

## PELHAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION APPROVES SEVEN MINI-GRANTS

The directors of the Pelham Education Foundation recently awarded seven teacher-initiated mini-grants for a total of \$25,624.72. “We were very pleased with the quality of this year’s grant applications,” said Foundation project development chair Cathy Draper. “The input of the district’s directors of elementary and secondary education, as well as subject-area supervisors, ensured that the proposals we received supported both the Foundation’s mission to enhance the quality of public education in Pelham and the school district’s curriculum goals.”

The “Traveling Art Exhibits” project developed by High School art teacher Kaycee Cherashore is already drawing interest from students, faculty and visitors to the school. The first of five large-scale, week-long, museum-style art installations is in place in the hallway outside the auditorium. A reproduction of *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, the master work of Japanese woodblock printer Katsushika Hokusai, is certain to inspire class discussions of the artist’s technique as well as the historical and cultural context in which it was created.

Social studies supervisor Maria Thompson, on behalf of the secondary social studies teachers, received a grant entitled “History Alive”, which will fund several student experiences as well as staff development opportunities for the teachers. The first event, a Presidential Forum in honor of Presidents’ Week, will link to the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade social studies curriculum. It will feature social studies teachers who will don costumes, wigs and makeup to assume the roles of American Presidents and First Ladies. Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade will enjoy a daytime forum, while students and the public are invited to attend “Executive Perspectives: An Evening with Presidents and First Ladies” in the High School auditorium at 7 p.m. on Thursday, February 11. Also as part of the History Alive grant, all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in a Civil War reenactment during the annual outdoor education trip to Sharpe Reservation.

Two grants will benefit students in secondary science classes. The first, awarded to High School physics teacher David Shembari, will permit all physics students to attend a “Physics Day”, set aside exclusively for physics teachers and students, at the Six Flags Great Adventure Park. The grant will fund the purchase of probes and sensors, which can be used in classroom activities as well. Students (who will pay for their own transportation and admission to the park) will use the equipment to gather data during rides. They will use the data to solve a set of problems about Newton’s laws of motion, conservation of energy and other physics concepts.

Students in chemistry and living environment (biology) classes work toward mastery of the Regents curriculum with the help of the EduGame! classroom assessment tool requested by science supervisor Brian Terry. The equipment includes hand-held devices that allow students to answer questions, anonymously except to the teacher, and the teacher to store responses in a grade book in order to inform future instruction. The software has been developed specifically to meet New York State standards and includes questions from prior year Regents exams.

High School broadcast production teacher Brian Powers was awarded a grant to purchase two iMac computers, along with editing software and related hardware, for use by students in the broadcast production and broadcast journalism classes. The equipment in the production studio was funded through a \$60,000 grant from the Foundation in 2006. With the growth of the program, students could no longer share a single computer with each other and with the district’s audio-visual staff.

Two mini-grants will provide physical education classes with equipment that will enhance student experiences as well as teacher assessment of student performance. Colonial School PE teacher and town meeting coordinator Sara Bagwell was awarded a grant for a projector, pull-down screen, audio equipment and wireless Internet for the Colonial gymnasium, which is used both for PE and for town meetings, concerts, assemblies and other activities.

The secondary PE and athletic departments, led by Susan Hughes and Joe DeVecchio, were awarded a grant to purchase a video camera, projector and related equipment. By capturing and replaying student performances in PE classes and athletic events, teachers and coaches will be able to help students understand and improve their own performance and make progress toward mastering the state standards in various skills.

In addition to the Presidential Forum that will be held at the High School at 7:00 p.m. on February 11, the community is invited to attend the Pelham Education Foundation Exploratorium. The Exploratorium, which will be sponsored by TD Bank and conducted in partnership with the school district, is scheduled for Thursday, February 25, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Like last year's Exploratorium, it will feature fun, hands-on learning activities for elementary school students, as well as demonstrations and guided tours of facilities for parents and other community members. More detailed information will be available in late January at [www.pelhameducationfoundation.net](http://www.pelhameducationfoundation.net).