

**What's this?** If there's one thing this community agrees on, it's the importance of education. With that in mind, the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools wants to help leaders in the community know about and understand how we, through engaged corporations, volunteers and citizens, are impacting student achievement. So welcome to *News That Counts for Kids*, which you'll be receiving on a quarterly basis. Information is meant for sharing, so we encourage you to pass this along to friends and co-workers, and even place in your lobby. Enjoy this inaugural issue. And we'll be talking to you again soon.

## Time to Celebrate - Foundation Turns 20

Great things always happen when a group of get-it-done leaders get behind something. That's exactly what happened 20 years ago. Former School Board member William Frangus, Former Superintendent James Schott, Former SunTrust executive Buell Duncan, Former Orlando Mayor Glenda Hood and others joined together to establish the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools. And the same goals that brought the Foundation to life are driving the organization today: to impact the quality of public education, to build a bridge between classrooms and the community, and to bring additional resources to our schools.

Today, with thousands of supporters, core student-enrichment programs, a major community engagement initiative and \$2 million provided for district programs and schools each year, the Foundation is helping to create a brighter future for every student.



Guests enjoy a reception for the Foundation's 20th anniversary. Following the reception, the Orange County School Board recognized the Foundation for its decades of work supporting student achievement.

## \$250,000 Coming to Teachers This Year

Celebrating 20 years is a great occasion. Celebrating 20 years on top of distributing more funds than ever to teachers in the district to use for classroom enrichment is an all-out fiesta!

This year, the Foundation has secured \$250,000 for teacher grant programs that ultimately mean new books, lab equipment, computer software and innovative learning initiatives will be making their way into local Orange County classrooms. The funds are made possible through corporate contributions and matching grants. Since the grant programs began in 1996, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 million to nearly 2,000 teachers in the district.

Progress Energy, the Darden Restaurants Foundation and Citi have been long-time endowers of teacher grants that generate a variety of classroom-based initiatives and needed resources, from math and science equipment to veteran - beginning teacher collaboration. Two new grants were established this year by The Bond Foundation to foster

science-related learning in West Orange middle schools and by the Universal Orlando Foundation to provide additional resources for students in grades K-2.



Debbie Clements with Progress Energy presents a check for \$50,000 to the Foundation's Chairman of the Board Melanie Fernandez.



A Foundation teacher grant funded this Cypress Springs Science Lab interactive insect learning project.

# UPDATES

## on our Work to Engage the Community and Boost Student Achievement



Understanding how we're involved in our children's education and how we can work together to boost student achievement. Understanding how the district nurtures quality teaching and the role our community can play. These are the two major priorities of the citizen-led initiative called *Count Me In!* And they are among the top priorities identified by citizens in a document called *Our Community Agreement*, which is now serving as a guide for action.

Over the past two months, *Count Me In!* conducted a community-wide survey to assess how parents and families are involved in their children's education at home and at school, and to provide feedback on everything from the school environment to school

communications and the barriers or challenges of getting involved. The results of the survey will be unveiled soon. We want to keep citizens engaged and talking and will be working to coordinate small group conversations throughout the county that will build from the survey themes. If you're interested in hosting a conversation, contact Heath Wells at [heath.wells@ocps.net](mailto:heath.wells@ocps.net) or 407.317.3261.

In addition, *Count Me In!* is working with the district to obtain a variety of data regarding teaching quality and evaluation - all in an effort to better understand the state of teaching, what's working, the challenges and needs. *Count Me In!* also aims to develop a reference guide for the community that provides tips, ideas and examples of great quality teaching practices, models and partnerships. Stay tuned for information and updates!



The Foundation has a clear mission with its Middle School Kids initiative - to generate positive youth development for the 40,000 middle schoolers in the district -- students who are facing major social, emotional and physical changes. The Foundation understands this is a time when students need help and support.

Thanks to a \$1.3 million grant from the Public Education Network, the Foundation is taking Middle School Kids into the classroom and beyond. Last year, the Foundation provided LifeSkills Training curriculum to the district's 39 middle schools in collaboration with the district's SAFE department. The program provides instruction for teachers and students. It addresses positive social interaction, understanding different emotions, the effects of substance abuse and prevention strategies, and improving self-esteem. Throughout the next two years, the Foundation will continue to provide professional development to educators and community partners, engaging everyone from parents to youth organizations. Work is underway to bring together students, parents, teachers, administrators and citizens to talk about the issues our student face today, as well as to promote community resources.



Ocoee Middle School students are learning about things like dealing with emotions and avoiding violence through a new LifeSkills Training curriculum.

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## Golf Tournament Raises \$130,000 for the Foundation

On September 21, more than 250 golfers strived for birdies and eagles at ChampionsGate Golf Club while going all out to support public education in Orange County. And the players and corporate sponsors were champions themselves as more than \$130,000 from this golf tournament benefit was raised to support the Foundation's work and programs. Since this event's inception eight years ago, the Foundation has raised nearly \$750,000.

