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## NEWS

### June 19, 2015 – Staunton City Schools Tip Sheet

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#### STAUNTON CITY SCHOOLS' TEACHERS RECEIVE VAE GRANTS

(STAUNTON, VA – June 19, 2015) Nine teachers in Staunton City Schools have received a total of eleven Creative Classroom Grants from the Valley Alliance for Education (VAE) for the 2015-2016 school year. The awards were distributed to grant authors Nicole Hostetter and Dwight Huyard at Bessie Weller Elementary, Christy Davis and Heather Smith-Reeps at McSwain Elementary School, Donna Morris, Chandler Sansing and Wayne Zink at Shelburne Middle School, Jennifer Goss at Robert E. Lee High School and Sandra Powell at the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents. These grants, totaling over \$11,000, will fund specific projects focusing on multiple subject areas and will provide supplemental classroom materials for many innovative and engaging instructional activities.

“We are thrilled to be receiving so many grants this year” said Dori Walk, Executive Director of Instruction for Staunton City Schools. “Our teachers work very hard to develop new and creative ways to engage students and we are grateful for the Valley Alliance for Education partnering with us to provide funding for so many of these special instructional projects through the Creative Classroom Grants program.”

The VAE awards the grant funds based on the creativity and educational merit of the project and its benefit to students. Throughout this school year, the teachers in Staunton City Schools receiving the grants will purchase the materials and implement their activities. The materials purchased will benefit this year’s students as well as students for many years to come.

The Valley Alliance for Education is a group of citizens and businesses who, through donations, promote, inspire, and recognize educational excellence in the area. The VAE has been awarding Creative Classroom Grants since 2003. Teachers in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County are eligible to apply for the grants. For 2015-2016, VAE awarded 25 Creative Classroom Grants totaling \$27,400.66 across the three school divisions.

### **LEE GRADUATES RECEIVE GRASP SCHOLARSHIPS**

(STAUNTON, VA – June 19, 2015) Five members of Robert E. Lee High School’s Class of 2015 were among the 124 Last Dollar Scholarships awarded by the GReat Aspirations Scholarship Program, Inc. (GRASP). Angela Bailey, Dalton Dabney, Mary-Peyton Kouchinsky, Chelsea Smith and Claire Venn were each awarded the 2015 GRASP Last Dollar scholarship. GRASP, a non-profit education organization headquartered in Glen Allen, Virginia, is supported by individual, foundation and business donations. GRASP recently awarded \$125,000 in scholarships to Virginia high school students graduating in 2015, with a total of \$15,000 being divided among the five recipients at Robert E. Lee High School.

GRASP has advisors in 76 public and private schools throughout Virginia and provides services and scholarship assistance, free of charge, to students and their families in an effort to help overcome the financial and social barriers to attending college or vocational education after high school. At Robert E. Lee High School, Mrs. Cindy Didawick serves as the GRASP advisor and is available to meet with students and parents each week to assist with navigating and understanding the financial aid process and with completing the FAFSA forms. "It is very important that we work with students from all economic and social backgrounds." said Mrs. Didawick. "We have many students whose parents do not have the financial means to send them to college and there are no special financial needs requirements for this scholarship."

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