

Helping young entrepreneurs learn by doing

The Young Entrepreneur's Academy (YEA!) after-school program at the Boys & Girls Club of Rochester needs laptops for their students. This program takes students in grades 6-12 through the process of starting and running a business enterprise or social movement over the course of a full academic year. Students are taught to write a business or social plan, make a pitch to potential investors, obtain funding, register with governmental agencies, and actually launch their own company.



As with all entrepreneurs, students learn that new business or nonprofit creation requires determination, courage, and motivation. Students work with attorneys, insurers, tax professionals, designers, printers and suppliers. They listen to guest speakers, shadow mentors in the community, and go on field trips to reinforce principles and witness applications of the skills taught in class.

Laptops are needed to support this program. Used laptops are accepted, as long as they are loaded with Microsoft Word. Funds also are being sought to purchase new laptops at \$500 each.

If you would like to support this initiative, contact Program Administrator Mary Hartstein at (585) 341-4352 or mhartstein@racf.org.

Assisting those with Multiple Sclerosis so they can remain independent

Multiple Sclerosis is a neurological disease that for many causes physical and cognitive disabilities that progress over time. Assistive technology and home modifications help people with MS maintain their independence, but many simply cannot afford the associated costs. The local chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society maintains an MS Independence Fund that provides last-resort financial assistance for people with MS whose quality of life is often greatly improved with just \$500 to \$1,000 of support.

If you can help, contact Program Officer Pat Campbell at (585) 341-4355 or pcampbell@racf.org.

Supporting opportunities for creative summer learning

For the past 25 years, Writers & Books has hosted SummerWrite, an engaging selection of innovative camps for creative writers and readers. Through these camps, students continue important learning during the summer months by participating in creative options unavailable in schools. In 2011, 550 students were involved in workshops focusing on fiction and poetry, filmmaking and performance, as well as yoga, cooking, horseback riding, and the outdoors — all integrated with the literary arts.



Photo courtesy of Writers & Books

During SummerWrite 2011, Writers & Books was able to provide 10% of its participants with needs-based scholarships. But because Rochester has the 11th highest poverty rate among children in the United States, many more city students could benefit from this kind of program. Every year, program organizers receive requests from parents who would like their children to have the opportunity to “open their minds and have human interaction rather than sitting at home in front of the TV or computer” while their parents are at work. These requests exceed the number of scholarships offered.

A donation of \$220 to SummerWrite's scholarship program will cover a full-day class for one student for a week; a \$110 contribution will cover five, half-day classes for one student.

If you would like to learn more about SummerWrite summer camps and its scholarship program, contact Lauren Frank, Director, Philanthropic Services at (585) 341-4360 or lfrank@racf.org.

Offering help to ensure adequate heat and light this winter

St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center manages a fund on behalf of a community collaborative that provides last-resort, emergency assistance to individuals or families who are at risk of eviction or having their utilities shut off. Grants averaging just \$175 help clients stabilize their living situations. The need for the modest assistance this program provides is evident year-round, but with winter here more families will struggle to meet their basic needs.

To find out more or to contribute, contact Program Officer Pat Campbell at (585) 341-4355 or pcampbell@racf.org.

Preparing young women for school and adult life

Junior League of Rochester presents GirlsROCK!, a series of half-day programs that strive to positively impact the lives of girls through innovative programming focused on self-esteem, nutrition, and personal safety. The programs target pressing concerns of today's young women, and activities include self-defense workshops and education about nutrition, fitness, and how to manage personal finances. These workshops are designed to prepare young women to be successful in the transition from middle school and high school into adulthood.



GirlsROCK! plans to serve 60 girls, ages 10 to 19, from Rochester city schools, Center for Youth Services, and Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester. The Junior League seeks \$1,500 to support workshop expenses.

If you would like to support this program, contact Program Officer Mairéad Hartmann at (585) 341-4350 or mhartmann@racf.org.

Reaching out to young, homeless mothers and mothers-to-be

The Chrysalis House helps homeless females who are pregnant or new mothers who are not entirely ready to be living on their own and need a level of supervision in order to succeed. The Transitional Living Program at Chrysalis House serves up to eight young women ages 16 to 21 and their babies or infants. In addition to housing and food, services include parenting education and skills, counseling and academic supports, case management, transportation to school and appointments, health assessment and referrals; and life skills, job readiness and goal-setting. The Center for Youth Services is seeking \$8,000 for food supplies.

If you would like to support this effort, contact Program Officer Mairéad Hartmann at (585) 341-4350 or mhartmann@racf.org.

Supporting an all-volunteer search team for its all-important work

The Massasauga Search and Rescue Team (MSART) is a volunteer, nonprofit organization based in North Chili that provides skilled search and rescue personnel to help public safety agencies to search for lost or missing people. All volunteers, who are extensively trained in federally approved ground search methods, must provide their own equipment needed to work safely in any situation. This includes the K9 teams, which is responsible for maintaining and training all dogs used for service. The team raises funds to supply major equipment needs, such as radios, GPS devices, ropes, and a mobile trailer to serve as a command post and to house communication equipment. This team stands ready to respond 24 hours a day to locations across the state and to assist similar teams in the Northeast.



Photo courtesy of Massasauga Search and Rescue Team

The canine team members include purebred dogs and mixed breeds, such as Bogee (pictured at left). This two-year-old shepherd mix was adopted from an animal shelter in Rochester after being abandoned by her owners. Registered with the American Kennel Club as a canine companion, Bogee is in active training and her future with the team looks bright.

MSART must pay all costs associated with the state call-out system, which sends an alert text to each team member when their services are needed and allows each member to respond as to his or her availability for a search. The fee for this is \$2,500 for two years. The team also must carry liability insurance at a cost of \$1,000 per year. Donations to cover these expenses would be much appreciated. The searchers also could use 10 handheld radios and two mobile radios, which are \$250 per unit.

If you would like to help this all-volunteer organization, please contact Program Administrator Mary Hartstein at (585) 341-4352 or mhartstein@racf.org.