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Mission Statement

The mission of the ICCSD Foundation is to promote quality education within the Iowa City Community School District by generating resources, as well as assisting others in generating resources, to enhance educational programs and activities for all students within the district.

"Education is Everybody's Business" Event Celebrates Foundation's 25th Anniversary and Kicks Off Capital Campaign



Student Jessica Metz discusses the Johnson County Reads Program

The Foundation held its annual "Education is Everybody's Business" event on Tuesday, September 12th raising more than \$10,000 in support of the Foundation's Excellence Fund. The luncheon, held at the new hotelVetro in downtown Iowa City drew over 175 people. Attendees included area business leaders and school district supporters who gathered to celebrate the work of the ICCSD Foundation over the past 25 years since its inception in November, 1981.

Guests were treated to an upbeat performance by the West High Jazz Combo, directed by Rich Medd. Tracy Collins, ICCSDF Director of Development, spoke about the Foundation's history and the Excellence Fund, the Foundation's annual fund that generates resources to enhance educational programs and activities for all students. Over its 25 year history, the Foundation has raised more than 3 million dollars in support of our public schools. This year grants totaling \$33,500 were approved for a variety of projects throughout the district. See page six for a full listing of the grants.

Support the Foundation's Excellence Fund - Envelope Enclosed!

Denise Rehmke, Media Specialist at West High School and Jessica Metz, Student at Tate High School, each spoke about the Johnson County Reads program. Participation in the program at all three district high schools was made possible through a grant from the Foundation's Excellence Fund. Jessica spoke about the value of participating in the program as well as the benefit of adding the books to the Tate High library. Please see article by Denise Rehmke on page 10 of this newsletter.

Next a special announcement was made by Katherine Moyers and Mark Hamer, co-chairs of the Foundation's 25th Anniversary Committee. Mark and Katherine, long time volunteers with the ICCSD Foundation, announced the most ambitious fundraising campaign in the Foundation's history.

Superintendent Dr. Lane Plugge served as the keynote speaker for the event, giving a visual presentation entitled "Together we make Great Schools Extraordinary". The presentation addressed the Foundation's important role in supporting the

school district and also described the variety of needs in the district to be addressed by the goals of the 25th Anniversary Campaign.

Every year the Foundation honors an individual or business as a "Special Friend of Education." ICCSD Foundation President Christy Fehlberg presented the award to the University of Iowa Community Credit Union, who was chosen for their outstanding commitment to the schools. Their support has included annual sponsorship of the 5th and 6th grade track meets, funding for School of the Wild, and the Student of the Arts Program. This year, UICCU sponsored Welcome Week activities for 17 district elementary schools for their ice cream socials, which included a \$500 donation to each school. Jeff Disterhoft, President and CEO was there to accept the award.

The 25th Anniversary year will be busy and rewarding for the Foundation with a lofty fundraising goal and many volunteers prepared to work diligently to achieve that goal. Please consider what you and your family can do to help the



Superintendent Plugge



Students Leif Rosenquist, Gabe Medd & Scott Ruebush perform. Erik Michaelson, Rachel Feldmann & Dan Reck also performed in the jazz ensemble.

Foundation continue to reach every child, every year.

Christy Fehlberg, ICCSD Foundation President

Special Thanks to our "Education is Everybody's Business" Sponsors

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25th Anniversary Capital Campaign Seeks to Raise \$500,000

On September 12th the Iowa City Community School District Foundation launched the most ambitious fundraising campaign of its 25-year existence. The Foundation set a goal of raising \$500,000 by December, 2007. Early support for this 25th Anniversary Campaign has been tremendous. We are extremely pleased to report that as of the writing of this update, the Foundation has received gifts and pledges approaching 60 percent of the goal.

While the 25th anniversary is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the ICCSD Foundation, it is also an opportunity to address critical needs in the district. The funds raised by this campaign will be used for programs, equipment and projects in the areas of technology, instructional equipment,

student activities and at-risk and special needs which are not funded through the district budget or the upcoming tax initiative.

