



**ROMEO
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS**

GOOD NEWS ACROSS 'R' DISTRICT

October 24, 2023



A donation from Four County Community Foundation in the amount of \$1,200 helped make a free thrift store for Romeo High School students possible. Pictured during the grand opening on Oct. 18 are, from left, Andrea Frederick, president of the Four County Community Foundation's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), RHS senior Ava Gedert, and Pam Gedert, RHS SERVE Coordinator and YAC Advisor.

Romeo Restored: Thrift store trending at RHS

Previously known as the Clothing Closet, Romeo High School's thrift store is back, rebranded as Romeo Restored: A free thrift store.

When the new high school opened in the fall of 2019, the store was moved to the renovated building, but stalled due to COVID. Pam Gedert, RHS's SERVE Coordinator and National Honor Society Advisor, agreed to take on the job of getting it back up and running.

"Through brainstorming, we came up with the idea of a free thrift store for students to take away the stigma from kids who may need to use it by opening it up to everybody," Mrs. Gedert explained, adding there was the additional advantage of "the fact that thrifting is super popular."



Romeo Restored is now open for students to browse the clothing racks.

Mrs. Gedert's vision was a store that was trendy, warm, inviting and fun. She wanted it to be a place where the students would want to come in and shop.

To make the vision a reality, she applied for a grant from the Four County Community Foundation to pay for essentials like shelving, clothing racks and lighting. Her daughter, RHS senior Ava Gedert, created the logo and the mural along one wall of the shop.

A \$1,200 grant was awarded by the Youth Advisory Committee of the Four County Community Foundation. YAC includes representation from each of the school districts in the community, including Almont, Armada, Capac, Dryden, Imlay City, Oxford, Richmond and Romeo.

"Four times a year we get to award grants to people and this was one of them," said Andrea Frederick, YAC president. "I was really excited about this one."

In fact, the Almont senior decided to visit the school to see the grant funds in action and presented the ceremonial check during the grand opening on October 18.

The store had a soft opening earlier this year, with about a dozen students finding outfits for the homecoming dance. Other students stopped by during set-up and asked to look around. If they found something they liked, Mrs. Gedert told them they were welcome to take it.

Set hours haven't been established, but it will be open during lunch several days a week, depending on Mrs. Gedert's schedule, and one day after school for the ninth graders to stop in. The staff is welcome to bring students anytime and any student who is interested in shopping simply needs to ask Mrs. Gedert and she said she will be happy to take them to the store.

While the racks are filled with clothing, several shelves are still empty, awaiting toiletries, socks, underwear and other necessities. Another planned addition is a student food pantry. An [Amazon wish list](#) has been created to help fill these shelves.

Clothing donations will be accepted, but will depend on specific needs, student interests and storage space, Mrs. Gedert explained. The best way to keep up to date on future needs and ways to donate is to follow RHS SERVE & NHS on Facebook.



RHS senior Ava Gedert designed the logo and created the mural on the wall of Romeo Restored. Ava is attending Kendall College of Art & Design of Ferris State University in Grand Rapids, where she plans to pursue graphic design and illustration.

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