

The Decatur Township
Educational Foundation
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Mission Statement

The Decatur Township Educational Foundation's mission is to enhance the quality of already innovative educational programs and projects by generating and distributing financial support and resources that benefit the students of the Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township.



FALL 2009

Report from the Chair

As the Decatur Township Educational Foundation successfully completes its fourth year of operations, we are excited to share with you the results we have achieved, through the dedicated efforts, unfailing wisdom, and financial resources of many individuals and organizations.

You will read that in our fourth year, we raised over \$30,000 to provide grants for Decatur students. Since our inception, we have provided over \$120,000 in grants to Decatur students.

We are especially proud of our Richard G. Lugar Government in Action grant and our Sease Community grants, both of which are important additions to our total grant program. You will read in this report about

the exciting progress of our Alumni Association during this resources, time, and talents to provide these opportunities for our students.

We are fortunate to enjoy a close working relationship with our Decatur Township School Board and our Superintendent. We are thankful for the support of the Decatur Township Board of Education, without whose vision our Foundation would not exist today. We look forward to another great year of fulfilling our mission: raising funds for the sole purpose of the enrichment of



Decatur Township students. For those who have supported this mission since our inception, we thank you. You have made a difference. We encourage all to join us in this "investment for the future."

Patricia A. Poehler
Chairperson

Alumni News & Events Highlights

The Decatur Central Alumni Association is looking forward to the upcoming year. This year's calendar represents our fourth full year of operations. The following members were sown in as officers for the DCHS Alumni Association for 2009.

President – Gary Rusie
1st Vice President – Ramona Frye Moyes
2nd Vice President – Dave Thomas
Secretary – Donna Watkins Rice
Treasurer – Pam Mc David

This year we were proud to take part in the Senator Lugar sign dedication at the Decatur Intermediate Learning Center. There the DCHS Alumni Association made Senator Lugar an honorary alumnus.

We were also privileged to name Beth Lucas and Ken Alman as the first Co-Alumni of the year at the annual Alumni Dinner. We thank them for the outstanding work they do for the youth in Decatur Township.

In the coming year, the alumni association is looking forward to the dedication of the Heritage Room at the high school, as well as the alumni golf outing, Relay for Life, and an updated alumni website.

Early Childhood Center

Learning in Motion – Kristina Spitz, Lisa Wicks
The Brain Gym program is a series of physical movements that have been scientifically proven and researched to improve listening, concentration, memory, reading, writing, organizing, and physical coordination. Preschool and kindergarten teachers are trained on the program for support of Response to Intervention strategies. Students learn higher order learning activities in creative ways.

Early Childhood Center/Lynwood

Anytime Boxes – Cristy Tapp, Kellie Compton
This year-long project encourages parents to be part of their child's education. Shoebox-size boxes give parents resources stored in one place to keep at home or in their car. At a make-and-take night, parents and children come and decorate their box and receive items to put into the box such as letter and number flashcard. Other items for the Anytime Boxes include books, dice, dominos, calendars and sight word cards.

Teaching Independence with "Tasks Galore" – Kim Edwards, Theresa Vasiento
"Tasks Galore" is a system of meaningful individualized tasks designed for children with disabilities like autism to learn functional academics. Each "task" is organized for the student to complete independently, after mastery with one-on-one instruction. Twenty tasks will be created which include fine motor skills learned into a group classroom activity.

Teaching Writing Without Tears – Theresa Vasiento

Children with disabilities have difficulty learning in traditional ways. "Handwriting Without Tears" gives writing a more hands on approach. Through this program, children are introduced to wooden pieces that help them learn sizes and movements that are necessary to form letters. The place the pieces on a stamp and see screen to see what letters the pieces make and then trace over what has been stamped.

Lynwood Elementary

Picure This, Write That – Terri Brosseau
Students explore photography using digital cameras which builds on their natural interest in the world around them. Once "captured" by taking and viewing pictures of themselves, other students and the world around them, the images are used as a

focus for the writing including autobiographies, documentation of science labs, content area writing and recording step to solving math problems.

Recorder Karate – Curtis McGill

"Recorder Karate" is an innovative method of learnin to play this musical instrument by challenging students to achieve their highest level of musical potential. Students receive colored "belts" at the end of each successful level. The digital curriculum provides both written assignments and audio MP3 players for student practice and performance.

Brain Fitness – Amy Harpod

Current brain research shows the need for movement in the learning process. Using the book *Thinking on Your Feet*, implementation of kinesthetic teaching strategies will be used to teach academic concepts in reading, writing, math, social studies and science during physical education class.

Flips for Writing – Jackie Bagosy, Terri Brosseau, Rebecca Ambler, Rachel Green

The fourth grade team will use flip video cameras for literacy projects. In one writing project, students will write a script for a short movie with clay characters. They will write dialogue, create clay characters, and then use Claymation 2.0 to edit their movies, add scenery, props and sound. They will record their own voices to use in the video. Science observations, investigations, and presentations could easily be recorded as well.

