

Great Ideas Grant Recipients

Spring 2003

The Great Ideas Grant Program is a cornerstone of The Helena Education Foundation's mission to enrich education in the Helena Public Schools. It is designed to put money directly into the hands of classroom teachers, helping educators take ideas for innovative teaching strategies and make them a reality. Specific goals include:

- Supporting teachers who want to infuse new elements of creativity into their classroom;
- Helping teachers extend student learning beyond the limitations of textbooks;
- Encouraging teachers to strengthen ties between the classroom, other teachers, parents, students and the larger community; and
- Providing funds for projects to enhance student learning that would otherwise not be possible within the District budget or with any other funding source.

The following eleven Helena Public School projects were selected to receive Great Ideas grants totaling \$20,000 for Spring 2003. These grants involve 41 teachers and over 2000 students in the District. Grants are sponsored by businesses and organizations that have made significant donations to the Helena Education Foundation.

1. **Camp to Capital (\$2552):** Central Elementary School, Karen Sturm, 630 students (Sponsored by Helena Elks Lodge #193)
Camp to Capital: Step into Helena's Past is an innovative guidebook project to historic Helena that shows how history shapes the present. Historic photographs and visits to local landmarks will allow comparison of then and now. Students gain a sense of place, and by teaching others, become stewards of their history.
2. **Schoolyard Habitat (\$1500):** Broadwater Elementary School, Carol Hunter, 300 students (Sponsored by Intermountain Administrators, Inc, Missoula)
Teachers in the *Schoolyard Habitat* project continue to work with a variety of community resources to create a natural outdoor classroom. This project will encourage students and staff to explore in a hands-on environment what they are learning inside the classroom, helping them develop an appreciation for the natural world around them.
3. **Write On Workshop (\$1697):** Hawthorne School, Christy Benning, 40 students (Sponsored by the Anderson Zurmuehlen/ Employee Benefit Resources)
First grade students will extend their writing skills by publishing individual books and classroom big books in the *Write on Workshop (WOW)*, a publishing center equipped with specialized tools and materials, and managed by the classroom teachers with a writing coach from the Helena community.
4. **Kids' Cooking (\$2244):** Broadwater School, Karen Mikota, 150 students (Sponsored by KTVH)
Kids' Cooking incorporates cooking in the primary classroom, giving purpose to math and science and allowing teachers to deliver the "lessons" through multiple hands-on experiences. Activities are designed to maximize attention as young students are introduced to a lifelong skill.
5. **Fuel Cells for the 21st Century (\$961):** Capital High School, John Miller, 40+ students (Sponsored by the Ruth and Vernon Taylor Foundation)

Through fuel cell model cars, CHS 9th - 12th grade science students will explore fuel cell and hydrogen technology, which has the potential of supplying an abundant, clean energy alternative to fossil fuels. Developing their project independently and working outside the classroom, they will conduct research into the viability of this potential fuel, and then share information with peers and other researchers.

6. **Digital Photography Comes of Age (\$2910):** Capital High School, Paul Pacini, 100 students
(Sponsored by Mountain West Bank)
Digital photography has replaced film for many amateur as well as professional photographers. This project will acquaint students with this new field, introduce them to its potential uses in classes such as Applied Design and prepare them to enter the evolving digital world.
7. **Horsing Around with the Arts (\$670):** Jim Darcy School, Retta Fasbender, 46 students
(Sponsored by Valley Bank)
Horsing Around with the Arts' 3rd graders will participate in horse-related, hands-on activities related to art, media and style, poetry and creative movement as they learn about Helena's art community and its mentors and how art reflects the past, present and future of everything in one's life.
8. **Spend the Day with Shakespeare (\$1425):** Helena High School, Kathleen Prody, 300 students
(Sponsored by Treasure State Transit)
Spend the Day with Shakespeare and fall in love with his works for life! Students will attend a live production of Twelfth Night performed by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks and will participate in a selection of hands-on workshops designed encourage students to get on their feet and perform!
9. **Brightening and Coloring the Future (\$3000):** Helena High School, Rob Holter, 300 students
(Sponsored by Sandy Mac's Distributing)
Computerized lighting control allows students to experience the application of color theory and physical properties of light in action. Theater and physics students will use new equipment to take classroom theory to reality - showing them that theory can be, and indeed is, being applied to everyday life.
10. **Taking Flight with Fairy Tales (\$696):** Helena High School, Margaret Belisle, 80 students
(Sponsored by KCAP)
Taking Flight with Fairy Tales brings high school and elementary students together to create a fairy tale, collaborating, interacting and connecting to experience the power of storytelling in an integrated and meaningful learning adventure. They will create a lasting product to take home!
11. **Eastern Front Meets Western Front (\$2345):** Helena High School, Jim Schulz, 20 students
(Sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana)
Nine students from HHS and nine from the Ukraine will conduct a joint oral history project involving WWII veterans from Montana and the Ukraine, interviewing, photographing and videotaping them. Stories, photos and memorabilia will be recorded in an English-Russian publication taking the form of a book, web page, video or all three.

The Helena Education Foundation plans to fund up to \$20,000 for fall 2003 grants. For more information on the Great Ideas Grants program or the Foundation, please contact Executive Director, Cindy Lewis, at 443-2545 or hef@mt.net.