Communities are judged by how well they support their children and their schools. This support must come from throughout our community. The early response to the 25th Anniversary Campaign is a clear demonstration of our community's commitment to education. It is a great beginning and we'll continue with our fundraising efforts throughout 2007 to ensure our success.

We are proud to lead nearly 50 volunteers working toward the Foundation's goal. We encourage all of you to join us in supporting the Foundation's 25th Anniversary Campaign over the next year. You can



Mark Hamer and Katherine Moyers

visit our website at www.iccsdfoundation.org, or contact the Foundation office for more information about the campaign. You can also learn about ways to get involved as well as additional information about the specific goals of the campaign in the Foundation's upcoming newsletters.

Our campaign slogan is "Together we make great schools extraordinary!" We believe that with parents, teachers, administrators, and community members working together we can continue to be a premier school district that provides all of our children with an extraordinary education. Please join us in this effort.

Mark Hamer and Katherine Moyers are 25th Anniversary Campaign Co-Chairs

Looking Back...



Apple IIe Plus

The Foundation was established in 1981 when the School Board asked a group of concerned parents to study ways to add funds to the school district following significant budget cuts. After six months of fundraising the Foundation purchased an Apple IIe Plus computer in 1982 that was shared among all of the schools in the district. Each school got to use it for just 3 weeks per year!

With continued fundraising the Foundation was able to supply computers to all of the schools, as well as many other items that have enhanced the quality of education in the district.

Picture Books in the Junior High Classroom

“A good book is a good book is a good book,” I tell my students by way of introduction as I stand before them holding *Tomas and the Library Lady*, a wonderful picture book purchased through a grant from the ICCSD Foundation’s Excellence Fund. “As I read this to you, I’m going to stop at different times and ask you to say something to your partner. At those times, you will tell your partner your thinking about what you’ve just heard. This will help us practice a strategy which readers use to improve their comprehension.”

Student’s faces are expectant and they listen attentively as I begin to read. When I stop for a “say something”, the room is abuzz with animated conversations filled with predictions, connections, questions, clarifications, and other thoughts. “Say Something” is an activity we’ll use often this year as we work on increasing reading comprehension. It’s a way of getting everyone engaged with a text and actively thinking about their reading. It’s a way of training our minds to be metacognitive, to think about our thinking as we read, rather than just running our eyes over words. I’m using this wonderful picture book with

Iowa connections as a vehicle for teaching this particular activity which we’ll use with increasingly complex text and increasing independence as the year progresses.

This is just one example of the wealth of uses language arts and literacy teachers are finding for the collection of picture books purchased with an ICCSD Foundation Excellence Fund grant. Every student at Northwest is benefiting from the collection of approximately 150 picture books. The average price of the books is \$16.00 or \$17.00 apiece, and we have purchased single copies of some titles and multiple copies of others,

depending on how they might be used in the classroom.

Language arts and literacy teachers have found that picture books, many of which are not actually written for young children, are wonderful vehicles for teaching. Kylene Beers, a noted expert in the field of adolescent literacy and editor of the *Elements of Literature* anthology used in the Iowa City Community School District, recommends using picture books to engage and delight readers of every ability level.

The best picture books carry great themes and messages, but they are shorter and therefore more manageable and effective tools for teaching discreet skills than are longer short stories or novels.

One example of this is when we teach the use of memorable language as a writing skill. Picture books are full of



Teacher Ronda Marshall uses a picture book to help students improve comprehension.



Junior high students work on picture book exercise.

beautiful images, both visual and written, which are easily accessible to readers. Teachers may introduce the idea of using memorable language in writing by using a particular picture book to which students listen, and then by asking students to work individually or in pairs with a picture book of their choice to notice and share similes, metaphors, and other memorable language they find. *Owl Moon and Letting Swift River Go* by Jane Yolen are excellent examples of books with beautiful language.

