



Binghamton City School District Education Foundation
History of Grants
2008-201'

Foundation Role

Binghamton City School District Education Foundation (our official legal name is “Binghamton School Education Fund, Inc.”) promotes creation and development of innovative educational programs and projects. Our mission is to enhance and support the full educational experiences of students enrolled pre-K through 12 by providing additional resources to ensure quality and innovation in all services and activities offered in the Binghamton School District. We accomplish this in consultation with the District’s Board of Education and close cooperation with the District staff.

Purpose of Grants

At classroom level, the Foundation helps to fund worthwhile programs, trips and other activities that ordinarily can’t be supported as part of a school operating budget but that are of clear benefit to the growth, education and development of students. We seek to assist staff in obtaining equipment and materials needed to maximize the educational value of academic programs. In this way it is hoped that Foundation grants may afford staff the opportunity to “think outside the box” when they design their curriculum so as to help every student realize his or her full potential.

History of Grants

To aid District Staff who may apply to the Foundation for grants — but also to assist individuals and organizations considering donations to support the Foundation in its mission — here is a brief re-cap of the awards made over the last several years.

2008 Awards (2008-2009 Academic Year)

1. Wilson Wares (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

\$750

Patty Mangan

After noticing several needy students often wearing the same outfit to school day after day, Woodrow Wilson Elementary teacher Patty Mangan proposed establishing an in-school clothing bank. The goal was to help these children feel better about themselves and to increase their self-esteem. The Foundation awarded Patty a grant to purchase clothing racks, storage bins, and used clothes, shoes and coats. The project was a huge success, and items were given to children on a daily basis. As the clothing bank became known within the school and the community, it became self-sustaining by receiving numerous donations of clothing items and money.

2. I Am America (MacArthur Elementary)

\$1700

Lonna Pierce

MacArthur Elementary Librarian Lonna Pierce created an entire day of education and enlightenment for over 575 students, teachers, librarians and community members by inviting an award-winning author to visit. Charles R. Smith, winner of the Coretta Scott King award, worked with students to write their own poems and family histories, take photos and create artwork -- all centered on the theme of themselves as individuals. Mr. Smith also conducted workshops, met with staff and presented a community forum that evening. The project provided students with an African-American role model who encouraged them to celebrate themselves, their families, their communities and their country.

3. Seasonal Changes and Planting at Camp Sertoma

\$1100

(Horace Mann Elementary)

Dyan Andrew

This project, proposed by Horace Mann Elementary's Dyan Andrew, gave 75 first-graders a fun learning experience across many curriculum areas while also providing them with the opportunity to participate in a community service project. The students and their teachers visited the Binghamton Boys' and Girls' Club Camp Sertoma twice in the fall of 2008, to plan a garden project, clean and prepare the areas and plant flower bulbs. In the spring, they made three trips to plant annuals, finish their beautification efforts, and enjoy a picnic and day of crafts, Native American lore, horseback riding and other typical camp activities. The project integrated math (measuring and plotting the garden areas), science (learning about soil and how plants and bulbs grow), art (creating pictures depicting their finished efforts) and health/fitness lessons (learning about physical activities and healthy lifestyles).

4. Mentoring Program (West Middle School)

\$700

Denise Whidden

Recognizing that middle school students are at a very vulnerable and impressionable time in their lives, teacher Denise Whidden created a mentoring program at West Middle. Staff members identified “at-risk” students and paired them with an adult staff member who volunteered to serve as a mentor. Almost 70 students were matched with mentors (several mentors volunteered to work with two students), and their activities involved regular one-on-one time together. There were also special activities among the entire mentor-mentee group, such as bowling trips and pot-luck luncheons. The program gave these students a committed adult friend in the school for talking, listening and helping. The funds granted were used for two bowling trips and two luncheons, which helped to reinforce the relationships between the participants.

Total 2008 Awards \$4,250

2009 Awards (2009-2010 Academic Year)

1. BHS Reads Dominic Carter (Binghamton High School)

\$1,000

Jennifer O'Hare

This project involved a yearlong study of noted African-American journalist Dominic Carter's book, *No More Momma's Boy*, culminating in a personal appearance by the author in the spring of 2010. Carter, who was once classified as a special education student, has overcome incredible odds to become a successful journalist, interviewing some of the world's most influential figures, such as Nelson Mandela, and Presidents Clinton and Obama. The goal of this project was to motivate all BHS students, particularly those who are “borderline” or “at-risk,” and to strengthen their skills for the NYS English Language Arts Regents exam by reading Carter's book, a highly-engaging piece of non-fiction.

2. Everyone Matters at Our School (East Middle School)

\$1,400

Dianne Gray

This program fostered school and civic pride by encouraging students to submit ideas for making their school and/or community a better place. Students who submitted ideas earned prizes. A committee selected the best idea which was then implemented. The top prize was awarded to the student with the winning suggestion. The program has marked its fourth year at East Middle School. The grant will fund expansion to three other elementary schools in 2009-2010.

3. Assertive Communication: Avoiding Exploitation **\$350**
(Binghamton High School)
Charlotte Kramer

Through a performance written specifically for the Life Skills students at Binghamton High School, the Broome County Mental Health Players delivered effective instruction in the recognition and avoidance of exploitative situations and relationships. Approximately 25 students from the special education program learned lessons in safety, self-esteem and self-advocacy.