Valley Mills Elementary

Family Literacy Backpacks – Nicole Jewell

These twenty take-home kits promote reading and literacy using higher order thinking skills based on Indiana standards. Each kit contains three books based on themes with varying reading levels designed to be used by the entire family. Each backpack has materials for multiple activities related to the theme of the books. The primary goal is to get all family members involved in literacy-based activities that are fun and promote learning.

Scientific Graphic Novels Explain It All! – Chris Hill, Sue Keene

Fourth grade students create science graphic/comic books based on science, language arts, and art standards. Students engage in an intense writing experience based on fictional or non-fictional characters and stories of their own design to describe scientific concepts and principals. These graphic novels are printed for distribution and posted on the school's website.

Adventures in Egypt – Susan Harloff, Chris Hill, Rhonda McCort, Beth Perry, Jill Wilkerson

The Children's Museum is hosting the exhibit *Tutankhamun: The Golden Kind and the Great Pharaohs*. The exhibit will include over 150 artifacts from Egyptian tombs. All 625 Valley Mills students will attend the exhibit. Students will take part in a school-wide exploration of Egypt that includes all grade levels. Multi-curriculum projects will be on display along with artwork from every grade level for the month of October.

We Are Fit For Movement – Blair Dawson, Amie LaRoche

Using the Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit in a classroom of students with significant physical and communication disabilities will offer opportunities for them to increase their motor skills by participating in activities provided by through the system. Wheelchair bound students will engage in sports they are physically unable to play. The students will have "peer buddies" who assist them through the day. Having this project in the classroom will enable students to increase their social skills by playing a sport with their peers.

West Newton Elementary

An Interactive Tour of Alaska – Tracey Krell
Welcome to Alaska! Our journey begins with many questions about the culture of Alaskan life as a compliment to the second grade curriculum. Second grad students create clay totem poles that have cultural lore and myth attached. Alaskan weather is charted and compared to our Indianapolis weather. Students keep an art journal of their tour with pictures and notes about what is discovered along the way including why salmon swim upstream in a study of the fishing industry. Students interact directly with a team of four adventurers allowing students to ask questions and send resources to the group.

Leaping Into Literacy – Scott Vogel

The "Leapster" handheld independent learning tools provide students with opportunities for interventions that are "child specific" so they follow the needs of the

learner. These targeted interventions are fun and engaging and fill the differentiated instructional need of a diverse classroom of first graders. Students use Leapster on a daily basis in the classroom as an independent activity during Literacy Stations.

Going Green to the Grocery – Jennifer Coffman, Tracey Krell

West Newton third graders will learn about conservation through the three "R's" of conservation: reduce, reuse and recycle. Students will recycle old papers to create new paper, reuse trash by turning it into something useful, and learn the need for reducing by doing a math project that calculates the amount of trash a family uses in a week. Students will decorate canvas bags with environmental message and hen track how often they use their bags and how many plastic bags they save.



My Mummies House – Tracy Krell

Students will have the unique opportunity to travel to a construction site in Egypt to see the reconstruction of two Egyptian Pyramids via camcorder and internet. They will also see actual Pyramid remains. Students will question a guest speaker about the role that math plays in the reconstruction of the pyramids. Students will see the correlation to great miracles of art and mathematical calculations. There will be an emphasis on careers and how interwoven math, science and art can be.

Decatur Discovery Academy

Science is Fun – Joan Tejchma

"Chemistry Topics" is a class offered to students in grades seven through nine that incorporates basic chemistry and its principles through basic lab report writing and experimentation. Students write a lab manual to be used with third and fourth graders using age appropriate activities. Lab equipment is used to perform the activities and experiments. The class works with these younger students to perform the labs at DDA.

VEing My Students – Robert Schutte
Students work on robotics programs and compete with other schools on the performance of their robots. Computer programming is used in which a trial and error method of completing the project is employed by the students.



Providing young people with the best possible education is becoming more and more challenging with each passing school year and the hurdles that students clear each day in the educational setting seem to grow higher each year. Students also need valuable real-life experiences to accompany the fundamental learning and understanding. A partnership of educators and the community and business members has been created through the Decatur Township Educational Foundation (DTEF) to enrich our young people's lives. Thus the opportunity to find important programs in technology, the arts, scholastic enrichment, professional development and cultural enrichment is the purpose of the DTEF through its grant program.

SMALL GRANT PROGRAMS

Decatur Intermediate Learning Center Blue Academy

Bioluminescence: Go With the Glo – Jean Trusedell
Have you ever wondered why fireflies glow or why plankton in the ocean takes on amazing hues when the waves splash at night? All sixth grade students in the school collect necessary data through experiments with sea fireflies, lightning bugs and florescent rocks to see if characteristics of one would have more merit in space exploration over the other. Students study the cellular structure of plants and animals and conclude whether florescence of bioluminescence would be more effective to use on the Moon and Mars.

