

Prior to opening his store, Store Director Chad Clark knew neighbors in Westfield, Ind. were enthusiastic about having a new Meijer in town. The diverse, thriving community is known for being a great place to raise a family, so having a supercenter in the neighborhood would save time and simplify shopping trips.

He also knew its neighbors had been challenged in unforeseen ways, so he wanted to find a way to help those who struggled during the pandemic have a chance to be part of its recovery in 2021. As team members completed training and continued stocking shelves for opening day, Chad saw an opportunity to make donations to three non-profit organizations that could bring smiles, smarts, and recreation to Westfield's teachers and local families.

"I knew how hard our team members were working to prepare a new store amid unprecedented challenges," Chad said. "Our teachers and students in Westfield also worked hard this year, so my goal was to find local partners where our support would be impactful for them."

Chad and team members from his store surprised the Westfield Education Foundation in early May with a check for \$10,000.

"Community partners like Meijer help us meet our mission of supporting students and staff at Westfield Washington Schools," said Brian Tomamichel, CFO for the Westfield Washington Schools. "Following a year of so many unanticipated costs, the new store's generous donation provides the opportunity for grants and scholarships, allowing our teachers funding to further engage students."

Supporting the nine schools in the Westfield Washington District, Brian said the funds have already provided principals an opportunity to keep working with students this summer, providing extra support, meals, and creative activities that support their academic growth and well-being. The Foundation is also reviewing grant requests from teachers for future projects.

Next, Chad and his team chose to focus on recreation, donating \$10,000 to The YMCA of Westfield's proposed state-of-the-art wellness center and \$15,000 to Westfield Youth Sports of Indiana (WYSI). While the wellness center is still seeking funding before it can begin construction, the impact would be huge for families in the community. The donation to WYSI is already helping local kids play in this summer's little league program.

"The generosity of Chad's store fully funds our scholarship program, so that deserving, young Westfield athletes and their families do not need to worry about the cost of participation," said Adam Esslinger, president of WYSI. "We were surprised at such generosity before the store opened and look forward to their ongoing community presence in Westfield."

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Additional assets available online: \_\_\_\_\_ (3)

<https://meijercommunity.com/Westfield-Store-Donations-Benefit-Youth-Sports,-Students-and-Teachers>