

Great Ideas Grant Recipients

Fall 2002

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 ten Helena Public School projects were selected to receive Great Ideas grants totaling \$19,480 for the Fall 2002. These grants involve 57 teachers and over 3000 students in the District. Grants are sponsored by businesses and organizations who have made significant donations to the Helena Education Foundation.

1. **Ola! Elementary Spanish (\$650):** Hawthorne Elementary School, Jenny Moore, 40 students
(Sponsored by the Helena Rotary Club)
The project will provide Spanish language and culture classes to third grade students, enriching the education and present curriculum with a skill not now available.
2. **Schoolyard Habitat (\$3000):** Broadwater Elementary School, Heather Brown, 270 students
(Sponsored by Intermountain Administrators, Inc, Missoula)
Teachers in the Schoolyard Habitat project will work with a variety of community resources to create a natural schoolyard habitat, allowing students and staff to explore in a hands-on environment what they are learning inside the classroom.
3. **Foreign Language Fair (\$2186):** Capital High School, Jan Jamruszka-Wilson, 600 students
(Sponsored by the Crowley Law Firm)
This proposal uses native speakers and others in the community to help foreign language students further explore and experience world cultures and languages through activities such as a masquerade ball, workshops at Carroll College and the Historical Society, special class presentations and web-based games.
4. **Science Seminar (\$1300):** Capital High School, Tom Pedersen, 33 students
(Sponsored by Anderson Zurmuehlen & Employee Benefit Resources)
The Science Seminar allows science students to apply previous coursework to topics normally not covered in the classroom within the natural environment of Glacier and Yellowstone Parks, using state and community experts, special readings and the actual experience of being in the wild.

5. **Senior Project Capstone (\$1150):** Capital/Helena High Schools, Jeanne Tweeten, 16 students
(Sponsored by Treasure State Transit)
The Capstone Event will showcase skills and creativity of self-directed seniors and provide a meaningful assessment of their work at a special presentation using community judges, filming for HCTV, and will hopefully encourage more teachers and students to participate in senior projects in the future.
6. **LinkCrew (\$3000):** Capital High and Helena High Schools, Kelley Morand, 800 students
(Sponsored by Mountain West Bank)
Funding for LinkCrew activities will support activities such as movie nights, recruiting, dances and t-shirts as well as mentor training for this freshmen orientation and peer mentoring program. The program hopes to decrease drop-out rates, increase attendance and develop student and mentoring leaders.
7. **My Future's So Bright I Need Shades! (\$1920):** Helena Middle School, Susan Dotter, 260 students
(Sponsored by the Ruth and Vernon Taylor Foundation)
Students in this career unit will take a career interest inventory, prepare resumes, research job opportunities and give presentations on careers as well as hear guest speakers on a variety of careers.
8. **A Novel Idea (\$1872):** Helena Middle School, Madeleine Neumeyer, 80 students
(Sponsored by the Grace Seekins Foundation)
This project's goal is to reach at-risk students who are reading below grade level with quality literature, which is beyond the typical format of the District's curriculum.
9. **Biotechnology in the Classroom (\$2902):** Helena High School, Sandra Wardell, 700 students
(Sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana)
The exciting project is designed to expose students to the latest innovations in genomics and biotechnology using biotechnology laboratory experiments performed with equipment purchased from these grant funds.
10. **Poetry at Helena High (\$1500):** Helena High School, Margaret Belisle, 250 students
(Sponsored by KTVH Channel 12)
This collaborative poetry project will demonstrate student creativity in grades 9 - 12 through writing, judging, reciting, teaching and appreciating poetry, encouraging students to express their voices as artists in the community.

The Helena Education Foundation plans to fund up to \$20,000 for spring 2003 grants. Foundation Board members will hold grant-writing workshops for interested Helena Public School teachers on January 22 and 23, 2003. Grant applications will be available December 15, 2002, and are due March 7, 2003. 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.