

**ND 69th Legislative Assembly  
ND Senate Appropriations Committee  
SB2019 Testimony Document**

**Content:**

- 2024/25 Goals
- Performance
- 30<sup>th</sup> Year History
- “The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Are Preparing Today!”
- Letters of Support



**Marketplace for Kids Inc.  
106 Mathews St.  
Mantador, ND 58058  
701-242-7744**

**[www.marketplaceforkids.org](http://www.marketplaceforkids.org)**

**Contact:**

**Executive Director  
Robert Heitkamp**

**[rheitkamp@mfknd.org](mailto:rheitkamp@mfknd.org)**





# Marketplace for Kids 2024-25



The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow  
Are in Our Schools and Homes Today!

### Mission:

To encourage youth to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment through the recognition and development of their inventive, creative thinking and problem-solving skills.

### Vision:

Our vision is for every student to receive entrepreneurship education and encouragement to become a lifelong partner in building stronger communities.



## 2024/25 Goals

- ✓ Add New Education Day - Roundup, Montana 9/25/24
- ✓ Add New Education Day - Grand Farm 10/22/24
- ✓ Add New Education Day - Fort Totten 11/1/24
- ✓ Add New Education Day - Belcourt 2/21/25
- ✓ Raise Teacher/School Project Student reimbursement rate (ND ONLY) to \$25 per Student 10/1/24
- ✓ Grow Overall Programming to "15" Sites May/25

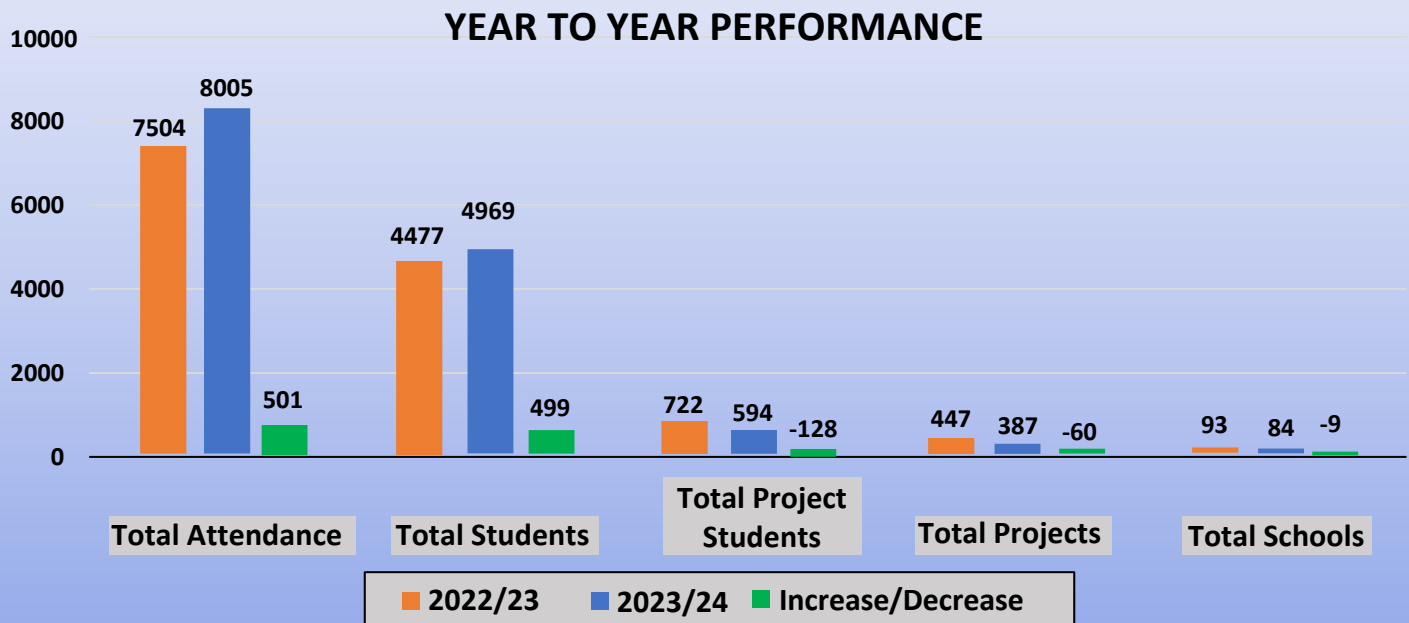
## HOW DOES MFK ALIGN WITH CTE'S VISION?

