

Partners in Education Awards 29 Teacher Grants
More than \$50,000 granted to Innovative PAUSD classroom projects

March 6, 2007 – Palo Alto, California – Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE), the only non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to supporting all schools in the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), last week announced its first round of 2007 teacher grants, awarding \$50,387 to 29 projects proposed by PAUSD teachers.

Established in 1987 by PiE's predecessor organization, Palo Alto Foundation for Education (PAFE), the teacher grants program makes awards to teachers at all levels who propose innovative classroom projects. Funded projects this month include a home economics program at Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School, equipment for a glass-blowing class at Palo Alto High School, special education and adaptive learning materials at Ohlone Elementary School, and a variety of other curricular and program enhancements in the areas of reading, literature, music, technology, art, science, mathematics, foreign language, and film. This round of awards ranged from \$87 to \$3,000, with two larger exceptions for especially noteworthy projects.

Funding was bestowed upon 29 out of 35 projects, a higher percentage than usual, according to Al Russell, the PiE board member who heads the teacher grants committee. Russell noted that this round of proposals was especially compelling and that the committee was also able to spread out the grants by awarding partial funding in some cases. It made eight awards to teachers at the elementary schools, nine to teachers at the middle schools, 10 to teachers at the high schools, one to a district-wide program, and one to a program benefiting three schools at different levels.

At Duveneck Elementary School, second grade teachers Matthew Bowling and Sylvia Lor-Cordova received funding for "The Architecture Game: Lego Math in the Second Grade Classroom." In his application, Bowling said, "We hope that this project would give kids a hands-on way of viewing many second grade math concepts. We are sure that the kids would be excited to build their designs and see them take form in the reality of Legos. These concepts could be explored in real-life ways that kids just can't get by doing problems in a workbook."

At Jordan Middle School, English teacher Molly Golden waxed enthusiastic about the funding she received.

"The PiE funds will actually buy the books I hope to use in the 'American Era Literature Circles.' So, I could not even start the project without it! It is wonderful to offer students of varying reading levels books that are appropriate for their ability and that will, hopefully, interest them. The grant has given me the money and time needed to research, read, share, gather feedback, and ultimately purchase books I can use in my 8th grade English classes that will give personal experience and voice to the times and eras they study in history class."

At Gunn High School Science-Engineering Tech teacher Bill Dunbar, who received funding for the Gunn Robotics Team, said, "Partners in Education has been a tremendous help to the Gunn Robotics Team and for a myriad of other great programs. PiE funds reflect the great interest in and support for education that makes this community a great place to teach. PiE funds allow us to build programs that reach all levels of students at all ages."

Since its inception, the teacher grants program has awarded more than \$1 million in 39 rounds of teacher grants. Last year PiE awarded nearly \$100,000 in two rounds of grants, and this June, PiE expects to award another \$50,000 in its final round of the school year.

Partners in Education

Palo Alto Partners in Education is a nonprofit 501(c)3 foundation dedicated to sustaining extraordinary public education in Palo Alto. Last year, the foundation donated \$1.89 million to the Palo Alto Unified School District to augment this school year's budget. That donation was allocated directly to the principals at each of the district's 17 schools on a per-student basis. For more information, please visit www.papie.org.

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