Picture books also provide amazing prompts for writing. In one assignment eighth grade students are asked to write a short story centered around a barn. Students create a setting using detailed descriptions. They must have a character enter the barn, find something which triggers a memory, describe that memory, and exit the barn. Their language must be “showing,” not “telling.” Before students start writing, the teacher reads them Patricia MacLachlin’s amazing look into a lovely old barn called *All the Places to Love*. It helps students visualize a particular barn and provides them also with a wonderful story to spark their

own imaginations.

Literary concepts are also introduced and practiced using the picture books. *A Cello for Mr. O* by Jane Cutler, a beautiful book about the selfless contribution of a musician in Sarajevo who kept people’s spirits up during the horrible deprivations of wartime by playing his cello each day in the town square, in spite of bombing attacks and other horrors, is often used to introduce and help students practice finding the theme in a text. *Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco is perfect for helping students understand symbolism.

Picture books often provide ideal overviews of particular historical periods or events. In eighth grade, study of the Holocaust is part of the curriculum, and *Rose Blanche* by Roberto Innocenti, as well as *A Cello for Mr. O* and *Butterfly*, help prepare students for the other texts they’ll be reading by giving them a sense of the time, the struggles and the “big picture” of this historical period. *So Far From the Sea* by Eve Bunting and *Baseball Will Save Us* by Ken Mochizuki are both outstanding considerations of how the United States had its own internment camps during World War Two where despair prevailed and lives were blighted.

Another teacher uses picture books to introduce thematic units. Many anthologies have sections with an animal theme. Beginning such a unit with *Jumbo* by Eve Bunting, the story of P.T. Barnum’s larger-than-life

attraction, leads eventually to a discussion of the responsible, humane treatment of animals and sets a tone and foundation for the reading of the other stories in the unit.

Teachers have also found picture books useful in teaching group work skills. When working in literature circles, students are asked to come to their lit circle meeting with discussion questions based on their reading, and they must be able to distinguish between discussion questions and recall/quiz-type questions. Teachers have found that picture books such as *Rainbow Fish* by M. Pfister are outstanding for teaching, and having students practice, the difference between “thick” and “thin” questions, before they begin participating in their novel lit circles.

As I’m sure is obvious by now, the picture books purchased for use in the junior high classroom through the ICCSD Foundation’s Excellence Fund grant are being used in many, many situations and are helping to enhance the learning of every student. We are grateful to the Excellence Fund for providing such valuable books.

By Ronda Marshall, 7th grade language arts teacher (with ideas provided by Meg Corbin & Andrea Keech, 8th grade language arts teachers and Elaine Ryan, 7th grade literacy teacher and district language arts curriculum coordinator)

Foundation Awards Annual Excellence Fund Grants

Each year the ICCSD Foundation makes grants to the school district from the Excellence Fund for projects and programs that are not possible within the district budget. In May of this year the Foundation approved the following grants to the ICCSD. These projects would not be possible without annual contributions to the Foundation's Excellence Fund from our generous supporters.

Field Trip for At Risk Students

Approximately 40 at-risk high school students who had improved a failing grade to a passing grade and improved their attitude and behavior were rewarded with a field trip to St. Louis in June 2006. The at-risk program is an effort to keep students focused on finishing school and receiving passing grades. Amount of grant: \$1,000

Cashore Marionette Performance

All fifth and some sixth grade students throughout the district will attend a performance at Hancher Auditorium of the Cashore Marionettes. The performance discusses the myriad of emotions in life, and guidance counselors and art teachers in the district are preparing an accompanying interdisciplinary unit for students. Amount of grant: \$2,000

Johnson County Reads

This program provides multiple copies of the Johnson County Reads book *The Tortilla Curtain* for City, West and Tate High Schools so that students may participate in a community activity. Amount of grant: \$1,258

School of the Wild

This program provides approximately 900 5th and 6th grade students with experiential learning that enhances awareness

and scientific understanding of the natural world and their connection to it. Amount of grant: \$3,000

