

Niles Education Foundation Announces Innovation Grant Winners

July 28, 2011 – Niles, Michigan: The Niles Education Foundation (NEF) selected six applicants, for the 2011 – 2012 school year, to be awarded an Innovation Grant.

- **Amy Scott and Adam Zmudzinski, Oak Manor 6th Grade Center** - Improve Your Math Skills through Literature, \$1,000 for 120 students in 6th grade. Students will be motivated and encouraged to think about reason and learn math in new ways. Specific children's literature books will be purchased and correlated to each math unit enabling students at all achievement levels to benefit from a deeper and more complex understanding of mathematics.
- **Jeff de Varona, Niles New Tech Entrepreneurial Academy** - Student Produced Algebra Tutorials - \$1,000 for 130 students. This grant will fund the purchase of digital video equipment to create high quality algebra tutorials and demonstrations to be broadcast over the internet. In creating these tutorials, it's expected that the involved New Tech students will master various algebra concepts with a greater degree of depth.
- **Nicholas Payne, Oak Manor 6th Grade Center** - Beginning Robotics - \$1,000 for 40 students. This grant will fund the purchase of equipment and books. The purchase would include (5) Lego Mindstorms Kits with the Mindstorms Discovery Books. Students will build robots and write computer programs to controls the robots. Critical thinking skills along with various math and science concepts will be applied when building the robots. This project also builds on the momentum of the recent robotics competition held at Niles High School.
- **Michael Vota, Niles New Tech Entrepreneurial Academy** - Digital Stereomicroscope - \$900 for 130 students. This grant would fund the purchase of a digital stereomicroscope for the Science Department at the high school. The stereomicroscope not only magnifies slides but solid objects. The digital capability allows the transmission of photo's from the microscope to the computer for viewing which improves the speed and efficiency of the inspection process.
- **Amy Rudlaff, Howard-Ellis Elementary** - K - 1 Dependent Learners Literacy Skill Development \$1,000 for 27 students. This grant funds the purchase of (2) iPad 2's in order to incorporate this technology into the K - 1 early literacy program. For use in a variety of instructional strategies, this technology allows students unlimited practice in developing foundational reading skills. Being more tactile and sensory based, younger students find the iPad a more "intimate technology" and easier to use than a traditional desktop.
- **Zech Hoyt, Howard-Ellis Elementary** - Improving Literacy Skills of English Language Learners (ELL) - \$1,000 for 14 students. Approximately 14% of the total kindergarten enrollment at Ellis is ELL students. For many of these students, this is their first school experience and some have had little exposure to a language other than their native language spoken in their home. This grant would fund the purchase of (2) iPad 2's for use in improving their literacy skills. The staff has experimented with this technology and found it to be beneficial.

Since its establishment in 2009, the Niles Education Foundation has invested more than \$21,000 for the enhancement of public education at Niles Community Schools.

The role of the Niles Education Foundation is to garner private support and public engagement for Niles Community Schools. As a tax-exempt, non profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, the Foundation provides Niles Community Schools with funding that is typically more flexible than restricted tax dollars. The funding and extra resources for the students, teachers, and schools helps to cover the gap that exists between what school budgets can cover, and what is needed to ensure the academic success of our students. Gifts are tax deductible for income and estate tax purposes. For more information on specific giving please call the Foundation office at 269-683-0732.

Niles Education Foundation
111 Spruce Street
Niles, Michigan 49120
www.nileseducationfoundation.org