

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Abilene Education Foundation represents Commitment to the future of Abilene, Texas. Commitment by all of our donors to enhance Abilene Independent School District through direct investment in AEF programs. Commitment by AEF staff to use their time and effort and creativity to make our programs work and "keep the wheels on track." Commitment by AEF C.O.O.L. college advisors to work hard to help first generation AISD graduates get into an institute of higher learning in spite of poor economic circumstances. Commitment by board members to use their time, effort and money on our programs and to make wise choices in the use of our funds to accomplish the desires of our donors and create programs with lasting positive effects for the students and teachers of Abilene Independent School District. I am extremely proud to be living in Abilene, Texas, and being a part of an organization which is truly making a difference for our students, our teachers and our future. AEF is making a positive impact in the future of our kids because of our donors, our staff, our volunteers and our board members, and I am extremely thankful for each and every one of you.

> Our third annual Cajun Fest Fundraiser will be held on April 11, 2013, at 301 Cypress from 5:00 to 8:00. Come join us to help raise money for Abilene Education Foundation. We will enjoy an evening of crawfish, music and a celebration of AISD students and programs. I hope to see all of you there.

Suddy Napier April

"ABILENE EDUCATION FOUNDATION REPRESENTS COMMITMENT TO THE

2012 Donors FUTURE OF ABILENE, TEXAS."



AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year at Abilene Education Foundation has been exhilarating, challenging, rewarding and finally, effective! Each day, it is so exciting to see firsthand the difference you and this Foundation are making in the lives of our students. I see it in the faces of the teachers who are so grateful for the funds we give them to enable creative projects or in the smiles of students as they take that first step toward college with one of our scholarships in hand. Your contributions show up in the form of classroom supplies, advising sessions with college counselors, scholarships for college and countless classrooms projects that might not ever have been possible without the work of this Foundation. It is truly a privilege and honor to lead such a fine organization and dedicated group of community volunteers.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's 2012 Annual Report. We have so much to share with you. New programs, like the Teachers in the Limelight Celebration (TLC) where we honor and showcase our finest teachers in each of our schools. They are so deserving of our praise! Other new programs include an exciting expansion of our C.O.O.L. College Advising program.

With a generous grant we have been able to double our impact and take this important initiative into all our AISD middle school and high school campuses. And lastly, we have made it easier for our teachers and administrators to access financial grants for their projects all during the year through a new program called Achievement Grants.

While we continue to expand programs, add programs and make new inroads in supporting Abilene ISD each year, we still have so much more we want to accomplish. As we encourage our students to dream big we must dream big along with them. That is why we work so hard to operate efficiently, with low overhead using a LOT of community volunteers. We need you too! I hope you will call us with your dreams for our public schools. It is a cause we can't afford to ignore.

We say THANK YOU to our board, volunteers, donors and partners for your participation with the Abilene **Education Foundation!**

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* Publication of this Annual Report has been made possible by several generous donor grants.

Provide Strength for AEF Programs & Endowment Funds

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

PASS FOR SUCCESS

AEF Pass for Success program offers the opportunity for fifth grade students from the AISD elementary schools to participate in a Football Passing Contest at the Cooper High and Abilene High home football games. The students meeting the distance goal set for the evening will win \$150 for the PE department on their campus, receive an AEF Pass For Success T-shirt, and wear a football jersey from their high school team. Students are selected by their PE coaches and are excited about making a contribution for their school as they show off their passing skills. The huge scoreboard is filled with information about AEF as the announcer introduces the students to the fans and provides information about some of the programs that AEF sponsors. What an exciting evening for AISD students!

2ND ANNUAL CAJUN FEST

In April, AEF launched its second annual Cajun Fest event in conjunction with ArtWalk (Sponsored by the Center for Contemporary Arts). With generous support from numerous businesses and individuals, AEF organized a feast of crawfish and shrimp as well as highlighting talented students of AISD. Student performances included AHS Steel Drum Band, CHS Red Rhythm and Blues, Revolution, Dyess Elementary Choir, Cougarette Dance Team, AHS and CHS cheerleaders and K-3rd grade students from all campuses participating in the coloring contest to name the Shrimp Boat. The event proved a huge success and raised \$40,000 in revenue which was used to help support the teachers and students of AISD.

