

## News Release

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## Symetra Awards Two \$20,000 Education Grants to Help Empower Students, Support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

BELLEVUE, Wash.—(June 12, 2020)—Symetra Life Insurance Company today announced that two schools were the recipients of the *Symetra Heroes in the Classroom*<sup>®</sup> education program’s “MVP Award.” Parkwood Elementary School in Shoreline, Washington, and Thornton Fractional North High School in Calumet City, Illinois, will each receive a \$20,000 grant for new student programming that supports diversity, equity and inclusion.

“Symetra is proud to act as a catalyst for innovative programs that benefit our local schools by building both academic skills and crucial relationships within the broader school community,” said Sharmila Swenson, AVP, Public Affairs at Symetra. “Together with our program partners, we applaud educators like the teams at Parkwood Elementary School and T.F. North High School who recognize the varied, diverse voices that make up a school community and respond with unique programs that actively promote inclusion and empower young learners.”

### “I See Me!”— Parkwood Elementary School, Shoreline Washington

Approximately 55 percent of Parkwood Elementary School’s students are students of color, and 27 percent speak a language other than English as their primary language. “I See Me!” will leverage the Shoreline school’s existing race and equity work by taking it directly to students and affirming their identities in a positive, impactful way. The “MVP Award” grant will equip all 22 classrooms and the school library with books, play materials and artwork that reflect racial diversity to help ensure that Parkwood students see themselves reflected in the stories they read and materials they study.

### “Enriching ELL Education and Supporting Our Immigrant Community” — Thornton Fractional North High School, Calumet City, Illinois

TF North’s school district is ‘committed to the development of an inclusive and equitable learning environment that meets the needs of all within the school community.’ The “MVP Award” grant will fund a two-pronged effort to better support the high school’s growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) and their families, both in and outside the classroom. The first part of the program expands access to technology and improves digital literacy within ELL classrooms by adding 75 new tablets as well as new flexible seating to help promote collaborative learning. The second half targets the needs of ELL families through community outreach and after-school resources like English and naturalization classes, career training and job fairs. The goal is to bridge language and cultural barriers to communication and build trusting relationships between ELL families and the school.

### About Symetra Heroes in the Classroom<sup>®</sup>

Symetra Heroes in the Classroom honors K-12 teachers for educational excellence during the NFL regular season. Teachers are recognized in front of their students and peers at surprise, in-school presentations, receive tickets to a Seattle Seahawks or Chicago Bears home game, as well as a \$2,000 Symetra donation for classroom books and supplies. Every school with a teacher-Hero is eligible to submit an “MVP Award” proposal. Nominated programs are evaluated on a range of criteria, including innovation, feasibility and demonstrated need.

Since 2006, Symetra Heroes in the Classroom has celebrated 632 K–12 teachers and contributed \$1.2 million for schoolbooks, classroom supplies and equipment, and in support of innovative student programming.

**About Symetra**

Symetra Life Insurance Company is a subsidiary of Symetra Financial Corporation, a diversified financial services company based in Bellevue, Washington. In business since 1957, Symetra provides employee benefits, annuities and life insurance through a national network of benefit consultants, financial institutions, and independent agents and advisors. For more information, visit [www.symetra.com](http://www.symetra.com).

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