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The Essex Foundation Helps Fund “Bon Voyage” for Local High School Students \$15,000 Awarded for Immersive International Trip in Spring 2025

The Essex Foundation (TEF) presented a \$15,000 grant to the Valley Regional High School (VRHS) World Language Department to help juniors and seniors travel to Spain and France for 10 days in the spring of 2025. As part of the school’s French and Spanish program, students will visit Paris and Madrid and participate in immersive homestay experiences in Salamanca and Aix en Provence. Many students need to pay for the trip themselves and are fundraising via bake sales, cookie dough sales, working jobs and babysitting.



The Foundation’s grant will help defray the cost of airfare, lodging, meals, transportation, homestays and cultural excursions, ensuring that all students, regardless of their financial background, can participate. The trip is designed to provide long-term benefits for the community. It will have a significant impact on each student’s academic growth, personal development and future aspirations, and provide them with a broader world view and a deepened understanding of different cultures, languages, and customs.

“This exposure helps students develop the critical thinking and empathy necessary for navigating an increasingly globalized world,” stated Jennifer Whelan, VRHS French Teacher & World Language Department Coordinator, “Having accompanied students on these trips, the empowerment and joy they feel at using their language skills in a new country can’t be quantified. We are all grateful for The Essex Foundation’s support of this life-changing experience.”

TEF President Strickland Hyde added, “The Essex Foundation is always excited to support local youth and help provide opportunities for them to experience new cultures and expand their knowledge. The Valley world language trips are known to be well-planned and meaningful.”

Providing support for educational programs is just one of the many local needs met by The Essex Foundation. Supported by donations from the community, The Essex Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to making a difference in the lives of Essex residents by providing funding for needs not met by other organizations or sources. More information can be found online at www.theessexfoundation.org or by emailing contact@theessexfoundation.org.

Pictured Above: Members of the Essex Foundation Board of Directors present the grant award to the Valley Regional High School World Language staff and students.