

Arch Coal Foundation Presents 23 Grants To Innovative Teachers in Delta County, Colorado

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SOMERSET, Colo. (Oct. 8, 2010) - Delta County teachers will receive 23 grants, totaling \$10,000, this school year from the Arch Coal Foundation to underwrite innovative teaching projects, according to Don Vickers, general manager of Mountain Coal Company's West Elk mine near Somerset.

The unique grants program is now in its fourth year in Delta County. The grant applications must indicate new and innovative classroom use of emerging technologies, of entirely new approaches to learning methods or demonstrate original concepts for testing education theories, said Vickers.

"Now, the Foundation is seeing how past grants have successfully tested concepts or new uses of technology in today's classrooms," Vickers said. "This program has been developed to challenge Delta's teachers to introduce new ways of approaching learning in their classrooms using their experience, imagination and professionalism.

"The county's teachers are not running out of ideas, as shown by this year's projects," said Vickers. "Again this year, our judges had a difficult time selecting among a large number of excellent applications."

The 2010 recipients, their schools and grants are:

Carol Beers, Paonia Elementary School. Continent Celebrations. The idea is to test whether students in the school's Kindergarten and first grade will increase their understanding of the seven continents, which are Core Knowledge factors, by "celebrating" a continent each month with various songs and activities from a continent. First grade teacher Jodi Simpson will share in the project.

Nancy Carlson, Hotchkiss High School. What Skills Are Needed to Develop Financial Literacy? She will test what skills are needed to develop financial literacy among teenagers, specifically in grades 9 - 12.

Amanda Cerise, Cedaredge Middle School. Increasing Non-Fiction Reading Strategies Through Gender-Specific Book Choices. The teacher will study whether use of gender-specific reading materials can increase reading and communications skills, as well as supporting certain facets of social studies.

Marylouise Dannels, Cedaredge Middle School. Holocaust Book Study. Dannels and other Cedaredge teachers Holly Rupp and Amanda Cerise will test their theory that a school-wide study of literature, in this example a study of the Holocaust, can result in higher understanding and recall.

Dan Dunham, Delta Middle School. Buoyancy and Boat Construction. Students will be challenged to learn scientific principles, attention to details and budgets as they plan and construct a wooden boat.

Hailey Eck, Delta Middle School. Living History: Leaders Throughout World History. Seventh graders will select a leader from history and then complete their own research, demonstrating their understanding of the responsibilities, challenges and accomplishments of the person in a prepared speech. A goal is to determine if students understand that much of our society today is because of past events and people.

Anita Evans, Hotchkiss K-8. M Cubed. Six, seventh and eighth grade students will have an opportunity to better understand molecular and atomic structure through "hands-on" use of manipulatives in the classroom. The grant will test whether student comprehension improves as a result. Colleague Kathy Gates also will share in the project.

Michele Gillis, Cedaredge High School. A Different View of Color. Juniors at the high school usually study To Kill A Mockingbird. Gillis plans to pair that book with another, Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands, to determine if the study of both books increases student understanding of racism.

Brandy Girard, Delta Middle School. Wow! I Can Think and My Opinions Matter. Can reading and study of literature create critical thinking skills? This project will determine if literature can assist student development in making difficult decisions,

making sound judgments and gathering and judging evidence.

Scott Groenke, Delta Middle School. Analyzing Real-World Motion. Using existing technology in a new manner, Groenke will be able to analyze distance, velocity and acceleration instantly graphed and shown to the entire classroom. This will test increased learning through the use of the new technology.

Matthew Hall, Hotchkiss High School. Listening for Comprehension. This grant will test Hall's idea that English language learners' comprehension and fluency will be greatly enhanced if audio books are combined with books, especially when the English words and pronunciations are seen and heard at the same time.

Joey Hancock, Lincoln Elementary. Writing for All. Using an iPad and its pages and speech applications, Hancock will determine if the new technology can increase disabled students' achievement.

Stephanie Hanson, Cedaredge Elementary. I Speak iPad. This grant also will test the new technology available on an iPad. Hanson will determine whether the iPad, and its ability to produce specific sounds in the English language, can be successfully used as an alternative to traditional speech pathology materials.

Richard Hypio, Hotchkiss High School. Obtuse Thinkers Acutely Assisting. Hotchkiss High School math and science students will test their own ideas and abilities to design and build an assistive device for a handicapped person in the community.

Nikki Lally, Delta High School. The Science of Art Class. Science teacher Lally plans to collaborate with Roger Hutchison, the school's art teacher, to determine if understanding and appreciation of both subjects are increased when the disciplines are combined, such as when an art lesson includes underlying scientific concepts.

Robin Liston, Delta High School. Looking at Science Through the Microscope. Imagine an entire class looking at science specimens at one time. Using a new technology that enables a camera to be placed on the eyepiece of an older microscope, an entire class can do this rather than one student at a time. Will this enable better classroom discussions, which in turn could lead to better understanding? Liston's grant will determine this.

Lindsay Molitor, Paonia Jr/Sr High School. Using the Kindle Wireless Electronic Reading Devices in Special Education Classes. Will use of a Kindle increase Special Education students' reading abilities and vocabulary? Molitor plans to measure student achievement through various assessment vehicles including the CSAP test.

Kelly Rienks, Cedaredge Elementary. Lapbooking. A lapbook is a project book or file folder, laid out in a creative manner that fits in a child's lap. It provides interactive space for drawings, stories, timelines, diagrams and written work from any topic. Will lapbooks increase student interest and performance in Delta County? Rienks' grant will help determine the answer.

Joe Siennicki, Garnet Mesa Elementary. Rocking American War History Through Guitar. Siennicki believes American history can be taught through music. His grant will test his idea that elementary students can learn about the history of an American war through songs written about that war. At the same time the students learn about history, they also will learn to play a guitar.

Susan Tate-Hamrick, Hotchkiss K-8. Drama Continues on to High School. Students who enjoyed participating in drama and plays at Hotchkiss K-8 are currently unable to pursue similar interests in high school. This grant will provide basic materials to the high school so that, if there is interest, this area of concentration may be available, even as an extra-curricular activity.

Becky Thatcher, Delta Middle School. Cooking Up a Storm. This project will test the ability of Thatcher's special education writing students to prepare and develop a small cookbook of healthy recipes, which they can use in their own homes. In addition to developing their writing skills, the students also will learn to prepare meals at home.

Renee Traczyk, Delta Middle School. Race to Read. Traczyk, who teaches special education students, will test whether rewards for improved student reading, comprehension and vocabulary performance works.

Wilynn Webb, Delta Opportunity School. Etiquette for Life. Students in Webb's classes will learn table etiquette, using a complete service of plates, silverware and other tableware. It will test the students' ability to both properly serve meals and to dine, preparing them with important life skills.

Gates, Hutchison and Rupp are co-applicants in their respective grants and Tracyzk also is a co-applicant with Thatcher's project.

Arch Coal's Mountain Coal Company and its West Elk mine are located near Somerset. Approximately 350 people are employed at West Elk. Arch Coal, Inc. is the nation's second largest coal producer. Through its national network of mines, Arch supplies the fuel for approximately 8 percent of the electricity generated in the United States. The company also ships coal to domestic and international steel manufacturers as well as international power producers. Arch is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: ACI) and maintains its corporate headquarters in St. Louis.