

Annual Summary
Excellence In Education
July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

The Excellence in Education committee closed out its sixth year of connecting the community and the school through financial donations, volunteer opportunities and adopting class and program needs. Each year the committee has exceeded our prior year's fundraising proceeds and volunteer hours, helping to provide more opportunities and unmet needs for the students at Custer County Schools. Community recognition of Excellence in Education is increasing, bridging the gap between the school and the many talented and generous citizens of this great valley.

The volunteer program "VOICE" logged over 1000 hours of hands on efforts by community volunteers directly contributing to the successes of students; helping mentor, read, assist teachers, and much more. Not all the intangible benefits of this one on one community/student involvement are measurable, but growth in aptitudes, confidence and attitudes is undeniable. The program's success lies in the careful coordination of matching the right volunteer with each situation. Excellence in Education funds this part-time coordinator's salary. The scope of work for the VOICE position has increased in the last two years with the new Adopt a Class program.

The Adopt a Class program continues to meet many classroom and program needs at the school. Last year funds were donated to purchase microscopes, field trips and help with a projector project for many classrooms. Many of the citizens who donate to Adopt a Class enjoy knowing what specific project they helped. Excellence in Education processes the donations, invoices and reimbursements to the school, with the direct help of the Voice Coordinator. This additional work scope for the coordinator has prompted the committee to ask the school to redefine the job description for the position and possibly provided additional funding for the position from Ex in Ed or through Adopt a Class. This summer's activities, which will reflect in next year's budget, Walter Van Woudenberg reached out to the community for large donations to establish a new IT program for the high school including new computers, furniture to revamp a class room and the necessary accessories to get the program of the ground.

The Got-It program continues to be our heart warmer. Another six seniors graduated on time through technology this past May. That brings our total six year count to 32. Each year Custer County enrolls many students that have been disenfranchised in other districts and is able to get them back on track to a brighter future, in addition to helping other students that have fallen behind from prolong illness or family situations. The administration is reviewing this year requirements into the program to ensure true recovery eligibility, not teacher avoidance issues.

Additional projects that Ex in Ed was able to help with included; new geometry math books for the 9th grade, help with the projector project and several teacher conferences for professional development. We hope to continue to expand our fundraising efforts and grant opportunities this coming school year to again help where needed.

Excellence in Education's two big fundraisers continues to grow. Our spirit campaign last November was our best ever with proceeds reaching \$9,600. And our Spring Dinner Celebration netted \$6,200 at a very fun filled event. We received a generous \$3,000 distribution from the regional director of the El Pomar Foundation, Jim Little, individual donations totaled \$2,500 and rounding out our funding was a small grant received from Sangre De Cristo Electric for \$1,000. Overall the committee raised \$32,000 to contribute to the success of Custer County Schools. Excellence in Education accounted for just over \$22,000 with Adopt a class proceeds at 10,000. A summary budget is attached.

Grant writing will be a focus this coming year. Our current ratio of funding is 80 percent community and 20 percent outside sources. We would like to return to a higher percentage of grant proceeds. We have been declined on several grant applications by various foundations the last few years. Feedback from on our applications has been very positive, the needs have just been many and their applicant list long.

Finally, we are having a change over on membership. Several committee members will be leaving this fall, Sarah Woods among them, one of the schools' and ours' strongest advocates. We thank her for the many hours she has worked to make this adventure a success. We have some strong new recruits and are ready for another successful year.

We would like to thank the Wet Mountain Valley Community Foundation for their continued support of this committee and its mission.

Sincerely
Lori Short
Chair