STAR TEACHER GRANT PROGRAM

The STAR Teacher Grant program (Supporting Teachers with Academic Resources) provides funding to teachers for classroom and instructional projects that enrich curriculum. The grant cycle for STAR Teacher Grants opens in May and is awarded in September. The STAR Teacher Grants are funded by AISD Payroll Deduction Donation Campaign, with matching funds by Kaye Price-Hawkins/ Priceless Literacy and The Greathouse Foundation. In addition to payroll deduction contributions, Mike Dudley in honor of his wife Judy, a longtime teacher at Fannin Elementary, gave two STAR grants to two deserving teachers at the new Myra Martinez Elementary. We also received a tremendous outpouring for the Mary Ann Polnick Memorial Fund, a 35 year educator who spent 31 of those years within AISD.

Over the course of the past eight cycles of the STAR Teacher Grant program, AEF has given over \$300,000 in total grants to our deserving and hard-working teachers. Individual grants were awarded for classroom projects, field trips, school equipment, supplies, calculators, games, creative activities and many other items. This past September, 67 community volunteers read and selected 54 different grants from 101 grant applications. Over \$47,000 were awarded to 66 teachers on 17 campuses, which in turn impacts over 10,000 students, more than half of the population of AISD.

The board of the Abilene Education Foundation feels this

program provides one of the most effective avenues for teachers as they strive to meet the diversity of students in their classrooms.



YOUNG MASTERS JURIED ART EXHIBITION

The Abilene Education Foundation presents the Young Masters Juried Art Exhibition for AISD Advanced Placement Art Students. Held each year in alternating locations at either The Grace Museum or The National Center of Children's Illustrated Literature, this annual exhibition celebrates young master artists and their dedicated teachers for demonstrating excellence in artistic education with a quality museum art exhibition. The Young Masters Exhibition extends the supporting role of AEF with AISD and impacts the future of not only the students selected for the show, but all AP art students by inspiring them to reach their full potential. Additionally, it provides students affirmation that may further enhance opportunities for acceptance into premier higher education art programs.

The exhibition is judged by a professional artist of national recognition. The Best of Show, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place, three Merit winners, and Honorable Mention winners are announced each year at a reception honoring the student artists and their teachers. College scholarships totaling \$5,000 are awarded annually to the winners.

The Young Masters project is supported by a grant from the "HeArts for the Arts" program of the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council and the City of Abilene. Additional assistance is provided by AISD, Abilene Frame-N-Art Shoppe, and other generous individuals.

ALUMNI ENDOWMENTS

Alumni Scholarship Funds are endowed monies that provide scholarship opportunities for the graduating seniors of AISD. These scholarship funds are generated by donations from the alumni of the two high

schools in the district. A permanent record of donors and gifts will be maintained by AEF, who will also manage the review of scholarships. The Community Foundation of Abilene will manage the investment of the contributions to the endowment. A \$20,000 endowment has been established for each high school and new donations are added quarterly. This amazing opportunity was begun in 2008 by the AHS class of 1958 and the CHS class of 1978.

AEF SCHOLARSHIPS

For the second year Abilene Education Foundation was able to give away numerous scholarships. AEF works continuously to raise money for students to make the transition from high school to college as seamless as possible, while working to help those students avoid huge post-graduation debt. Scholarships are also established by community members in honor or memory of loved ones. Last year AEF granted over \$34,000 in scholarships to the students of AISD. Scholarships granted in 2012 include the Abilene Education Foundation Scholarships, AHS and CHS Alumni, Young Masters Juried Art Exhibition Scholarships, Johnny Ortega Jr. Memorial, Judy Trammell-Smith Memorial Art, Heroes Have always Worn Hairnets (School Nutrition Association of Abilene), Abernathy, Meta Alice Keith Bratten, Doug Thompson Memorial Art, and Choose Life Community Scholarship.

