



Tahoe/Truckee **Excellence in Education** Foundation
Business & Community helping Students reach new heights

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TAHOE TRUCKEE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

SMART TIMES

Excellence in Education

Winter 2009

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY HELPING STUDENTS REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Friends of Education—Are You One?

The Tahoe Truckee Excellence in Education Foundation is asking for your support by becoming a “Friend of Education.” Becoming a “Friend of Education” is an easy way for you to invest in the future of our educational community.

Your support is needed this year more than ever. Governor Schwarzenegger’s latest budget includes a \$8.6 billion cut from K-14 education over two years. These cuts are impacting schools in Tahoe-Truckee. TTUSD is facing a projected \$3.3

million deficit in next year’s budget. As the district works with staff and the community to find the best solutions to this difficult budget situation, you can help now by becoming a Friend of Education.

Your annual membership gift will help Excellence in Education continue to increase its fundraising efforts that provide needed support for TTUSD in the form of educational grants and teacher awards and training. To join, please see the insert or visit www.ExinEd.org.

TTUSD is projecting a \$3 million

shortfall for next year. Your

support is needed more than

ever before. You can help!

Foundation Honors Fellows, Star Recipients

Do you remember a teacher or school staff person who had a great impact on your life? Fortunately, most of us have experienced a teacher or school staff person who left a lasting impression on the soul! Each year the Excellence in Education Foundation gives the community the opportunity to recognize those individuals for their efforts.

The Linda Brown Fellows Awards recognize teachers who demonstrate originality, innovation and dedication to the teaching profession that is above and beyond the normally high standards of TTUSD. Excellence in Education is proud of the Fellows program and feels it is a great way for our community - parents, students and fellow teachers to acknowledge the tremendous work being done in the classroom.

The 2008-2009 Linda Brown Fellows recipients are: Claire Boyle, Tahoe Lake Elementary; Candy Blesse, Truckee

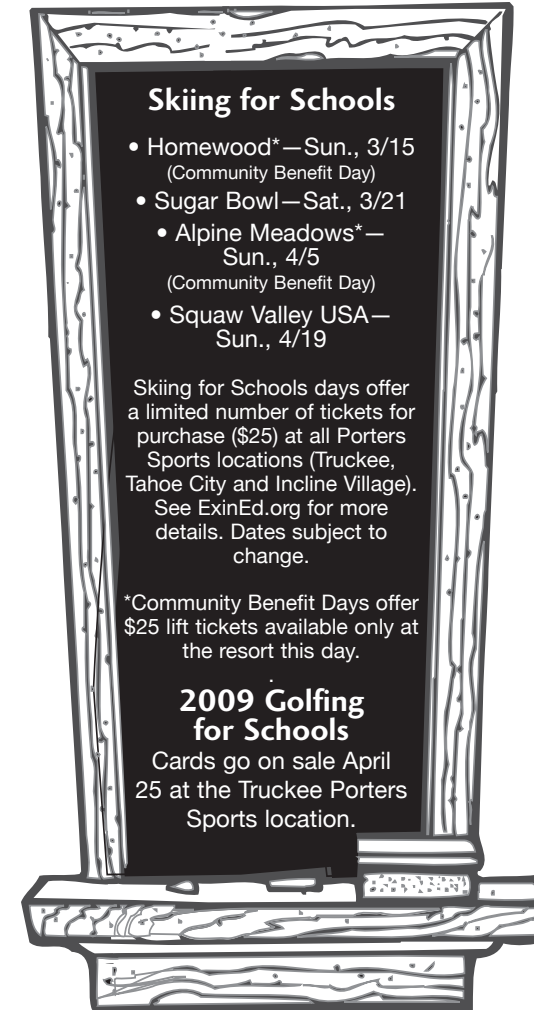
Elementary; Mike Depew, Community School; Sue Mock, Alder Creek Middle School and Karen Pilaar, Glenshire Elementary. Recipients each received \$2,000 for educational purposes within the district and \$1,000 for their personal use.

New this year, the Star Award was given to recognize classified employees who positively impact the lives of the students by providing outstanding support in their positions.

The 2008-2009 Star Award recipients are: Marci Calderon, Kings Beach Elementary; Clemente Sarabia, Truckee High School; Deed Verutti, Tahoe Lake Elementary and Chris White, Truckee High School. The recipients each received \$1,000 for their personal use.

The deadline for this year’s Fellows and Star Award nominations is Thursday, May 7, 2009. Applications are available online at ExinEd.org.

