



PROUDLY SUPPORTING WISCONSIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Media Kit

INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEA MEMBER BENEFITS FOUNDATION

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Quick facts:

- ▶ Founded in 2019 by WEA Member Benefits.
- ▶ Established as a 501(c)(3) public charity.
- ▶ **Mission:** To support public education through grants and charitable donations to public educators, public schools, and the communities they serve.

FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

School-based mental health

- ▶ Trust-based philanthropic approach connecting funders and school districts.

Annual student art contest

- ▶ Encourages students to explore their imaginations and the world around them.
- ▶ Prizes funded in memory of a former Wisconsin art teacher.

FOUNDATION STAFF

Steve Goldberg, Executive Director*

WEA Member Benefits Foundation

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*Consultant to WEA Member Benefits Foundation, representing Steve Goldberg Consulting, LLC

WEA MEMBER BENEFITS

Member Benefits has a tradition of philanthropic support for public schools, and creating the Foundation takes those efforts to the next level.

weabenefits.com | 1-800-279-4030 | memberbenefits@weabenefits.com

- ▶ Founded in 1972.
- ▶ Works with Wisconsin public school employees and their families, offering retirement savings and investment programs, financial planning, and insurance products designed specifically for the education community.
- ▶ **Mission:** To advance and protect the financial well-being of public education employees and their families.
- ▶ **Vision:** Every member financially secure.



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weafoundation.org | info@weafoundation.org

MEDIA RESOURCES

Follow the WEA Member Benefits Foundation on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

To learn more and stay up-to-date with the Foundation, please visit weafoundation.org.

BY THE NUMBERS

School-based mental health funding pilot

Since 2022, the Foundation has provided **4 pilot districts** with **\$144K of challenge grants**, and **helped secure another \$871K in funding** for school-based mental health programs.

Student art contest

Since 2020, the Foundation has received **765 entries**, with **39 finalists**, **5 Best in Class awards**, and distributed **\$25,500 in prize money**.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS TO CONSIDER

Stories within the stories.

- ▶ In 2020, the WEA Member Benefits Foundation received its [first endowment](#) from Dr. Paul Lange, and his wife, June. The gift honors his sister Loeymae Lange, a former art teacher at Cooper Elementary School in Burlington, Wisconsin.
- ▶ The Lange's endowment funds are used as prize money for the annual student art contest to help promote recognition and positive self-esteem for student artists.
- ▶ WEA Member Benefits Foundation has developed an [academic partnership with the University of Wisconsin Center for Community and Non-Profit Studies](#) (Co-Create team) to evaluate and further develop the school-based mental health funding program.
- ▶ In its year two evaluation of the program, Co-Create reported, "This pilot has demonstrated growth and promise. The Member Benefits Foundation is well positioned to continue and expand this effort to involve additional districts and funders, all for the benefit of Wisconsin public schools, students, and their communities."

MEDIA INFORMATION

Reach out to the media contact listed below to arrange interviews, request information, or to learn more about WEA Member Benefits Foundation.

- ▶ Chelsey Bowers, Marketing and Communications Manager | 1-800-279-4030 ext. 2127 | cbowers@weabenefits.com

Q&A

A deeper dive into the Foundation.

Q: Who is WEA Member Benefits?	A: WEA Member Benefits has been helping PK- 12 Wisconsin public school employees and their families achieve their financial goals since 1972, offering retirement savings and investment programs, financial planning, and insurance designed specifically for the education community.
Q: Why did WEA Member Benefits create the WEA Member Benefits Foundation?	A: WEA Member Benefits has a proud tradition of philanthropic support for public schools, driven by a belief in public education. Creating the Foundation takes those efforts to the next level. “...with the Foundation, we are not only helping our members build financial security for themselves, we are investing in their schools and communities they serve,” said Member Benefits President and CEO, Dave Kijek . “And that’s good for everyone.” Together we support public school educators, students, and the communities they serve, and provide financial resources for their success, which in turn helps build strong communities.
Q: Tell us more about your student art contest.	A: Our student art contest began in 2016 and became a collaboration between WEA Member Benefits and the Foundation in 2019. The contest encourages students in grades K-12 to showcase their creativity and submit original artwork for the chance to be one of ten finalists winning \$500, or the Loeymae Lange Memorial “Best in Class” Award winner for \$1,500.
Q: How did school-based mental health become an area of focus for the Foundation?	A: This initiative became a focus after a survey we conducted in late 2020 and early 2021 to identify the top challenges facing Wisconsin’s public educators. School-based mental health was frequently mentioned as a major, unmet need for K-12 students and schools. We are leading a statewide effort to establish a clear funding path to help philanthropic organizations and individuals provide financial support for school-based mental health programs for K-12 students.
Q: How are funds being used within the school-based mental health program?	A: Funds are being used to hire mental health coordinators, foster partnerships with community therapists, support families in meeting insurance plan deductible requirements, enhance staff training on restorative justice and mental health, conduct student screenings, and deliver a range of other vital services.
Q: What results are you hearing from the pilot districts?	A: Pilot districts are reporting increases in student and family access to mental health services by reducing barriers such as: cost, time, and transportation.
Q: Are you expanding to other districts?	A: The Foundation actively onboards additional districts to their school-based mental health funding model each school year.