Recently, AEF also established an endowment with gifts from an anonymous donor to provide annual scholarship grants. This endowment will be named and awarded to students beginning spring 2014.

GIFT GRANT PROGRAM

GIFT (Giving to First-time Teachers) Grants help new teachers set up their classrooms at the beginning of each new school year. The average out-of-pocket cost for a new teacher is \$700. Thanks to the generous donations of several Abilene-area retired teachers and community members, AEF was able to provide grants of \$150 each

year to first-year, new-to-the-profession, AISD teachers to help offset some of their classroom expenses.

PROGRAM EXPENSES

ACHIEVEMENT GRANT \$6,000

AEF PASS FOR SUCCESS \$2,500

AEF SCHOLARSHIPS \$8.000

AHS/CHS ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIPS \$4.000

C.O.O.L. PROGRAM \$220,000

GIFT GRANT PROGRAM \$6,750

SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITE \$3.000

STAR TEACHER GRANT PROGRAM \$48.000

YOUNG MASTERS JURIED ART EXHIBIT \$15.000

* For more information about our 2012 financial information, go to our website at www.aaeeff.org to download our Audit Report and 990.



WHAT'S NEW WITH AEF?

C.O.O.L. BECOMES COOLER

In 2007-08 the Shelton Family Foundation generously funded the C.O.O.L. (College Offers Opportunities for Life) Program. Two full-time college advisors were hired (one each at Abilene and Cooper high schools) to assist students who were the first in their families to attend college as well as other students in need of financial aid, college applications, and college visits.

This year, with the help of the Dian Graves Owen Foundation, the C.O.O.L. Program has been able to expand the services offered to AISD students by hiring two additional college advisors. The main goals of the expansion program are:

- Increase the number of seniors who are the first in their families to attend college or economically disadvantaged to apply and enroll in post-secondary institutions.
- Increase awareness of underclassmen and middle school students of the college admission process through classroom presentations.
- Track, locate, and encourage past graduates in the C.O.O.L. Program who have not completed their post-secondary education to re-enroll and finish their degree.



Since inception, the C.O.O.L. Program has served over 1,200 seniors and helped them to enroll in post-secondary education. Beginning this year, a concentrated outreach at ATEMS High School (first graduating class) and Woodson Center for Excellence will be in effect. The C.O.O.L. Program also offers college tours to high school seniors at no cost, FAFSA workshops for parents and students, as well as sponsoring a College Fair which includes all area schools and recruiters from over 60 college campuses. Advisors are Will Medina, ATEMS and Woodson Center for Excellence; Amanda Hothan, Abilene High School; LaQuiera Gantt, Cooper High School; and Christine Curtis-Carr program coordinator/college advisor concentrating in community, post high school graduates, and middle school outreach.

In 2012, additional funding for this program was recieved from Citi Foundation and NACAC Imagine Fund.

TEACHERS IN THE LIMELIGHT CELEBRATION (TLC)

The Abilene Education Foundation (AEF) is proud to announce the inaugural Teachers in the Limelight Celebration (TLC) scheduled for Monday, April 29, 2013, at the Abilene Country Club.

This new-to-AEF event is made possible by a generous gift and endowment set up by Mr. Edwin Jennings, Jr., in honor of his parents, Edwin and Agnes Jennings, Sr. The awards banquet is underwritten by Mr. Randy Pool, Abilene Ice, Inc. Mr. Jennings' desire for this event is to recognize, honor, and award monetary gifts to outstanding teachers in Abilene ISD. Late in 2012, each AISD campus nominated a teacher meeting the criteria set forth by Mr. Jennings. Each of these nominees will be honored on their respective campuses, be featured in the news media, and receive a monetary award. One elementary and one secondary teacher will each be awarded an "Edwin and Agnes Jennings Teaching Excellence Award." Because of his passion for teaching math and science, Mr. Jennings also wishes to honor secondary math and secondary science teachers with an "Edwin and Agnes Jennings Teaching Excellence Award."

With the donation of 3,000 shares of ExxonMobile stock from Mr. Edwin Jennings, Jr., a permanent endowment has been established to honor teachers making a difference in the lives of students in Abilene ISD. This endowment will allow AEF to continue these awards yearly for generations to come!