Special "THANKS" to the 40 fine restaurants in the Truckee and North Tahoe area that make our Dining for Schools program possible!



Skiing for Schools

- Homewood*—Sun., 3/15
(Community Benefit Day)
- Sugar Bowl—Sat., 3/21
 - Alpine Meadows*—Sun., 4/5
(Community Benefit Day)
- Squaw Valley USA—Sun., 4/19

Skiing for Schools days offer a limited number of tickets for purchase (\$25) at all Porters Sports locations (Truckee, Tahoe City and Incline Village). See ExinEd.org for more details. Dates subject to change.

*Community Benefit Days offer \$25 lift tickets available only at the resort this day.

2009 Golfing for Schools

Cards go on sale April 25 at the Truckee Porters Sports location.

Skiing for Schools

Thanks to our resort partners—Alpine Meadows, Homewood Mountain Resort, Northstar-at-Tahoe, Squaw Valley USA and Sugar Bowl for giving community members the opportunity to ski/ride for a reduced price on designated days during the winter season.

See 2008-2009 Skiing for Schools Dates above, or ExinEd.org for more details and updates. Dates subject to change.

Golfing for Schools

Golfing for Schools cards go on sale April 25 at the Truckee Porters location. Please visit ExinEd.org for program updates and details.

THANK YOU

FRIENDS OF EDUCATION 2009

Foundation Honor Roll

Alpine Valley Homes,
Bryan and Brenda Burns
Wayne and Joan Trehwhitt

Foundation Sponsor

Chip and Mary Brown
Jeff and Sue Gross

Foundation Patron

David and Sally Gardner
Nancy Gisko
Sidney and John Scott
George and Susan Varuan
Jo Lynn Wilson

Foundation Supporter

Dick and Mary Abbey
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David and Linda Brown
Laura and Jeff Brown
Debbie Cole and Lisa Dobey
James and Amy Easterbrook
Sally Frazier
Desmond and Alison Elder
Don and Shirley Hale
Michelle and Larry Larson
Bob and Brady McClintock
Jeff and Laura Partridge
Scott Ryan

Rick and Catherine Thompson
Kelli and Steve Twomey
Barbara Weedn
Holly Zuklie

Family Membership

Kern and Gina Barta
Phebe Bell and Billy McCullough
Emily and Ron Farrell
Mike and Pam Hafer
Andy and Laurel Holmer
Erica and Brook Igleheart
Alissa Just
Tom Kalange
Jim and Lynette Kenney
Trudy and Rolf Lesem
Andrew Levy
Phyllis and Rick McConn
Lisa and Sandy McPherson
Michael and Karen Rodarte
Rich and Edie Scarpa
Lauren Schaake
Richard and Lisa Scibird

Individual Membership

Wendy Buchanan
Chuck Lancaster
Claudia Waters
Mary Lynn Willis

PAYROLL DEDUCTION PARTICIPANTS

Many TTUSD employees participate in a payroll deduction program to benefit Excellence in Education. The Foundation appreciates this direct support from these employees!

Mary Berelson	Julia Lawrence
Mark Brady	Erin LeFevers
Heidi Bushway	Susan Lowder
Verkler	Nancy McNair
Nancy Casper	Lisa Melin
Sydney Dion	Julie Miescke
Teresa Eppolito	Dean Nordby
Mary Ferrari	Susan Phebus
Karyn Freested	Janice Plochko
Jan Ganong	Dana Pomeroy
Patricia Hamilton	Martha Reedy
Kilty Highfill	Kathy Rittner-Echols
Ed Hilton	Toni Rockwell
Dana Hurt	Christine Smith
Karen Hutchinson	Patricia Stonick
Lissa Johnson	Bonnie Whittemore
Nancy Kerr	Terrina Woodard-
Diane Laroche	Gross
Hien Larson	

Excellence in Education's IRS form 990 is available for public inspection.

What Does it Mean to be a "Basic Aid" District?

Let's face it—school finance is complicated. Public school district funding comes from a variety of different federal, state and local sources. Many of these funds are designated for specific programs such as special education or class size reduction and some are for "general use." In California, there is a minimal amount of funding per student that is guaranteed by the government for the general use category. This general funding is called revenue limit funding and is based on a formula combining local property taxes and state taxes allocated to districts per student using average daily attendance (ADA).