Marketplace for Kids (MFK) aligns with North Dakota Career and Technical Education ND CTE's vision by annually offering entrepreneurial educational experiences based on labor market information tailored to the needs of North Dakota's business, industry, and private sector. Through partnerships with Career & Tech Centers, Colleges, and industry leaders, MFK leverages their expertise, equipment, and processes to introduce career choices to thousands of students, focusing on elementary students in grades 3-8 statewide. MFK addresses career awareness and skill development using up-to-date technology and instructional methods, providing youth with exploration opportunities and foundational skills necessary for entering the workforce.

# ECONOMIC AFFECTS - PERFORMANCE - WHAT'S NEW!!!

## 2024/25 Projections

- ✓ 23/24 Number of State and/or Entrepreneurial Educators **479**
- ✓ Average Education Day Cost **\$ 22,513.27**
- ✓ Average student cost per day of Entrepreneurship Education **\$49.84**
- ✓ Account increases over Pre-Covid costs - **Average Increase - 587%**
- ✓ **Smallest Account Increase - 35%/Largest Increase - 1,500%**



## WHERE IS MARKETPLACE FOR KIDS NOW?

- ❖ In 2024/25 Marketplace for Kids has **15 Education Days** scheduled.
- ❖ We have added "**3**" new Education Days(ND) (**11,000 est. attendance this year!**)
- ❖ Classes such as "**Electric Motors and Circuits**" Presented by the ND State Electrical Board, "**CareerVeiwXR**" Presented by MFK, "**Lessons About Your Money**" Presented by JumpStart ND, "**Young Workers - Talking Safety**" Presented by ND Workforce Safety & Insurance and "**DIY Breadboard Circuit**" Presented by Edu Tech are scheduled at all Education Days for the 24/25 year.
- ❖ MFK staff, grant writers, and Advisory Leadership Team Members have been working feverishly to cover the financial costs of the new Education Days by applying for new grants and reaching out to past and new supporters.
- ❖ Three of the 4 new Education Days are complete with Belcourt at TMCC in February!

Celebrating

1995

30 Years

2025

# IGNITING THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION

Our vision is for every student to receive entrepreneurship education and encouragement to become a lifelong partner in building stronger communities. Since 1999, student participation in our program has totaled nearly 150,000!

We believe that youth are skilled, innovative people who will continue to power a diversified, vigorous economy.



**Education Days**  
2024-2025 Season



**Students**  
2023-2024 Season



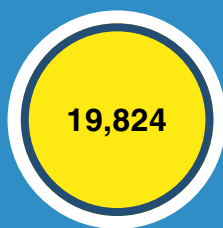
**Teachers**  
2023-2024 Season



**Student Projects**  
Since 1999



**Total Attendance**  
Since 1999



**Volunteers**  
Since 1999

Marketplace  
for



Igniting the Spirit of Innovation!





## Marketplace for Kids “The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Are Preparing Today!”

### WHAT’S AN EDUCATION DAY?

Education Days offer a distinctive experience where students engage in hands-on activities to explore careers, technology, and the future, with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship and innovation. The event includes brief, interactive classes that help students delve into career fields, STEAM, self-employment skills, new technology, and entrepreneurship. Additionally, the Hall of Great Ideas encourages students to create projects utilizing 21st Century Learning Skills, including collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.

### WHAT DOES MARKETPLACE FOR KIDS TEACH?

Marketplace for Kids (MFK) primarily focuses on entrepreneurship, providing students with their first exposure to business ownership, career options, innovative technology, and college environments. The program offers a wide range of classes during Education Days, including STEAM subjects, hands-on learning activities like financial literacy, starting a business, and various industry-related topics such as wildlife, industry safety, energy resources, agriculture, automotive, aerospace, construction, plumbing, HVAC, robotics, electronics, drones, and virtual reality applications.

