

# **HOLLISTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

## **Grants for Intensive Study –2009 Recipients**

**The Holliston Education Foundation** is pleased to announce the selection of HEF's Grants for Intensive Study for 2009. The recipients are:

**1) James Levasseur, Chris Levasseur, Courtney Bowker, Science Teachers, Holliston High School:**

The Science Department at the High School was awarded a grant (in the amount of \$11,300) for three teachers to participate in the Amazon Expedition with Earthwatch. This is a hands-on research experience that will culminate in enhanced curriculum in the study of biology at the High School, and in video/slide presentations about conservation and rainforest protection for elementary and middle school students. The grant monies will pay for teachers to participate in the program over the summer, share their findings, incorporate new lab techniques and methodology into the biology curriculum, and create presentations for students.

HEF selected this grant for its wide-ranging implications for improving the science curriculum at the High School and extending that knowledge and excitement to students in the lower schools. We were impressed by the teachers' enthusiasm for maximizing the results of this project for their students and community, and by their interest in making a connection to this research an ongoing feature of the science curriculum in Holliston.

**2) Renee Popek, Art Teacher at the Miller and Placentino Elementary School:**

Mrs. Popek was awarded a grant (in the amount of \$2,238) to fund the study and creation of a student-designed mosaic installation. Grant monies will pay for Mrs. Popek to attend a class on mosaic design and instruction over the summer, conduct a year-long study of mosaics with students in grades one through five, and purchase the materials necessary to construct the mosaic. Mrs. Popek plans to link the project to other curriculum areas and to the community through solicitation of materials and ongoing documentation on a website.

In making this award, HEF took particular note of the innovative and interdisciplinary potential of the project, its connections to the town and the plans for ongoing instruction as the mosaic remains a permanent installation for elementary school students to enjoy in future years.

### **3. Heidi Finnegan and Kate Meo, English Teachers at Holliston High School:**

Mrs. Finnegan and Mrs. Meo were jointly awarded a grant (in the amount of \$2,244) for a poetry project to enhance the High School English curriculum in the area of poetry, and create a community-wide event for the enjoyment of poetry at the Holliston Public Library. Grant monies will pay for Mrs. Finnegan and Mrs. Meo to attend a conference on teaching poetry over the summer, create new curriculum to share with colleagues, and design a poetry event in collaboration with the librarians at the Holliston Public Library. This event will include poetry readings and a poetry-writing workshop.

In making this award, HEF was particularly impressed by the teachers' ability to identify a specific need in the curriculum and find a creative and purposeful response. We were pleased to fund a project that would have a positive impact on the High School and connect the High School to the greater community. The teachers' willingness to share their expertise and enthusiasm with colleagues, students and residents was noteworthy.