



Press Release

**For immediate release
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East Lansing Educational Foundation Awards \$10, 015 in Grants to Teachers

East Lansing, MI – The East Lansing Educational Foundation recently awarded \$10, 015 to East Lansing Public School teachers through its Grants for Teachers Program. ELEF board members formed ‘prize patrols’ to surprise teachers in their classrooms with balloons and award letters, and students and principals applauded.

The 33 teachers who won awards in ELEF’s competitive grant process will use their funds to purchase: books for grade level reading, science and art; music scores; math resources; reading software licenses; document cameras; MP3 players for English Language Learners; and Life Skills materials for Special Education. One of the more unusual grants awarded was to Susan Cogan, MacDonald Middle School’s speech pathologist. She will use \$450 to buy Livescribe Smartpens for her hearing impaired students.

Jane Bitsicas, co-president of the Foundation, said, “Everyday we read about cuts to funding for education. As a result, ELEF isn’t funding so-called extras anymore; 11 of 17 grants to elementary schools this cycle were for reading materials. Reading, music and math are just not options we can let slide.”

Bitsicas reports that the Foundation’s 2010 annual giving drive was up slightly over 2009. “District leaders are doing good work balancing budgets in lean times,” says Bitsicas. “But they can’t do it alone anymore; tax dollars just won’t cover true costs. Private donations – through non-profit foundations like ELEF – are a way private citizens can make a direct difference.”

ELEF has granted over \$225,000 to district teachers in the last ten years. Besides the annual giving drive, funding for these grants is raised at the annual awards dinner – scheduled this year for May 12 at Eagle Eye Golf and Athletic Center. For more information on the awards dinner or to make a donation towards these grants online, go to: www.eastlansingedfoundation.org

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