Community Reading Month Visiting Author Project

A guest author visits each of the elementary schools and discusses the writing process and what it is like to be an author. These visits make a lasting impression with students and encourage life-long reading and writing skills. This year award winning author and illustrator Peter Catalanotto will visit with all 1st and 2nd grade students throughout the ICCSD. This program is sponsored in part by Hills Bank and Trust Company. Amount of grant: \$6,000

Family Night at the Public Library

The ICCSD Title 1 Reading Program along with Hancher Auditorium and the local public libraries sponsor an annual Family Night at the Public Libraries for families whose children receive Title 1 reading support. This grant supports transportation costs to the event for Lucas, Wood, Roosevelt, Mann and Twain schools. Amount of grant: \$920

National Geographic Reading Expeditions

Supplementary materials from National Geographic will improve reading comprehension for seventh

grade students at Northwest Junior High. Amount of grant: \$1,800

Picture Books - Visualizing and Drawing Inferences

Books were purchased to accompany a lesson plan that will teach students the cognitive strategy of visualizing, which aids in comprehending text. This grant will provide materials for North Central Junior High. Northwest and Southeast Junior Highs received this grant previously. Amount of grant: \$1,000

At Risk Parents Picnic

This grant supported a picnic for about 125 parents and students to orient them to services available to them through the district and the community. Amount of grant: \$500

Medical Teaching Doll

This grant supports the purchase of a hands-on medical teaching mannequin for the purpose of teaching students and staff about specific medical conditions and medical procedures they may need to learn in order to care for themselves. Amount of grant: \$3045

To help make more grants available next year, please make your donation to the Excellence Fund with the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

New Additions to the ICCSD Foundation Board of Directors

“I joined the Foundation board as an Iowa City Education Association liaison because I have witnessed the contributions that the ICCSD Foundation has made for the benefit of educators, students, and their families. As a teacher in the ICCSD for 24 years, as a parent of two daughters who attended K-12 in ICCSD and who have both become teachers, and as a community member who appreciates the excellent education available to our youth, I hope to continue to serve through the Foundation as it enhances the District’s outstanding programs and opportunities.”
Anna Mary Mueller



“I joined the ICCSD Foundation Board because it works for all students in the Iowa City Community School District. As a former school librarian, I am aware that there are many rich opportunities for our students and staff that may not be funded through the regular budgetary process. I like the idea of being a part of a group that advocates for all children in our community and also is looking to the future to expand those opportunities with a long-range plan of action.”
Barb Stein

Active Campaigns within the ICCSD

The following are current fundraising campaigns for specific projects within the ICCSD. For more information or to make a donation, please contact us.

City High Landscaping

A campaign to add landscaping to the main entry area as well as the auditorium entrance

West High Landscaping

A campaign to update the landscaping around the music and athletic entrances

Lemme Playground

A campaign to replace several pieces of playground equipment

Roosevelt Playground

A three phase campaign to purchase a SpaceNet, Rock Climber & Play System

Weber Playground

A campaign to update the current playground equipment

Wood Playground

A campaign to update playground equipment

Mann Playground

A campaign to update playground equipment

Penn Playground

A campaign to update playground equipment

Lincoln Elementary "Roaring into the Future"

A campaign to add air conditioning to the cafeteria/ gymnasium, purchase a mobile computer lab and to enhance the existing playground equipment

DPO Kate Wickham Educational Scholarship

An annual campaign organized by the District

Parents Organization to raise funds for scholarships to be given to high school seniors planning a career in education. With a suggested donation of \$50 you may honor a teacher or administrator.

West High Softball, "Rounding Third and Heading for Home"

A \$50,000 campaign to make a variety of improvements such as the addition of restrooms, running water for concessions, improved drainage system, updated scoreboard, concrete walkways and batting cages

Family Concert Series

An annual campaign to raise funds to allow the concerts to be offered at a price designed to assure that no student or family in the ICCSD is precluded from attending

Safety Requirements Lead to New Generation of Playground Structures

Space Nets, interactive play panels, climbing walls and roller slides; these are not the school yard playgrounds of swings and jungle gyms that many remember growing up. Research into safety, cognitive and physical development, play value and age appropriateness has led to vast changes in the playground equipment industry. Compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has also played a big factor in determining whether a play structure is still useful or must be removed.

