

2009 - 2010
Annual Report



*Paving the Way for
Better Education*

Letter from the Executive Director...

Susan Copeland



I moved from the classroom twelve years ago to work for the Polk Education Foundation and I left behind a very rewarding career as a teacher. But working with the community to achieve goals to support education surpasses anything I could have imagined as a teacher. Donors feel good about helping a cause, providing a service or sponsoring an event, and

in turn, students and teachers benefit. What an honor it is for the Polk Education Foundation to serve our community in this capacity, and my sincere thanks to all that make our work possible!

When speaking about the work of the Polk Education Foundation, many remark to me they did not realize all that we do. Although we are well known for our scholarship program, we provide many other programs and services. It is my hope that when you read this annual report, it gives you a more thorough understanding of the scope of our work, and perhaps motivates you as a supporter in one area, to add another. And if you have never worked with us before, I feel certain we can find an area of support that touches your heart and will make you feel good about the assistance you provide.

Sincerely,



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What is the Polk Education Foundation?

The PEF was created in 1988 as a 501 (c)(3) direct-support organization for the Polk County School Board. The Foundation acts as the fiscal agent and manager of many educational programs benefiting Polk County Public Schools. The PEF serves to enhance educational programs for students with private and corporate funds. Led by a volunteer Board of Directors made up of community, educational and business leaders, the Foundation has raised and spent over 27 million dollars.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Polk Education Foundation is to establish a proactive partnership between the community and the public school system to link community resources with the educational needs of its students through reading and mentoring programs, scholarships, school grants and other educational endeavors.

Take Stock in Children



This past school year the *Take Stock in Children* program had the honor of serving 130 students throughout the year. The students have received a scholarship for two or four years of tuition after they graduate high school. Most of the students were selected in either the ninth or tenth grade and are monitored for



LaShayla Mosely,
recent recipient

grades, attendance and behavior while participating in the program. Each student is matched with a volunteer mentor from the education or business community, who works with them in preparation for college or technical school. Mentors volunteered almost 2,500 hours while meeting and encouraging their students at various schools. Thirty of the students in the program are physically challenged and the program served 19 high schools and two middle schools. Each year,

rising 9th graders are selected to replace the students who graduate from the program. For more information regarding the opportunity to apply for a scholarship, apply to be a mentor or to be an event sponsor, please go to www.polkeeducationfoundation.org/tsic



Aaron Bledsoe, recent graduate

Take Stock in Children unveiled a new logo in June at the annual State conference. Mr. Stanley Tate, founder of the Florida Prepaid Scholarship program, was the main speaker. Two employees from Polk County, Susan Copeland, Foundation Director and Teresa Choquette, Student Advocate were recognized for 15 years of service with the *Take Stock in Children* program.

Scholarships

PEF Awards over \$594,000 in Scholarships

Scholarships awarded through the PEF are made possible through sponsorships from businesses and individuals from our community and from Polk Education Foundation funds. Donors are able to work with the PEF to design criteria to offer a scholarship that fits their wants and needs.

The PEF is not only the fiscal agent, but also administers the entire process from application submission, judging, awarding, and sending scholarship funds to college and universities.

328 scholarships were awarded by the Polk Education Foundation this year totaling \$ 594,000. Scholarship information for the 2011 year will be available in February on the PEF website.



President Round Table Scholarship Awards

(l to r): Recipient Jarvis Wiley, Susan Copeland, PEF Executive Dir., recipients Alejandro Bustos, Magdalene Dupree and Andrea White.



North Lakeland Kiwanis Scholarship Awards

(l to r): Recipients Ashley Day and Deanna Urban (Lake Gibson High School), Dan Powell, President North Lakeland Kiwanis, and recipients Hannah McClellan and Chelsea Wilson (Kathleen High School)

Grant Programs

Through various programs and sponsors, the Polk Education Foundation awarded just over \$110,000 in grants last year to individual classroom teachers and to schools. The largest

of these programs were the School District Matching Grants, Energy Education Grants from Progress Energy and AT&T Succeed Grants.



Executive Director Susan Copeland (left) and Jerry Miller, Progress Energy Community Affairs Manager (right) present Babson Park teacher Kristy May and Principal Ken Henson, with a check for science innovation.

The School District Matching Grant program was funded with \$25,000 from the Florida Legislature. Through this program designed by the PEF, schools were invited to leverage these dollars to raise private funds to be matched dollar for dollar, to support literacy or low performing students. \$35,000 in Energy Education Grants sponsored by Progress Energy allowed schools in the Progress Energy service area to apply for funds to enhance their energy education curriculum. And the Succeed Grants funded by AT&T disbursed \$25,000 to selected local high schools to help students prepare for college through tutoring, college placement classes and test preparation.

Thank You to all PCSB employees who gave...
\$4,413 was raised.

Just One for the Kids First Annual Payroll Deduction Drive!

Thank you to all employees who gave to the Polk Education Foundation's Just One for the Kids payroll deduction drive! \$4,413.00 was raised in this first time campaign. We appreciate the support of our school district employees who make the PEF part of their philanthropic giving!



Superintendent's Partnership Awards

The Polk Education Foundation partnered with the PCSB Community Relations and Workforce Education departments to host the annual Superintendent's Partnership Awards. Each school in the county as well as all district office divisions were invited to nominate a partner they felt made an outstanding contribution of time, talent, money or a combination of all, to the success of their site last school year. 52 partners were honored at this program with finalists and a top winner in the elementary, secondary and district office being named. