



Teresa M. Rafferty
Superintendent of Schools

1515 Stelton Road
P.O. Box 1332
Piscataway, NJ 08854
732 572-2289, ext. 2513
Fax 732 777-1361
www.piscatawayschools.org

Contact: Judy Palermo
Public Information Officer
(732) 572-2289 ext. 2582
jpalermo@pway.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Piscataway Education Foundation Awards Grants for Innovative Teaching

Twenty Grants Awarded to Teachers Spanning Preschool to High School

Piscataway, NJ, September 2, 2016 – While the first day of school for student is September 6, faculty and staff of Piscataway Schools met on September 1 for convocation to officially launch the 2016-2017 school year. A highlight of the gathering was the announcement of the 20 teacher “Inspire Grants” to be funded this year by the Piscataway Education Foundation (PEF). This is the second year the PEF will fund teacher grants through a competitive process. Grants are awarded for innovative teaching practices and non-traditional teaching methods

The 20 Inspire grants represent funding of over \$20,000. Grants were awarded to teachers spanning preschool through high school. Curriculum areas included Literacy, STEM, Physical Education and Health, Special Education, Social Studies, Foreign Language and ESL. Grants were also awarded for Character Education, Collaboration, Communication, and Alternate Seating.

“We find that some of the most innovative thinking in educational practices can be found within our own staff,” noted Dr. Frank Ranelli, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, in presenting the grants. “We are so pleased to be able to fund so many worthy projects, and through the fundraising efforts of the Piscataway Education Foundation, hope to continue this practice for years to come.”

The following teachers and programs will be funded by PEF Teacher Grants for the 2016-2017 school year:

-- more --

Children's Corner Preschool

Kathleen Walsh and Sonya Slyman for "Watch It Grow," continuing support for an organic garden that allows students to grow plants and vegetables in a safe and sustainable manner.

Debbie Eichner and Kristin Hummel for "Growing Kits," which foster science research and oral language skills.

Nicollette Serido for "Brainy Babies," a program that introduces Pre-K students to Spanish language concepts.

Eisenhower Elementary School

Kristina Gilleece for "Family Literacy Bags," created for students to take to and from school, focusing on literacy, discussion and family interaction, and providing interactive learning at home.

Knollwood Elementary School

Isabella Metrokotsas for "Active Seating II," workspace options for non-traditional seating during class time.

Donna Srouji for "Conversation Enrichment," to enhance the oral vocabulary and conversation skills of ELL students.

Tina Jenious-Flood for "Bridging the Gap," a program that encourages students to create, using minimal materials and skills they already possess.

Da'Shawn Reynolds for "OzoBot," a mini programmable robot that introduces coding steps that can be applied to other aspects of STEM.

Randolphville Elementary School

Jennifer Sernotti for "Community Connectivity," a program that builds presentation and communications skills through live streaming student presentations of morning announcements and other programs.

Arbor Intermediate School

Lauren Straube and Danielle Mignella for "The Best Seat in the House," alternate classroom seating including yoga ball chairs and exercise bike chairs.

-- more --

King Intermediate School

Marie St. Louis for “Passport Club,” a program that encourages students to explore other cultures and countries and draw relationships to their own lives.

Jeff Celebre for “Flight Exploration,” building with flight and rocketry materials to enhance the STEM experience.

Michelle McCarthy for “Mind and Body,” a morning exercise program to help make the mind and body connection.

Conackamack Middle School

Brian McCarty for “Garden Grant,” building a garden into lessons, offering students opportunities to research, grow, and use skills in non-traditional ways.

Quibbletown Middle School

Andrew Kehoe and Beth Barbarasch to support Year Two of the Quibbletown PBSIS Initiative: Positive Behavior Supports and Community Room, supporting character education.

Vinny Stio for “Buddy Ball,” an ongoing recreational program for students with special needs and their general education “buddies.”

Piscataway High School

Paul Mazur for “NASA Comes to P’way,” building a multiple rocket launch control system.

Brinder Soin for “Hack PHS,” a 24-hour event where students collaborate, create and learn through STEM activities.

Mike Awad for “Hydration Station,” giving PHS students water filling stations to encourage drinking water over sugary drinks.

###

About the Piscataway Education Foundation

The Piscataway Education Foundation is a non-profit, independent, charitable organization committed to establishing and maintaining a positive relationship between the Piscataway Township School district and corporate, business, community, individual and government entities. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.