Keys to Success Mural – Cheri Helton
Students work one-on-one with professional mural painters to get a sense of the art career of a mural painter while participating in painting the "Keys to Success" mural. Students interact and ask questions of the professional artists during the project as well as learn about the use of acrylic paints. Students also help install the mural on the first floor of the Blue Academy between two wings of classrooms to foster pride and ownership of their school and artwork through this mural which reflects the keys to success in life.

experience. A large LCD screen, PlayStation 2 equipped with electronic scoring platforms, and pedometers are used in the program. Students use the equipment to participate in high-energy dance moves to engage in a cardiovascular workout all the while having fun. Maximum participation occurs 100% of the time during the physical education class through this unique approach to fitness. C'motion is proven to have positive cognitive effects on participants. The goal is to curb childhood obesity and increasing cases of diabetes by changing poor lifestyle choices.



Bot Madness: Robotics at DILC – Margie Giger, Jean Trusedell
Through and introduction to Robotic and Computer Education, students will learn three basic principles. First, when students are given hands-on opportunities to create and use math and science with their own purposes in mind, they learn that language is stimulating and interesting. Second, the program will instill a sense of teamwork and leadership as they work in groups of four. Finally, students will develop a sense of community as they learn how robotics has improved all of our lives. This program will revolutionize how students view the application of math, science and technology.

Drumming Around the World – Jana Miller
This project is based on the "World Drumming" curriculum that teaches students about other cultures, including Africa and South America.

Decatur Intermediate Learning Center Gold Academy



Journey Into Reading – Susan Elliott, Chris McGathey
Students participate in small literature circles based on their lexile levels and have meaningful literacy discussions with teachers and other students. This setting will give students the opportunity to collaborate with others and reflect on, analyze, and critique quality literature. Small group work will provide time for the students, teachers, support staff and administrators to develop positive relationships, which builds a sense of community throughout the school.



Tinkling Jump Bands – Megan Mathew
Tinkling is a Phillipino dance which involves two people hitting bamboo poles using them to beat, tap, and slide on the ground against each other in coordination with one or more dancers who step over and in between the poles in a dance. Tinkling jump bands will provide the students with a fun fitness activity while teaching them about rhythm and is also a multi-cultural activity.

Decatur Intermediate Learning Center
C'motion – Megan Fee, Quincy Wallace
C'motion is a fitness-based, digital dance gaming

Students participate in large ensembles involving the entire class. Students will learn life lessons such as communication, listening, teamwork, discipline and respect for others.

Decatur Central High School

DNA Jewelry – Chris Hiller
As part of the combined course called Bio-Lit, approximately 90 students create a double-helix structure that resembles DNA and is a piece of wearable jewelry. Different beads are used to represent each of the major building blocks of a DNA molecule. This hands-on project enables students to understand the make-up and structure of DNA in an enjoyable learning process.

The Animals are Coming! – Aimee Schludecker
High school Zoology students are hooked into the second semester curriculum by coming face-to-

David G. Sease "Community Service Grant"

This special grant is named in honor of David G. Sease, the first chairman and one of the founding trustees of the Decatur Township Educational Foundation. The grant is offered to encourage students to become involved in their community through outreach and service oriented projects.

DCHS Recycling Program – Cim McClelland
The Interact Club, a service learning club, wants to expand the current recycling program. With the purchase of more recycling containers to be located throughout the building, students would be more likely to use them and become more aware of this important issue and possibly begin eco-friendly behaviors in their own lives.

Senator Richard G. Lugar "Government in Action"

This is a special grant in honor of Senator Richard G. Lugar to encourage students and faculty member committed to becoming "Agents of Change". The purpose of this grant is to foster student learning in under-



standing the importance of their study of and participation in the widely varied elements of United States leadership in the world today.

Senior Trip to Washington, DC – Cim McClelland
Seniors are students of the U.S. Government and Economics. The focus of this trip will be citizenship and active participation, emphasizing the process of our republic, federalism, separation of powers/checks and balances, and the history of our country. Students will write their senators and representatives about a legislation or social concern beforehand. As part of the trip, they will meet with Senator Lugar and have a tour of the Capitol Building. There will also be a service learning project which students will complete while they are in



FINANCIAL REPORT

The Decatur Township Educational Foundation was established in 2005 by a group of business, civic, and educational leaders and the Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township alumni who understood that a foundation is vitally important to both current and future learners. The Foundation receives funds from individuals who are concerned about the future of our children. The funds are offered as grants to faculty members for creative classroom programs as well as major projects that offer new educational opportunities for groups of classrooms, departments, entire schools and the district as a whole that are not otherwise available.

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