4. News Bowl League (Woodrow Wilson Elementary) **\$99**
Bruce Gregory

By encouraging students to follow current events, the News Bowl League helps to foster lifelong learners. This grant enabled a fourth-grade class at Woodrow Wilson Elementary to participate in an online contest among students from across the U.S. Students independently followed television, radio and print news reports, then took daily current events quizzes. The quizzes stimulated further discussion of events, and helped students learn about their nation and their world. The grant helped defray the cost of some of the subscriptions necessitated by the program.

5. Backpacks for Success (Woodrow Wilson Elementary) **\$500**
Patty Mangan

Backpacks have become fundamental equipment for public school students. But not all families have provided them to their children; nor can every family automatically afford to. This project funds backpacks and school supplies for students beginning their school experience in a kindergarten class at Woodrow Wilson Elementary. The supplies include educational materials the child and parent can use at home, such as flashcards, educational games and books. By giving these students a positive start, this program increases their self-esteem and helps provide a solid beginning to their education.

6. Mentoring Program (West Middle School) **\$700**
Denise Whidden

This was a continuation of a project funded by the Foundation in 2008-2009. Recognizing that middle school school students are at a very vulnerable and impressionable time in their lives, this project pairs an adult staff volunteer from West Middle School with a student identified as potentially at-risk. By participating in the program activities, plus one-on-one time, the adult becomes a friend and positive role model. Last year, 41 adults paired with 68 students. The program held a kick-off luncheon and two bowling trips. This year, the program hopes to be able to pair even more adults with students. (Note: One issue confronting future activities is transportation. Policy prevents mentors from driving students in their personal vehicles. The mentor program would like to take a trip to a Mets game in the spring,

but needs a sponsor for the bus. If anyone has an interest in sponsoring, please let us know.)

7. Reading Coach (District-wide) \$700
Tammy Orzelek

District teacher and reading specialist Tammy Orzelek conducted a professional development workshop for teachers in the district interested in developing advanced strategies to increase student learning. The workshop and follow-up classroom visits focused on using unique materials and methods to address individual students' different learning abilities, styles and levels of engagement.

8. Wilson Garden Growers (Woodrow Wilson Elementary) \$950
Barb McLean and Kristina Goodrich

This project mobilized Woodrow Wilson Elementary students in creating and maintaining an edible and floral garden at the school. As members of the Garden Growers Club, the students learned about gardening as a lifelong skill. The benefits of healthy eating, of instilling pride in their community, and of nurturing their environment and fostering sustainability as it relates to our world were all made tangible to the youngsters through this project.

9. Model U.N. Conference (Binghamton High School) \$1,300
Patrick Clarke, Sue Phelps, Greg McCausland

This grant helped offset the overall costs for Binghamton High School student representatives who participated in the Model United Nations simulation, a three-day event at Cornell University in April 2010. Throughout the school year, the Model U.N. Club at the high school helps to raise student awareness of global issues. By participating in the U.N. simulation, the students learned to see issues from diverse perspectives and had the opportunity to interact with students from across the country. The project helped them to become more internationally minded, while developing their skills in public speaking, writing, critical thinking and argumentation. As a result, they are better prepared for higher education and global citizenship.

Total 2009 Awards \$6,999

2010 Awards (2010-2011 Academic Year)

1. High School Mentoring (Binghamton High School) \$400
Rick Gouldin

Pairing at-risk students with faculty members, this program is an extension of two others that already exist in the District's two middle schools. This mentoring is for the

student who may have lost his or her way....for the student who may lack the kind of family support that typically leads to success in school....for the student who may find him or herself estranged from other students....for the student who is in danger of falling between the cracks of the system. When it comes to young people like these, a mentor often means there is an adult's ear to listen, an adult's eye to see the confusion, an adult's life-experience with which to give advice. In this way the student knows someone is "there for them." Someone is "in their corner." Someone may be able to "go to bat." The Foundation's grant allowed the BHS Mentoring program participants to gather for a kick-off pizza party in the fall and a cookout in the spring.

2. Let's Move / Mets Move (West Middle School)

\$400

Laura Aquisto/Denise Whidden

In cooperation with the Binghamton Mets baseball team, students in the West Middle Mentoring Program (recipient of Foundation grants the past two years) teamed up to promote physical fitness within the community, and later on showed off their green thumbs. Jim Ehmke (WIVT-WBGH TV) volunteered to film and edit public service announcements featuring the students explaining exercise, healthy eating and nutrition, all goals of First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" program. At NYSEG stadium just prior to a B-Met's game, students were introduced "live" to the fans before the first pitch. Then the PSAs were shown on the giant outfield screen during the breaks between innings. The mentoring group also planned a clean-up day in Recreation Park, plus planting a flower garden on the school's grounds, again helped out by Mets players. The Foundation's grant provided for the healthy lunches during the filming, as well as transportation to the stadium and various equipment for the gardening activity.

3. Cooking Class (Theodore Roosevelt Elementary)

\$ 500

Amy Nugent

Amy's special education class learned first-hand how to prepare foods, with health basics like nutrition and proper eating as the immediate goals. But math, reading, planning and writing were woven into the program as well, especially when it came time to understand the recipes, interpret what had to be bought for the meals chosen, followed by the trip to the supermarket. A final end-of-year cookbook compiled by the class served as the caper to the project. Our grant helped to purchase the groceries used for the class, along with aprons and cooking utensils.

4. Super Tuesday - Parents and Children Learning Together

\$750

(Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

Patty Mangan

To improve the literacy and language skills and weave them into everyday activities, the parents in Patty's class were encouraged to come to school once a week to learn games that can then be used at home. Projects included writing a grocery list together, crafting magnetic letters for the fridge or simply knowing how to engage

children to become better readers. Patty believes that “parents need to take responsibility for their child's education” but also need to learn what tools to use toward that end. The Foundation grant allowed Patty to buy language games, books for home use and instructional take-home aids.

