

**ARMSTRONG SCHOOL DISTRICT FOUNDATION AWARDS \$13,000 IN TEACHER GRANTS  
Non-Profit Group Supports Educational Projects to Reach 3,000 Students**

FORD CITY—The non-profit Armstrong School District Foundation announced today that it is awarding \$13,000 in Educator Innovation Grants, which will enable innovative learning experiences for more than 3,000 Armstrong School District students this school year.

Educators from across the Armstrong School District submitted numerous quality applications by the June deadline. In the end, the volunteer Armstrong School District Foundation Trustees decided to fund 10 projects. A team of trustees reviewed and scored each application on a multi-point scale, with criteria matching the grant application questions.

Here are the recipients and their projects:

<p><b>District-Wide</b></p>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>RAIN: Research Applications In Neurobiology.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$5,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> 800 students in grades 7-12 district-wide.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Christie Orlosky, an Elderton Jr-Sr High School science teacher.  <b>Details:</b> A core group of juniors and seniors from each of the four high schools, totaling 40 students, will be invited to learn basic anatomy and physiology of the brain, coupled with a computer program that predicts their learning ability. Once the training session is over, each student will be responsible for teaching a total of 20 fellow classmates from their home school how to use the computer model to enhance their learning capacity. The original core of students will communicate with an advisor from school, as well as with the lead teacher for this project, through the Web-based <i>blackboard</i> communication system. There will be a culminating visit for the core group of 40 students to the Biomedical Research Tower at the University of Pittsburgh in spring 2009.</p>
<p><b>District-Wide</b></p>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>VersaTiles Activity Books/Lending Library.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$2,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> 933 students in grades 5-6 district-wide.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> N. Sue Bowser, an elementary math coach.  <b>Details:</b> VersaTiles combine the captivating challenge of a puzzle with the purposeful practice of a workbook. VersaTiles gives students immediate feedback when they check their answers so they can correct mistakes on their own.</p>
<p><b>Ford City Jr-Sr High School</b></p>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>Knock Your Socks Off Chemistry Demonstrations.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$1,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> Approximately 300 students at Ford City Jr-Sr High School in Chemistry II, Chemistry I, and Science 7-9.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Kirk Wicker, a Ford City Jr-Sr High School science teacher.  <b>Details:</b> Designed to excite students about the sciences.</p>
<p><b>Elderton Jr-Sr High School</b></p>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>Amazing Arthropods.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$1,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> 90 biology students—from general-level to AP—in grades 9-12 at Elderton Jr-Sr High School.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Christie Orlosky, an Elderton Jr-Sr High School science teacher.  <b>Details:</b> Gives students a hands-on approach to organisms such as spiders, millipedes, bees, termites, cockroaches and butterflies.</p>
<p><b>West Hills Primary School</b></p>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>K’Nex Sets and Eric Carle Book Resource Centers.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$1,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> 150 kindergarten students at West Hills Primary.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Brenda Contrael, a kindergarten teacher at West Hills Primary School.  <b>Details:</b> Will create a resource center filled with books and games from well-known children’s author Eric Carle, as well as the educational <i>K’Nex</i> toys.</p>

<b>West Hills Intermediate School</b>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>RACERS: Racing Always Challenges and Excites Students.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$1,000.  <b>Benefits:</b> Approximately 30 Title I reading students in grades 4-6 at West Hills Intermediate School. They would then share their learning with all other students (approx. 500).  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Mona Fleeger, a fourth through sixth grade teacher at West Hills Intermediate.  <b>Details:</b> This project uses rubber-band powered racers, presentations by local business owners, a field trip, research projects, and a student-generated parent newsletter to increase student interest in reading.</p>
<b>Kittanning Senior High School</b>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>HOPE (Holocaust Offers Powerful Education) to district students.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$500.  <b>Benefits:</b> 50 to 60 ninth and tenth-grade students who are primarily gifted or high-achieving students at Kittanning Senior High School.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Gretchen Contrael, a ninth-grade teacher at Kittanning Senior High School.  <b>Details:</b> A trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. will enhance the current holocaust unit examined by these students. Additionally, it will offer the students a chance to further ruminate over the impact of this tragic event.</p>
<b>West Hills Primary School</b>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>Learning Centers for Reading Time.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$500.  <b>Benefits:</b> 15 to 20 learning support students at West Hills Primary.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Jessica Weigel, a learning support teacher at West Hills Primary.  <b>Details:</b> Will provide reading center materials including phonics games, puzzles, a LEAP Frog Reading System, and LEAP Frog Reading Books in order to maximize learning potential during reading center time activities.</p>
<b>West Shamokin Jr-Sr High School</b>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>Operation Montserrat: How Principles of Science and Math are Used to Predict Hurricanes and Volcanic Eruptions.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$500.  <b>Benefits:</b> 35 CP seventh-grade earth science students at West Shamokin Jr-Sr High School.  <b>Lead Teachers:</b> Karen Risinger and Patricia Yamrick, teachers at West Shamokin Jr-Sr High School.  <b>Details:</b> Features partnership with the Challenger Learning Center at Wheeling Jesuit University.</p>
<b>Kittanning Senior High School</b>	<p><b>Project:</b> <i>Technology-Enhanced Education.</i>  <b>Amount:</b> \$500.  <b>Benefits:</b> 120 tenth-grade students at Kittanning Sr High School.  <b>Lead Teacher:</b> Erin Scahill, a tenth-grade teacher at Kittanning Senior High School.  <b>Details:</b> This project incorporates digital media into the traditional English classroom. The use of interactive games, PowerPoint, DVDs, and CDs will enhance the students' understanding of the classics and better prepare them for our technology-powered world.</p>

“We are delighted to not only continue these Educator Grants for the fourth straight year, but also to increase our total grant allocation,” said Bruce Hall, ASD Foundation President. “The quality of these innovative projects is inspiring—especially our first-ever \$5,000 District-Wide Grant, which will enable a neurobiology lesson that will reach across all four high schools.”

The Armstrong School District Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to expanding educational opportunities for Armstrong School District youth.

Since fall 2005, the Armstrong School District Foundation has awarded nearly \$30,000 in educator grants. These grants have given teachers the means to do innovative programs benefiting more than 6,600 students to date.

The money for these grants come to the 501c3 nonprofit Armstrong School District Foundation from employee payroll deductions, from ordinary community donors, and from an annual golf outing at Kittanning Country Club held each June.

Future goals of the ASD Foundation—if financial support is available—include starting a district-wide student jazz band, supporting a summer enrichment school, and providing support for artist-in-residence programs, among many others. For more information about the ASD Foundation, please visit [www.asd.k12.pa.us/asdfoundation](http://www.asd.k12.pa.us/asdfoundation).