As you drive around the Iowa City Community School District you'll see an ongoing shift of old, out dated and sometimes unsafe equipment giving way to brightly colored "adventure modules" in our elementary schools. District Safety Director, Bob Porter, is currently auditing all of the preschool and elementary playgrounds owned by the district. There are national guidelines he follows to determine if structures are safe for the more than 6,000 ICCSD children who race to the playground everyday for recess. More than \$20,000 is allocated annually to top off

the mulch layer on our school playgrounds. Maintaining the proper mulch depth is crucial to keep our children from becoming another playground injury statistic. About 70% of the 200,000 playground injuries that occur annually are fall related. New surfacing materials are available, but the expense of the materials and installation has been prohibitive for many schools. Constant inspection and repair of the equipment is required to avoid pinched fingers, trapped extremities, or even more serious injuries.

Although the district is committed to inspecting and maintaining all play equipment on school grounds, they are in a constant budget shortfall. There is no room in the budget to replace equipment when it is deemed unsafe or outdated. Newer and safer play structures are very expensive. Fortunately, many parent groups are stepping up to raise funds through private donations to purchase and install this equipment.

In compliance with ICCSD school board policy, all district capital campaigns of over

\$5000 are to be channeled through the ICCSD Foundation. The Foundation has been assisting parent groups to raise money and find grants to fund new playgrounds for many years. Foundation Director of Administration, Linnell Phillips, can help PTA/PTO/PSTO's set up a special project account for their playground fundraising. The Foundation office will process and acknowledge all campaign donations, provide donors with tax deductible receipts and generate account reports as needed. All contributions made through the ICCSDF are tax deductible and 100% of each donation goes to the designated fund. This same system is also available for landscaping projects, athletic fields and equipment and any other project for which a school group would like to raise funds.

Please contact the ICCSD Foundation office at 688-1012 or phillips.linnell@iccsd.k12.ia.us for more information on establishing a special project or campaign fund.

Jacki Brennan is currently ICCSD Foundation Vice President and is past chair of the Weber Playground Committee.



Parents assemble playground equipment at Weber Elementary.

Students Rewarded for Achievements with Field Trip

This June 43 junior high and high school students traveled to St. Louis for a day of fun at the Six Flags Great America theme park. The trip, made possible through a grant from the ICCSD Foundation's Excellence Fund, was designed to reward students for improved grades and behavior.

The trip, in its second year, was conceived and coordinated by Henry Harper, Juvenile Court School Liaison and At-Risk Facilitator at City High School, as a way to motivate students to be successful. Many of the students Harper works with do not have the opportunity to go on vacations other than visiting relatives, so visiting a theme park is an attractive incentive.

In order to be eligible to attend, students must meet three requirements : no unexcused absences or tardies, no behavior issues, and no failing grades.

Mr. Harper's rules are firm because he wants students to learn "if you want something, you have to work for it." For many students meeting all three requirements is a challenge, though Mr. Harper has found that students who are able to improve their attendance and behavior naturally improve their grades.

Henry Harper's philosophy is one of providing positive motivation for students, fostering self-confidence. "Once students

have success academically, that confidence feeds on itself." His goal is to keep students in school and graduating.

Students aiming to qualify for the trip often push their friends to meet the requirements as well, providing positive peer encouragement. According to Harper, the trip has made a difference in a number of students who went from meeting the requirements in the third trimester the first year of the trip to meeting the requirements in all three trimesters the second year.

The day of the trip students and chaperones boarded the charter bus at 5:00 a.m. for the drive to St. Louis, and didn't arrive back in Iowa City until about 11:30 p.m. The Foundation's Excellence Fund grant covered the cost of the charter bus, with additional funding from City High School and a donation from Dave Moran of DHS which provided funds for the purchase of tickets and spending money for meals for students who were unable to provide their own.

