



OUTLOOK

THE SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Newsletter and Annual Report, Spring 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Spring is here and the SOMEF Board and volunteers are out in full force seeking your financial support...

AGAIN! Every time you turn around SOMEF is hosting a fund-raising event – the Quiz Bowl or Night of a Hundred Dinners – or soliciting donations for one of our campaigns: Honor Your Teacher and Staff, Back-to-School, and End of the Year appeal. The list goes on.

Why do we need to keep raising all of this money, you may ask? The answer is simple: our main goal is to reinvest what we raise in our schools. Unlike many other foundations, SOMEF does not have an endowment to fund our programs. We must raise the \$70,000 to \$80,000 each year for teacher grants, summer grants for administrators, capital improvements, and special projects. Our desire is to increase our budget to meet all of the existing and new requests that come to us from South Orange-Maplewood educators.

To this end, we are planning a special event to mark the 10th anniversary of our ACHIEVE Volunteer Tutor Program and have much more in store in 2006-2007.

The generous support of the community keeps SOMEF alive. We would like to thank Maplewood Mayor Fred Profeta, for designating ACHIEVE as a beneficiary of the Maplewood Mayor's Ball 2006.

Thank you too for being our partner, and please consider increasing your financial commitment to SOMEF. When you do, ask your employer about matching gifts programs – it is an easy way to double our dollars. So, relax, have a great summer, and enjoy – but we won't let you forget about SOMEF for long!

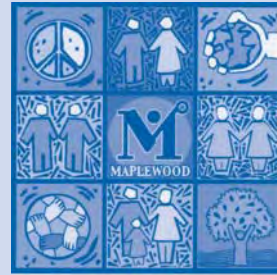
Jean R. Campbell, President

MAPLEWOOD BUSINESSES SUPPORT SOMEF

Anthony Garubo of the eponymous Garubo Salon and Day Spa has transformed his passion for the positive virtues

project, "Immigration Comes Alive," that will study immigration patterns based on students' personal family histories.

of our two towns into a new SOMEF grant. He dedicated proceeds of the sale of posters and other merchandise bearing a colorful, original image depicting Maplewood, united in its diversity, to fund an educational initiative that will help students respect their differences while discovering their commonalities.



Clinton School art teacher, Irene Dunsavage, is the first recipient of the new Garubo Unity Award. She is implementing a school-wide, interdisciplinary

Following Mr. Garubo's lead, Krista Fahey of Classic Design Framing graciously framed 6 of Garubo's posters – one for each Maplewood school. She is also donating proceeds from the sale of specially commissioned prints of Rosa Parks (some are still available). SOMEF values the involvement of these two civic-minded Maplewood merchants, who chose the Foundation to benefit from their fund-raising activities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

At SOMEF, Rule Number One is to spend everything we earn! Although this philosophy would not go over well in my household, I take great pleasure in helping ensure that your donations expand our children's learning experiences throughout the South Orange and Maplewood Schools.

It might seem that spending the money we raise is an easy job. In truth, it is a daunting task that is undertaken conscientiously by our hard-working, volunteer Board of Trustees. Notably, our Grants Committee labors exhaustively – deciding how to apportion our available funds among the long list of commendable project proposals we receive from SO/M staff members every year. This year alone, SOMEF gave teachers more than \$40,000 in grant money to fund exciting projects in science, character education, the arts and more.

In addition to supplying 2500 hours of free tutoring to students in need each year and helping improve school facilities, SOMEF is broadening its reach through shared initiatives, including partnerships with the Loft, CHS' School-Based Youth Services program and Seton Hall University. Also this year, a team of Marshall School educators piloted alternative strategies for ACHIEVE volunteer tutors helping struggling readers.

I can assure you that your contributions to SOMEF are distributed with great care and steadfast dedication to our mission of providing enhancements to the educational experience of *all* our children. It is a privilege to serve SOMEF: the trustees, many other volunteers and you, our donors, to whom we attribute our continued success.

