

## **24 Innovative Teaching Grants Totaling \$10,000 to Be Made to Delta County, Colorado, Teachers by Arch Coal Foundation**

October 28, 2008 12:00 AM ET

SOMERSET, Colo. (Oct. 28, 2008) - Twenty four teaching projects suggested by Delta County teachers and teaching specialists have been selected to receive 2008 Arch Coal Foundation innovative teaching grants.

Announcement of the \$10,000 in grants was made by Pete Wyckoff, general manager of Mountain Coal Company's West Elk mine in Somerset.

"This is the second year for these unique grants," said Wyckoff. "Our program challenges the county's educators to use their experience, skills and imagination to create new teaching models that aid learning in their classrooms."

The Arch Coal Foundation received 59 applications for this year's grants, almost double the number from the program's first year. If all the grants are utilized as anticipated, more than 2,500 students will be impacted by the teachers' innovative ideas this school year.

This number includes some students who will be exposed to more than one innovative teaching idea. Because the program also asks that the program be replicable, successful ideas will continue to be used, as well as shared with other teachers, so that thousands more students will benefit from the ideas for years to come, according to Wyckoff.

"We were very pleased with the outstanding growth of this program," said Wyckoff. "It made it increasingly difficult for our judging panel of educators, citizens and company personnel to select these innovative ideas from the many excellent applications."

The 2008 recipients, their schools and their grants are:

- Maureen Ayers, Hotchkiss K-8 School. Experiential Life Skills Instruction: This program is designed to prepare special needs children to become independent, productive adults through explicit life-skills instruction, interactive games and real-life experiences.
- Lenore Cambria, Hotchkiss K-8 School. Radio Broadcasting: This program's goal is to introduce students to radio broadcasting through theater, history and real-life situations of the day.
- Tara Cox, Paonia Elementary School. Science Thinking Outside the Book: Taking science out of the textbook and into the hands of students and emphasizing the importance of working in a group are the goals of this project.
- Hailey S. Eck and Daniel P. Renfrow, Delta Middle School. My Book for President: A Student Campaign: This program is designed to take "Literacy Circles" to a new level, one in which students actively encourage classmates that their book is the best book in the class.
- Brandy Girard, Delta Middle School. Read, Listen and Learn: The goal of this project is to help below grade reading students develop larger vocabularies and comprehension by experiencing books through the use of audio equipment at the same time they view the literature.
- Mary Groome, Paonia Junior-Senior High School. Using a Document Camera to Enhance and Share Writing: This project seeks to enhance the entire class of students' writing skills, in addition to sparking interest in individuals and classmates' writing by sharing, analyzing and communicating.
- Linda Hodges, Hotchkiss K-8 School. An Evening Under the Stars: This project seeks to provide a home-to-school connection by encouraging students and their families to explore the night sky.
- Richard Hypio, Hotchkiss High School. Physics, Math and Technology - Using Calculator-based Laboratories: This project is designed to provide advanced physics students opportunities to work with up-to-date equipment and programs in a hands-on process for math that will increase their understanding of physics and math concepts.

- Brad Kahrs, Delta Middle School. Technology in Math Class: This program is designed to test the teaching of math using new technologies.
- Debra L. Lange, Paonia Elementary School. The Wonders of Weather: This grant's idea is to provide fourth graders with a hands-on approach to learning about the weather and water cycles.
- Zac Lemon, Hotchkiss High School. Winter Ecology: This project's goal is to build awareness of life in harsh winter conditions and to teach winter survival.
- Jennifer Magner, Delta Middle School. Birds of a Feather: This science teacher will partner with colleague Dan Dunham's technology class, which will build a mobile aviary. The aviary will allow the display of various birds that Magner's class will study, including the birds' life cycles, embryology and genetics.
- Ryan McCay and Julie Mottern, Delta Middle School. Wii Fitness: This project will be designed to motivate and engage students, especially those who are reluctant participants in physical fitness, by use of popular technology. It also will introduce the same students to key concepts in physical education.
- Alicia Michelsen, Lamborn Vision School. Plants As Food and Medicine: This program will be designed to help students identify and use plants for cooking and how plants can be utilized for remedies in a medicinal sense.
- Julie Mottern and Chuck Sidor, Delta Middle School. Orienteering As a Life Skill: The teachers will design a program to develop student interest in orienteering and map reading skills and to help students develop self-confidence through successful decision making.
- Karla Nolte, Hotchkiss K-8 School. Bare Books for Young Authors: This program promotes writing excellence by giving students a venue in which to publish their finest work.
- Rhonda E. Pinckard, Hotchkiss K-8 School. Summer Book Sets: This program reflects improvements designed by Pinckard over her first year grant - an effort to improve or maintain student's reading ability over the summer.
- Kelly Rienks, Paonia Elementary School. Ready, Set, Strategize: This program's design will help students practice and master strategic thinking and mathematical reasoning.
- Janet Rogers, Crawford School. Scientific Method Through Germs for Primary Students: This program's design will provide first grade students an understanding of scientific methods and will increase their abilities to present their learning to others.
- Nancy Rowe, Garnet Mesa Elementary School. Civil War Highlights: Students will write, read and perform a skit about the Civil War.
- Tricia Shriver, Cedaredge Elementary School. Connecting Literature and Cultures Through Cooking: The project's goal is to have students connect to their classroom studies by using cooking to enhance understanding.
- William Thompson, Delta Middle School. Eighth Grade Science Students Go to C.B.I.: This grant will expose students to the use of science (genetics) by professionals in the real world and to conduct some of the same tests in a school setting.
- Amy Wright, Crawford School. Music and Reading/Discovering the Link: This project is designed to improve reading comprehension by integrating reading and music.
- Sheryl Yeager and Renee' Tracyzk, Delta Middle School. Reading Champs: Designed to target and provide books of high interest to young, male readers, this program's goal is to improve reading skills and to develop a love of reading.

Key components of the grants program are that the teachers must demonstrate "innovation" in their ideas and that the program must be "replicable," according to Wyckoff.

Arch Coal, Inc. is one of the nation's largest coal producers. The company's core business is providing U.S. power generators with clean-burning, low-sulfur coal for electric generation. Through its national network of mines, Arch Coal supplies the fuel for approximately 6 percent of the electricity generated in the United States. The company is listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: ACI) and maintains its corporate headquarters in St. Louis, Mo. Mountain Coal Company's West Elk Mine is located in Somerset, Colo. Nearly 450 people are employed at West Elk.