### WHO MAKES MARKETPLACE FOR KIDS HAPPEN?

MFK (in partnership with ND CTE) begins with the programming created and approved by **Regional Advisory Leadership Teams** and **Marketplace staff**. Hundreds of volunteers including people from **business, Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corps., Score, Retired Teachers Associations, students from DECA, 4-H, Honor Societies** etc. present classes and provide guidance, direction, and hands-on help to presenters, students and staff throughout the day. Volunteer hours during the 2023-24 Education Day season amounted to over **2,875.75 hours (\$96,485.98)**.



# Marketplace for Kids

## "The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Are Preparing Today!"

### WHY DOES MARKETPLACE FOR KIDS HAPPEN?

ND CTE and MFK believe that ***"every student has the right to receive entrepreneurship education and encouragement to become a lifelong partner in building stronger communities."*** We strive to ***"encourage youth to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment through the recognition and development of their inventive, creative thinking and problem-solving skills."***

### HISTORY:

- ✓ Marketplace for Kids started in 1995 as a pilot.
- ✓ Elementary teachers designed a concept to encourage students to showcase their innovative ideas and attend age appropriate experiential classes of all types.
- ✓ The Advisory Leadership Team elected Jamestown as the site for that first Education Day was a success with over 600 students/teachers/dvisorsparticipating.
- ✓ 1997 the regional concept was developed, expanding to 12 Education Days in 2015

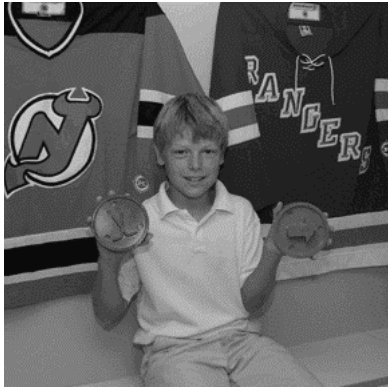
### STANDARDS:

- ✓ MFK meets State and National Standards in Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship Education, Arts, Math, and Language.
- ✓ Numerous MFK representatives reviewed the standards and provided feedback to the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education to validate and/or improve the content and organization of the National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship Education. These standards represent a framework for all organizations to work together to "Accelerate Entrepreneurship in America."

### RESOURCES:

- ✓ MFK provides continuing education credit to the education network.
- ✓ Classroom outreach sessions to help students and teachers get started planning.
- ✓ Supplies lesson plans (from teachers), Learning Guide and resources to meet the demand of a growing/changing education network.

# Success Stories



**Riley Giauque** is an Ambassador for the MFK Program and has represented the program as a Keynote Speaker at the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education Annual Meeting and numerous Marketplace for Kids Education Days. Riley's passion for hockey and creativity led him to invent the EZPUCK and ONETIMER. EZPUCK is a stationary disk that allows users to improve their stickhandling and puck control on the ice. ONETIMER is a hockey training device that allows users to practice passing both on and off the ice. Riley featured his EZPUCK invention at Marketplace for Kids when he was in the fourth grade and has since filed and received a patent for both the EZPUCK and ONETIMER. He currently markets his products online through his website [www.ezpuck.com](http://www.ezpuck.com) and has sold his products across

the globe. Riley was also the recipient of the 2018 Scholarship for Entrepreneurship at North Dakota State University.



**Ethan Bowman** is an Ambassador for the MFK Program. Ethan's invention, EZGRO, a self-watering system was the 1<sup>st</sup> Place winner of the Bright Ideas Showcase and Contest in 2012. He has gained national recognition with an interview in a National Agriculture magazine and his garden concept was used at a nursery in his hometown of Jamestown, ND where he also volunteered his time to improve his concept. You can view his EZGRO invention on YouTube at:

<https://bit.ly/3nu6iIi>



**Joshua Boen** is an Ambassador for the MFK Program. In 2014, his love of competitive swimming and technology came together in the invention, iCoach, a real-time coach-athlete communication tool. iCoach is an app that enables coaches to directly communicate with their athletes while they're in action. The app connects with the athlete's headpiece via Bluetooth allowing the coach to speak to the athlete and gives the coach control over who is receiving their communication. iCoach allows the coach to pick recipients by displaying a list of all the athletes and allowing them to select one or all. Josh's iCoach invention was the 2014 1<sup>st</sup> Place winner of the Marketplace for Kids Bright Ideas Showcase and Contest held at Minot State University. Also, in 2014, Marketplace for Kids arranged for

Joshua to present his invention to Microsoft, Myriad Mobile, and One Million Cups in Fargo.



