

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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CSEE Foundation presents over \$23,000 in grant awards

Commerce ISD teachers shrieked in excitement as board members of the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation visited classrooms “Publisher’s Clearinghouse” style to present grant awards for this year. Over \$23,000 will be shared among the seven grant projects which target math, science, the arts and technology instruction.

Foundation board members Dr. Jack Pirkey, Janet Peek, June Dunn, Jerry Keeble and Alicia Hulsey along with Superintendent Blake Cooper visited each campus making the annual grant award presentations on October 27.

At Commerce Elementary School, grants were awarded to Rhonda Overman for the second grade and kindergarten teacher Heather Kilgore and first grade teacher Cari Sturch.

Kilgore and Sturch will purchase Promethean ActiVotes which will allow them to immediately assess students’ understanding. Along with the Promethean boards already in place in classrooms, ActiVotes help meet the needs of today’s learners. This approach to assessment will

seem like a game to students and will ignite and inspire students to learn and enjoy learning, according to Kilgore and Sturch.

Overman’s grant will provide for a trip to the Dallas World Aquarium for second graders. The grant will allow children who may only experience wildlife through books or videos to have the opportunity to study fish, starfish, octopus and jellyfish in their natural habitat. The students will be able to see, hear and sometimes touch many plants and animals in a rainforest and in an aquatic environment.

Elementary music teacher Angela Neal will continue to introduce students to different types of music and instruments through her “Blast from the Past with Classic Brass” grant award. Neal has showcased jazz, opera and percussion instruments in previous years through grant funds.

This year the show will focus on the historical progress of horns from ancient conch shells to new electronic trumpets. Students will learn simple

Commerce Middle School received three Gold Performance Awards. The school was recognized for comparable improvement in math and commended for attendance and performance in social studies.



Sondra Feduccia’s third grade students were excited to learn that their class would benefit from the Commerce School Educational Enrichment Foundation grant, which will allow them to visit the Nature and Science Museum of Dallas.



**Exemplary
Expectations**

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tunes and identify varied sounds produced by brass instruments.

Next year's fourth graders will continue the tradition of traveling to the State Capitol. Teacher Julie McLeroy said she was thankful to the Foundation for funding the trip annually so that students experience the story of Texas through authentic learning. Students will reflect upon their experience by creating videos, books, poems and other projects that highlight the various experiences they had during the day in Austin.

Fifth grade students will visit the Dallas Museum of Art and all A. C. Williams Elementary School students will experience an art exhibit personally when the Frida Kahlo traveling exhibition comes to the school. Art teacher Lonnie Plunkett says children will learn etiquette involved in viewing an art exhibit or visiting a museum and also create a their own self portrait after viewing the Kahlo exhibit.

Third graders will delve deeper into the world of science and math concepts through the grant written by teacher Sondra Feduccia. Through their visit to the Nature and Science Museum of Dallas, students see that science and math have meaning and relevance in their lives. By meeting and interacting with science professionals, students will be exposed to opportunities available for careers in science.

Using technology to encourage reluctant readers is the focus of a grant written by Sherry Rector for Commerce Middle School language arts, English and reading teachers. Grants funds will be used to purchase ten Ipads to enrich instruction in these areas. Rector says that the more children read, the better readers they become and use of the new Ipads should entice struggling readers to develop a love for good literature.

The CSEE Foundation has provided over \$190,000 during the past decade to enhance instruction in the arts, math, science and technology.

"We are very grateful to the Foundation for supporting our schools and our students. The contributions they make touch the lives of many students and help ensure a brighter future for our students and our community," Superintendent Cooper said.

PUTTING A CAP ON DRUGS



Red ribbon week creates awareness of drug and alcohol dangers

Each campus held Red Ribbon Week October 25-29 and activities were planned to enhance students' understanding of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

At CHS, Communities In Schools worked with student leadership teams to choose a dress theme for each day to represent their stand for being drug free. Team jerseys, crazy hats, sweats and Halloween costumes were used to highlight the theme for each day. Students also had a presentation from a police narcotics team on the negative affects drugs could have on their lives.

CIS case manager Shane Rhudy said students could sign a pledge stating they would stay drug free and in return receive a red bracelet.



Students from the TAMU-Commerce Education Department shared math skills with ACW students on Tuesday, October 18. The university students demonstrated easy steps to solve math equations, various uses of geometry and real life math skills in action. Each class rotated through six different stations throughout the day to complete hands-on activities to better their knowledge of math.

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Robotics teams find the thrill of competition

The Commerce Middle School robot El Tigre made it to the semi-finals in the Best Inc. Robotics competition at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Teams from CMS and CHS designed, built, programmed and developed a marketing strategy for their designs during the six-week process.

CMS sponsor Andrew Simpson said his team's biggest challenge was problem solving because "nothing we did was done right the first time." His

team was constantly going back and changing things and trying to figure out why things weren't working or how to make things easier.

Seventh grader Mathew Black received the Integrity award for exhibiting honesty, hard work and consistency in character.

Simpson said it was exciting to see the robots in action and the team was thrilled to be the only middle school to make it to the semi-finals.



TRASHION STATEMENT



CHS Theatre Arts I classes were assigned to build costumes out of recycled materials and model them in the annual Trashion show. Costumes had to be at least 80 percent recycled materials. The costume construction assignment is part of the theatrical design unit according to theatre arts teacher Karri Anderson.

Texas history lessons come alive in Austin for fourth graders

Fourth graders made their annual trek to Austin in early November and although there was an early morning bus delay, the day was a successful learning experience, according to Principal Wes Underwood.

The trip, which is funded by the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation, reinforces the students' understanding of Texas history. The group toured the Capitol, the Bob Bullock Museum and also saw an IMAX presentation.

"Many of our students have never traveled outside Commerce so a trip like this really opens up their world," Underwood said.



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CES International Night packs the house

Bringing foods representing their cultures, CES families shared a potluck supper before viewing a student presentation focusing on language and the many different languages spoken by their families.



Who let the dog out?



Clifford, the Big Red Dog visited Commerce Elementary School during the school's November Book Fair. Hidden beneath all that red is Jayson Campbell, the HVAC technician for the district.

FFA finishes strong in district contest

The Commerce FFA was runner-up in sweepstakes at the District FFA Leadership Contest held at North Forney High School November 8. Only one school had more teams place in the competition.

Competitors and placements include: Job Interview second place Caryn McKinley (qualified for Area Contest); Jr. Skills Demonstration fourth place team Garrett Jackson, R.J. Reynolds, Billy McDonald, Dustin May and Nathan Burt; Sr. Skills Demonstration sixth place team Blake Madewell, Dalton Krodle, Gregory Robinson and Chelsi Green; Public Relations second place (qualified for Area Contest) team Ashley Kanaman, Kody

Miles, Alex Worley and Kadie Hays; Jr. Creed Speaking third place Laney Davidson; Sr. Creed Speaking second place Rebekah Cooper (qualified for Area Contest); Radio Broadcast third place team Payton Ferguson, Macy McQueary and Amanda Hill; Jr. Quiz first place (qualified for Area Contest) team R.J. Reynolds, Nathan Burt, Laney Davidson and Lindsey Turner; and Sr. Quiz seventh place team Nancy Hernandez, Kaitlyn Mulkey, Rebekah Cooper and Gabrielle Castro.

The area contest will be held November 20 at Krum High School.

Sponsors are Richard Meeks and Tommy Marshall.