

Since 1993, the East Palo Alto Kids Foundation (EPAK) has been a community-based, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to promote educational opportunities by awarding grants to teachers in the classrooms of East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park.

Spring 2011

Micro Grants Program Update - \$196,000 Awarded to Teachers

During the 2010-11 school year, EPAK awarded 338 micro-grants of up to \$500 each to teachers in the Ravenswood School District. Teachers use these microgrants to buy materials that complete basic literacy, math, science and technology curricula. Most of the materials are used by students year after year. Thanks to donations from individuals and support from several foundations, these grants totaled \$165,000.

In Fall 2010, we gave \$90,000 to 184 teachers, and in January 2011, EPAK awarded \$75,000 to 154 teachers. As part of a special one-time outreach in March, EPAK awarded an additional \$31,000 in grants to 50 non-classroom school employees, that work with students in a variety of capacities.

The next article tells about how nine of those 50 grants were used.

EPAK Special Grants Awarded to After-School Coordinators



As part of \$31,000 in one-time additional grants, EPAK awarded up to \$1500 to every **Academy for Learning** after school program at the Ravenswood District schools. This was a special opportunity for EPAK to reach even more Ravenswood students. The grants will increase opportunities for learning in an expanded school day. Here are a few highlights of how these grants will be used:

- Students at **Cesar Chavez School** who master their multiplication tables, will be treated to a field trip. The theme of the Chavez multiplication campaign is "Climbing Towards Success," where students move their own marker on a mural of a mountain as they master their multiplication tables. "To keep with the theme of the campaign we would like to take our students for some indoor rock climbing," says **Yesenia Diaz**.
- **Willow Oaks** and **Costaño Schools** will purchase sports uniforms for the middle school sports programs to use. "Having new uniforms will create more team unity, build school pride in the players as well as the spectators, and give the students using them a sense of importance knowing that they represent their school," says **Mauricio Rodriguez**. Willow Oaks School participates in all four Ravenswood Athletics sports.

- 7th grade students at **Ronald McNair School** will have hands-on life science experiments and then go on a field trip to the Tech Museum. They will also offer a graphic design class to encourage students to pursue careers in technology.

- **Brentwood Academy** will use their grant to build its library collection. "Our staff has been trained in various reading strategies by District and New Teacher Center staff. We want to use the new book sets to support students with their reading and comprehension skills," according to **Erick Granados**.

- At **Green Oaks**, students in 4th and 5th grade will learn about the different layers of the Earth, minerals, rock formation and ultimately build their own volcanoes. Students in 3rd grade will increase their reading fluency by using Reader's Theater and other scripts to perform a student play. Students in K-2 grades will participate in physical education games and nutrition lessons to learn what it takes to be healthy.

- **Elizabeth Calderon** at **Belle Haven**, explains that the "workbooks, math and literacy games, flashcards, (and) Karaoke, will be used to provide students the opportunity to build their proficiency in understanding and applying targeted mathematics, literacy, and enrichment concepts, skills and strategies in a fun way."

Hoopoe Share Literacy Donates Books to Ravenswood Schools

In March, **Sally Mallam**, Hoopoe Books Share Literacy Director donated 1250 books in both English and Spanish. EPAK distributed the sets valued at \$5300 to more than sixty K-2 classroom teachers. These book sets are beautifully illus-

trated and promote tolerance and understanding through multicultural stories. **Hoopoe Share Literacy** also provided accompanying lesson plan CDs and activity guides to the teachers. *For more info, go to www.shareliteracy.org.*

Sponsored Projects Updates

In 2007, EPAK launched a Sponsored Projects Grant Program for donors wishing to help even more than one classroom at a time. With their help, EPAK has successfully completed 15 projects, putting over \$200,000 additional dollars to work in EPA schools.

• Ravenswood Child Development Center (RCDC) Receives \$5000 grant

Ravenswood Child Development Center was awarded a \$5,000 grant for kinder readiness activities, including three par-

ent workshops this winter. According to Director, **Yolanda Lacey**, the workshops were entitled "Navigating the School System" (Jan 5), "Are You Ready?" (Feb 3) and "Parent to Parent Discussion" (Mar 2). Additional activities are planned this spring.

Important Board Announcements



Tami Espinosa, principal of Brentwood Elementary School, will succeed **Laura Roberts** as President of the Board beginning April 1st. Laura will continue to serve as board member. Tami, who served as Chair of the Allocations Committee, will be succeeded by **Cindy Chin**, principal of Willow Oaks School. **Marco Chavez**, who works for the San Mateo County Office of Education, succeeds **Lou Pelosi** as Chair of the Communications Committee and will also serve as Co-Vice President.

Welcome to new board members, **Jenna Wachtel** and **Adam Hogan**. Both have taught in Ravenswood district schools and bring fresh ideas and energy. Jenna will succeed Cindy as Secretary. Congratulations to Tami and the rest of the new committee chairs!

Thanks very much, Laura, for your leadership, service, and generosity as EPAK's president over the past two years.



EPAK Volunteer All Stars - Lydia Moran



Lydia is a long-time EPAK supporter and education foundation veteran. She has served as EPAK's Treasurer for the past 5 years. She also serves on EPAK's Allocations and Finance Committees. Lydia says, "Having lived one mile from East Palo Alto for about 30 years, I am astounded by the differences that a political borderline (or a creek) makes in the education of children. Children are a major resource for the future and investing in them will give everybody (not just

them) a better life." Lydia successfully organized the 2010 Borders summer book drive which resulted in \$16K worth of new books being donated to Ravenswood schools this year. Thanks to Lydia's experience, dedication and attention to detail, EPAK is assured to dot all the I's and cross all the T's!

EPAK needs volunteers to join their Communications Committee. If you have good writing skills and experience in Public Relations, Graphic Design or Social Media, please contact info@epak.org.

To donate, please send check or money order to the above address, or donate online at www.epak.org Questions? info@epak.org or (650) 852-9398 or www.epak.org



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Granting Opportunity in Every Classroom

Join Us For EPAK Day at Costano School, May 25th

Join us for EPAK Day 2011, Wednesday May 25th at 8:30 am at **Costaño School**, 2695 Fordham Street in East Palo Alto. It's the perfect opportunity to celebrate our progress, reconnect with what we do and meet with board members, and volunteers. Principal, **Gina Sudaria** and her staff will talk about innovative ways teachers have used EPAK grants to strengthen education at her school and lead a classroom tour to see teacher grant recipients in action. A light breakfast will be served. **For more information visit www.epak.org.**



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