## Marketplace for Kids “The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Are Preparing Today!”

### RECOGNITION:

- MFK has been recognized as a program that should be replicated by the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education.
- Featured in the national publication “Education Update” (a publication of ASCD Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) as a program to begin teaching entrepreneurship early.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/education-update/jun09/vol51/num06/Educating-Emerging-Entrepreneurs.aspx>
- Recognized in the Midwestern Office of the Council of State Governments Newsletter as “**One of the best youth Entrepreneurship programs in the nation.**” (MFK students have presented at their annual Conference)
- Collaborates with the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education on National Entrepreneurship Education Standards to provide entrepreneurial education programs to all Americans.

### SUMMARY:

Marketplace for Kids is North Dakota's only elementary entrepreneurship education program for grades 3-8, in partnership with CTE. Supported by the North Dakota Legislature since 2005, it has ***benefited over 175,000 students*** and aligns with the National Standards for Entrepreneurship Education.





December 31, 2024

Mr. Robert Heitkamp, Executive Director  
Marketplace for Kids  
106 Mathews St. Suite B  
Mantador, ND 58058

Dear Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee,

I am pleased to submit the following letter of support for continued legislative funding for the Marketplace for Kids program.

Marketplace for Kids is a nationally recognized educational program that is designed to promote career opportunities for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students across North Dakota. Reaching our youth during these formative years is a unique and important aspect of the program which is designed to foster entrepreneurship, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills that encourage the state's youth to become productive members of the workforce and their local communities. A key component of Marketplace for Kids is Education Day, a series of one-day events held across North Dakota to promote career opportunities and showcase entrepreneurship to elementary and middle school students.

Valley City State University will be hosting its third annual Marketplace for Kids event on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Hosting an Education Day on the VCSU camps is an excellent opportunity to expose area students to career opportunities and develop and enhance skills in creative thinking, entrepreneurship, and problem-solving. This initiative will contribute to a greater statewide effort to educate students, contribute to a skilled workforce, and promote economic development in North Dakota.

On behalf of Valley City State University, I request your continued support of Marketplace for Kids. Such support will ensure the success of the statewide Education Days and help create a vibrant future for North Dakota. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone at (701) 845-7100 or email at [alan.lafave@vcsu.edu](mailto:alan.lafave@vcsu.edu). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan LaFave, President  
Valley City State University

# MFK AND OPPORTUNITY:

Dear Chairman Sorvaag & ND Leaders,



[www.graftonnd.gov](http://www.graftonnd.gov)

PO Box 578 | 5 East 4th Street | Grafton, ND 58237

Phone: 701.352.1561 | Fax: 701.352.2730 | TDD: 701.352.1411

December 30, 2024

Senate Appropriations Committee  
North Dakota Legislative Assembly  
600 E Boulevard Ave  
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for continued and increased funding for Marketplace for Kids through the Career and Technical Education Department of North Dakota. This longstanding program plays a vital role in fostering entrepreneurial skills and innovation among elementary school students across the state. I urge you to prioritize this initiative in your upcoming budget considerations to ensure its continued success and further expansion.

Marketplace for Kids has been a critical resource for young learners, providing them with a hands-on platform to explore and develop entrepreneurial skills at an early age. This type of experiential learning is essential in preparing the next generation for a rapidly changing workforce.

However, the needs of the modern educational landscape are evolving. To continue its success and reach its full potential, Marketplace for Kids requires a rebranding and retrofitting effort to align with the digital age, contemporary business practices, and today's educational tools. With additional financial support, this program can be revamped to incorporate new technology, enhance digital literacy, and provide students with the resources to connect with real-world business mentors and opportunities in the 21st century.

This program has consistently demonstrated its value, filling a critical gap in the state's approach to entrepreneurship education. As we look toward the future, we must ensure that Marketplace for Kids remains a relevant, dynamic force in our educational system. Increased funding will allow this program to reach even more students and encourage them to become tomorrow's innovators, leaders, and entrepreneurs.

