



13 GREAT IDEAS

The Helena Education Foundation awards
Spring 2014 Great Ideas Grants





1. Can You See it Now? Teaching Chemistry through Models and Demonstrations

Recipient: Denise Thomas

School: Helena High School

Sponsor: Sandy Mac's Distributing

Chemistry can be a difficult subject to grasp because students cannot "see" the particles that they are studying. Using models and chemical demonstrations, Helena High chemistry students will experience chemical concepts in a kinesthetic and visual manner to gain a deeper understanding of the particle nature of our world.

2. Chrome our Classroom

Recipient: Justine Alberts

School: Kessler Elementary School

Sponsor: D.A. Davidson

Chrome our Classroom will allow students at Kessler Elementary to wirelessly collaborate with students and teachers inside and outside of the classroom. The interactive capabilities of the tablets will help students become more responsible for their learning while being able to create and share documents.

3. Common Kore for All

Recipients: Erin Finstad and Mary Emge

School: Bryant Elementary School

Sponsor: Mountain West Bank

Sitting in a traditional classroom chair for the entire day is a challenge for anyone. Our bodies need movement if we want them to function at their best. Bryant Elementary students are going to try a new type of seat. Kore Active Chairs allow students to wiggle just enough to keep their brains and bodies active.

4. Do You Hear What I Hear?

Recipient: Jennifer Skogley

School: Broadwater Elementary School

Sponsor: Allegiance Benefit Plan Management

Broadwater Elementary students won't just hear music, but will have it in the palms of their hands through the use of technology. Interactive aural and basic theory skills, along with activities that teach musical concepts and the science of hearing will improve student learning and appreciation of music.

5. Darkening the Ultraviolet World of Electric Arc Welding

Recipient: Tom Kain

School: Capital High School

Sponsor: Montana State Fund

Welding students at Capital High will use high-tech, auto-darkening weld helmets to accurately and precisely produce welds in electric arc welding applications. The helmets will help the students' progress in the world of welding, gaining greater skills while maintaining high safety standards.

6. Leap into Reading

Recipient: Ashlie Buresh

School: Kessler Elementary School

Sponsor: The Exchange Club of Helena

The LeapFrog Tag Reading System will allow kindergarten students at Kessler Elementary to listen to books read aloud, read along, or play reading games. This tool gives students the opportunity to work independently on engaging activities of their own choice at their individual levels.

7. Find Your Voice, Find Your History!

Recipient: Jonna Schwartz

School: Helena High School

Sponsor: Chelsey Frank

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is a Pulitzer Prize winning novel that focuses on the lives of African American women living in the 1930's rural South. American Literature students will embark on a journey that involves not only a critical reading of Walker's novel, but also a critical investigation of themselves and their heritage.

8. Molecular Model Mania!

Recipients: Claire Pichette and Tanner Duncan

School: Helena High and Capital High Schools

Sponsor: Helena High Class of '62

"Principles of the Biomedical Sciences" is the introductory course in a 4-year *Project Lead the Way* medical career pathway at the high school level. Students explore basic concepts of biological science and medicine through hands-on lab activities and problem-solving challenges, which will now include using molecular models. Through the pathway classes, students gain knowledge of the practical applications of biological topics and the many careers available at all levels of the medical profession.

9. Look, Learn, Create! Partnership

Recipient: Carol Morgan

School: Four Georgians Elementary School

Sponsor: Ron and Connie Bergum

The *Look, Learn, Create! Partnership* will help teachers integrate arts education while addressing new curriculum challenges and will serve Four Georgians Elementary students by providing opportunities to become engaged in the classroom and receive arts instruction. This program builds on the relationship between Helena Schools and the Holter Museum of Art.

More HEF events and programs at
www.hefmt.org

10. Mind Fullness

Recipient: Sally Mueller

School: Rossiter Elementary School

Sponsor: Montana Broom and Brush

Students at Rossiter Elementary will have a daily opportunity to practice skills that enhance attention—to focus and calm the body and the mind. The goal of the *Mind Fullness* project is to improve students' ability to regulate emotions and behavior resulting in increased academic performance and decreased problem behaviors.

11. Reaping Rewards through Robots

Recipient: Buffy Smith

School: Helena High School

Sponsor: Robert Peccia and Associates

Reaping Rewards through Robots uses simple robots to encourage and challenge Helena High students who already program and those who are hesitant to even try programming. Students may be motivated to pursue one of the many computer careers after learning with these Arduino Robotic components.

12. Sharing Montessori Math

Recipient: Katy Wright

School: Smith Elementary School

Sponsor: US Bank

Montessori math materials foster a child-centered, individualized way to learn math. This grant will allow Montessori trained teachers to share tools and methods with educational peers, giving all of the students and staff at Smith Elementary access to Montessori math methods and materials.

13. Exploring a New Golf: Disc Golf!

Recipient: Linda Paull

School: Helena High School

Sponsor: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana

The Physical Education department at Helena High will expand their students' interests when it comes to outdoor activities. Disc golf is a fast growing sport that can be enjoyed from school age to golden age, making it one of the greatest lifetime sports around. Easy to learn, fun to play.