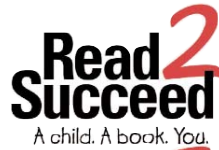


Hitting the links, impacting student achievement. These golfers were among the 250 people who played in the Foundation's Fore Our Schools Golf Tournament and raised more than \$130,000 to support the Foundation's work.

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## Change a Life - Become a Reading Mentor

Now recruiting! The Foundation's Read2Succeed reading mentoring program is looking for caring people in business and in the community to mentor students, support the work of their teachers, and help instill a love for books and learning. Schools and teachers cannot do it alone. Everyone in the community plays a role in helping our students succeed. And it's a proven fact that when adults are involved in children's education, student achievement skyrockets, behaviors drastically improve, and schools themselves are better.



We encourage you to sign up to be a Read2Succeed volunteer and provide one-on-one reading assistance and mentoring to second-graders reading below grade level. Your commitment would mean mentoring a student for one hour per week on a school campus during regular school hours. A few hours a month can make a world of difference to these young learners, who one day might just be working for your company or involved in your organization. Contact Debbie Betourne at [deborah.betourne@ocps.net](mailto:deborah.betourne@ocps.net) or 407.317.3261.



Read2Succeed volunteer mentor Kim Kiraly works with Maxey Elementary student Danysha Calo.

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## Our Newest Donors

The Foundation would like to thank our most recent donors for their contributions that will impact student achievement:

- **AT&T** contributed \$10,000 toward the Foundation's Read2Succeed program.
- **Bank of America** contributed \$15,000 to sponsor Teach-In.
- Nearly \$15,000 was generated from **The ABLE Trust, Orlando Magic** and **Kent Foundation** to fund: scholarships, back-to-school supplies, support at Kaley Elementary and general student support activities and programs.
- **AMSCOT** contributed more than \$9,000 toward literacy programs.
- Unrestricted gifts were given by: **EMBARQ, PB Foundation** and **Nancy Robbinson**.

## WFTV-Channel 9 Provides \$16,000 to Foundation



The Foundation for Orange County Public Schools got a major boost to its Read2Succeed second grade reading mentoring program, thanks to WFTV-Channel 9. Through the station's Family Connection "I Am The One" campaign, which is focused on helping our youth and championing issues faced by Central Floridians through volunteerism, the Foundation received \$16,000 to strengthen its Read2Succeed program.

The "I Am The One" campaign is a year-long celebration of volunteerism and philanthropy, and WFTV has given \$50,000 to education foundations in Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola,

Seminole, Sumter and Volusia counties. "WFTV-Channel 9 cares about the issues our community is facing," said Shawn Bartelt, Vice President and General Manager of WFTV-Channel 9. "We support a number of important issues and literacy is one of them. Our education foundations do an incredible job of helping youth in our region become fluent readers and that's why we're supporting them in this effort."

The Foundation for Orange County Public Schools led the effort to generate WFTV's support to all nine education foundations and is now working with Channel 9 on-air personalities to become Read2Succeed mentors. For more information on WFTV's "I Am The One" campaign, visit [www.wftv.com](http://www.wftv.com).

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## Foundation Leads Community Engagement for Future of Hungerford Preparatory High School

The Foundation, which is a trusted, independent resource for genuine community engagement, was asked by Superintendent Ron Blocker and the School Board to lead an important community initiative that will help guide the future of Robert Hungerford Prep in Eatonville.

Because of declining enrollment and low interest in the school's magnet programs, the School Board agreed to phase out the current programs over the next three years and launch a revitalized school in 2010. The Foundation is facilitating small group conversations with residents across the district to determine what types of educational programs at Hungerford would attract students and thrive. More than 30 conversations will be held by the year's end. By April 1, the Foundation will issue a report to the School Board that summarizes the community's vision for students, which the Board will incorporate it into its decision-making on Hungerford's future.

This community engagement process is both important and exciting to Eatonville, Hungerford and Orange County Public Schools.

In addition to helping with the revitalization effort of the school, this community engagement work will help preserve Eatonville's rich history, ensure that citizens know their voice counts, and enable greater transparency, the understanding of shared goals and visions, and accountability among everyone.



Citizens across the district are lending their voices to help determine the future of Hungerford.

# GET INVOLVED

Make a contribution to the Foundation.

Yes! I want to invest in students and teachers in Orange County Public Schools with a tax-deductible gift.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

- \$100 Provides 15 books for mentors to read with second-graders who need support and a little extra help through our Read2Succeed program.
- \$250 Provides 30 workbooks for Middle School Kids - a middle school youth development program that is helping children learn positive social interaction skills, understand different emotions and the effects of substance abuse and prevention strategies, and improve self-esteem.
- \$500 Provides curriculum for 50 students in a family literacy program.
- \$1,000 Provides tuition for 10 teachers to attend professional development opportunities to better meet student needs.
- Other amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed (make payable to Foundation for Orange County Public Schools)

Please bill my gift to:  VISA  MasterCard  Discover  AMEX Account # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Verification Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Cut out completed form and mail with contribution to:

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