

# Harrison Educational Foundation

## Grants Awarded for 2011/12 School Year

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### Harrison High School

#### Law Day

Chetan Hertzog and Tiffany Garner, teachers in the Social Studies department, have been awarded a grant for the high school's annual Law Day in the spring of 2012. Law Day includes both a mock trial competition for all Law I and II students which is judged by attorneys from the Harrison legal community, and debate rounds judged by members of the forensic community. In addition, persuasive speaking workshops will be led by a professional coach. The program is intended to bolster the understanding and appreciation of law, encourage civic involvement and foster a sense of community. Students develop critical thinking skills and have the opportunity to explore career options and interact with adults from the community affiliated with the practice of law. Over 200 students participate, including students in Law I, Law II, the mock trial and debate teams, as well as model congress. The grant covers the cost of the workshop director, trophies/awards and lunch.

#### Writers Among Us

Jessica Maricevic and Tara Morrissey, on behalf of the English Department, have been awarded a grant for supporting the High School English Department's writing recognition program. Grade level teachers are responsible for selecting writing pieces during the school year. Upon selection, each student is recognized in various ways, culminating with a recognition ceremony for writers, parents and teachers. Last year the National Council of Teachers of English annual literacy magazine competition ranked the Harrison High School's "Imagine" as Excellent among national high school literary magazines. The grant covers a reception, gifts and a keynote speaker.

### LMK Middle School

#### Literary Magazine/Writing Competition

Kate Biggs, Carol Kitson and Joan McNeece, ELA teachers at LMK, have been awarded a grant for a two-part literary program: 1) The LMK Literary Magazine is open to all students, with writing pieces submitted by teachers and/or editors for approval. The magazine provides a stimulus to encourage students to creatively express themselves through writing or drawing. The National Council of Teachers of English annual literacy magazine competition has ranked the 2010 "Literature Molded By Kids" magazine at LMK as Superior among national middle school magazines - the only middle school in New York State to receive this honor. Printing is funded by the district. 2) For the writing competition, students submit writing samples to be evaluated and included in a journal. Awards are issued in multiple categories. The grant covers the cost of engraved award plaques and certificates.

#### SMART Response System for Math Instruction

Laurie Griffo, an eighth grade math teacher, has been awarded a grant for an interactive student response system in the secondary math classroom to promote student achievement. Students will use the system daily to record homework answers at the beginning of class. This will allow the teacher to identify areas of weakness within the class as well as for individual students. The response pads will also be used throughout class time to formatively assess student understanding and plan for differentiated instruction. Students would also use the pads to submit questions and thereby create an interactive classroom blog. The goal would be to develop a network among students that would carry over into classroom discourse and further promote self-directed learning.

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### LMK Spotlight Night

Brian Seligman and Lorraine Anne Sclafani, on behalf of LMK Middle School, have been awarded a grant to help fund Spotlight Night events at LMK. Spotlight Night is a school-wide Arts and Science Festival. This night is a "show and tell" for various art, writing, science and just about any other type of student projects. Many members of the community attend this event from grandparents to siblings.

### All Elementary Schools

### Beginning Reading & Math

Marina Moran, Supervisor of Elementary English and Social Studies, and Dennis Kortright, Supervisor of Elementary Math and Science, have been awarded a grant for Kindergarten Book Bags filled with a variety of reading materials and math games to be used over the summer. As part of the district's orientation for all incoming kindergartners, parents will participate in workshops where they will learn strategies for supporting the development of early literacy and math skills at home. The goals of the program include strengthening the home/school connection, fostering the development of basic literacy and math skills conducive to school readiness and increasing parents' participation in the academic lives of their children.

### Harrison Avenue Elementary School

### Chinese Storytelling and Cultural Program

Josephine Skorney, Patricia Straus, Paula Gelsomino and Claudette D'Arco, third grade teachers at HAS, have been awarded a grant for a three-day cultural enrichment program entitled *The Monkey King: Chinese Storytelling*. This program has been funded by PTAs at all four elementary schools in prior years. The program explores Chinese culture through traditional Chinese stories and incorporates music, creative movement, percussion, mask-making and writing into the storytelling process, and culminates in a presentation featuring all students. Third grade curriculum related objectives of the program include understanding of Chinese culture (social studies), exploring genres of literature including folktales (ELA) and developing writing techniques including summarizing and paragraphing skills.

### Parsons Memorial Elementary School

### First Grade Courtyard Garden

Dorianne Nardi and Karen Kaczmarcyk have been awarded a grant for a sustainable green garden to be housed in the Parsons courtyard and cultivated by all first grade students and their teachers. Through maintaining a classroom garden students will learn all about plants, organic farming and recycling. They will apply their knowledge to a real-life setting and develop an appreciation and understanding of the importance of sustainability. Students will learn that plants have different purposes, one of which is to provide healthful food to eat. As a culminating experience, students will enjoy a salad feast. The grant will cover the cost of beds, seeds, tools, a bench, a rain barrel and decorative gardening items.

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## Samuel J. Preston Elementary School

### Building Character Program

Jennifer Winters and Cindy Neese, on behalf of the Preston Character Committee, have been awarded a grant for classroom library books and other materials in conjunction with the creation of a character building and moral values program for students at Preston. Building good character and demonstrating exemplary behavior in classrooms, hallways, playgrounds and the community are important educational goals for NYS and HCSD, and research indicates the direct correlation between high level of character/values and academic achievement. The program will include behavioral themed literature, proactive intervention training, school-wide assemblies and bi-monthly classroom lessons. Libraries of six to eight character building books in each classroom will be supplemented with banners and posters throughout the school. Preston will be piloting this program with the expectation that best practices will migrate to all four elementary schools.