AEF ACHIEVEMENT GRANT

In 2012, AEF began Achievement Grants for AISD administrators, counselors, or non-profits with programs which directly impact the achievement of AISD students. Grants are awarded quarterly in November, February, May, and August. Funds available per quarter total \$2,500 and are reviewed by a committee of the Abilene Education Foundation. The first Achievement Grants were given in November to the following:

- Woodson Center for Excellence Rewarding Achievement - \$2,000
- Abilene High School Partnerships in Learning \$1,000
- Madison Middle School Madison ROCKS \$1,000
- Taylor Elementary School The Leader in Me \$1,000
- Young Audiences of Abilene 7th graders in AISD to attend Amahl and the Night Visitors - \$1,000

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: MR. EDWIN JENNINGS, JR.



Edwin J. Jennings, Sr., (1895-1968) and Agnes May Smith (1895-1975) were married in 1919, moved to Abilene in 1920 and lived in Abilene the rest of their lives. Mr. Jennings, Sr., was a traveling salesman who spent most of his career working for the National Casket Company. Mrs. Jennings attended the Florence Normal Teacher's College in Florence, Alabama, and was a public school teacher in Florence prior to

her marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Jennings were active and well-regarded members of the Abilene community.

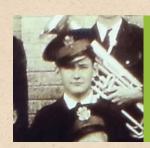
The Jennings' only child, Edwin J. Jennings, Jr., was born in Abilene in 1922. He attended Alta Vista Elementary, Central School, and graduated from Abilene High School in 1940. He was a member of the Abilene High School Boys Band, winner of the math award, and valedictorian of his class.

Edwin and Agnes Jennings always emphasized to their son the importance of studying hard and obtaining a college degree. Edwin Jr. still recalls the trip his father took him on to visit Rice Institute in

Houston while he was a senior in high school. Edwin Jr. attended the Rice Institute in Houston and enlisted in the Army Air Corps during WWII. The Army sent him to UCLA where he received a degree in Physics Meteorology. He then became an instructor in that program before being sent to the Philippines where he served until 1946.

Returning to Rice Institute after the war, he received his B.S. in Chemical Engineering in 1948 and an M.S. in Physical Chemistry in 1949. He is a natural-born teacher who tutored many of the younger Rice students in math, chemistry, and physics from 1946-49.

Those students still comment on his remarkable teaching ability. He was hired by legendary coach Jess Neely to be the head tutor for the Rice Institute football team that won the Southwest Conference championship in 1949. Mr. Jennings met Colleen Alessandra at Rice Institute in 1948 and they married in 1949. They live in Houston and have five children who have been awarded a total of nine university degrees.



EDWIN J. JENNINGS, JR., WAS A MEMBER OF THE ABILENE HIGH SCHOOL 1935 BAND.

UNIVERSE STAR

\$10,000 and Up

Anonymous Citi Foundation Dian Graves Owen Foundation Dodge Iones Foundation Edwin J. Jennings, Jr. Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation Julie & Buddy Napier Edith & Peter O'Donnell Shelton Family Foundation

GALAXY STAR

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\$1,000 - \$4,999 Shawna & Jeff Abernathy Abilene Cultural Affairs Council Abilene Teachers Federa Credit Union Suzanne & Mike Alexander Cathy & Phil Ashby * The Barber Foundation Carolyn & John Beckham Peggy & Bob Beckham Rodney Brown * Ruth & Lee Caldwell Jo & Joe Ed Canon Lisa Chavez-Owens/Owens

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of Dr. Charles Craig

Beverly and Fred Barron

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memory of Jerry Paul

Dehlinger, William

(Bill) Sides, BeeAnn

(Gilcrest) Childers

Chuck Moser, and

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Donna and Ted Smothers

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Stowell Dana Ogle

Ruth Ann Wheeler

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Reunion Acct

Nita and Steve Slaton

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Class of 1959

Class of 1960

Class of 1993

Anonymous **

Class of 1995

Class of 1996

Class of 2001

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Jennifer Jordan **

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Sue and Charles White

of Ann Slaton Blackley

Voncille Norris

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Dehlinger

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Cook

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Class of 1969

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Class of 1978

Jane Anne Batier Cathy Bedford Janet Estes Garrison Shelly & James Hughes Melody Martin Robin and Robert Rice Rose Roberts