The trips in both 2005 and 2006 went very smoothly with no discipline problems or conflicts among students. According to Mr. Harper, as a result of this program, senior students are planning a special seniors only trip for next year with additional requirements including the requirement that students earn

their own money to cover the cost of the trip.

Below are thank you notes from several of the students.

"Thank you for your generosity and help with the Six Flags Trip of '06. This trip really motivated a lot of students, including myself. This pushed students because if everyone was trying hard that motivated their friends and other students to do the same. This was also a great help to the teachers because they had less problems out of the students." - Andrea Washington, Senior

"I am very glad that I got to go on this trip. It was a great way to have fun and hang out with other students at City High. Thank you for this opportunity." - Eryn Alexander

"Thanks for giving me the opportunity to enjoy the great wonders of Six Flags Great America. Mr. Harper motivated me to keep my grades up and attend class everyday. Working hard in every class, staying focused on important work, and perfect attendance was worth it for the trip. This great experience is an unforgettable memory, thanks again for the great opportunity." -Jeannea Williams, Senior



Jeannea Williams and Ashley Velez at Six Flags in St. Louis, MO

Students Participate in Johnson County Reads Program

As a librarian in the Iowa City Community School District, I have witnessed our district library program benefit repeatedly from the generosity of the ICCSD Foundation, primarily in terms of technology. Since the 1980s, when technology began to transform our library world, the Foundation has supported our acquisition, implementation and integration of technology. But while the Foundation has continued to be a source for technology support, it has also supported our libraries and students with books—wonderful, delightful books.

Five years ago, a community-wide reading initiative began. Johnson County Reads is our local take on the One Community, One Book model

that has been conducted in cities across the country. Our program, Johnson County Reads, is coordinated by the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights, and sponsored by local public libraries and high school libraries, various other U of I programs, and several local businesses.

Each year, a committee selects one book and encourages all community members—adult and teen—to read the book and participate in community discussions. We have enjoyed a diverse selection of titles, fiction and non-fiction, but each has shared the common element of focusing on some aspect of human rights.

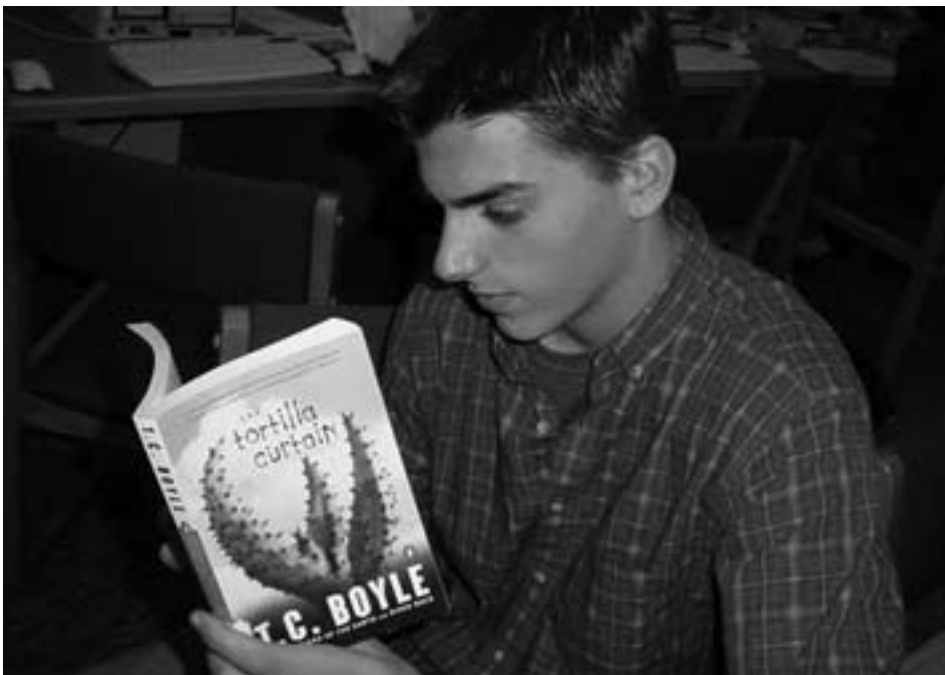
Since 2001, we have purchased multiple copies of the selected