What is the Great Ideas Grant Program?

Great Ideas Grants put money directly into the hands of classroom teachers, empowering educators to turn their ideas for innovative teaching strategies into action.

- ▶ Grants are named after major donors to the Helena Education Foundation. The amounts of the grants do not reflect the contribution of the donor.



To date, HEF has awarded **240** grants, totalling more than **\$485,491** and involving more than **85%** of Helena's teachers:

- 101** High school grants
- 49** Middle school grants
- 9** PAL grants
- 84** Elementary school grants

Great Ideas Grants enhance the education and experiences of virtually all of Helena's 8,000 students over the last eleven years.

Thank you to the HEF Spring 2014 grant sponsors:

- Sandy Mac's Distributing
- D.A. Davidson
- Helena High Class of '62
- Mountain West Bank
- Allegiance Benefit Plan Management
- Montana State Fund
- The Exchange Club of Helena
- Chelsey Frank
- Ron and Connie Bergum
- Montana Broom and Brush
- Robert Peccia and Associates
- US Bank
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana

Great Ideas Grant sponsor: THE EXCHANGE CLUB OF HELENA

Supporting youth is a main pillar of our organization and through these grants, our students learn in ways that would not be possible otherwise. By offering youth access to furthering their education or improving systems that are already in place, our community will be a better place to live. We thank the HEF for their tireless work on this project and for allowing us to help make a difference for this classroom.

—Dan Mazurek, on behalf of the Exchange Club of Helena

Great Ideas Grant sponsor: MONTANA BROOM AND BRUSH

My 3 children had phenomenal experiences in Helena schools and for 30 years Montana Broom & Brush has been fortunate to do business with the school system as well. We are happy to support the Great Ideas Grants program to insure that our grandchildren and all public school students in Helena will enjoy enriched opportunities for years to come.

—Mike Sampson, Montana Broom and Brush





Would you or your business like to sponsor a Great Ideas Grant or give a gift to the Helena Education Foundation?

Make an investment in the future of your community today! Thanks to so many generous supporters, Great Ideas Grants have helped make 240 great ideas a reality. Here are some grant highlights:

- ▶ Teachers in the **Sound of Leadership Project** work with eighth grade students at C.R. Anderson to build leadership skills while providing structured mentoring to sixth grade students. This project focuses on building a positive school community by actively engaging classes in team building. A mobile sound system enhances learning opportunities and community building for these and other large groups of students throughout the school year.
- ▶ **700 Healthy Helena Hearts** Middle school students learn total-body conditioning through a program using Nordic Walking Poles, which simulates the benefits of cross-country skiing and engages the entire upper body muscle system. This activity burns 40% more calories than walking and stimulates the brain to improve cognitive function. Nordic walking training takes place in PE classes and activities offered before school, during lunch and after school for students to enhance their exercise regimes and improve their health.
- ▶ **Flying Past the Stars on Silver Wings with Matilda** is a creative celebration of the power of reading to change lives. Families and the Central School community to read and explore together, and construct “Little Free Libraries” around Helena for the community to enjoy. The many activities planned in conjunction with this project ignited children’s passion for reading and learning, helping them “shoot for the stars”.
- ▶ **Our Tube** introduced high school students at PAL to the experience of recording oral histories, podcasts, and video documentaries in collaboration with community members and media experts. The students operate video and audio equipment, edit the recordings, and present the final product in the form of documentary and news media programs.
- ▶ **Probing Yellowstone** The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem represents one of the most outstanding research environments in the world and this innovative and challenging project gives Helena High science students hands-on experience using scientific probes to record and analyze data in Yellowstone. After researching, writing and learning about environmental stewardship students will have the opportunity to present and publish their findings.

For more information about Helena Education Foundation upcoming events and programs, please visit HEF online at hefmt.org

The **MISSION** of the Helena Education Foundation is to enrich education in the Helena Public Schools through consistent community investment of time, talent, funding and other resources, providing students, staff and the community with unparalleled educational opportunities and experiences. The Foundation will achieve its mission by directing resources toward the following **GOALS**:

- Promote the understanding that everyone in the community is responsible for creating quality public education
- Inspire parents, businesses and the community to participate with the school district in enriching education
- Celebrate student academic success
- Increase the visibility and value of Helena public schools
- Recognize staff for creative and innovative teaching



YES! I believe great schools are everyone’s business. I want to support this important public education partnership

Method of Payment:

- Check enclosed \$ _____ (make checks payable to Helena Education Foundation)
- I’d like to pledge \$ _____ (please bill me)
- Please contact me regarding a planned gift or gift of securities or other assets

The Foundation is a legally incorporated, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable and educational corporation, allowed to receive and distribute funds, property and gifts of any kind for the benefit of public schools located in Helena. It also maintains a qualified endowment. Planned gifts are eligible for the Montana State Tax Credit. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



**Send to: Helena Education Foundation
PO Box 792
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Credit card payments are accepted online at www.hefmt.org

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I am a graduate/former student of the Helena Public Schools:

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