

Education

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Large gifts benefit educational group

By Jonathan Allen

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FORT MILL TOWNSHIP — The Foundation for Fort Mill Schools recently got two major donations that will help fund its teacher grants program.

First Citizens Bank gave the Foundation the first of four installments of \$5,000 this week for the Innovative Classroom Project program. The bank has pledged a total of \$20,000 to the Foundation through 2012,

according to Market President Andrew Shene.

“These are tough times, so we hope it helps,” Shene said.

The Innovative Classroom Project program awards teachers across the district with \$500 grants to implement projects they have designed to supplement the curriculum and provide additional learning opportunities in the classroom. The Foundation takes applications from teachers each year in May and awards one teacher at each

school a grant to fund their idea in August.

“Innovative Classroom Projects identify special opportunities or circumstances and are evaluated according to a weighted scoring process for innovation, creativity, educational value, student involvement and teacher commitment,” Foundation Director Jill Lauber wrote in a statement.

In the past, the program has funded programs like extra homework help, specialized

readers for elementary students and other opportunities the school district would not have been able to fund on its own.

Late last month, Allen Tate Realtors also donated money to the Foundation. The company presented Lauber with a check for \$1,276.89 on Tuesday, Jan. 27. In the last five years, Allen Tate has contributed more than \$10,000, Lauber said.

“We couldn’t do it without these guys,” Foundation Board President Angie McCrae said.