5. Parent Academy (Horace Mann Elementary) \$400
Suzanne Sousa

For various reasons, many parents shy away from their child’s school, sometimes out of anxiety left over from experiences or fears connected with their own schooling many years prior. These often are the very parents who need to be more involved with their children. Horace Mann Elementary teachers planned an open house, encouraging parents to come back to school for an evening to establish a comfortable rapport with the staff. To further stimulate parent attendance at the open house, the Parent Academy offered free babysitting with speakers. Our grant helped Suzanne with door prizes and books for her program.

6. Planting at the Boy's and Girls' Club (Horace Mann Elementary) \$900
Dyan Andrew

This echoed the Planting at Camp Sertoma Project from the 2008-2009 grants. Approx. 70 1st-graders visited the Boy's and Girls' Club on Binghamton’s Clinton St. to plant shrubs, saplings, bulbs and annuals in the spring and create a walkway of stepping stones. The children learned how to clean the areas, which end of the bulb goes where, the wonderful art of cooperation and a host of other skills. During the year the students’ science lessons dwelt on gardening and how plants grow. Thus, they witnessed a first-hand demonstration of the lessons in their text. And allowed them the pleasure of discovering that even 1st-graders can improve their community! The funding here covered buses, all of the plants and then food for an end-of -year picnic.

7. West Mentoring (West Middle School) \$900
Denise Whidden

Students that are at risk are paired with a faculty or staff member and through the year will go on field trips, have luncheons and feel the security of knowing that there is some one in that school who is their advocate. We have funded this activity the past two years and last year they went to a corn maze where children rode a tractor pulled a hay wagon for the first time. They also went to Roberson for the annual Christmas Forest and then contributed to an ethnic cookbook. They host luncheons during the school year and get together for volleyball matches and badminton tournaments. Funding goes toward buses, food and bowling as well as the other above activities.

8. Reading Bags (Woodrow Wilson Elementary School)**\$1,123****Aubrie Smith**

This project provided every Woodrow Wilson first-grader with a Literacy Bag to take home once per month. Included in each bag were books at their level, plus research-based activities on which both students and their parents could work together. Parents learned about the bags during the District's Curriculum Night and participated in a benchmark survey. Reading scores from the previous years were compared to current-year results as one means of assessment. Care was taken so that what went home was very much like what was experienced in the classroom during the day, so that there was homefront reinforcement for the child. The grant paid for 100 canvas bags and a host of puzzles, folder games, sight word games, books and more to help implement the "Reading Bags" program.

9. Bringing Language to Life (East Middle School)**\$100****Jessica Monahan/KC McHenry**

Learning a foreign language often means going beyond the lessons of the texts and grammars and immersing one's self in the geography and culture of the other country. Also it's often the case that the most effective lessons in any new subject matter will tap the creativity of the students, enabling them to weave their own ideas into the material; in effect, to "put their own stamp on" the lesson. The "Bringing Language to Life" grant helped purchase a memory card and photo paper for East Middle's foreign language students to produce passports, menus, community brochures and travel brochures.

10. Continuation of Wilson's Garden (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)**\$595****Kristina Goodrich**

This grant took lots of plot-twists and turns. A prior-year grant (2009-2010) from the Foundation had funded the start-up of Woodrow Wilson Elementary's garden. In the fall, faculty, staff, students and parents had joined forces to prepare above-ground beds for spring planting. In a separate, parallel activity, one of Wilson's classes worked to craft ornaments for the garden, to be installed come spring. Over the intervening winter, unfortunately, vandals brought havoc to the garden beds. So, for the 2010-2011 school year, Kristina again applied to the Foundation for a follow-on grant, this time seeking fencing that would ward off vandals from the garden beds and the ornaments that would later adorn them. The Foundation grants committee was eager to help, but nonetheless felt that the fencing, by itself, was a kind of equipment which lay far afield from the intent of its mission. What we were able to do was assist Kristina in finding a very resourceful parent-volunteer who was able to secure the fencing and install it as a community service to the school. Kristina then adjusted her grant request to cover plants, a hose and some garden implements. To which the Foundation replied, "you got it!" A happy ending for certain. But with several pleasant post-scripts. Coincidentally, through a District pen-pal program, the Woodrow Wilson Elementary students are now sharing their gardening experiences with Calvin

Coolidge Elementary students who tend a similar garden at their site. Meanwhile, a Thomas Jefferson teacher has contacted Kristina to find out more about the project. (Perhaps we shall see gardening beds at other BCSD sites, as well!)

11. Art Flags (Binghamton High School)

\$3,206

Sarah Ainsworth

This project helped eight individual academic departments achieve a higher profile within the BHS campus and in the city, while at the same time providing students in the school's Graphic Design classes with practical work in branding/identity that was "close to home." Working in teams, the students used Adobe® Illustrator to design a total of nine double-sided vinyl banners, measuring 2' x 6', for display outside the high school where all could see and enjoy them. Lending "real-world" professionalism to the effort, a guest artist from the community consulted with the teams on their work. The students were graded on creativity, originality, craftsmanship, attendance and participation. Some classroom supplies came from the art department's budget while the Foundation's grant paid for the banner production, installation, poles and hardware. Sarah was able to negotiate a significant discount from a local banner production shop given the volume of banners and the academic nature of the project.