I respectfully ask for your support in increasing financial backing for Marketplace for Kids, and for your continued commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in North Dakota's youth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dusek  
Community Development Director  
City of Grafton

*The City of Grafton is an equal opportunity employer*



December 27, 2024

Robert Heitkamp  
Executive Director  
Marketplace for Kids  
106 Mathews Street, Suite B  
Mantador, ND 58058

Dear Robert:

The Valley City-Barnes County Development Corporation is pleased to support Marketplace for Kids as a sponsor and legislatively to secure State funds for the program.


Last year, I had the opportunity to serve as a volunteer judge of the children's projects and spoke with each team of entrepreneurs. Their imagination and thoughtfulness were refreshing. Marketplace for Kids exposes our students to private businesses, specific educational opportunities, skill development, and the many possibilities that life can offer.

Education Day covers a broad range of opportunities that nourishes the curiosity and excitement of students and the world around them. Through hands-on learning, presentations and project development, students can gain an understanding of a wide range of topics from the trades and manufacturing to team building and STEAM.

Initiatives such as Marketplace for Kids are investments in our most valuable asset – our children. Education Day is a positive force in shaping our youth that will generate long-term, positive impact for students, businesses, and communities. We encourage approval of funding from the ND Career & Technical Education Department and wholeheartedly extend our support to other funding sources of your choosing.

Thank you for your work and dedication to North Dakota's students.

Respectfully,

  
Jennifer Feist  
Director of Development





Angelle French, Director  
Pembina County JDA  
PO Box 595  
Cavalier, ND 58220  
angelle@redriverrc.com

January 2, 2025

Dear Chairman Sorvaag and Members of the Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee,

On behalf of the Pembina County Job Development Authority (PCJDA), I am writing to express our strong support for Marketplace for Kids and to encourage continued funding and recognition for this exceptional organization that plays a critical role in shaping the future of North Dakota's youth and communities.

Since its inception in 1995, Marketplace for Kids has empowered students across our state by encouraging them to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment while honing their creative thinking and problem-solving skills. This visionary program fosters an entrepreneurial spirit that aligns perfectly with North Dakota's goals of building a diversified, vigorous economy powered by innovative young leaders.

Marketplace for Kids' Education Days are the culmination of these efforts, providing students with a hands-on opportunity to explore careers, technology, and the future in an environment rooted in entrepreneurship and innovation. These events not only inspire creativity but also equip students with the tools and confidence to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

As an organization dedicated to supporting economic growth and workforce development, the PCJDA recognizes Marketplace for Kids as an invaluable partner in preparing our youth to lead and innovate. By instilling entrepreneurial skills and fostering lifelong learning, this program strengthens the fabric of our communities and ensures a brighter future for North Dakota.

We respectfully urge you to continue supporting Marketplace for Kids through funding and resources that enable the organization to fulfill its vital mission. Your investment in this program is an investment in the next generation of entrepreneurs, innovators, and community builders who will shape the future of our state.

Thank you for your dedication to the success of North Dakota's students and communities. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional information or further support for this essential program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angelle French", written in a cursive style.

Angelle French  
Director, Pembina County Job Development Authority

# MFK AND OPPORTUNITY:

Dear Chairman Sorvaag & ND Leaders,

December 30, 2024

Dear North Dakota Leaders,

It has been an honor to be part of the Marketplace for Kids program for the past eight years, volunteering as a presenter and board member, chaperoning my own kids' classes on Education Day, and as an advocate for the work the program does to advance workforce in North Dakota. Thank you for continuing to support the Marketplace for Kids mission in building community relationships in order to strengthen our workforce and make ND the best place to work, raise a family, and call home.

Each year, communities across the state plan for Marketplace for Kids Education Days. Teachers excite their students with the idea of creating inventions that could someday become their personal business. They support them throughout the brainstorming, planning, creating, and presentation process. In celebration, students gather at their local Education Day to explore careers, learn of job opportunities in their community, listen to the stories of community leaders, and present their own invention with the promise of a medallion in recognition of their effort. The energy radiating from the presenters, volunteers, teachers, and students is contagious.

Learning centers on connecting ideas and facts to authentic experiences. While learning begins in the classroom, hands-on experiences ignite the students' curiosity and passion. Marketplace for Kids is the only statewide, no-cost program that provides this type of experience for elementary and middle school kids. We hope to continue increasing the number of Education Days, especially in the rural and smaller areas that are often faced with challenges not permitting them to travel or participate in the regional Education Day.