titles and encouraged our high school students to read and participate in the program. In the past three years, the Iowa City Community School District Foundation has funded the acquisition of these books for us, enabling us to purchase even more copies.

In 2004, the Johnson County Reads book was *Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, a coming-of-age novel about a young boy in Afghanistan in the 1970s. Friendship, class distinctions, betrayal, guilt—all portrayed against the backdrop of an unstable Middle East country. Many, many students and staff from our high schools read *Kite Runner* and participated in discussions. Many of us learned more about Afghanistan from this novel than we had ever known. The title has remained on the reading lists for several of our high school courses. And many students continue to read and be moved by the compelling tale of *Kite Runner*.

In 2005, the selected book was *When the Emperor Was Divine* by Julie Otsuka. This short novel offers a haunting view of life in a Japanese internment camp from the viewpoints of members of one displaced Japanese-American family during World War Two. This book wasn't quite as widely read as some of the earlier selections, but we still had a number of high school students and staff reading and participating in our discussions.

We have been, however, thrilled with this year's selection—*Tortilla Curtain* by T. C. Boyle. Although written in 1995, Boyle's novel explores the very timely societal and political issue of illegal immigration, casting for us compelling characters who fall





on both sides of the American Dream. At West High School, we have been using this book with small groups of students in a seminar course the past few years, so we know that it works well with young adults for discussion and reflection. This year, because of the Foundation's generous funding of 120 copies of *Tortilla Curtain*, most of the 450 sophomores at West High will be reading, reflecting on and discussing the work. Sara

Pettit, a junior at West High commented that as she began the book, she "...really wanted to understand and empathize with the different characters." But she found herself questioning why they did what they did. "The issue of illegal immigration is so difficult. I really wish there were a solution."

And why does it matter that high school students participate alongside adult community members in reading and discussing these books? Because they can—and because these young adults in our high schools offer fresh and sometimes profound insights into many of the issues addressed in these books, issues in our world that matter.

We are sincerely grateful to the Foundation for its ongoing

support of students in so many ways. We are particularly appreciative of the funding it has provided us in recent years to support our students' participation in the One Community, One Book, Johnson County Reads Program.

*By Denise Rehmke
Librarian
West High School*



Team Russia Participates in Run for the Schools

Sporting t-shirts featuring the slogan, "Be Athletic" and a drawing of a Russian athlete and her child, 15 students and faculty members from the University of Iowa Russian department joined Run for the Schools. This is the seventh straight year "Team Russia" has participated in this popular Iowa City event.

Professor Margaret Mills of the University of Iowa Russian Department started Team Russia in fall 1999 because she wanted "to [...] engage UI students in an important Iowa City community-based fundraiser."

"It's great to get the faculty and students together to do something good for Iowa City," said Stephen Grant, UI

Russian instructor and graduate student.

Team Russia practices once a week in the weeks prior to the event each year, giving students and faculty a chance to get to know each other outside the classroom. "My favorite part of the run [...] is getting to know these young people outside the confines of the classroom and my office," Mills said.

Since its inception, more than 125 faculty members, teaching assistants and students of Russian have participated in Run for the Schools, each year wearing a newly designed Team Russia shirt. UI Russian Instructor Frank Swoboda said, "Whenever my Russian friends

see my 'Run for the Schools' shirt, they think it is the coolest thing."

Alyssa Levitz, wearing the Team Russia shirt, is a West High senior studying Russian at the University of Iowa.



 **ICCS**D FOUNDATION

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