12. Medieval Feast (MacArthur Elementary)

\$3,000

Lonna Pierce

How to take the students back in time to a place of long-ago, so as to make the lessons of history come alive? Thanks to librarian Lonna Pierce who designed a multi-disciplinary, hands-on experience, MacArthur Elementary students partook of the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the Middle Ages. Her "Medieval Feast" project combined costumes, juggling in the physical education classes, bells and songs with the music teachers and a madrigal choir, along with books read by Lonna. Plus live appearances by a knight-in-armor! Perhaps most appreciated of all, the students said, they got to enjoy tasty food representative of those romantic days! A Foundation grant paid for the dances, choir, food, etc. The Feast garnered most favorable reports from various local news outlets. And it also served as a showcase-example of the work done by the Foundation when the latter hosted a reception for community professionals with an interest in channeling community resources to assist the District in similar activities that expand the boundaries of the classroom.

Total 2010 Awards \$12,274

2011 Awards (2011-2012 Academic Year)

1. Parent-Child Backpacks (Horace Mann Elementary)

\$350

Dyan Andrew

Building off the conviction that the parent-child-home connection is so important to learning, and that the parent is the child's first educator, this program enabled all first-grade students at Horace Mann (75 children in all) to take home a backpack containing math stories and games for parent and child to work on together. Six different math topics were addressed (i.e., three sets of six backpacks — a total of 18 — to accommodate all three classrooms) allowing a fresh topic to go home to each child's family approximately six times per school year. Simple math concepts, including odd/even, patterning, adding, tens and ones, hundred-counting, etc., were incorporated.

2. Art Club Mosaic (West Middle School)

\$980

Joanne Arnold

To learn about the ancient technique of mosaic for multi-cultural awareness, the Young Artists at Work Club, numbering 24 students, had the opportunity to work with local artist Yvonne Lucia to create two tile mosaics for permanent display in the main hallway at West Middle. Via the project, the participants were better able to grasp mathematical skills, spatial skills and color theory, and came to appreciate how cooperative effort can achieve "big" things. They also realized a sense of ownership in doing something special for their school building that is now showcased for all students, staff and visitors to see on a daily basis. (Note: Yvonne Lucia has also worked with the students at Theodore Roosevelt Elementary on a similar project involving mosaic murals.)

3. Voyage to Book Island (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

\$2,500

Lindsey Edwards

Recognizing the highly diverse student population at Woodrow Wilson (and the continuing exposure to diversity awaiting these elementary students as they progress to middle school and high school levels), the Voyage to Book Island project focused on nurturing tolerance and acceptance of other cultures, involving all students (450) and staff throughout the school year. While providing at least one book for each child to keep in his/her home, the program interwove appreciation of reading (via performances by singer John Simon and singer-songwriter-puppeteer "Mrs. McPuppet"), appreciation of music (with the help of the BHS Steel Drum Band), along with a sampling of cooking from other cultures (assistance provided by the American Civic Association).

4. PALS Cooking Partnership (Binghamton High School)**\$600**

Danielle Guccia / John Sweeney

The PALS program promotes independence by helping students with intellectual disabilities to learn about food in ways that prepare them for adulthood. PALS also fosters acceptance of differences among members of the student body, particularly between “typical” students and their disabled peers. Involving the Culinary Arts Class, the program encourages basic learning about food preparation, appliance operation and understanding and implementation of simple recipes. Supporting 24 students with three teachers and five classroom aides, the project culminated with compilation of a Cook Book and a banquet for the building’s teachers and administrators.

5. Science w/Dirtmeister (Horace Mann Elementary)**\$899**

Mary Ann Karre

With Foundation funding, this program enlisted science “learning celebrity” Steve Tomecek, who helped launch Horace Mann Elementary’s Science Month climaxing in the Science Fair and Exposition. Tomecek’s presentation motivates students to use the scientific method in their school projects, to learn about the practical and career applications of science and math, and it promotes a love of the sciences among students who would otherwise probably have considered such disciplines to be dull and tedious. Amplifying its effectiveness, the project enlisted help from the Horace Mann Booster Club. Science w/Dirtmeister also enjoyed a portion of the proceeds of Tomecek’s book sales.

6. Nurturing Writing in K (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)**\$900**

Patty Mangan

Prodding youngsters to become independent writers, this program encourages them to feel comfortable communicating through print. Because the District expects its students to know how to write a complete sentence, construct a paragraph and respond to text by the time they are in 5th grade, “Nurturing Writing in K” provides an early foundation by means of a writing center offering a variety of paper, pencils, markers, crayons and rubbers stamps. With these tools, the goal is for each kindergartener to learn proper capitalization, punctuation and spacing, to accomplish some writing each and every day, and to look forward to it as a fun and enjoyable experience.

7. Recording Special Ed Reading (Theodore Roosevelt Elementary)**\$761**

Amy Nugent

This program promotes reading capability among special needs students with an array of tools including the iPod-Touch®, video camera and Smartboard. Over the course of a five-day sequence, utilizing a special “Read Me Stories” app on the iPod, each student learns to write a poem, illustrate it, read and record it, and listen to that recording. With the Smartboard, the instructor helps the student to better appreciate

word families and correct sentence order. With the video camera, the deaf student is able to enhance his/her “signing” capabilities. There is flexibility in the program so as to accommodate different rates of individual student reading progress.

8. iPods & iPads for Speech

\$580

(Theodore Roosevelt and Horace Mann Elementary)

Judith Pappo / Tamara Johnson / Domenica Carter

Simultaneously targeting 125+ speech and language therapy students at two elementary schools, this program puts educational “apps” to work in a small-group setting to increase skills in expressive and receptive language, social language, articulation and fluency. The video capability of the iPad to record the students during therapy particularly helps students with social/pragmatic language skills. Apps chosen in consultation with the Southern Tier Independence Center enable the instructor to capture progress data and share it with other specialized service providers as well as parents. The “Sign 4 Me” app uses a 3D avatar to afford deaf students an 11,500-word sign language library.

