

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Education Foundation – Raising Funds for Students & Teachers

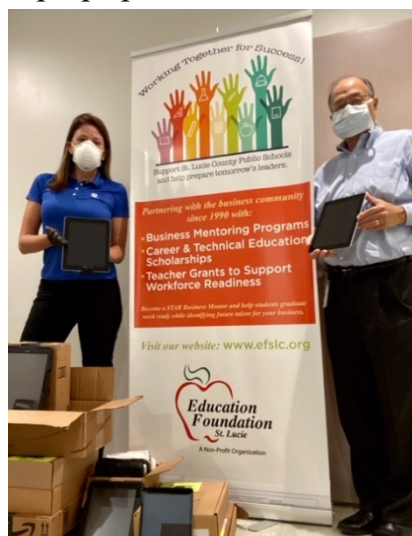


St. Lucie County, FL- The St. Lucie Education Foundation (SLEF) was created in 1990, to support the St. Lucie County School Board. Its mission is to advance public K-12 education through partnerships with local businesses and organizations.

It sprang from legislation that was passed in 1984 allowing school districts to create local foundations to raise funds for programs to support students, teachers and public schools. Since its beginning, the SLEF has provided millions of dollars in student scholarships and teacher grants.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Education Foundation jumped into action to help the St. Lucie Public Schools provide laptops to students for distance learning. To date the Foundation has raised over \$50,000 through partnerships with local businesses, which allowed them to purchase laptops and iPads for students to use. And they received a donation from FPL of nearly 80 additional iPads. The \$300 laptops provide access for students to online learning to help keep them on pace through the end of this school year and beyond, if necessary.

The SLEF has continued its work in support of our students during COVID-19. By working with multiple community partners, the Education Foundation received a matching funds donation from the Children's Services Council to support a new school district summer program designed to prevent "summer slide", which is the potential for students to lose their learning gains during the summer. The program is called SPARK (Summer Prep Activities to Recharge Knowledge). The Education Foundation and Children's Services Council will provide funding to mail the kits to 13,484 students. The cost for the mailing is \$10,000.



Kate Cotner of FPL with Thom Jones and some of the donated iPads

Through the program, all public school students currently in K-4 will receive a four to six-week summer learning packet with essential ELA (English Language Acquisition) and Math skills to complete at home and return to their 2020-2021 teacher at the start of the school year. The SPARK program can be completed throughout the summer and as a follow up for students also participating in summer school.

In addition, the SLEF has also been raising much needed money to help feed almost 2,000 St. Lucie County homeless students during the pandemic. “We are in need of additional financial support,” stated Thom Jones, President of the Education Foundation. “We hope local businesses and individuals who can help, will help.”

The Education Foundation Board serves as the conduit for private sector investment and community involvement in our public schools. They work with business owners and other interested parties to raise funds and awareness for the Foundation. In addition, they hold fundraisers and work with the media to promote quality education, outstanding teachers and recognize our top students.

The St. Lucie Education Foundation uses the proceeds from their fundraisers to provide teacher grants and student scholarships. The grants allow educators to increase and create opportunities for student success by providing the funds to support innovative teaching methods and programs.

Their next big initiative will be a fundraising virtual “Dance Fit” event. This is an indoors fundraiser for elementary age students. It will begin on October 13 and culminate with a celebration and recognition at the Safety Festival, now scheduled for October 24. Each participating school will keep a portion of the funds raised by students who attend their school. The top schools as well as the top fundraisers will be recognized at the Safety Festival. Anyone interested in participating in the Dance Fit is invited to visit their website at [efslc.org](http://efslc.org).



The St. Lucie Education Foundation is a community wide organization; and is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation dedicating to advancing public K-12 education. To make a donation or for more information about the Education Foundation, please contact Thom Jones, President at (772) 429-5507 or visit [www.efslc.org](http://www.efslc.org).