

Annuitants Jill Nilsen and Melanie Mills have been working with the CUSD#1 Excellence in Education Foundation Board (EEF) on a first ever major fundraising event for the organization. Their goal, and the goal of the board, is to raise enough money to create an endowment fund that will support EEF teacher grants to enhance classroom learning into the future. In retirement, both are contributing to a project that enriches our community. You can support their efforts and local schools at the same time by attending or donating to the "Homecoming Happening" on October 4th (coinciding with CHS homecoming) at the Doudna Arts Center at EIU. You can buy tickets at the Doudna Box Office, from board members, or online at doudnatix.com. More information is included in attachments to this email.

During the course of the evening, fifteen outstanding graduates from Charleston schools in the fields of medicine, politics, law, athletics, business, education, and the arts will be honored. It will be an evening of wonderful food, silent auctions, entertainment (a variety show), and testimonials from Charleston teachers and graduates addressing the high quality education provided in the Charleston schools. Former Governor Jim Edgar, a CHS alumnus, will serve as host and emcee for the formal program at the Doudna Arts Center at EIU.

Over the past 20 years, the EEF has awarded over \$400,000 to support the enrichment of creative/supportive classroom teaching environments and enhancement of educational opportunities for our children. The success of this event will help to ensure the sustainability of the grant program into the future. As Mills put it, "I joined the EEF board because I strongly believe that the quality of life in our community is directly related to the quality of education in our schools. Providing resources for teachers to excel just makes good sense."

Annuitants can contact Nilsen (jfnilsen@eiu.edu) or Mills (mbmills@eiu.edu) or EEF President Jeanne Dau (dauconsulting@gmail.com) with any questions or for additional information. This is just one example of EIU annuitants lending their expertise to the community as they continue to "work" after retirement.

Melanie Mills, Ph.D.