9. Bringing Books to the World (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

\$1,692

Wendy Perrin

With the prevalence of children at Wilson from families recently immigrated to our community, the District faces an uncommon challenge in offering English as a Second Language (ESL). “Bringing Books to the World” serves a group of 35 Wilson ESL students in K, 1st and 2nd grades. As a means of helping them grow in their language capabilities, each student chooses five books from the Scholastic Book Order (approx. \$20 per student) to help them to begin to build home libraries they can enjoy with their families. They also choose a sixth book to add to the classroom library. These ESL students share their readings with other students via “Book Talks”, keying on author, illustrator, setting, characters, and simple plot details. At a practical level, the books help these immigrant students prepare for the required NYS ESL Achievement Test in the spring, but on a broader level, since the Wilson library is expanded, as well, the program adds to the overall “literacy environment” at the school.

10. Chenango River Study (Binghamton High School)

\$2,738

Jacqueline Scallan

This project took advantage of the high school’s proximity to the rivers running through the city. Entailing 800 students and eight science teachers, the study applies biology, chemistry and environmental science to measure the characteristics of the Chenango River. Comparative measurements vs. “rural” samples taken at Chenango Valley State Park demonstrate effects of urban development on local water quality. Data is maintained from year to year. Not only are students immersed in practical “field” applications of classroom science, but they gain a more profound

appreciation for — and a responsibility for stewarding — the rivers they traverse each day, on their way to and from school.

11. The Genographics Connection (Binghamton High School) \$3,000
Carolyn Wilczynski

Tapping the resources and credibility of the National Geographic Society's Genographics Project, this program enhances the high school's studies in evolution, genetics, human ecology and environmental science. DNA samples (via cheek cells) from both students and staff will illuminate our common genetic heritage, revealing that we are all related on a very basic level. Participants learn that skin color is no more of a differentiator than eye color, and is in fact merely an adaptation to where our ancestors lived. Students will map the journeys of their ancestors on a public world map mural posted in the school hallway. Not limited to science, the mapping exercise also takes into account the historical events that occurred while our forbears migrated through Asia, Europe, Africa and/or the New World. Through a field trip to Cornell University, participants will grasp how National Geographic Genographics Project seeks to help save aboriginal cultures while providing a better understanding of the genetics of the human race.

Total 2011 Awards \$15,000.00

2012 Awards (2012-2013 Academic Year)

1. SRA Reading Lab (Calvin Coolidge Elementary) \$2,000
Carin Shaffer & Ellen Mouillesseaux

From McGraw Hill, SRA Reading Laboratory offers the elementary school teacher a powerful supplemental tool for reading instruction. SRA Lab lessons draw from phonics, decodable text, time reading and fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, test preparation and literature. Folding together the efforts of six teachers and approximately 100 students in 2nd and 4th grades, the SRA Lab allows flexibility so that students may work at their own pace and concentrate on individual problems they may have encountered previously with their reading skills.

2. Calvin Coolidge Literacy Club (Calvin Coolidge Elementary) \$1,000
Ellen Mouillesseaux & Amy Merrill

The Literacy Club concept works to instill a lifelong love for reading, beginning in the 1st and 2nd grades. Participants select poetry and Reader's Theatre skits based on their interests. With creative props and scenery, the performances are presented to classmates, teachers and parents, thereby enhancing skills in reading, thinking, listening and public speaking.

3. Fun with Dance and Fitness (Calvin Coolidge Elementary) \$276.45
Margaret Doherty

Motivating students to “get up and get active” during lunch time, and to bring their parents back for more of same in an evening program, this fitness strategy employs the Wii interactive device with dance and healthy exercise routines. The 10-week sequence also incorporates Yoga, Zumba dance, and is viewed on the gymnasium Smartboard encouraging positive social interaction among students in a low-key, fun way. Parents have a convenient, relaxing way to connect with the school, their children, and their children’s instructors on a regular basis.

4. Build a Better Brain (Theodore Roosevelt Elementary) \$2,650
Judith Pappo

According to education researchers, “fluid intelligence” (defined as the ability to reason abstractly, to solve novel problems, to learn, to see connections) is highly predictive of educational and professional success. The Build a Better Brain regimen improves test scores in fluid intelligence in as little as four weeks, and is also observed to help the ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactive disorder) student. Based on the results of this pilot project, the program may be expanded throughout Roosevelt.

5. Teddy Bear Health Clinic (Theodore Roosevelt Elementary) \$2,000
Carolyn Wheeler

Taking aim at the obesity epidemic in particular and the overall family health improvement in general, this program works toward better parent-child bonding and helping both youngsters and adults learn skills in gardening, cooking, budgeting, shopping and exercising. Built on the nationally known “We Can” curriculum, the program uses the Foundation’s funds for transportation, foodstuffs and other supplies. To maximize the program, Carolyn combined our Foundation’s funds with others secured from the UHS Foundation and the NYS Department of Health.

6. Poetry Comes Alive with Kenn Nesbitt \$1,700
(Horace Mann & Thomas Jefferson Elementary)
MaryAnn Karre

Reaching as many as 750 students and 80 staff members, poetry serves as the raw material for high-intensity learning in reading, writing and performing in front of an audience. Feeding off the inspiring presentation by Kenn Nesbitt, students learn to memorize, to enunciate, and to project. Students (and staff) who have seen Kenn perform talk to this day about how his wonderful recitations. Some students even began reading and memorizing poems voluntarily. Apparently stirred by some of Nesbitt’s verses, one student who had never previously spoken up in class was

ultimately inspired to stand up with wide-eyed expression and recite some stanzas. Thus, the program's title: "Poetry Comes Alive."

