom funding surprise
from local credit union**

“Never give up on what you set your mind on doing,” said West Hills STEM Academy Teacher Ashley Bueckers, after receiving donations from Inspirus Credit Union.

SEATTLE, WASH. – Three teachers at West Hills STEM Academy in Bremerton were surprised with \$4,301 in much-needed classroom supplies from Inspirus Credit Union.

Each year, teachers nationwide spend hundreds of dollars out of their own pocket on supplies for their classrooms. From purchasing new equipment to building their own, teachers go to great lengths to get their classrooms ready for a new school year.

Two Inspirus team members walked into the classrooms of West Hills teachers Shayla Sharlow, Ashley Bueckers, and Stephanie Codorniz with bags full of pens, pencils, and star erasers for each student, and a big surprise announcement for the teachers.

Sharlow, Bueckers, and Codorniz each posted project requests on DonorsChoose.org, a crowd-funding website for educators to get classroom supplies. Inspirus Credit Union was there to announce that all of the teacher’s projects would be fully-funded.

“Walking into a teacher’s classroom and letting them know they will be receiving the classroom resources they requested was an overwhelming and joyous experience,” said Inspirus Credit Union Senior Personal Finance Representative Cynthia Smith. “These teachers are such hard workers and it was inspiring watching them interact with their students, and talk with their students about the new supplies they would soon have to enhance their learning environment.”

Ms. Bueckers requested an easel and a new table and chairs for her classroom on DonorsChoose.org over one year ago.

With the easel, I will be able to make lessons more interactive,” said West Hills Second Grade Teacher Ashley Bueckers. “This easel is at the student's height so they can easily show me and their classmates how they've mastered the material.”

Over the summer, and without an easel for the upcoming school year, Bueckers took it upon herself to purchase the materials to build her own easel.

“I totally had some struggles and had to take it apart, re-cut pieces, and make it work,” said Bueckers.

Today, Bueckers has a new and fully functional easel to use with her students.

“Never give up on what you set your mind on doing!” said Bueckers.

This year marks the eighth year of the STEM Program at West Hills STEM Academy, serving low-income families in the greater Bremerton area. With more than 70 percent of students from low-income households, there is a great need for resources teachers can use to successfully support their students full learning capabilities.

To support other teachers in Washington State, visit DonorsChoose.org/Washington.

About Inspirus Credit Union

Founded in 1936 by a Seattle math and journalism teacher, Inspirus serves 80,000 members across Washington who share a passion for education. With \$1.2 billion in assets, Inspirus operates branches in Seattle, Spokane, and Lynnwood. Its philanthropy model includes education-giveback programs that allow members to direct charitable contributions to schools in their communities. Inspirus team members donate upwards of 1,000 volunteer hours each year in support of education. Inspirus Credit Union is a 2017 winner of Puget Sound Business Journal's Corporate Champion Awards, honoring their contributions to education. For more information, visit inspirusCU.org.

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