The Greater Waco Advanced Manufacturing Academy (GWAMA).

1. Project description – GWAMA began a construction science curriculum two years ago and masonry is one of the five trades included in this new curriculum. BMI supported this initiative with a $5,000 donation at the beginning of the program and recently GWAMA has come to us requesting both teaching, equipment, tools and material help. We have agreed to help provide all four requests and would like for the Foundation’s help to defray the tool expense (the instructor will be one of our retired Superintendents and any funds granted by the Foundation would not be used to pay the instructor)
2. Project objective –
   1. The Greater Waco Advanced Manufacturing Academy strives to achieve the following objectives:  
       - Improved student achievement through career-centered vocational learning  
       - Increase student opportunities through a variety of technical offerings  
       - Provide students with expanded choices in educational opportunities  
       - Hold students accountable for meeting measurable outcome
   2. The masonry project for the Greater Waco Advanced Manufacturing Academy strives to achieve the following objectives:  
       - By graduation, students that have chosen masonry as their primary focus will be ready to be hired as a competent apprentice mason  
       - Will have completed a minimum of the OSHA 10 hour course and have their forklift operator’s license
3. Background – In the 1990’s the Texas Education Association, following the Texas Legislature’s wishes, scaled back on vocational training throughout the State, preferring to focus on making students graduating from high school ready for college studies. As time passed, it became obvious that many children were not being well served by this change in emphasis. As the State began to relax these restrictions on vocational learning, school districts all over the state began planning for new vocational schools. The Waco Independent School District was one of the leaders in this push and founded both GWAMA and GWAHCA (Greater Waco Advanced Health Care Academy). Initially GWAMA’s scope did not include construction trades. That has now been remedied and five trades, including masonry, are available to learn
4. Scope of project to include what work is included in the project and what are the deliverables (report, video, presentation, etc.) – GWAMA’s curriculum begins when a student enters their 10th grade year. As they progress to their 11th grade year, they are expected to focus on one trade (but also be exposed to the other trades) if they choose the construction curriculum, in this case, masonry. They will study and perform masonry construction both their junior and senior years (one full week during each of the annual six-week periods of the school year)
5. Budget to include anticipated expenses – we have priced, through commercial sources available to BMI, the items necessary for an apprentice tool bag as well as all safety items. The total amount for 15 students would be $11,465 (Tools @ $464.35; Levels @ $299.99; BMI will provide all safety items). If this sum exceeds possible funding limits, any sum would also be welcomed

The Masonry Foundation Board got creative with this request. The Board partnered with Marshalltown Trowel to work together to fulfill certain equipment requests from grant requests. Marshalltown will work with the Foundation Board to accept tool requests. Marshalltown will make an in-kind contribution to the foundation to help fulfill this need. It is expected that at some point all the requests may not be able to be met and the Board will work with Marshalltown at that point to draft criteria for awarding the requests. This request was fulfilled completely.

Board rationale for supporting the program

The Board would like to fulfill as many requests for tools for programs as possible. That being the case, they also understand that doing so could open a flood gate of requests. Working with Marshalltown to fulfill some of these requests will be a win, win for all parties as the school will get their needed tools without spending valuable resources.

Without the support of Marshalltown’s gracious in-kind donation, the Board would likely of had to pass on this request as they were concerned that future requests would inundate the Board and would potentially consume the resources of the Foundation. They were thrilled to develop a new partnership with Marshalltown to fulfill some of these requests.