Class of 1979

HS Class of 1979 Reunion

* Denotes donations also made through Payroll Deduction Campaign

Bracken & Joanna

Kolle - In memory of

Dr. Charles Craig

Mary Ann Polnick was a lifetime educator teaching her first three years in Lutheran parochial school, one year with Lubbock ISD, and 31 years in the Abilene Independent School District. She was married to Dr. David Polnick for 38 years and both of their children, Benjie and Julie, graduated from AISD. Mary Ann passed

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

PROVIDE STRENGTH FOR AEF PROGRAMS

My wife, Mary Ann Polnick, believed in Faith, Family, and Friends and AEF

away on February 3, 2012.

is an organization that fosters these three concepts by supporting the teachers and children of AISD. Mary Ann believed with her whole heart that every child can learn and everyone in AISD, from a teacher aide, bus driver, cafeteria worker, teacher, principal, and even the superintendent should never forget that we are here for the children. Her passion for faith, family, and friends along with her love for education was very evident.

In the 1990's, Phil Morehead, a former AISD school board member and a local attorney, had an idea that AISD should have its own foundation. He presented his ideas to the administration and the School Board and planted the seed for the formation of our foundation.

When I became superintendent in 2003, school finance was a major issue. The distribution of funds was not equitable and AISD was at the bottom of funding with no way to increase revenue. Although AEF had only been in existence for a couple of years, their potential for financial assistance to AISD was very evident and it was obvious to me that the foundation needed to grow. The Abilene Education Foundation was a ray of sunshine in our dreary state funding system. One of their first projects was teacher grants and AEF was on

When Mary Ann became ill and I was thinking of ways to honor her life as an educator, memorials to AEF for teacher grants was a nobrainer. I want to say a special thank you to the friends and co-workers of Mary Ann who gave in excess of \$10,000 to honor her life.

I encourage everyone to consider memorials to AEF as a way to honor a loved one who has departed this earth. What a wonderful way to honor the life of anyone who has been involved with the children of AISD. After our Faith, our children are our most valuable resource.



Dr. David Polnick was an educator for 38 years with 32 years in AISD. With AISD, he was a teacher, principal, central office administrator, and his last seven years was the Superintendent of AISD. The Board of AEF honored him by making him their first board member emeritus.

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

In 2005, Julia Jones Matthews established an endowment benefiting Abilene Education Foundation at Community Foundation of Abilene. The corpus of that endowment is owned and managed by Community Foundation. Interest earned helps with AEF's operational expenses. JJM: \$519,138

Abilene Education Foundation has established a second endowment fund also managed by the Community Foundation of Abilene. This endowment, initially established with generous contributions from Lee and Ruth Caldwell, continues to grow and support AEF programs. AEF Endowment: \$37,699

In 2009, former Abilene High School and Cooper High School alumni helped to establish the groundwork for two additional endowments to provide scholarships for AHS and CHS graduates. Abilene Education Foundation is working with alumni and AEF

donors to grow these endowments so that scholarships can be awarded every year to Cooper and Abilene High graduates. AHS Alumni Endowment: \$24,631 and CHS Alumni Endowment: \$23,914

A new AEF endowment with gifts from an anonymous donor to provide annual scholarship grants has been established. AEF Unnamed Endowment: \$26,764

With the donation of 3,000 shares of ExxonMobile stock from Mr. Edwin Jennings, Jr., a permanent endowment held at the Community Foundation of Abilene has been established to honor teachers making a difference in the lives of students in Abilene ISD. This endowment will allow AEF to continue these awards yearly for generations to come as part of TLC - Teacher in Limelight Celebration. TLC: \$289,958

^{**} Denotes 2012 donations for Alumni Scholarships