As a parent of four school-aged kids, past elementary classroom teacher, current educational leader, and community member, I am grateful that our state offers this program to all of our kids. Helping as a judge at the Marketplace for Kids Education Days has allowed me to tap into the imagination and creativity of our students. I have observed devices that help with housecleaning jobs, machines that reduce pollution in our oceans, take care of pets when the owners are away, and reduce the amount of time we spend on daily tasks. Kids not only learn from the process of creating their own invention, but also are intrigued by the projects of their peers. Being inspired by others is one of the best ways to spark curiosity and learning.

The shortage of community helpers in North Dakota, particularly in rural areas, is evident when we visit our local restaurants, make doctor appointments, schedule routine maintenance for our vehicles and homes, shop in grocery stores, and read updates on teacher shortages in our schools. Luckily, we have the opportunity to alleviate this issue through programs like Marketplace for Kids. Marketplace for Kids provides experiences for students to explore exciting career opportunities while motivating our kids to seek careers within the state of North Dakota. I strongly believe that kids instinctively want to stay in the place they call home, yet often look outside their local community because they are unaware of the opportunities outside their front door. Marketplace for Kids provides this chance for kids.

Please consider this letter of encouragement for continued support for Marketplace for Kids. If you have questions or would like to visit about Marketplace for Kids, you are welcome to contact me at [mleibel@nd.gov](mailto:mleibel@nd.gov).

Sincerely,

Marijke Leibel EdD  
Assistant Coordinator  
ND RISE State Mentoring Program

## MFK AND OPPORTUNITY:

Dear Chairman Sorvaag & ND Leaders,

January 2, 2025

Dear ND Legislative Leaders and Education Committee Members,

My name is Mary Haugo and I am currently the Board President of Marketplace for Kids. I have been a volunteer since the first Marketplace for Kids in Jamestown in 1995. I'm also a Region 5 co-chair in Fargo at our Microsoft event. I've had the privilege of working with our first Executive Director, Marilyn Kipp and now with our current Executive Director, Bob Heitkamp.

I am writing to ask you for an increase of \$150,000 for our funding from the Career and Technical Education Department of North Dakota. Costs have gone up considerably and we have added three Education Days to our program making it a total of fifteen Education Days in North Dakota. Your support is crucial to making our program a success.

Our 8 Board Members are committed to this worthwhile Program. We are all volunteers because we believe that Marketplace for Kids helps students in grades 3-8 become lifelong learners that will build stronger communities in North Dakota.

Education Days show students the career opportunities they have in their own community. Business leaders showcase what they have to offer which creates an interest in a career they maybe haven't heard of in their own backyard. Classes help students discover entrepreneurship, explore career opportunities, and show new ideas for starting a business.

As a teacher for 36 years I found it was so fulfilling to help the students create a project board for an invention they created. This required using reading, language, and technology skills. They also practice learning public speaking skills, meeting new friends and listening to others. The Standards of North Dakota and National Standards in Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship Education, Arts, Math and Language are met in all grades that participate.

Our Marketplace for Kids website is a great tool to help parents, teachers and students access information on how to become a part of this worthwhile program. Teachers register their students and inventions online for each Education Day.

By having your continued support we are able to keep this amazing program that has been going on for 30 years !

Our students are our future leaders of tomorrow and will hopefully stay in the great state of North Dakota !

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Mary Haugo  
State Board President of Marketplace for Kids



# SPONSORS

as of December 1, 2024

## RUBY LEVEL



**Bobcat**

**devils lake**  
Economic Development



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BochateyFoundation.org



The Dolores J. And Robert A. Bochatey Foundation



Williston  
AREA RECREATION CENTER



## EMERALD LEVEL



**MARVIN**



WALSH COUNTY  
JOB DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
*Dig in!*



STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OF NORTH DAKOTA



## SAPPHIRE LEVEL



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**SIoux**  
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# MFK "GOLD STAR" Sponsors

as of 7/1/2024

## DIAMOND LEVEL \$10,000 & UP



## "GOLD" SPONSORS 2023-24

(\$1,000 Donation and up)

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