



OUTLOOK

THE SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Newsletter and Annual Report, Spring 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In my fall letter, I predicted that we would have a banner year. Happily, I was 100% correct. Our two dazzling fundraising events, as well as grants and large donations from community members and organizations, brought in thousands of dollars that will be used in our schools in the months to come. The credit for this huge success belongs to all of our Board but, in particular, the unequalled dedication of our Quiz Bowl and Night of 100 Dinners committees whose efforts yielded over \$24,000 combined.

At our May 6 reception honoring the recipients of Teacher Grants, Summer Grants for administrators and Michelle T. Riecke Fellows, we announced that we gave over \$44,000 in staff grants this year. Along with the \$80,100 given through a generous donation for the CHS TV Studio Arts Program and the purchase of the curtains for the high school auditorium, this brings our donated funds in this fiscal year to the school to almost \$150,000.

Sadly we say goodbye to two board members who are stepping down: Gloria Turner and Joan Lee who have given so generously of their time and resources. We will welcome new trustees in June and appreciate interest from anyone in the community to serve on a committee or bring us a new fundraising idea.

We are a working board. The key to our success and viability is grounded in the fact that we all pitch in. Everyone works in different capacities from revising our strategic plan to crafting strategies for development, to typing families' messages into Honor Your Teacher and Staff tribute cards.

The challenge we face as a community to continue to deliver high quality education to every child at a cost that our citizens can bear is a bold one, but within our reach. The job of SOMEF is to inspire creative thinking in the classroom through grants, to help bridge the racial achievement gap by working with the administration to come up with new and innovative solutions to this urgent problem, and to provide the district teaching staff with funds to augment their skills that they can bring back to their students and colleagues.

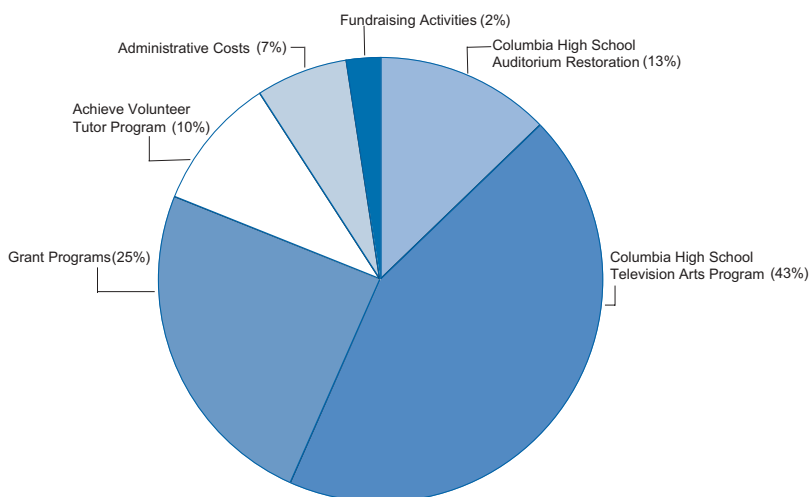
Our projected budget for grants to teachers next year will be close to \$50,000. We thank you for your donations this year and look forward to your support in the coming year. Have a great summer and think about how you can get involved in SOMEF.

Jean Campbell

SOMEF FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

Audited financial statement on page 2

Expenditures July 1, 2004 through April 30, 2005



SOMEF+ Junior League = Grant for Good Reading Skills

A grant from the Junior League of the Oranges and Short Hills to SOMEF funded an instructional film to be used at a new workshop for parents of elementary school age children and ACHIEVE tutors. Entitled, "A Pebble in the Pond," the film provides tips on helping children develop good reading skills. It covers how to choose the right books, ways to improve comprehension and fostering a love of reading. The film was lovingly produced through a collaboration of members of the Tuscan Elementary School Staff, freelance Director of Photography, Paul Gibson (also an ACHIEVE tutor and Tuscan parent!) and ACHIEVE Coordinator, Deborah Prinz. Following a pilot presentation at Tuscan in June, the workshop will be presented at the other elementary schools and at tutor training workshops beginning next year.

