



Redding Education Foundation

...fostering the fulfillment of learning at every age

December, 2005

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Dear Redding Neighbors:

Three years of investment in innovative educational practices is bearing fruit for education in Redding. Seeds sown from the generous support of the Redding Education Foundation (REF) yield benefits that far exceed the \$100,000 invested in grants to teachers, technology, community educational initiatives, and cultural efforts. REF thanks the numerous families, individuals, corporations, and community partnerships for their support.

Established in November of 2002 as a 501 © (3) not for profit, REF's mission is "to mobilize and enhance opportunities to promote educational excellence so that the Redding community may better experience the fulfillment of learning at every age." REF investments reap results; mobile labs at John Read Middle School, SMART Boards at Redding Elementary School, and online resources in lieu of textbooks at Joel Barlow HS. Perhaps you borrowed an interesting book on brain learning connection from the Mark Twain Library or participated in our "Let's Chat" discussions or witnessed Peter Pan fly in John Read Middle School's spring production. All resulted from grants by REF in concert with the expertise, creativity, and dedication of educators and community members. All projects were beyond the scope of approved town and education budgets. Please partner with us in this exciting and rewarding endeavor. Your generous support will cultivate lifelong learning in Redding.

How does Redding benefit from an Education Foundation? The economics are clear. Rising costs to maintain educational excellence challenges the limitations of our residential tax base. The opportunities are clear. Today, there is an unprecedented array of instruments both intellectual and technological that creates greater efficiencies in the acquisition of knowledge and depth of understanding for all. REF embraces our community values and vision for education, and marshals resources to enhance learning opportunities for all of Redding.

With the community's collective talents, expertise, and financial generosity, REF will strategically invest resources, creating new learning opportunities to promote intellectual growth at greater economies. The effectiveness of your Education Foundation is referenced in this letter. Your support, financial and otherwise, will enable us to continue to make a difference. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your contribution. Your support is gratefully appreciated.

The REF Board of Directors extends to you and your family best wishes for the holiday season.

Kate Ebbott
President,
Redding Education Foundation
938-8383

GRANTS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The Grants for the Enhancement of Educational Practice (GEEP) program allows teachers and administrators to apply for grants of up to \$2,000 to implement innovative practices in their classroom utilizing technology, hands-on experiences, professional development, and/or exposure to cultural diversity. Over the last two years, REF funded 13 grants totaling over \$17,000. Grants include smart boards, a water garden, online subscriptions in lieu of textbooks, software, after school programs, professional development and other great innovations. A detailed description of grant requirements and awards may be found on our website (www.reddigeducationfoundation.org).

The purpose of the GEEP program is twofold. Foremost, GEEP encourages and celebrates the best in our educators. Secondly, we hope the germination of ideas will eventually grow to benefit the ER9 community. Next year, we will partner with the Easton Learning Foundation (ELF) to offer grants to Joel Barlow High School (JBHS).

Congratulations and thanks to the teachers whose dedication and creative vision benefit all. The following summarizes five grants awarded in the '04-'05 academic year.

Interactive Classroom through Distance Learning *Judy Garamella and Jennifer Desmarais, JBHS.* The grant funded a subscription to "The Columbia American History On-Line (CAHO) Project", college level e-seminars with point-counterpoint discussion, and document based questions to augment exposure to great minds on American history.

SMART Boards *Lisa Welp and Elise Glynn* SMART Board technology used to adapt instruction to students' various learning styles. (See <http://www.smarttech.com/education/impact.asp> for a description of this technology's impact on learning). The grant funds the purchase of SMART Boards, related equipment, to be used in Mrs. Welp's classroom and the Computer Lab. The project includes professional development and technical support to train all RES teachers in the breath of applications. The SMART Board in the Computer Lab is available for use by all of RES students.

USA Playground Map for the Children of RES *Karen Feld, Redding Elementary School* A map of the US painted on the asphalt encourages visual interactive learning at RES. Classroom lessons integrate use of the map. Lesson plans developed will be shared with all RES teachers.

Smart Boards *Judy Boyle, Rebecca Richards and Francine Lamonica, Redding Elementary School* SMART Board technology available in various settings, including small and large group presentations will engage students in active learning and support different learning styles. The project calls for the use of the technology across various disciplines, with applications in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Geography and multi-disciplinary lessons. Grant applicants expect to see increased participation, greater on-task behavior and students demonstration of higher order thinking skills.

Art History Elective Course *Randall Smith, Joel Barlow High School* This grant made possible a new Art History elective course at Joel Barlow High School and funded the necessary purchase of a projector for use in the course. The projector enabled presentation of images in a dramatic and effective manner so as to immerse the student in the subject and time of the piece. Words alone are not adequate to convey knowledge and understanding the visual image is an imperative requirement to facilitate discussion and debate. The constant availability of a quality projector made this possible.

