



Back to School, and Back to...



Investing in Educational Excellence!

Mini-Grants Encourage Innovation

Three U-46 schools participated in an Educational Foundation pilot program last spring, which ran in conjunction with Teacher Appreciation Week. Students and families were encouraged to “Thank a Teacher” by making a donation to the Educational Foundation in their honor. Each teacher recognized by students received a certificate thanking them for making a difference for their students.

Additionally, participating schools were eligible for five hundred dollar grants. These Teacher Innovation Grants gave priority consideration to unique projects at a classroom, grade or school level that were new to the district—a departure from the Foundation’s traditional grants, awarded to programs more district-wide in nature. U-46 teachers responded with some exciting requests.

DREAM Academy teacher Karen Tobin was awarded one of the mini-grants to purchase a “Virtual Job Shadow” program. In Tobin’s COOP program, students focus on college and career (continued on back)

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Mini-Grants

(continued from front)

exploration. The program, purchased with the Foundation's grant, empowers students to search and explore various careers, providing access to five minute videos of thousands of jobs. Students virtually job shadow, going behind the scenes with real professionals in actual jobs. Says Tobin, "The kids are excited about learning new careers...they're discovering new possibilities, goals, and hope."



Teacher's Legacy an Inspiration

Kathy Turnquist was a much-loved, long time teacher in District U-46, and she was passionate about reading. Not surprisingly, in the final months of her battle with cancer, she and her husband Jerry—also a district teacher—thoughtfully selected the U-46 Educational Foundation for one of her memorials. The Foundation worked with Jerry to honor her request that the funds be used for a library or literacy program.

Partnering with Gail Borden Public Library provided the perfect opportunity to remember Kathy and her great love of reading. The Foundation funds were used to help create a memorable final reading event for the Summer Reading Challenge. In addition to fun events including music and magicians, each child who finished the challenge was awarded a book of their own.

"Several studies have shown that reading over the summer helps prevent 'summer slide' when students return to the classroom in the fall," says Margaret Peebles of Gail Borden. Kathy is remembered fondly by all who knew her, and she impacted many, many students over her teaching career. Her memorial gift celebrated Kathy's love of learning and reading; through her gift, she once again inspired the students of U-46.



Make a difference for the children of U-46

You may contribute to the foundation in general—or to honor a teacher, a staff member, child or parent.

For more information or to donate, log on to <http://district.u-46.org/foundation>

U-46 Educational Foundation Mission

To acquire and dedicate resources to enhance the quality of education for U-46 students.