



Otto Bremer Trust commits \$250,000 to support service-learning in hundreds of schools across Minnesota

– WE Schools to benefit from grant in the 2019/2020 school year –

St. Paul, MN (December 16, 2019) – Today, [WE](#) announced that the [Otto Bremer Trust](#) will continue its long-standing support for the organization with an investment of \$250,000 that will help to further develop and expand WE Schools, WE’s free, yearlong service-learning program, to include thousands of teachers and students across Minnesota.

Since 2012, Otto Bremer Trust has been supporting WE as a founding partner in Minnesota, enabling WE to deliver its innovative WE Schools programming state-wide. Thanks to the Otto Bremer Trust’s support, WE’s programming will be able to reach schools and youth groups in urban and rural areas across the state while innovating new program modules that will explore social issues such as social entrepreneurship and youth well-being.

Since launching the program, WE has engaged over 560 primary and secondary schools in Minnesota who have collectively volunteered nearly three million hours and fundraised over \$4.6 million for local and global organizations.

“We have been proud to partner with WE since helping them launch in Minnesota eight years ago,” says Brian Lipschultz, Co-CEO and Trustee, Otto Bremer Trust. “WE’s core resonating message about the importance of service to others is more important today than ever. The OBT Trustees make this investment knowing that the future of our country – actually our world – depends on a generation that values “we” more than “me.”

[WE Schools](#) provides teachers with access to free educational resources and action campaigns that encourage students to learn about critical social issues and develop ways to tackle them. The program guides students through the action planning process, helping them create meaningful change on local and global issues they’re passionate about while developing strong life skills for success beyond the classroom. WE Schools operates in over 18,000 schools globally and is proven to increase academic engagement, civic engagement as well as college and workplace readiness. After participating in WE Schools during the 2018/2019 academic year, 71% of educators agree that youth have developed stronger communication skills, 79% agree that youth demonstrate increased leadership among their peers and 71% agree that youth now display a greater enthusiasm for learning.

Made possible in Minnesota by the Otto Bremer Trust and other longstanding supporters, WE Schools’ extensive program offerings are available virtually to educators and students, connecting them with a larger global network of 120 countries already accessing WE’s virtual programming. As WE continues to innovate new and dynamic programs for digital and virtual accessibility, students and teachers can



engage in meaningful service learning through a series of programs that WE has launched in the past year, including,

- **WE Teachers**: A new, no-cost program for any teacher across America, providing free resources and training to support them in addressing critical social issues with their class.
- **WE Well-being**: A new initiative from WE that empowers youth, educators and families with tools and resources to promote their own well-being and the well-being of their community.
- **WE Social Entrepreneurs**: A program which equips young people with the skills, knowledge and resources to create their own social enterprise, merging charity and business to create sustainable impact.
- **AP with WE Service**: A new college level learning program that offers AP teachers the opportunity to incorporate service-learning into all AP course, enabling students to engage with relevant coursework through the lens of service in local and global context.
- **Global Classrooms**: Through the use of Microsoft Teams, WE's Global Classroom is an engaging, virtual-event series that removes the typical barriers of a four-walled classroom to unite young people and educators around the world.
- **WE Day Connect**: The world's largest virtual celebration of social good, an engaging and inclusive online WE Day event that invites students, educators and schools from around the world to come together to share their actions of impact, inspire and celebrate one another.

“Because of the Otto Bremer Trust’s investment, teachers and students across Minnesota will be able to access tool kits for their classrooms on topics ranging from mental well-being to getting college ready and sharing their social actions on a global scale with like-minded changemakers,” said Craig Kielburger, co-founder, WE. “It has been a privilege to partner with the OBT Trustees to grow these programs in Minnesota. OBT is an extraordinary institution that truly invests for impact. Our students never met Mr. Bremer, but thousands of them will benefit from his legacy and every day we will see how they can truly change the world.”

Minnesota youth are engaged, passionate and socially minded around issues that affect their daily lives, including bullying, local hunger, diversity and inclusion, human rights and more. During the 2018/2019 academic year, WE Schools in Minnesota impacted over 204,000 youth, with 88 percent of educators agreeing that students felt a deeper connection to their local community.

Educators can sign up and access the free curriculum and campaign resources of WE Schools by going to WE.org/weschools and WE Day Connect by going to WE.org/wedayconnect. For more information visit WE.org.

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For more information about WE Schools in Minnesota or to speak with Craig Kielburger, a representative from the Otto Bremer Trust, a local student or teacher participating in WE Schools, please contact:



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About the Otto Bremer Trust

The Otto Bremer Trust is a bank holding company and a private charitable trust based in Saint Paul, Minnesota that works at the intersection of finance and philanthropy. OBT is the 86-percent owner of Bremer Financial Corporation, a regional financial services company, and also manages a diversified investment portfolio. Since its founding, OBT has invested more than \$700 million in people, places, and opportunities in the Upper Midwest.

About WE

[WE](#) is a family of organizations that makes doing good, doable. [WE](#) is made up of [WE Charity](#), empowering domestic and international change, [ME to WE](#), a social enterprise that creates socially conscious products and experiences to help support the charity, and [WE Day](#), filling stadiums around the world with the greatest celebration of social good.

[WE Charity](#) was founded by [New York Times Bestselling authors Craig Kielburger](#) and [Marc Kielburger](#), in 1995, with a mission to fight child labor. WE has since grown and evolved to address the root cause of child labor - extreme poverty. In the past 24 years, [WE](#)'s programs have empowered over 1 million people with clean water, built 1,500 schools and schoolrooms overseas, and empowered more than 200,000 children with access to education.

[WE](#) enables youth and families to better the world—supporting 7,200+ local and global causes by volunteering millions of hours of service, shopping daily with an impact, and raising millions of dollars that directly benefit their local communities and the world.