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VinE receives Agency of the Year Award from United Way of Northeastern Minnesota

Pictured are VinE tutors from the Tower-Soudan School. Front row: Cathy Carlson (site coordinator) Muriel Scott, Diane Meehan. Back row: Lynn Scott, Doug Workman and Cassandra Hainey (program director). Submitted photo.

Volunteers in Education (VinE), a nonprofit dedicated to helping students achieve academic success by providing tutoring services to local students, recently received the Agency of the Year Award from the United Way of Northeastern Minnesota.

So far in the 2016-2017 school year, VinE has served an average of 604 students per month through the work of 80 volunteer tutors. VinE tutors work with students in Northeast Range School in Babbitt, Tower Soudan School, North Woods School in Cook, Cherry School, South Ridge School in Culver, Nelle Shean Elementary in Gilbert, Franklin Elementary in Eveleth, and Eveleth-Gilbert Junior High.

VinE received the Agency of the Year Award for the positive impact the organization has had this past year, along with significant improvements made to the program over the last year.

The United Way focuses on measurable impacts that local nonprofits have in the community; they reviewed information collected from VinE surveys from students, tutors and teachers to help determine the impact tutoring has on local students. Teachers utilizing VinE tutors reported observing a significant positive impact on students. Teachers noticed improvement in 85 percent of students' understanding of the subject matter and 85 percent of students' confidence.

Perhaps the most telling of the improvements made were heard from students, such as "With my tutor, I raised by grade to a B+. This also helped in other classes. I was able to make the B honor roll." One student summed it up the best by saying, "My tutor helped a lot."

The United Way of Northeastern Minnesota provides grants to over 40 partner agencies in the area in addition to fulfilling their own initiatives, making many services available that would not be possible without their support. The United Way helps students succeed by providing funding for organizations like VinE, and also by making students ready to learn through the food sent home with the Buddy Backpack program and encouraging early literacy through the Imagination Library. The United Way invests in "programs that improve academics, encourage youth development that are intervention-based, addressing issues early."

To learn more about how you can get involved with helping students succeed, visit www.vine-mn.org or call 218-404-5742.

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