Deborah Prinz, Executive Director



**South Orange Maplewood Education Foundation
Financial Statement***
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2005

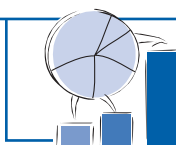
Balance Sheet

Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$180,862
Investments	5,000
Total Assets	\$185,862
Liabilities	
	\$0
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$51,626
Permanently Restricted	
Achieve Volunteer Tutor Program	\$7,760
Strawberry Fields	\$17,090
Columbia High School Auditorium	\$3,612
Riecke Endowment Fund	\$105,774
Total Permanently Restricted Net Assets	\$134,236
Total Net Assets	\$185,862
Total Net Assets and Liabilities	\$185,862

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Revenues	
Donor Contributions	
General	\$32,109
Achieve	28,421
Restricted Columbia H.S. TV Studio	80,100
Riecke Fund	2,862
Auditorium Fund	0
Total Contributions	\$143,492
Fundraising Events	26,370
Contributions from Organizations	3,350
Interest Income	1,494
Total Revenues	\$174,706
Expenses	
Grant Programs	
Special Projects	\$38,638
Achieve Volunteer Tutor Program	8,141
Columbia H.S. TV Studio	31,524
Columbia H.S. Auditorium Project	80,100
Riecke Fund	23,337
Total Program	9,547
Total Program	\$191,287
Fundraising	\$5,684
Administrative and General Expenses	\$15,366
Total Expenses	\$212,337
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	-\$37,631
Net Assets at the Beginning of the Fiscal Period	\$223,493
Net Assets at the End of the Fiscal Period	\$185,862

*Based upon audited financial statement for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2005



To date in '05-'06 SOMEF has raised \$88,000!

SPRING FUNDRAISERS YIELD \$27,000 FOR SOMEF

QUIZ BOWL

The second annual SOMEF Quiz Bowl held at Maplewood Middle School on March 5th was a crowd-pleasing and financial success – securing itself as one of the community’s favorite new events. Forty-one teams of students (grades K-12), parents, teachers, Board of Education members and Maplewood Township Committee members threw their hats into the ring, competing in a college-bowl style competition, and SO/M Director of Health and Physical Education, Judy LoBianco served as emcee, adding humor and zest to the family-friendly fundraiser.



NIGHT OF 100 DINNERS

On Saturday April 22, SOMEF had 165 friends over for dinner. The night went off without a hitch with the help of gracious hosts who simultaneously entertained guests at 10 beautiful homes in South Orange and Maplewood. A heart-felt thanks to our generous hosts the Basedows; the Hoskin/Hirschberg family; the Jaseys; the Talls and Colemans; the Gombergs; the Niggelis; the Correa/Goldberg family; the Rabinowitz’s; the Weinrauchs; the Goldsteins and the Amarant/Gruber family, and hats off to our dinner chairperson, Meryl Levine, and her committee of volunteers.



Ellen Powers observes a tutoring session at Clinton School.

ACHIEVE WELCOMES...

The ACHIEVE Tutor Program welcomes Ellen Powers, our new Assistant Coordinator. A Maplewood resident for 16 years, Ellen has held many volunteer positions within the Marshall and Jefferson Elementary School PTA’s. She also brings experience from the Human Resources field, where she worked as a Labor Relations Researcher and Employee Benefits Analyst. If you’re interested in volunteering as a tutor, contact Ellen at achievetutorprogram@yahoo.com.

2006 RIECKE FELLOWSHIP AWARDED

This year’s Michele Traina Riecke Fellowship was awarded to Thomas Whitaker of Columbia High School and Peter Trebour of Maplewood Middle School. They will attend the AVID Summer Institute in July 2006 in Atlanta, GA. “Advancement Via Individual Determination” is an in-school academic support program with a proven track record. It prepares students in Grades 5-12 in the middle of the academic curve, “the silent majority”, for college eligibility and success. AVID also helps to level the playing field for minority, low-income and other students who may be among the first in their families to go to college. At work in nearly 2,300 schools in 36 states and 15 countries, and named one of the nation’s top 10 educational organizations by Worth Magazine for 2002, the AVID formula is simple: raise academic expectations and provide intensive support. The result? Under-achieving students realize their true potential and are poised to enroll in 4-year colleges.

Funds Raised by SOMEF = Funds Spent in Our Schools

88% of the money raised this year was disbursed to our schools:

Teacher and Staff Grants 47%

ACHIEVE Volunteer Tutor Program 32%

Other SOMEF programs 9%



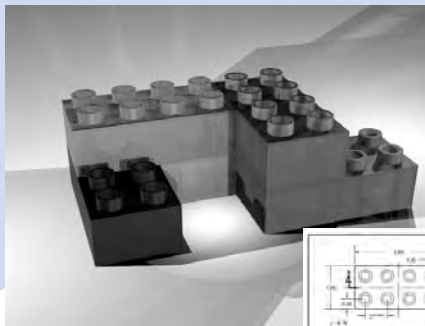
SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHER GRANTS

INDUSTRIAL ARTS GOES HIGH-TECH

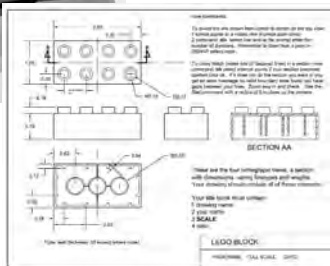


Shop class doesn't look anything like you remember. Noah Brauner, a professional Industrial Designer and Columbia High School teacher for the past 4 years, was the 2005 recipient of the Michelle Riecke Fellowship and is using his experience to transform the curriculum.