In a small number of school districts (less than one percent), the local property tax revenue meets or exceeds the dollar amount that is designated by the state's revenue limit formula. When this happens, the school district is classified as "basic aid" (or excess revenue) and is allowed to keep the additional money. An analogy for understanding this concept is to visualize that every school district has a bucket which represents its funding. Each bucket is filled with the local area's property taxes. If the bucket isn't completely filled by the property tax revenue, then the state tops off the bucket to reach the revenue limit number. However, if the local property tax revenue fills or even overflows the bucket,

Basic Aid status is not guaranteed year to year, nor is there a guaranteed minimum amount of excess funding.

then the state doesn't need to contribute. These districts whose buckets are filled or even overflowing from local property taxes get to keep the excess funding and are called "basic aid" or excess revenue districts. However, because property tax revenue and enrollments fluctuate, some districts are basic aid one year and not the next. A district is also considered basic aid whether it is one dollar or several thousand dollars over the revenue limit number.

Due to rising property values, several new developments and a relatively flat student enrollment, Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD) crossed the threshold from a revenue limit to a basic aid district in 2003-2004, and remains so today. Over the past several years, our district has received more

funding from property taxes than it would have received from revenue limit funding. Because our district is basic aid, we are in better financial shape than many districts in California, but we still are not insulated from the woes of the state's financial crisis. Property tax revenue represents 67% of our district's funding; 33% comes from additional sources—including federal, state and local dollars. It is the additional 33% of funding that we are hearing a lot about in the news. This percentage is generally earmarked for specific programs



such as special education, class size reduction and transportation. Additionally, local property tax revenue has been over 10% the last few years and this trend has recently slowed due to the current economic conditions. As a consequence, the annual growth rate used in the district's multi-year budget projections for the upcoming school years has been reduced to 4%—and may even drop lower based on revised growth projections.

So, what does it all mean?! TTUSD is a basic aid district, which has helped our district's financial situation; however with the current state budget cuts and decrease in property values our district is still facing a tough road ahead. For more information on the district's financial situation and other issues facing TTUSD, see the Budget Primer document posted on www.ttusd.org.

References: TTUSD Budget Primer and www.californiaschoolfinancing.org

Winter Discovery Program Gets Underway



Students gather outside the new yurt being used for the Winter Discovery Program.

Next time you are in Tahoe City, go check out the new yurt being used for the Winter Discovery Program at the Tahoe City XC Center. The program is a collaborative effort between the Tahoe Cross Country Ski Education Association and Sierra Watershed Education Partnerships (SWEP).

Two hundred and fifty 3rd through 5th grade students from Tahoe Lake and Kings Beach Elementary Schools will participate in the Winter Discovery Program this year. The theme is winter ecology, with three topics: Watersheds and Weather, Ecosystems and Adaptation and Nutrition and Fitness. The curriculum relates to the winter environment and California state content standards.

Excellence in Education contributed \$25,000 for the purchase of the yurt. For more information on the Winter Discovery Program please contact christine@4swep.org.

Get Active!

Need a fun Saturday activity? A new, hands-on exhibit that explores the world of activity and teaches people the science of strength, flexibility and balance is at the Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance on Donner Pass Road in Truckee.

The "Let's Get Active" exhibit has 11 highly interactive stations that engage both children and adults and help them learn that healthy choices are within reach!

The exhibit is open from 10am to 2pm on Saturdays from February 7 through April 25. Third through fifth grade teachers may also sign up for Friday field trips! For more information, contact Maria Martin 530.587.3769 or mmartin@tfhd.com.

Fall Grants Funded: \$74,760

The Foundation's Allocations Committee met in November to review requests from TTUSD teachers for funding. Thirty-four grants were fully or partially funded for a total of \$74,760. Congratulations to all grant recipients! We appreciate your hard work and dedication to the children of our community. Stay tuned for some exciting new grant opportunities for the spring cycle.