7. Book Publishing (Ben Franklin Elementary)

\$2,060

Sandy Harrington, Marjorie Baldwin, Sandi Distin,
Sarah Barcak, Theresa Solecky, Velvet Tanner

To start emerging readers off on the right foot while at the same time taking advantage of "home-grown" authors among the "upperclassmen" in their building, this program enlisted fifth-graders to write, illustrate and publish books to be used by Franklin Elementary's kindergarten students. Each book consisted of 8 to 12 pages. Age-appropriate topics were chosen and the projects were monitored by four kindergarten teachers, classroom aides, the 100-Book Challenge Coordinator and the school librarian. The Foundation grant provided for a color laser printer and printing/binding consumables. Not only did the first-time readers get a better running start on this key skill for lifetime success and enjoyment, but the fifth-graders also learned desktop publishing system skills that would pay off many times over in their later schooling. In a most thrifty way, the Franklin library was able to grow its collection of books aimed at its youngest readers. And, frosting on the cake, the program fostered a sense of community across the grade levels at Franklin.

8. The 12:1:1 Classroom Cafe (Calvin Coolidge Elementary)

\$645.97

Valerie DeGennaro

Not all students and their families are in a position to partake of Coolidge Elementary's daily afternoon snack-from-home custom. In the 12:1:1 Classroom Cafe, students learned to prepare a healthy snack with the ingredients and kitchen implements provided through this grant. Besides satisfying these youngsters' late-afternoon-urge for an energy boost, the snack preparation also served to hone the daily life-skills of reading and understanding recipes, plus the discipline for accurate measuring and the follow-through that leads successful missions-in-the-kitchen. The 12:1:1 Cafe provided opportunities for social interaction and cooperative learning. Some of the tasty items prepared were further enjoyed when the students studied cultures and ethnicities of other peoples in the Character Education curriculum. What's more, because snacks could also be purchased in the "Cafe" by teachers at very affordable prices, proceeds from those sales supported an end-of-year trip, and the students thereby learned to appreciate the concept of money.

9. Mentoring Program (West Middle School)**\$1,000**

Denise Whidden

Continuing the momentum and cementing the gains of this already established and successful program aimed at students who are socially, emotionally or academically at risk at West Middle , this year's grant provided funds to make possible several field trips, including Soughton Farm, Newark Valley (hayride and problem-solving skills via corn-maize navigation), Roberson Museum and Science Center "Home for the Holidays" (expanding awareness of multiple ethnicities in our community), a Chinese New Year's celebration (fundamental Chinese language vocabulary learning) and various others including St. Patrick's Day, Mardi Gras, Cinco De Mayo and Earth Day. With the year capped off, per tradition, by the Mentor-Mentee afternoon of fun competition on the alleys of the Laurel Bowl. Assessing results, the mentoring team monitors performance, behavior, attitude and participation, along with attendance and academic progress.

10. First Grade Planting Sunshine (Horace Mann Elementary)**\$600**

Dyan Andrew

With other "green thumb" successes on its resume over the years, the program this time turned to a beautification-and-learning project just two blocks north of the school at the Horizon's Federal Credit Union. That's a location by which many of Horace Mann Elementary's students travel each day to and from class and which comprises a focal point for the general neighborhood. Three First Grade classes, supported by ten staff members, planted thousands of flowers in the fall semester, learning about their subterranean development, then, come spring, noting and appreciating their above-ground form, color and breeze-driven spectacle. Over the course of the planting/growing season, while ostensibly planting and caring for a flower garden, these students also used their classroom math and science skills out in the everyday world, plus learned deeper respect for their neighborhood and the businesses located in it. Dyan supplemented the Foundation's grant with an in-kind donation of materials from Lowe's Home Improvements.

11. News Brain Monthly Challenge (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)**\$199**

Bruce Gregory

Bruce Gregory revived this highly effective program from a prior year. In order to stimulate greater interest in current events — i.e. politics, foreign affairs, climate and weather events, sports and entertainment, etc. — this project organized and motivated 25 4th-graders to participate in a national monthly online current events contest, "The News Bowl," headquartered in Lincoln, NE. The students were responsible for sorting through large amounts of information to zero in on topics of interest to

them, and along the way to gain a deeper understanding of geography, political science, social science and the world in general. One team of Woodrow Wilson Elementary 4th-graders came in first against 27 other schools competing in the News Bowl. Showing they were not merely some “flash-in-the-pan,” this team subsequently placed 11th out of a field of 77 and later 5th among 129 schools. The Foundation grant paid for “Newsbowl” registration, and covered multiple grade levels at Woodrow Wilson. “Many former students tell me they developed the habit of keeping up with the news because they had to research it during 4th grade,” reports teacher Bruce Gregory.

12. Math Centers that Enhance Children's Development **\$1,000**
 (Woodrow Wilson Elementary)
 Patty Mangan

Proactively gearing up to meet New York State’s new Common Core Standards, this project sought to improve Kindergarteners’ math process skills, in particular problem-solving, reasoning, communicating, connecting and representing. Through a variety of “Math Center” stations incorporating games and manipulatives, students learned shapes, sorting, patterning, graphing, counting, estimation, measurement, and simple addition and subtraction. Patty is a true believer in the Foundation (and the Foundation has come to believe in her). The Math Centers grant is her fifth in as many years, all at Wilson Elementary.

