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Voya Financial Honors Minneapolis Teachers with \$2,000 Grant for Innovative Program

Since 1996, the Voya Unsung Heroes initiative has awarded more than \$5 million to help the nation's educators fund creative teaching ideas

Voya Financial, Inc. (NYSE: VOYA), a leading provider of workplace retirement solutions, including savings plans for K-12 educators, announced today that Laurel Engman and Anna Sharratt, teachers at Dowling Elementary School in Minneapolis, have received a \$2,000 grant as part of the company's 2018 Voya Unsung Heroes awards competition.

Through the Voya Unsung Heroes program, Voya Financial awards grants to K-12 educators nationwide to honor their innovative teaching methods, creative educational projects, and ability to positively influence their students. For more than 20 years, the program has awarded over \$5 million in grants to more than 2,000 educators across the United States.

"Our Unsung Heroes program continues to recognize teachers who go above and beyond to inspire today's students in the classroom," said Heather Lavalley, president of Tax-Exempt Markets at Voya Financial. "We are proud to honor teachers like Laurel Engman and Anna Sharratt whose inspiring program is making a difference in the lives of young people. This commitment and passion for teaching closely aligns with our focus at Voya on helping all Americans prepare for their unique financial futures."

Engman's and Sharratt's innovative teaching idea, "Wednesday in the Woods," focuses on providing the Dowling School's kindergarten program with meaningful outdoor learning experiences, integrated with core academic subjects. With the Voya grant, Engman and Sharratt are able to expand an existing partnership with a nearby school's program. Through the program, the students will focus on social and emotional development as well as supporting interdisciplinary learning. This project will provide meaningful, recurrent outdoor learning opportunities to a group of children who otherwise may not have access to nature, laying the groundwork for a lifelong connection to the natural world. The team's research shows that active, outdoor learning can benefit young students in the areas of creativity, problem-solving, executive function, academic performance, focus, motor development, social skills and communication.

Selected from a group of more than 1,200 applicants, Engman and Sharratt are one of only 100 winners across the country who will receive this award to help fund and bring their program to life. In addition, they will now compete with other finalists for one of the top three prizes — an additional \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$25,000 from Voya Financial.

To learn more about this year's winning projects, as well as those from previous years, visit the Unsung Heroes website at Voya.com/UnsungHeroes. Applications for the 2019 Voya Unsung Heroes awards are currently being accepted through the website until April 30, 2019.

NEWS RELEASE



Unsung Heroes is part of Voya's broader efforts to empower teachers to become leaders by promoting their careers, recognizing high-achieving accomplishments, providing training opportunities and offering financial support to achieve their goals.

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About Voya Financial®

Voya Financial, Inc. (NYSE: VOYA), helps Americans plan, invest and protect their savings — to get ready to retire better. Serving the financial needs of approximately 14.3 million individual and institutional customers in the United States, Voya is a *Fortune 500* company that had \$8.6 billion in revenue in 2017. The company had \$528 billion in total assets under management and administration as of June 30, 2018. With a clear mission to make a secure financial future possible — one person, one family, one institution at a time — Voya's vision is to be America's Retirement Company®. Certified as a "Great Place to Work" by the Great Place to Work® Institute, Voya is equally committed to conducting business in a way that is socially, environmentally, economically and ethically responsible. Voya has been recognized as one of the 2018 World's Most Ethical Companies® by the Ethisphere Institute; one of the 2018 World's Most Admired Companies by *Fortune* magazine; as a member of the Bloomberg Gender Equality Index; and as a "Best Place to Work for Disability Inclusion" on the Disability Equality Index by Disability:IN. For more information, visit voya.com. Follow Voya Financial on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and Twitter [@Voya](#).