

Press Clippings - 3/16/2023

– Daily Herald –

United Way, Nicor Gas Foundation bring \$1 million community program to Elgin

March 16, 2023

By Rick West



*United Way of Metro Chicago President and CEO Sean Garrett announces the expansion of its Neighborhood Network Initiative to Elgin during an event at **Elgin High School** Wednesday. Rick West | Staff Photographer*

United Way of Metro Chicago is expanding its Neighborhood Network Initiative to Elgin, bringing the agency's expertise and a million dollars in funding from the Nicor Gas Foundation with it.

The program is a neighborhood-based investment model that addresses needs in the community with a goal of improving residents' quality of life.

A kickoff event for the announcement was held Wednesday at **Elgin High School**.

"The reality is neighborhoods are the single best predictor of how much money you're going to earn, what kind of education you're going to get and how long you're going to live, all across our country," said United Way of Metro Chicago President and CEO Sean

Garrett. "So the idea of a Neighborhood Network is to say that if we know that this concept is such a strong predictor, what can we do about it?"

Elgin will be UWMC's 14th Neighborhood Network, joining programs in West Chicago, Evanston and other areas. The program was launched in 2013.

"The idea is bringing people together to set a vision for their community and then executing that vision," Garrett said.

Alignment Collaborative for Education (ACE) will serve as the "community quarterback," or lead partner agency, for the effort that will ultimately bring in a number of other local groups.

"Often in society we work in silos," said Jacquelyn Rosa, associate vice president of community engagement with United Way Metro Chicago. "We all want a really great quality of life but you need to bring everybody to the table to make that happen."

The United Way program provides the funding and technical assistance to support the Neighborhood Network.

"We really believe in a community-based approach, so we listen to the community, work with the community and then they decide where the dollars should be spent to make those goals become a reality," Rosa said.

Rosa said ACE is one of the reasons Elgin was chosen for the program.

"One of the things we look for are organizations that are already doing great work, that are already bringing people together," she said. "We saw the strong partnership in Elgin and the great work and we want to help build upon that work and bring the dollars that are needed to expand."

Rosa said the \$1 million dollar gift from the Nicor Gas Foundation will fund the program for four years, but they'll look to add additional partner investments along the way.

Elgin High School Principal Jamie Crosen said he was thankful for what the initiative would provide his students.

"We are opening doors for them," he said. "We're opening doors that at times would not be open, especially to students of color. So this is a great opportunity."

– AED Magazine –

Altorfer CAT Donates Diesel Engines to Elgin High School District

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By Jenny Cohen

Local high schools in the U-46 school district in Elgin, Illinois, have received quite a valuable addition to their automotive program: diesel engines.

The engines, donated by Altorfer CAT in Illinois, represent a big step forward for students to be able to study diesel engines at the high school level.

“We talked to teachers and trucking companies and asked about diesel engines and diesel repair,” said Melissa Damewood of the U-46 district. “What we determined was there was a really great opportunity to extend student learning.”

That learning includes working on two engines from Altorfer CAT and the potential for two more to be given to other schools in the district. Damewood, the district’s coordinator for career and technical education, said four of the five high schools could potentially have these engines, and every student in the district would have access and the ability to get hands-on learning with them.

As part of the district’s automotive program, the engines will give students more exposure to different technologies and the potential to pursue an interest in diesel maintenance and repair once they graduate from high school.

“We wanted to have the opportunity for students to sit with diesel engines and compare them to a traditional engine,” Damewood said. That would allow them to learn how they can apply their knowledge of automotive engines to the diesel versions.

CONNECTIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

The donation of the engines was part of a collaboration between the Elgin school district and the Alignment Collaborative for Education in Elgin. Brian McGuire, president and CEO of The AED Foundation (AEDF), is one of Alignment’s governing board members.

“Brian had wanted to do something in large equipment for quite some time,” said Nancy Coleman, executive director of the Alignment Collaborative for Education. “He came to me a year ago and said, ‘What can Alignment do to get this going?’”

Coleman noted that the U-46 district didn't have any diesel programs at the time but worked with local businesses and the school district to get diesel technology into the high schools.

The Alignment Collaborative for Education is in a unique position to work between the local business community and educational interests like the U-46 district or community colleges, to find avenues for collaboration in the Elgin area. "We look at all the industry sectors and where we have gaps in the workforce, and we address those gaps," Coleman said. "We train people to live and stay in this area."

The collaborative works as a conduit to help businesses connect with students who can become potential employees in a way that they may not be able to otherwise. That could mean helping students find the best future path for themselves in fields like health care, manufacturing, and automotive.

