

For Immediate Release

**DISTRICT 128 FOUNDATION FOR LEARNING ANNOUNCES ITS THIRD  
INNOVATION GRANT RECIPIENTS**

**Vernon Hills, Ill.** -- The District 128 Foundation for Learning is proud to announce the recipients of its 2009-10 Innovation Grants. The grants are awarded to teachers whose proposed projects actively engage students and impact student learning. Each grant is awarded a maximum of \$1,000. Foundation trustees awarded a total of \$7,750 in grants to recipients at a luncheon held Nov. 25 at the District 128 Administration Center.

To date, the Foundation has awarded nearly \$20,000 in Innovation Grants to Libertyville and Vernon Hills High School teachers. Foundation Chair **Anne Landgraf** noted, "It is through the generous donations of both the school community and the community at large that we are able to distribute these funds." Information about contributing to the Foundation can be found on the Foundation's website, [www.d128foundation.org](http://www.d128foundation.org).

The following eight programs and projects will be funded through the newly awarded grants:

**Latino Leadership Team**

Working with counselors from Omni Youth services, a full-day leadership team building event will be held to develop a Latino Leadership Committee. The training will include low and high ropes courses. Topics featured include working with others, reaching out to the community, finding commonalities among one another, and what it takes to be a good leader. The group will then work together to provide translation services at evening programs and events for parents.

Awarded to **Tiffany Heinlein, Jodi Cusick-Acosta, Rebeca Garcia--VHHS**

Requested: \$1000

**Social Thinking Curriculum**

Addressing the needs of students with social-cognitive deficits, this program will be introduced at both schools. The speech-language pathologist for the District will work with the Special Services social workers at the buildings to run groups that will teach this curriculum to the students. The grant money will be used to purchase materials (books, posters, DVDs) for both schools.

Awarded to: **Andrea Townsend -- LHS/VHHS**

Requested: \$1000

**Culture, Identity, and Knowledge: Ernesto Mejia Student Lunch & Learn and Latino Parent/Student Evening Program**

This program will cover issues of identity and culture and how they impact our lives. The student portion of this program will be open to all students. The primary audience is ELL students, students of immigrant parents, and/or students who are immigrants themselves. The keynote speaker, Ernesto Mejia, will deliver a keynote address. Group discussion and activities will follow. An evening program for students and their families, delivered in Spanish, will discuss issues such as family and the importance of education.

Awarded to **Wendy Meister-Louria, Tiffany Heinlein--VHHS**

Requested: \$1000

### **Orchestra Collaborative Composition Project**

Orchestra students will work with a professional composer in multiple sessions during a classroom module on musical composition. The composer will write a piece for the orchestra, involving students in the step-by-step writing processes he uses. He will also listen to, evaluate, and offer guidance for group compositions created by the students. Groups will do creative video recordings of their compositions for CatTube and perform them live at a public concert.

Awarded to **Jason Heath** -- LHS

Requested: \$1000

### **Good Eats: The Chemistry of Food**

Food chemistry is the study of chemical processes and interactions of all biological and non-biological components of foods. Students will be able to explore, learn and understand the chemistry behind preparing food through various lab activities and demonstrations. By adding food chemistry to topics already covered, the course content will be enhanced and students will be given additional examples of how chemistry is connected to so many aspects of life. The grant money will be used to purchase equipment and food items necessary to provide the instruction.

Awarded to **Sherri Rukes** -- LHS

Requested: \$1000

### **Introduction to Material Science Unit**

One of the fastest growing college majors, Material Science, encompasses metals, ceramics, polymers and composites. The project will allow the students to examine, test and understand the various types of materials and learn how chemistry relates to other subjects and jobs. Some of the topics will be additions to the existing curriculum. A separate two week unit will be developed to study some of the materials that have important uses in society but do not fit easily into the current curriculum. The grant money will be used to purchase equipment and materials to provide the instruction.

Awarded to: **Sherri Rukes** -- LHS

Requested: \$1000

### **Illuminate in the Classroom: Using Synchronous and Asynchronous Virtual Meeting Space as Supplementary Education**

Using the software product Illuminate, students can log on as an entire class to a virtual classroom from their home computer in order to receive supplemental education, from review sessions led by the teacher to presentations given by the students themselves. Sessions are conducted in real time online, and then recorded so that students who might miss the session can recall the session at their leisure. Funding would provide licensing for one year in one classroom. This can be considered a pilot program for this type of teaching.

Awarded to: **Meredith Tarczynski, David Widzisz** -- LHS

Requested: \$1000

### **Safe Navigation: G.P.S. Units (Go Places Safely)**

The Driver Education Staff would like to utilize portable GPS units to enhance instruction. Students will be taught how to use the technology safely and how to utilize features that can help in case of emergencies. The units will also enhance classroom projects related to trip planning and map reading skills. The grant money will be used to purchase 3 Garmin Nuvi 1250 units.

Awarded to: **Bryan Wilcox** -- LHS

Requested: \$750

The mission of the District 128 Foundation for Learning is to obtain resources to enhance and enrich the instructional program in Community High School District 128. Founded in 2007, the Foundation is a 501(c) (3) non-profit, autonomous, tax-exempt organization. It is led by a group of dedicated local

community leaders in business and education who want to make Libertyville High School and Vernon Hills High School the best they can be.

For further information, please contact:

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