

KAI's Theresa Funke Memorial

Fine Arts Scholarship



THERESA FUNKE

The creation and teaching of art were the focus of Theresa Funke throughout her life. Growing up in Evansville, Indiana, art quickly became a passion for her in her pre-teen and teenage years where she received several awards in city wide shows. She developed these skills in her college, St. Mary's College, and post-graduate studies, American University.

While she pursued other professional interests in adulthood, she continued to paint, draw and explore art. In her mid 40's, Theresa returned full time to art by obtaining a teaching degree from Northern Illinois University. As a NIU student, Theresa observed Bonnie Whildin's art class at Kaneland. Theresa found her first job at Lincolnway High School, but after two years, a full time elementary art position opened up at an elementary school in Kaneland, working in the same room alongside Bonnie Whildin. During the student teaching observation, Bonnie had explained the idea of a Fine Arts Festival. She wanted to bring professional artists to rural Kaneland for her families and students to learn about being an artist. Theresa loved the idea and plans began to propose the idea to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. McCormick. When the two new grade schools were built in Elburn and Sugar Grove, Bonnie and Theresa were assigned to each school respectively and together, they held the first festival in Kaneland in 1998.

Theresa loved teaching art to all her students from grade school to high school. At whatever age her students were, she explored with the students how to create art following tried and true principles. In order to foster other creative pursuits, Theresa studied and taught photography, jewelry and ceramics. As a result of her focus on personal instruction in the classroom setting, many of her students received local and national awards. Theresa continued to teach until her untimely death at the age of 59 in 2011. In 2014, the Board of Directors of the Kaneland Arts Initiative voted to rename the Kaneland Arts Initiative Fine Arts Scholarship to honor Theresa and her passion for students and the Arts.

THE SCHOLARSHIP

The mission of the Kaneland Arts Initiative is to encourage people's involvement in, appreciation of, and support for artistic endeavors and fostering the development of artistic abilities. The Theresa Funke Memorial Fine Arts Scholarship is for Kaneland High School students who intend to major in a Fine Art in college.

These Fine Arts can be any one or more of the following:

- visual art (including graphic arts)
- music
- theatre
- dance
- music/art therapy
- any education of the arts disciplines listed
- others (video game creation, stage management, screenwriting, etc)

Strong candidates are those who have participated in the Arts both in and out of Kaneland High School and have references from artistic people from the activities listed. Candidates are also required to write a brief essay indicating those who have inspired them to focus on the Arts as a degree in college and how they hope to inspire others.