



Press Release

For Immediate Release:
May 10, 2011

East Lansing Educational Foundation and Summit Community Bank Partner with East Lansing's Pinecrest School for Reading Month

East Lansing, MI – March was Reading Month, an annual nationwide push to get students reading. In East Lansing, one leading business partnered with a local elementary school to offer an incentive no child can resist: pizza. Mrs. Sharon Viol's 4th grade students collectively read for a school-high 1400 hours during the month and won a pizza party, sponsored by Summit Community Bank.

The partnership is the first in a new program being developed by the East Lansing Educational Foundation to ally local business with local schools. "The quality of education in East Lansing is a front-burner issue for all of us," explains Jane Bitsicas, co-president of the ELEF board. "We have many community-oriented local businesses, many of them owned by our own East Lansing High School graduates. Business leaders are ready to help and ELEF is building a bridge."

The alliance is called "Business Partners for Education" and John Abbott, President and CEO of Summit Community Bank (SCB), is the honorary chairman.

"As a locally owned and managed community bank, we are proud to support our local public schools," commented Abbott. "We believe it's important to give back to the community that supports us. The East Lansing Education Foundation and the East Lansing Public Schools are truly a solid part of this community."

In addition to the pizza party, employees from SCB were guest readers in Pinecrest classrooms. "We want to be known as the local community bank," Abbott continues. "We are in the Pinecrest neighborhood and take great pride in teaching children about financial literacy. We take our community involvement seriously."

Business Partners for Education Campaign is set to launch this fall, with Summit Community Bank; Grua, Jamo & Young; East Lansing Basketball Club, and Musselman Realty onboard as leading partners.

For information about the *Business Partners for Education* Campaign, call ELEF's Dorsey Gude at 517-333-7413 or gude_dw@elps.us

The East Lansing Educational Foundation, founded in 1984, is a community-based nonprofit organization that raises and distributes private funds to improve public education for all East Lansing students.