Total 2012 Awards **\$15,131.42**

Grand Total 5-yr period (2008-2012) **\$53,654.42**



2013 Awards (2013-1014 Academic Year)

1. Making Books Club

\$1,426.75

(Benjamin Franklin Elementary)
Sandy Harrington

This was a continuation of a program, "Book Publishing," at Franklin Elementary from the 2012 Awards (2012-2013 Academic Year). To help support the 100 Book Challenge, Fourth and Fifth-graders wrote and produced original books for kindergarteners and First graders with materials provided through the Foundation's grant. Again, a great example of younger students helped by older students (while the latter learned or improved upon their own skills — in this case, desktop publishing). As well as a great example of a team solution to a recurring problem: a shortage of appropriate books for the beginning reader. (Kindergarten and First grade teachers and aides, along with the librarian and the 100 Book Challenge Coordinator, collaborated on the project.)

2. Visual Literacy Across the Curriculum

\$ 733.95

(West Middle School)
May Ann Karre

With the prevalent, strong emphases on visual learning, on students developing visually oriented materials and on the Internet as a key information source, teachers have encountered a two-pronged problem. In the past, some classroom lessons simply seemed to encourage a cut-and-paste mentality with insufficient attention to creation of original content. What's more, the relative ease of accessing existing visual materials from the Internet has caused many students (and some teachers) to lose sight of copyrights and other restrictions on usage of images found in their online searches. A joint effort among the West Middle's librarian and Sixth, Seventh, Eighth-grade teachers, this visual literacy project stimulated students to create their own images rather than simply download existing images. This skill equips them to be successful in the highly visual world they regularly encounter in high school, college and beyond.

3. Sci-Girls: Engaging Girls in STEM

\$361.90

(Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

Suzy Kitchen

Though there have been important gains in developing early interest among girls in science, technology, engineering and math, teachers report there are still obstacles attributable to lingering gender stereotypes, as well as certain cultural influences and socio-economic factors. A collaboration among Binghamton City School District, WSKG Public Broadcasting and the Community Foundation for South Central New York (Women's Fund), the Girls in Science program at Woodrow Wilson Elementary reached thirteen girls, changing attitudes towards STEM subject matter through interactive, inquiry-based activities. A senior girl from the high school, who aspires to be an astrophysicist, served as a mentor, role model and cheerleader for the younger girls from Wilson. As "Sci-Girls" reported on their project at a Board of Education meeting, their awakening intellectual curiosities and growing self-confidence were palpable. The students were also recognized at a reception at WSKG studios.

4. Negro Leagues Baseball: Born to Make History

\$1,982.04

(Thomas Jefferson Elementary / MacArthur Elementary)

Lonna Pierce

The not-told-often-enough story of Negro Leagues Baseball in our country not only gives another angle for appreciation of "America's pastime," but also helps inspire school populations with large components of both minority and poverty-level students (48% and 82% respectively at MacArthur Elementary, for example). With the total devastation of the MacArthur site in the 2011 flood, lost from that building's library were all the titles on Negro Leagues Baseball and most on African-American history in general. A Foundation grant enabled librarian Lonna Pierce to mobilize 60 staff members at both MacArthur and Jefferson Elementaries to provide learning about the Negro Leagues for 750 students through reading, video, art, research and theatrical performance. A large poster derived from a Library of Congress photograph kicked off the year-long endeavor in the school libraries. The students also created portraits of their favorite players to line the walls in the hallways of their schools. Capping the year is a student performance in the school, attended by parents, dignitaries and Binghamton Mets baseball team members.

5. First Lego® League Robotics Club

\$1015

(East Middle School)

Jill Brown

Previously, the East Middle School's Sixth-graders had done exciting work in robotic engineering and programming. To keep the momentum going, the Robotics Club employed Lego®s building blocks and structural concepts to further develop skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Club efforts foster interest in robotics engineering and programming as possible fields of study and later career choices. By simulating real-world issues, First Lego® League also encourages critical

thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity — the “Four C’s” of 21st Century skills.

6. Jr. Great Books / Non-Fiction

\$571.65

(Horace Mann Elementary)

Sheila Bagnick

Third grade represents a critical moment in the development of reading skills among elementary schoolers. The Jr. Great Books program provides books with which to help teach reading and writing to these youngsters. As the program is applied, students who may have scored poorly on Second grade reading tests meet in small groups for 30 minutes per day, five days per week, for four to five weeks. Focusing on critical and analytical reading strategies, the Jr. Great Books are also available to share with other teachers in various grade levels.

7. Taking the Show on the Road

\$920

(Theodore Roosevelt Elementary)

Anne Marie DePalmo

Field trips to museums, science centers and zoos, etc., have traditionally enriched the learning experiences in the classroom, especially for the elementary school students. With the pressures of budget realities and expanding curriculum requirements, field trips have become a scarcer resource than in the past. And, outside the routine of the school day, children in poverty-level households seldom get the opportunity to visit these special places of learning on their own. “Taking the Show on the Road” has enabled 36 pre-K students at Roosevelt Elementary, accompanied by staff and parent volunteers, to benefit from field-trip learning. Scheduled throughout the school year, the visits are chosen to coordinate with curriculum and classroom educational materials.

8. Recessitation: Bringing Recess Back

\$1,600

(MacArthur Elementary)

Jacqueline Coleman

Once again, the 2011 Flood damage at MacArthur necessitated help to provide the students and staff with something very important they had lost in the deluge. The Recess period during the day had been hindered by the loss of the recreational setting and equipment at that site. Compounding matters, the number of disciplinary referrals originating from the absence of a recess hour had worsened. “The Recessitation” project sought to reinvigorate the Recess period, adding a learning component, aiming at the “academic mastery” goal in a fun, creative way. Various recreation stations were set up, affording all students the opportunity to experience different activities. These stations are rotated through the school year.

