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## Voya Financial Honors Cincinnati Teachers With \$2,000 Voya Unsung Heroes Grant for Innovative Teaching Program

***Since 1996, the Voya Unsung Heroes program has awarded more than \$5 million to help the nation's educators turn creative teaching ideas into reality.***

Voya Financial, Inc. (NYSE: VOYA), a leading provider of workplace retirement solutions, including savings plans for K-12 educators, announced today that Lori Cooper and Justin Harris, teachers at Western Hills University High School in Cincinnati have received a \$2,000 grant as part of the company's 2017 [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.

"At Voya, we are proud to recognize the many teachers who go above and beyond to inspire a love of learning in their classrooms," said Heather Lavalley, president of Tax-Exempt Markets at Voya Financial. "Understanding that we all learn differently, these teachers have developed unique programs to engage the minds of each and every student. This aligns with our desire to help all Americans prepare for their unique financial futures. We are honored to empower Lori Cooper and Justin Harris to continue to impact the lives of young people who will one day be the future leaders of our communities."

Cooper's and Harris' innovative teaching idea, "Defenders of the Mill Creek," focuses on using challenge-based learning alongside an engineering design process to improve the quality of the local watershed in Cincinnati, the Mill Creek. Students involved in the project will monitor the health of the local watershed throughout the course of the school year, visiting various sites along the creek and performing chemical tests. Through their findings, they will educate the local community on the need to reduce the amount of water consumed on a daily basis. Students will examine how local water usage affects the watershed by tracing the flow of water from their home to the wastewater treatment plant. This project presents a unique opportunity for the students to help solve a societal problem that is of particular significance to the local community.

Selected from a group of more than 1,200 applicants, Cooper and Harris are among 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 [Voya Unsung Heroes website](#) (unsungheroes.com). Applications for the 2018 Voya Unsung Heroes awards are currently being accepted through the website until April 30, 2018.

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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 13.6 million individual and institutional customers in the United States, Voya is a *Fortune 500* company that had \$11 billion in revenue in 2016. The company had \$517 billion in total assets under management and administration as of June 30, 2017. 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 and has been recognized as one of the 2017 World’s Most Ethical Companies® by the Ethisphere Institute, as well as one of the Top Green Companies in the U.S., by *Newsweek* magazine. For more information, visit [voya.com](http://voya.com). Follow Voya Financial on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Voya) and Twitter [@Voya](https://twitter.com/Voya).

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