



WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO **REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

NEWS RELEASE

Date: August 11, 2008

Contact: Gerri Hutner (gerri.hutner@ww-p.org)

609.716.5000, extension 5046

The West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Foundation has announced over \$6,500 in Excellence in Education Grants to teachers and students in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District for educational projects starting in September 2008. Marcia Smith Fleres, executive director of the WW-P Education Foundation stated, "The WW-P Education Foundation is proud to be able to provide resources for innovative projects that promote excellence in teaching and learning, and we thank all the teachers, staff, and students who are willing to try a creative approach and to challenge themselves." These grants are made possible by the WW-P Education Foundation in partnership with corporate and individual sponsors including: Merrill Lynch; Bristol-Myers Squibb; Janssen, a Division of Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals; and Integra Foundation.

The West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Foundation (WWPEF) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the continued excellence of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional Schools. Founded in 1995, WWPEF has awarded over \$187,000 in teacher and student grants for 245 innovative programs in the schools. For more information on the WW-P Education Foundation, visit www.wwpef.org or email info@wwpef.org.

The eight grants awarded are as follows:

- **Dutch Neck Elementary School Outdoor Classroom** by Erik Breitenbach, Boy Scout and WW-P High School South student.
This is an Eagle Scout Project where Erik Breitenbach will create an outdoor classroom with tables, benches, and amphitheatre seating that will allow teachers to

utilize this community garden for science classes that bring together hands-on activities with instruction.

- **Developmental Guidance Lessons and Career Exploration** by **Linda D’Orlando, Jenny Godnick, Mary Fregosi, and Dawn Gilchrist**, Guidance counselors, Grover Middle School.

Career awareness is a major area of development for middle school students, and this grant will allow the Guidance department to help students explore potential careers that match with their interests and skill sets by using an individualized program called “the Career Game”.

- **Get “Real” with Reading** by **Kristine Luberto, Gina Hopkins, and Barbara Sheridan**, teachers, Maurice Hawk Elementary School.

Elementary-age students have a strong interest in non-fiction books. This grant will provide opportunities for the children to explore non-fiction material through small group instruction, individual interests, and research projects.

- **Bee Buddies** by **Stacy Bradshaw**, teacher, Town Center Elementary School.

An innovative social skills program for multiple disabled students and their grade level regular education students is at the heart of “Bee Buddies.” This program will bring special education students together with their grade level peers to play games and make crafts with the goal of helping regular education students gain tolerance and understanding of those who are different than themselves.

- **Summer Book Trading Club** by **Regina Lertch, Shaun Andolina, Enid Perry, and Linda Griffin**, teachers, Town Center Elementary School and Wicoff Elementary School.

This program is for at-risk first grade students who are reading below grade level. The program helps them to maintain and increase their reading skills that they have developed over the school year by providing them with “just right” books to be read over the summer. The program involves parents by providing them with ways to help their children continue their reading progress over the summer.

- **Pollywog Paradise** by **Dr. Sven Strnad and Kristina Niwinski**, teachers, Millstone River School.

The overall goal of the project is to convert a backyard style fishpond into a pollywog (tadpole) pond which would be set up in one of the courtyards of Millstone River School (MRS). The pond is actually a model of a vernal pool, a type of temporary, fish-free wetland that fills up each spring with water and dries out later in the year as water evaporates. This will allow for field research activities including student observation of the life cycles of frogs and toads and the study and record keeping of ecosystems. Hands-on activities can be used in other content areas, such as reading and writing, as students learn to share the experiences in the natural world.

- **Interdisciplinary Experimental Science Materials** by **April Sheffield**, teacher, Village School.

This project will give fourth graders the opportunity to expand on their understanding of the Grade 4 science curriculum, including land and water, electric circuits, and astronomy. These components will give students a greater opportunity to connect learning through new and inventive activities.

- **FIRST Robotics Team** by **Libby Kamen and Matt Lagana**, High School North students, The High School North FIRST Robotics Team 1923 is a group of students that work together with engineers and teachers to design and build a robot that competes against team from all over the world. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is designed to show students that engineering, robotics and sciences are the “sport of the mind”. Funded in partnership with Janssen, a division of Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals.