



**SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION**  
*"Ensuring a bright future for our children"*

Phone: 973-378-2055      [www.somef.org](http://www.somef.org)

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**SOMEF Late Funding Initiative Yields  
Nearly \$9,000 More in Grants**

February 2007 – The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation is pleased to announce that it will distribute nearly \$9,000 more in teacher grants thanks to a successful late funding initiative.

Every fall, the South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation invites district teachers and staff to apply for grants for innovative projects to be carried out with their students. (SOMEF) Teacher Grants pay for otherwise unavailable classroom equipment, curriculum materials, special events, visiting artists, and other enriching programs.

Since 1999, SOMEF has awarded \$170K for 271 teacher grants in all nine schools. Both small grants, stipends up to \$1500, and large grants, those above \$1500, are awarded.

This past fall, SOMEF reviewed applications from teachers and administrators for requests totaling an overwhelming \$170,000. While many of these ideas and projects were highly qualified, the not for profit organization had just under \$30,000 on hand to distribute among the nine schools.

For the second year in a row, SOMEF invited the community to help close the funding gap and extend the impact of the grant program by becoming 'late' sponsors of approved, but unfunded teacher grants. The call to action did not go unnoticed. Donors were able to review individual project descriptions online (at [www.somef.org](http://www.somef.org)) and make targeted donations to fund specific grants – or partially fund grants. Nearly \$9,000 came flooding into SOMEF by the end of January.

Worthy grant recipients included: Clinton's After School Enrichment Scholarship Program, the South Mountain Cozy Corner, An After-School Weight Loss Support Group for Students at Maplewood Middle School, Jefferson School "Hoops and Chat" program, and Family Literacy Kits at Marshall School.

The largest recipient was "Reaching for the STARS: Stellar Training for All to Reach Success" at Seth Boyden. The \$4,473 grant will pay for 72 scholarships for students to attend an after school enrichment program aimed at skills required for the NJASK. This 'late-funding' success was a school wide effort. The school community banded together, hosting a breakfast to create awareness for the program and to secure the required funding.

"Our late funding initiative is a unique form of philanthropy because it allows people to make donations based on personal interest or experience with schools," said Sandra Kurek, of the SOMEF Teacher Grants Committee. "We're delighted to further extend the reach of our grants program."

The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation believes that an exemplary public school system is essential to the well-being of our community. SOMEF's mission is to enhance the educational experience for all students and staff, by providing funds to enrich educational programs, activities and facilities. SOMEF raises money through events, such as Night of 100 Dinners, Honor Your Teacher tributes, and fundraising appeals. To learn more, click on [www.somef.org](http://www.somef.org)