At least 900 students graduate from high schools in the Elgin district each year who are not likely to pursue a postsecondary education, according to Coleman. That's why it's important for a program like the Alignment Collaborative for Education to expose students to different pathways before they graduate in order to encourage them to stay and be a productive part of the local community.

"It's about the future of these cities," Coleman said. "Elgin continues to grow, and we need to be sure that we are preparing students and they are walking out of high school into economic situations that are giving them a good quality of life and standard of living. All of that has to be looked at." One way the collaborative has been able to do that is by exposing students to potential good-paying careers in fields like diesel.

That's where the U-46 school district comes in, with roughly 500 students in its automotive program that will now include hands-on diesel experience.

"We're really excited about diesel because it's a great career opportunity," Damewood said. "And the diesel businesses are absolutely saying 'we need people.'"

The district is already putting the first two donated engines to good use, and teachers are coming up with ideas to integrate them into the curriculum. Students can get hands-on experience in such things as how to take apart and rebuild an engine or compare diesel engines to the automotive engines they've already worked on.

"Diesel engines are expensive, and the fact that they were willing to bring them to us is incredible," Damewood said. "We're so appreciative. If I had to buy new engines, I can't even tell you what that would do to our budget."

Local businesses are also reaching out to help students outside of the classroom because they see the value of getting more students exposed to a potential career in the industry.

“We’re excited to work with people who are interested in helping us out by offering internships and small group tours,” Damewood said. “Students can see what an amazing career diesel is.”

In fact, she has some advice for others in the diesel industry based on her experience at the school-district level. “If the goal is to get more people, look no further than your local high school.”

It’s a sentiment shared by Joey Horn, technical training manager for Altorfer in East Peoria, which is donating the engines as well as an instructor to help train students. Horn noted that a TechForce Foundation study found that there will be a shortage of 642,000 technicians in the field by 2024, which is why it’s important to reach out to students.

“It’s an issue not only of getting young people interested in the industry but also keeping the ones that are new to the industry,” Horn said. “With the help of programs like the ones taught by U-46, Altorfer will be supplied with quality foundational technicians.”

And it helps to be able to work with a unique program like the Alignment Collaborative for Education, with its connections in the community. “This is a really good example of how the school district and the community have come together in a beautiful way,” Damewood said.

WORKING WITH THE AED FOUNDATION

One reason for this program coming together was the help of AEDF in connecting local businesses like Altorfer CAT with the Elgin business community and the U-46 school district. According to Damewood, “This wouldn’t have happened without them.”

AEDF also invited the district to conferences where teachers and staff were able to connect with other educators and learn how they’re teaching similar concepts around the country. “Hearing about the work they’re doing generates better work for everyone,” Damewood explained. “You get tips by being with other educators.”

AEDF’s support is also felt at the Alignment Collaborative for Education. Both foundations understand the important connection between business and education, according to Coleman. “They’re more than willing to do those kinds of projects because they know that’s what’s going to make the difference,” she said. “We’re just greatly appreciative of our partnership with The AED Foundation.”

And Altorfer CAT sees the work with AEDF, especially on projects like this, as important to its business. "Collaborating with the folks at AED," said Horn, "has helped to increase our chances of finding high-quality individuals.

<https://www.aednet.org/magazine/current-issue>

– Daily Herald –

Dorszewski delivers in net for Palatine

March 15, 2023

By Gregg Voss

Palatine lacrosse goaltender Danny Dorszewski is in the relatively rare position of having his college destination squared away as a junior.

Dorszewski is headed to Long Island, N.Y., and Hofstra after high school, to play for one of the nation's historic lacrosse programs.

That decision came up fast, but sometimes, that's how life is. Dorszewski, a member of Team Illinois lacrosse, got a text from a Hofstra assistant coach in late October inquiring about his interest in going to school there and playing for the Pride and coach Seth Tierney, who coincidentally is also a Team USA assistant coach.

That lit the fuse, so to speak, with Dorszewski making a visit to the school in mid-November while on a travel tournament on Long Island for Team Illinois. He was offered a scholarship, and verbally committed, on the same day, Nov. 18.

"Hofstra was a high-priority school for me," Dorszewski said. "I really liked their stadium and they are Division 1, and have a lot of good things going for them."

But he got plenty of support. His dad, Wes, was crucial, as was Palatine coach Chris Gantz, who asked perhaps the most important question.

"They had a great tour of campus and Danny called me afterward, and I asked him, When you're done with college, is that a diploma you're going to be happy with hanging on the wall?" Gantz said. "That's my No. 1 thing."

It was. And that's the culmination of a long road for a player who assumes arguably the toughest position on the field, considering shots are coming at him at a good 80 miles per hour in some cases.

