

KIDS BENEFIT FROM AUBURN EDUCATION FOUNDATION GRANT AWARDS

After an energetic year of fund-raising activities, gaining community support, and receiving a substantial grant from Hometown Realty, The Auburn Education Foundation enjoyed its greatest year of giving awards. During the 2003-2004 school year, the Foundation approved 40 mini-grants of up to \$250 and seven maxi-grant of up to \$1000. Almost \$16,000 in grants were approved to enrich programs for Auburn's school kids. Since the reorganization in 2001, AEF has awarded a of 109 grants totaling \$36,000. Proposals have come from classroom and special education teachers, computer lab and library techs, and even office staff who want to help make their school a cheerful place for learning to flourish.

Throughout the district, funds to improve the Reading and Language Arts programs remain a high priority among teachers. Learning phonics and basic reading becomes easier with programs such as Reading Rods used by Theresa Tucker of Auburn Elementary School. The Versa Tiles Phonics Lab was incorporated into the classroom of Skyridge's Kim Morris. Auburn Elementary's Cathy Gower and Lisa McBroom introduced LeapFrog programs for Learning Centers. Lynn Beckler is using Singlish to accelerate language learning though music, colorful visuals and movement. This program is especially effective with children learning the English language.

Hilve Osella created a Literature listening center with a cassette player and headphones so Kindergarten children could listen to stories on tape over and over again. Sue Nelson's second graders had the same opportunity Charles Pierce of Rock Creek reinforced reading fluency with the software edition of Read Naturally. He envisions a reading fluency lab which could be used before and after school hours. Craig Lechman of Alta Vista and Joy Nesmith of Auburn El also had children listen to stories and practice public speaking through the use of classroom listening and recording stations.

Co-Writer 4000 software will help children to write more in Maureen Rodarte's Rock Creek special education class. Hand held Spell Checkers increase the writing and spelling power of E. V. Cain students taught by Marsha Dolkas. Gloria and Mark Maxwell published three personal magazines which included research, stories and poetry written by students. They focused on the writing process from prewrite to publishing. The Larry Ford award was given for an innovative idea to develop a software loaning library which would be accessible to all Skyridge teachers for classroom use. To customize reading and writing materials for many ability levels, Sharon Bertrando from Skyridge purchased Clicker 4 software. With the purchase of on-site licenses, the loaning library of educational materials is feasible. She also uses the computer and software program called "Build Ability" as a tool to generate literacy enriched lessons and activities.

A reading intervention program, Accelerated Reading is gaining recognition district-wide. Introduced by Juliet Hamilton of Alta Vista School, the Accelerated Reading program is now used in classrooms and resource rooms throughout the district. Awards for books, quizzes, and software were granted to Doris Feenstra, Heather Watkins, John Edgerton, Laurie Westmith, and Mark and Gloria Maxwell of Skyridge School; Juliet Hamilton, of Alta Vista School; George Loveday, Nancy Tellefson, and Carol Wright of Auburn Elementary School; and, Lysa Sassman, and Susan Spense of Rock Creek School.

Barbara Whitley from Auburn Elementary will introduce her Kindergarten children to the life cycle of the butterfly. She will also use a roll-around cage for the pet guinea pig so children can observe its behavior both indoors and out. Gail Burch of Alta Vista recommends the series, "Let's Read and

Find Out” to help students learn the basic and the more difficult science concepts. Leslye Vodden’s Kindergartners will explore their five senses through hands-on investigation and experimentation.

A proposal to establish a Video Library to support Auburn Elementary’s fifth grade Social Studies curriculum won the attention of The Daughters of the American Revolution. The DAR award will provide initial funds for Margie Bauman, Donna Homes, and Lisa Borden to order films. Skyridge’s Charlene Messner will reinforce geography skills for second graders with a new globe. At E. V. Cain, Kelly Bennett used navigational compasses to stimulate interest in mapping. Kathy Koester and Tom Sarradet are purchasing historical fiction to bring history alive in the classroom.

An outstanding Medieval Faire was held at E. V. Cain. In this one-day experience of living history, seventh-graders rotated through interactive stations as candle-making, combining herbs common to the time period, playing period games, observing black-smithing demonstrations, and more. Strolling musicians, food booths, and even a Renaissance Queen made this an unforgettable event. This event received the Fall 2003 Judy Harrison award.

The Symphony Goes to School, a recipient of the Spring 2004 Judy Harrison award, is spearheaded by retiree, Audrey Mueller. Each year, members of the Auburn Symphony Orchestra perform concerts in the four elementary schools. A teacher’s guide and CD of the music heard at the concert is given to each teacher. Auburn El’s kindergarten teacher, Hilve Osella, believes that singing and movement to music promotes good mental and physical health and helps children to learn. Classical music is played during work time to provide a soothing atmosphere.

Immediate Photo Feedback for Joy Nesmith’s Auburn El students when they attend field trips, assemblies and other school activities is made possible with a digital camera. Connie Gill and Kelly Lardner, office staff at Skyridge, are actively involved in building a healthy school climate. They received a digital camera and software to create student awards and to make the school newsletters more interesting. They post pictures of “The Student of the Month” and other special school events.

Computers and support materials have become a staple throughout the schools. An Alpha Smart program and a computer hub will integrate donated computers in Pat Burn’s fourth grade classroom. The Steve Brown Award goes to E. V. Cain’s Monika Brockway, Carol Stryker, and Kelly Bennett for their innovative Web-Welcome Everyone. Eighth graders are trained as Big Buddies for incoming 6th graders. Conflict Management and Peer Counseling equip students to befriend and mentor their struggling peers. Debra Gudge, computer lab technician, has selected Kid Pix software to inspire creativity and support the core curriculum through the Rock Creek Computer Lab.

Creativity and enthusiasm are evident in the varied proposals. How fortunate that Auburn has a staff that seeks out the best for students. The Auburn Education Foundation is excited to support their efforts. The Foundation raises funds through various fund-raising activities, grants, memorial gifts, sponsorships and memberships. Funds are accessed from the foundation through the submission of a Mini-and Maxi-Grant Application. We thank everyone who has helped raise funds to support worthwhile programs for school children. The Foundation slogan is, “Making Dreams Come True”. We invite all staff and community to continue to join us in that endeavor. Together we do make dreams come true.