District Wide Grants - \$11,815

Sensory Motor Integration – Cindy Dunham
Partially funded \$3,109 of \$6,217

School Bus Safety Program- Dawn Parkhurst
Fully funded \$179

Early Intervention Hearing and Vision Kit – Jan Ganong
Fully funded \$8,527

Tahoe Lake Elementary - \$4,128

Accelerated Reader – Deed Verutti and Teresa Ketron (shared with Glenshire Elementary)
Fully funded \$3,102

Thesauruses for Writing and Research – Rebekka Fine
Partially funded \$500 of \$1,200

Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Programs – Elizabeth Black and Jan Ganong (shared with Kings Beach Elementary, North Tahoe Middle and High School)
Fully funded \$526

Kings Beach Elementary- \$10,942

California Mathematics Council Math Festival – Linda Bendock
Fully funded \$2,000

Read Naturally for ELL and High Achieving Students – Helen Moore
Fully funded \$4,310

Comprehensive Home Library Program - Danielle Karwowski
Fully funded \$2,195

Literacy Books and Games – Kathleen Tippins
Fully funded \$637

Pottery Kiln – Cindy Burau and Suzanne Beye
Fully funded \$1,800

Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Programs – Elizabeth Black and Jan Ganong (shared with Tahoe Lake Elementary, North Tahoe Middle and High School)
Fully funded \$526 (funding including in TLE grant totals)

Glenshire Elementary - \$6,547

Accelerated Reader – Deed Verutti and Teresa Ketron (shared with Tahoe Lake Elementary)
Fully funded \$3,102 (funds included in TLE grant totals)

Daily 5 Component – Suzanne Samson
Partially funded \$900 of \$1,733

Historical Fiction for Small Groups – Monika Bock
Fully funded \$4,147

Making an Environmental CD – Claudia Waters
Fully funded \$1,500

Donner Trail Elementary - \$918

Take Home Books – Michelle Reed
Fully funded \$668

Fractional Power Cubes – Michelle Reed and Kathee Hansen
Partially funded \$250 of \$353

Truckee Elementary - \$5,481

Math Manipulatives – Nancy Shaeffer
Fully funded \$3,176

Percussion Instruments – Rita Whitaker-Haun
Fully funded \$722

Listening Centers – Mardiece Patrick and Sandy Hines
Partially funded \$1,583 of \$2,375

Alder Creek Middle School- \$250

Stop Watches – Nancy Casper
Partially funded \$250 of \$500

North Tahoe Middle School- \$2,239

Musically Based Performance Learning – Julie Brisbin
Partially funded \$550 of \$2,050

Triple Beam Balance – Julie Brisbin
Fully funded \$903

Read Naturally – Pat Hamilton
Fully funded \$786

Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Programs – Elizabeth Black and Jan Ganong (shared with Kings Beach Elementary, Tahoe Lake Elementary and North Tahoe High School)
Fully funded \$526 (funding including in TLE grant totals)

North Tahoe High School - \$19,109

Real Life Characters – Anne Butterworth
Fully funded \$2,160

Career Center Enhancement – Margie Falk
Fully funded \$5,000

Touchstone Book Series – Bonnie Whittemore
Fully funded \$428

English Novels – Erin McKee
Fully funded \$6,521

Athletic Equipment – Bill Freeman
Partially funded \$5,000 of \$17,069

Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Programs – Elizabeth Black and Jan Ganong (shared with Kings Beach Elementary, Tahoe Lake Elementary and North Tahoe Middle School)
Fully funded \$526 (funding including in TLE grant totals)

Truckee High School - \$13,331

Shakespeare Plays on CD – Patrick Mooney
Fully funded \$660

School Sound System – Grant Steunenberg and Kevin Cowie (ASB Secretary)
Fully funded \$2,930

Green Chemistry – Susan Lowder
Fully funded \$4,384

Local Aquarium Habitat – Trent Kirschner and Kathy Tallant
Fully funded \$934

Anthropology and Hair/Fiber Analysis – Kathy Tallant
Fully funded \$3,723

Functional Life and Vocational Skill Development – Jennifer Smith
Fully funded \$700

Personal Development Courses Offered for College Bound Students

Sierra College offers two courses that may be of particular interest to students getting ready to attend college.

The College Success course (Personal Development 1) addresses the need for strategies to create success in college, life and career. Academic methods for test taking, memory improvement, note taking, critical thinking and research skills are among the strategies taught in this class. Students also

learn techniques for effective time management, goal setting, increased self-awareness, motivation, communication and stress reduction. This is a three-unit course and is transferable to both CSU and UC campuses.

Sierra College also offers a course in Career Planning (Personal Development 6) on the Tahoe-Truckee Campus. In this course students will begin to evaluate their personality, interests, values and skills to help iden-

tify appropriate careers and college majors. Through occupational research, individual assessments, research on educational requirements, resume writing, interviewing techniques, goal setting, decision making and other job search strategies students will look into various career paths. This is a three-unit course and is transferable to both CSU and UC campuses. —Cindy Flores, Sierra College Counselor. www.sierra.cc.ca.us