So what's it like to play goalie, considering he's wearing a chest protector, gloves, helmet and throat guard, but not much else in the way of protection.

"There is a lot of pressure," Dorszewski said. "In a big game with really good shooters, you have to stay composed and stand tall. You can't let the pressure get inside your head. Do the basic things that make you a great goalie."

He got involved in lacrosse as a fourth grader. He was playing feeder program football and some of his football friends encouraged him to try the sport. He embraced it and eventually, he gravitated toward the goalie position. Fast-forward to his freshman year behind netminder Rand Paddack, who now plies his trade for Bryant University in Rhode Island, and something special was brewing.

When Danny was a freshman, Rand was a senior, and what we found is he was taken under Rand's wing," Gantz said. "We knew he was good. He took over last year and he dominated. His save percentage was just exceptional."

Added Dorszewski of Paddack, "I kind of knew Rand before high school. Freshman year, he saw a little potential in me and so we worked together and sometimes in training, he would shoot on me."

He is also quick with advice for young goaltenders that aspire to be him someday.

"One thing I suggest is work outside of practice," he said. "Don't rely on team practices to get better. Make the best version of yourself. Play as much as you can, get as much repetition as you can."

Boys Lacrosse at a Glance

FAMILIAR NAMES

Key returnees: Mikey Edell, defenseman, sr., Wheaton Academy; Aiden Weisenborn, attackman, sr., Wheaton Academy; Trevor Torres, defender, sr., Neuqua Valley; Liam Gramza, attackman, sr., Neuqua Valley; Danny Dorszewski, goalie, jr., Palatine; Andrew Philbin, defenseman, sr., Palatine; Caleb Lee, attackman, sr., Stevenson; Jack Myers, defenseman, sr., Stevenson; Lance McCann, attackman, sr., York; Tommy Kowalski, midfielder, sr., York; Drew Deney, attackman, sr., Warren; Bobby Devenport, goalie, sr., Warren; Ryan Jensen, defenseman, sr., Hampshire; Campbell Smith, attackman, jr., Hampshire; A.J. Baumley, midfielder, sr., Huntley; Connor Ardell, attackman, sr., Huntley; Nick Holland, long-stick midfielder, sr., Naperville North; Jack Houck, midfielder, jr., Naperville North; Ryan Thompson, faceoff, sr., St. Charles North; Jack Raine, attackman/midfielder, sr., St. Charles North; Cole Hansen, defenseman, sr., St. Charles East; Blake Skifstad, faceoff, soph., St. Charles East; Kyle Clouse, goalie, sr., Lake

Zurich; Andrew Beaudoin, attackman, sr., Lake Zurich; Joey Busch, defenseman, sr., Benet; Nathan Olson, defenseman, sr., Benet; Erik Lorenzo, attackman, sr., Benet; Alex Wegrzyn, midfielder, sr., South Elgin; Michael Hudik, midfielder, sr., South Elgin; Leo Izquierdo, midfielder, senior, St. Viator; Cade Faulkner, attackman, sr., St. Viator; Tommy Webster, midfielder, sr. Hinsdale Central; Dean Assicurato, faceoff/midfielder, sr., Hinsdale Central.

GET TO KNOW THEM

Top newcomers: Zeke Merchant, attackman, soph., Wheaton Academy; Breck Peacock, midfielder, sr., Wheaton Academy; Jonathan Ostendorf, attackman, soph., Neuqua Valley; Ben Stefanski, midfielder, fr., Neuqua Valley; Cameron Crew, attackman, soph., Stevenson; Ryan Loch, faceoff/midfielder, sr., Stevenson; Jack Kevin, goalie, jr., York; Nathan Schlieff, defenseman, jr., York; Noah Walowski, defenseman, jr., Warren; Chad Steffans, attackman, soph., Warren; Chase Lorbiecki, midfielder, jr., Hampshire; Henry Tworek, goalie, soph., Hampshire; Alan Saban, goalie, sr., St. Charles North; Mason Kissner, goalie, soph., St. Charles East; Chase Isaacson, attackman, fr., St. Charles East; Max Maj, attackman, soph., Lake Zurich; Coplan Oettinger, midfielder, soph., Lake Zurich; Zach Gorman, goalie, fr., Benet; Grant Rudolph, attackman, fr., Benet; Patrick Carr, midfielder, fr., Benet; Louie Simpson, goalie, soph., South Elgin; Kaden Lemvig, long-stick midfielder, fr., South Elgin; Jack Hartman, goalie, soph., St. Viator; Emerson McGrath, midfielder, soph., St. Viator; Bart Bouchelion, defenseman, soph., Hinsdale Central; Noah McCurry, defenseman, soph., Hinsdale Central.