9. Homework Club**\$350**

(West Middle)
Laura Zanrucha

Taking aim at homework “underperformance” by students in all grade levels, Homework Club seeks to create an environment where, once a week, students can receive extra help in all subject areas. Teachers and staff volunteer to stay following school in order to provide assistance to the students. The money is earmarked, in order that, after a long day, participating students will have access to a healthy snack so as to give their best effort toward both quality of their work and toward on-time completion.

10. Literacy Club**\$600**

(Calvin Coolidge Elementary)
Ellen Mouillesseaux & Amy Merrill

Along the path to producing avid, lifelong readers, thinkers and learners, a teacher strives to breed self-confidence and independence in the the students. Through an “extended-day” activity two to three times per week, Literacy Club fosters a love of poetry among members and encourages new capabilities for expression through student performance in front of an audience. The target group of students includes First and Second graders.

11. SRA Reading Lab**\$2,000**

(Calvin Coolidge Elementary)
Carin Shaffer

Reinforcing existing SRA Reading Lab programs targeting Second graders and Fourth graders, Coolidge Elementary’s reading initiative now includes the school’s Third graders, too, thanks to a grant from the Foundation. This interactive, personalized reading practice program has been updated by McGraw-Hill to include innovative 21st Century digital and social skills. SRA Reading Lab aims to enhance comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, word analysis and study skills.

12. The Magic Paint Brush**\$700**

(Woodrow Wilson Elementary)
Kristina Goodrich

Here the Foundation grant enabled teacher Kristina Goodrich to provide an engaging and creative opportunity to students with special needs, as well as to their parents and guardians. A program of Life is Washable, Inc., a local non-profit organization, The Magic Paintbrush™ is a source for innovative workshops, activities and materials designed to make a difference for special needs families. As implemented by Goodrich, the program combined the goals of the student’s Individual Educational Plan (IEP) with traditional educational goals. Creative learning activities focus on literacy, science and anti-bullying. These activities revolve around multi-sensory art to grow student self-

confidence. Establishing rapport with teachers, paraprofessionals and family members is key to its success.

13. Take-Home Reading Bags

\$1,138

(Woodrow Wilson Elementary)

Melissa LeClair

Woodrow Wilson Elementary already had a Take-Home Reading Bag program for its First graders. With the 2013 Foundation grant, teacher Melissa LeClair extended the program to include the school's Third graders. Again, the goal is to involve families in their student's learning in a fun and engaging manner. Affecting 75 students, served by four teachers, each month the individual student takes home a bag containing one of eight rotating topics (in Science, Social Studies, Math). In each bag sent home are related activities to be completed, returned and presented by the student so as to confirm what they have learned from the experience.

14. OLWEUS Bullying Prevention

\$1,000

(Binghamton High School)

Kelly Breward & Ariana Zbrzezny Koniuto

For several years, the OLWEUS® Bullying Prevention program, aimed at safer schools and safer communities, has been a useful tool within the District and especially at Binghamton High School. The Foundation grant funded the 2013 kick-off for the OLWEUS program. Helping get the year underway at that kick-off event were a nationally renowned speaker on bullying topics and refreshments provided through the grant.

15. Student Publishers

\$500

(Binghamton High School)

Jennifer Rogers

Successful instruction in reading and writing is continuously challenged by today's distracted cultural and family environments, where the discipline to become a good reader/writer is diminished and where our society has come to value immediacy above many, if not most, other virtues. In the effort to "break through" these barriers, reading/writing instructors have turned to the Student Publishers program, a year-long process in which students develop, write and publish their very own novels. The student author participates in each stage — brainstorming, development, revisions, publication. (The Foundation's grant covered shipping costs of the novels, uniquely designed T-shirts and certificates announcing publication.) This program bolsters the confidence of the otherwise struggling readers/writers by celebrating a success that few, if any, would otherwise achieve.

16. Community Planting at Danielle House

\$600

(Horace Mann Elementary)

Dyan Andrews

Keeping a Horace Mann “community planting” tradition going, their First graders visited the Danielle House to learn about that organization but also to plan for a beautification project on its grounds. Subsequent visits entailed the actual planting (tulips and daffodils), and later, observation of the blooms, together with clean-up of the beds and grounds to prepare for a celebration of their project. 60 students and 10 staff members worked together to make all this happen. (Editor’s note: The Danielle House offers a temporary, safe and homelike atmosphere for patients' families and loved ones, and for outpatients seeking respite during a medical crisis, during treatment phases of medical care, or medical related services in the Binghamton area. Danielle Stento, for whom the home is named, and her parents, Tony and Diane Stento, who founded Danielle House, are alums of the Binghamton City School District.)

Total 2013 Awards \$15,499.29

Grand Total 6-yr. period (2008-2013) \$69,153.71

Notes of interest:

- Foundation **Grant Policies** and **Application Guidelines** are available from district building principals, or from the Foundation itself (contact Carol Oestrich, Foundation Board Secretary, coestrich@aol.com, 607-797-0026).

You may also access these documents on the District's Web site:
<http://www.binghamtonschools.org/TheBinghamtonCitySchoolsFoundation.aspx>

- For a copy of Foundation **By-Laws** and current roster of Foundation **Board of Directors**, (contact Carol Oestrich, Foundation Board Secretary, coestrich@aol.com, 607-797-0026).