With a changing environment, CHS started reducing its Industrial Arts programs in the late 1990's. Under Brauner's tutelage however, hands-on high-tech classes using commercial software are gaining in popularity: instead of jigsaws, students are using computers to master architectural model making, solid/surface modeling, 3-D animation and visual effects. Last summer, Brauner used his SOMEF/Riecke grant to immerse himself in the summer graduate class "Computer Animation Using Maya" at the School for Visual Arts. The intense course expanded his tool set and allows him to expose students to advanced modeling techniques.



Student renderings using CAD 2D and Rhino3D modeling software



recently mastering how to properly animate hands and simulate finger joint movement.

For students at all levels with interest in Architecture, Engineering or Industrial Design, and computer animation, these enriching classes teach practical arts, business and life skills that are intended to prepare students for further study (Boys tend to outnumber girls 3:1 but compete equally).

Brauner develops projects that make the classes challenging, first assigning a tree house design project to students in Architectural Modelmaking. His open classroom is available to students during lunch, where they work freely under his guidance. Dedicated to his specialty and his students, Brauner has also built work/display tables to enhance the classroom, and continues to look for grants and donations to keep his programs state-of-the-art. Since the software has heavy processor and memory requirements, Brauner needs funding to purchase two high-powered workstations and two licensed copies of Autodesk Maya Unlimited (commercial version) and SolidWorks (3D product design CAD software). If anyone would like more information on this program or have an interest in making a donation, please contact SOMEF.

Max Lopez, a math-minded sophomore taking Independent Study with Brauner, is using the Maya program to study animation and modeling. Working with Brauner and teaching himself using tutorials from text books bought with the SOMEF/Riecke Grant, Max was

GRAPHIC NOVELS FOR THE RELUCTANT READER

The librarians at our five elementary schools—Sharon Edelberg, Mary Sciano, Roberta Baltin, Suzanne Ng, Robin Rabinowitz, and Jeanie Van Oss—have used a SOMEF teacher grant to invest in a beginning collection of graphic novels for motivating reluctant readers. Graphic novels, stories told in comic book format, have become an important component of library collections for both children and teenagers. Comics have a century-long history in the US, from short strips in the newspaper to the longer comic book versions that became wildly popular with the Superman series after 1938. Comics tell a story with illustrated panels and text, and can range from the simple to the complex in both art and plot. Graphic novels expand the story-telling aspect of comics and include a diversity of genre, styles, and subjects.

For students who are visual learners or have limited word decoding skills, graphic novels can be great tools. They are less intimidating to some students than books with entire pages of text and yet they challenge

students with sophisticated stories and vocabulary they might not encounter otherwise. An appealing reading experience helps to develop stronger reading habits. Graphic novels also help struggling writers by giving them new approaches to story-telling.

Most of the graphic novels the librarians purchased are biographies, classics, and non-fiction books that support the 3rd through 5th grade curriculum. They include books on George Washington, Harriet Tubman, and Abraham Lincoln, as well as versions of *The Red Badge of Courage* and *Black Beauty*. Although intended to cultivate new readers, graphic novels appeal to good readers as well. Circulation statistics are often the best indicators of a book's popularity, but Sharon Edelberg at Clinton School received some immediate feedback from her students: "When I introduced them to the fifth graders, there was an audible, collective 'oooooh' from them, which is always a good sign!"



2006-07 SOMEF OFFICERS

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VICE PRESIDENT: MARK TOLSTOI
TREASURER: PAT COTTER
RECORDING SECRETARY: MICHELLE LANGSAM
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY: PATTI COLEMAN

We welcome new trustees Rick Sirois, Michelle Langsam, Jim Reilly and Janice Little and thank departing trustees Nancy Sobieski, Karen Basedow, Gia James, Lisa Winkler, and Doris Boyer for their dedication to SOMEF and the children of Maplewood and South Orange.

SOMEF thanks volunteer extraordinaire Jean Duffy for her hard work maintaining our data base.

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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Deborah Prinz, Executive Director

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



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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.