**South Orange Maplewood Education Foundation
Financial Statement***
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2004

Balance Sheet

Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$181,932
Investments	41,561
Total Assets	<u>\$223,493</u>
Liabilities	
	<u>\$0</u>
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>\$59,609</u>
Permanently Restricted	
Achieve Volunteer Tutor Program	\$7,386
Strawberry Fields	\$17,090
Columbia High School Auditorium	\$26,949
Riecke Endowment Fund	\$112,459
Total Permanently Restricted Net Assets	<u>\$163,884</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>\$223,493</u>
Total Net Assets and Liabilities	<u>\$223,493</u>

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Revenues	
Donor Contributions	
General	\$33,273
Achieve	11,293
Strawberry Fields	25,000
Riecke Fund	112,593
Auditorium Fund	10,400
Total Contributions	<u>\$192,559</u>
Fundraising Events	39,446
Contributions from Organizations	3,970
Interest Income	1,027
Total Revenues	<u>\$237,002</u>
Expenses	
Grant Programs	\$26,885
Special Projects	8,150
Achieve Volunteer Tutor Program	23,335
Strawberry Fields	22,533
Total Program	<u>\$80,903</u>
Fundraising	\$8,539
Administrative and General Expenses	\$14,196
Total Expenses	<u>\$103,638</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	<u>\$133,364</u>
Net Assets at the Beginning of the Fiscal Period	\$90,129
Net Assets at the End of the Fiscal Period	<u>\$223,493</u>

*Based upon audited financial statement for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2004

YOUR DONATIONS SUPPORT:

ACHIEVE VOLUNTEER TUTOR PROGRAM:

ACHIEVE addresses the academic achievement gap by supplying 200 trained volunteers who give over 3,000 hours of free tutoring annually to 275 SO/M students who are academically at-risk. Volunteers are high school and college students and adults from the community.

SOMEF TEACHER GRANTS: Since 2000, SOMEF has awarded \$114,000 in grants to teachers for 189 of their innovative projects and activities in all nine schools.

COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM FUND:

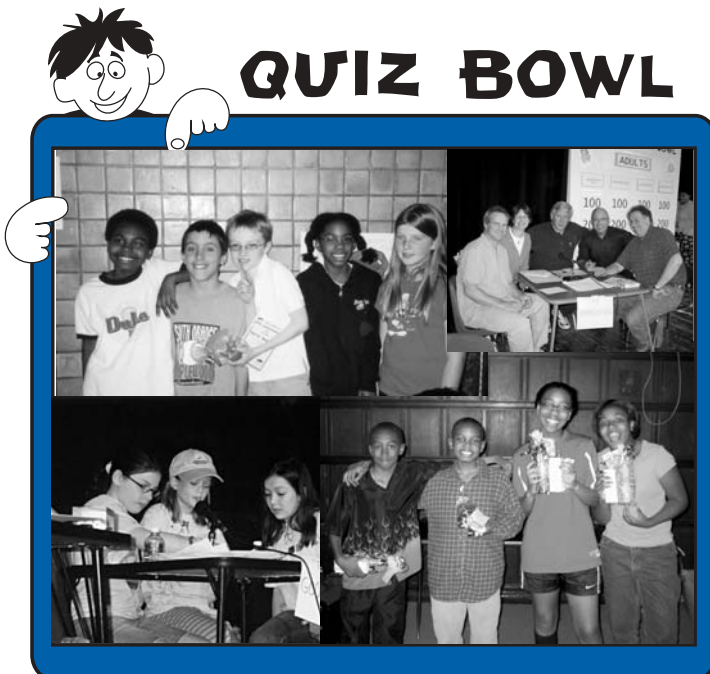
The purchase of new curtains and restoration of entry doors launched SOMEF's plan to help renovate this 2,000 seat architectural gem that serves the schools and the community-at-large.

2005 RIECKE FELLOWSHIP AWARDED

The 2005 Michelle Traina Riecke Teaching Fellowship – one of the ways in which SOMEF supports professional development for teachers – was awarded to two staff members. Noah Brauner, CHS graphic arts teacher, will study Computer Aided Design (CAD) Technology at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Middle school social worker, Kate Pfeifer will broaden her skills for working in a culturally diverse community at New York's Minuchin Center for the Family. The Fellowship was established in memory of Shelley Riecke, former president of the SO/M Board of Education.

TWO GREAT FUNDRAISERS NETTED \$24,000 FOR SOMEF PROJECTS

QUIZ BOWL



In April, 37 teams including 150 teachers, parents and students of all ages competed for the chance to become the next "Ken Jennings" of Jeopardy fame at the SOMEF Quiz Bowl, sponsored by Valley National Bank. A silent auction gave a boost to the proceeds. Award-winning CHS TV Arts students caught it all on tape. A few of the winning teams are pictured here.



Elegant house parties were given by ten generous hosts in Maplewood and South Orange in January. Thank you to our event committees and the hundreds of donors who made these events so successful. We hope to see you again next year!

