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PALO ALTO PARTNERS IN EDUCATION AWARDS \$68,059 FOR 2010 FALL ROUND TEACHERS GRANTS TO FOSTER INTER-SCHOOL COLLABORATION, EQUALITY OF RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION AND ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING

May 12, 2011 – PALO ALTO, CA – Palo Alto Partners in Education (PiE), the education foundation that raises funds for the Palo Alto Unified School District, today announced the recipients of the fall 2010 Teachers Grant round, awarding \$68,059 for 22 teacher grants to 19 school programs across the district. The fall grant award is one of the largest amounts ever offered by PiE for teacher's grants in a single round.

This year's recipients include a student-run start-up recycling business, clickers for algebra comprehension, expansion of individualized early reading materials, a new world music program, student stress-reducing after-school yoga and meditation, and historical glass-making and glass molds, among other notable projects.

"We look for teachers' grants that allow the testing of innovative ideas and pilot programs by teachers and staff," said Marcie Brown, former PiE Board Member and Committee Chair for the fall 2010 Teacher Grant Awards. "We are especially interested in collaborative projects that have reach across the district."

"Achieving equality of resources between schools in the district is one of PiE's founding values and this year we awarded our largest grant to Barron Park Elementary school to purchase a new set of K-2 leveled readers," said Ms. Brown. "Barron Park is one of our newest elementary schools and has a wide range of readers among its approximately 170 K-2 students with considerable overlap in reading levels between grades K-2. This grant will provide enough books for struggling-to-advanced readers to reach appropriate reading levels for their grade. Other Palo Alto elementary schools have used leveled readers for some time and this grant allows Barron Park to use leveled readers to enhance its reading program as well."

PiE's goal of fostering inter-school collaboration includes a grant that extends a popular high school

math technology called “smart clickers” used at Gunn and Paly and funded by PiE last year, to JLS middle school’s 8th grade algebra classes. The grant will purchase smart clickers that will allow over 200 students to solve math problems electronically during “warm-ups” at the beginning of each class, enabling teachers to see -- at a glance -- which students comprehend the material and who needs more help. Previously, teachers gleaned this information by relying on “volunteers” while some students remained disengaged.

PiE also will be funding the enhancement of high school electives, including Paly’s landmark glass-blowing program. The grant will enable the purchase of industrial glass molds, which both speed glass-object making and will expand the program’s curriculum to include a unit on “Historical Glass-Making.”

The Gunn Robotics Research team will receive an award to partially make up for the loss of \$8,000 in state funding and be used to purchase building materials for competition-ready drive trains. PiE’s goal of funding innovation in our schools will be met by an award to Project “Reach” at JLS (which stands for Resilience, Effort, Attitude, Communication and Honesty). The grant will fund an innovative pilot project that simulates running a start-up business for students to repurpose tennis balls and turn them into felt furniture glides to prevent student chairs from scratching floors. Project Reach’s small class environment is uniquely suited to pilot this innovative project that ties academic learning to business, enabling the students to apply engineering and math skills for product design, development and analysis and apply English and communications skills for marketing and sales.

Another program designed to meet district, community and PiE goals to reduce student stress will be funded for the purchase of materials and equipment for a new weekly after-school student yoga class at Gunn High School. The class is designed to teach yoga and meditation to help alleviate student stress and improve student well-being. The yoga class offers an alternative to the high school’s competitive after-school sports programs and provides an outlet for students to relax, recharge and get healthy.

Music programs at all five secondary schools serving over 1,100 students across the district will offer world music and multicultural programs with new percussion instruments, including sound effects and ethnic instruments, purchased with PiE teachers grant funds. Students will learn music from African, South American and Asian cultures and perform in ensembles and drumming circles. The instruments have already made their debut in a performance on April 27 at the Jordan International Festival.

The final day for PiE’s spring round of 2011 teachers grant applications closed May 1. For additional information on PiE teachers grants please visit www.papie.org.

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