2006 GEEP Applications are now being accepted thru June 1, 2006. The GEEP Application may be downloaded from www.reddigeducationfoundation.org. For more information, contact Cathy Slavin at slavins@optonline.net .

GRANTS FOR THE CULTURAL ARTS

In celebration of the wealth of creative talent residing in Redding, REF encourages and supports cultural projects and programs for the community. Four Cultural Arts Grants have been awarded..

❖ REF and Georgetown Land Development agreed to make the Wire Mill Arts Center a reality. REF invested the seed money and resources to create the Wire Mill Arts Foundation (WMAF). Georgetown Land Development will build the Wire Mill Arts Center comprised of a black box, dance studios and a film screening room managed by the WMAF. The Center's mission is to be a venue for the highest expression of arts in all it's varied forms. Design is underway with opening anticipated in 2008.

❖ REF supported the JBHS Chorus performance at Carnegie Hall, and the JRMS Odyssey of the Mind team at the world wide competition in Washington DC.

❖ REF awarded a grant to the JRMS Players to fund the technical equipment necessary to enable Peter Pan to fly in their spring production.

MOBILE COMPUTER LABS A SUCCESS AT JRMS

Thanks to the generosity of nearly 95 Redding families and organizations, two mobile computer labs are now in full use at JRMS. REF leveraged private donations with corporate monies to fund the labs, a model for how we work to maximize every dollar donated to REF. The campaign marshaled sufficient resources to deliver not one but two mobile labs equipped with 35 laptops, the majority of which are IBM Think Pads, machines that far exceed the specifications originally requested. In all, the two JRMS Computer Labs are equipped with: 21 IBM R50 ThinkPad computers, purchased at 20% of their retail value, 9 IBM Think Pads, also purchased at a significant discount 2 new LexMark laser printers, 2 Gateway carts and one wireless LCD projector, 5 compatible laptops purchased with monies allocated by the Board of Education to replace obsolete machines. That REF was able to fulfill this request on time, with equipment that exceeded expectations, is a credit to Redding's support for educational excellence.

refQUEST...

Save the dates! "Let's Chat" continues

Jan 11 7:30 pm Meadow Ridge Auditorium.

Dan Burstein, bestselling author of "The Secrets of the Code" series, exemplifies creativity thru his series on "The Secrets of the Code, Secrets of Angels and Demons" and "Secrets of The Widow's Son". Mr. Burstein will be available to sign his books following the discussion.

Jan 25 7:00pm Mark Twain Library

Robert Cook, Headmaster of the Harvey Upper School offers intriguing neurological insights with educational and developmental implications in a discussion of the teenage brain under construction titled "(What) Were They Thinking?"

Reservations are kindly requested. Please phone Kate Ebbott at 938-8383

In partnership with the Mark Twain Library, the Redding Education Foundation launched its first effort to evolve "adult ed" into a considered approach to learning in the Digital Age called refQuest. **In the spirit of innovation, we chose to depart from the typical model of Adult Ed and focus on one topic for the year. We began at the (neurological) root of learning, The Brain Learning Connection. With the help of experts at Crown House Publishing, a collection of significant work from experts in the neurological and educational field was donated to the Mark Twain Library for the community's use. A list of the 25 titles, and websites for further exploration may be found on our website. REF complimented the "independent study" with a series of discussions; entitled "Let's Chat" on topics such as brain based learning basics, non-drug treatments for learning differences, and resiliency in the face of genocide. Still to come are programs on developing the adolescent brain entitled "(What) Were They Thinking?" 1 Nurturing Creativity and the Science of Happiness. For information on any**

programs, past or future, visit our website at www.reddingeducationfoundation.org.

Our next year long focus for refQuest beginning in Sept '06 will be the new 3 R's, "Rigor, Relevance, Relationships". This focus highlights principals underlying the strategic plan formulated over the past year by a broad spectrum from the ER9 community and recently adopted by all three Boards of Education in Redding and Easton. We welcome your suggestions and comments for refQUEST. For further information, contact Kate Ebbott at 938-8383.

What's New for 2006?

The Technology Fund: Under development is a Technology Fund to mobilize resources for hardware and software identified by educators as strategically necessary but beyond the scope of the Education budgets. The Technology Fund will collaborate with the ER9 Technology committee to identify projects to be funded by REF initiatives. Currently:

REF is organizing a campaign for an online Writing Practice Program for JRMS students developed by Educational Records Bureau, Inc. Information on this exciting leap in the development of writing skills may be found at www.erblearn.org. Estimated cost of the program is \$8,000

SMART Board technology currently in use at Redding Elementary School is being analyzed for application in selective classrooms throughout the three schools.

The Technology Fund can make a tremendous difference that will have widespread benefits for Redding. We need your talents and support to make it a reality.

OUR THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED TO THE REDDING EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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