SPOTLIGHT ON GRANTS

HISTORY THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ARTIST



SOMS students learning how art is linked to what they learn in their Social Studies classes.

A special SOMEF grant sent 226 sixth grade students to the Newark Museum this spring for a program that tied in works by American artists to the students' social studies curriculum. Led by museum educators, four groups of students and their teachers spent a day studying pieces from the periods of Western Expansion, the Roaring Twenties, the Harlem Renaissance and the Great Depression. Following the tour, the students had a session in the museum studio where they learned to make art works such as water color cityscapes and World War II era propaganda posters that were linked to what they were learning in class and to what they had viewed in the gallery.



The museum education project showed students that art reflects and relates to all aspects of life. Their comments during the gallery tour indicated that they realized that people react to art in different ways, and that prior knowledge and individual experiences influenced their own interpretations and what they "saw" in each work of art.

MAJOR GIFT TO COLUMBIA TV PROGRAM

Sometimes, the best gifts are the ones that come at the right time, are needed the most, and are given with a selfless spirit. SOMEF helped bring the Columbia High School TV arts program and a generous, anonymous donor together on the occasion of the program's 25th anniversary of on-air broadcasting across local cable stations.

The magnanimous donor provided \$80,100 to allow the program to advance its technical capabilities and broaden the scope of the curriculum. The addition of a new mini-studio gives freshmen TV 9 students the ability to experience the "studio/control room" environment. These students also now have computers with software that will prepare them for the more advanced programs used in the new computer video-editing lab.

Originally started as a club in the late 70s, the high school's TV program has evolved into a nationally recognized, Emmy award-winning curriculum. Columbia's 475 TV students help produce on-air broadcasts across two local cable stations, South Orange Cablevision Channel 19 and Maplewood Comcast 35. A daily live news show, "Good Morning CHS" and other live shows reach over 250 million cable subscribers. The highly popular TV arts classes have waiting lists and many of its graduates have also gone on to successful careers in film and television, stemming from their experience at CHS.

The \$80,100 check was presented to the South Orange-Maplewood School District on August 16, 2004 and SOMEF trustees were present at the TV arts program's 25th anniversary celebration on March 30, 2005.

The High School was the recipient of a second anonymous gift too: A donation of \$10,000 helped complete one of SOMEF's five major goals for the Columbia High School Auditorium Renovation project – the purchase and the installation of new, majestic Broadway-quality curtains for the school's grand auditorium.



TV Arts student Michael Ore shows off the new equipment in the video-editing lab.

A LESSON IN ART AND RECYCLING



Howard Stein, a local sculptor, became the artist in residence to a South Orange Middle School art club as the result of a SOMEF grant application by Ellen Hark. The members of the art club learned from Mr. Stein about creating art from found objects, and through that experience they gained a new appreciation for the artistic possibilities of items such as hubcaps and mufflers. In pondering how to make art from their random collection of junk, the students first created figures of a boy and a girl. Club member Cassidy Bommer's brainstorm to incorporate old lockers was the catalyst that ultimately defined the project. The experience culminated in a joint project - a sculpture which will be permanently displayed outdoors at SOMS.



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 www.somef.org

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The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation (SOMEF)
 We believe that an exemplary public school system is essential to the well-being of our community. Our mission is to enhance the educational experience for all South Orange-Maplewood School District students and staff by providing funds to enrich educational programs, activities, and facilities.

SOMEF needs volunteers! Fundraising, marketing, website development, grant writing and more. Call us today.

2005-06 SOMEF OFFICERS
 PRESIDENT: JEAN CAMPBELL
 VICE PRESIDENT: MARK TOLSTOI
 RECORDING SECRETARY: SANDRA KUREK
 TREASURER: NANCY SOBIESKI

We welcome new trustees Michael Malloy and Susan Present and we thank departing trustees Joan Lee and Gloria Turner for their years of hard work and dedication to SOMEF and the children of Maplewood and South Orange.

I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation (SOMEF):

\$500.00 \$100.00 \$25.00
 \$250.00 \$50.00 Other: \$ _____


Please make checks payable to: South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation
 Mail to: P.O. Box 84, Maplewood, NJ 07040
 For more information please call 973-378-2055

Name _____
 Address _____

 Phone (H) _____ (W) _____
 e-mail _____

May we include your name when we publicize our donor list? yes no

All gifts are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
The South Orange-Maplewood Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated in the State of New Jersey.



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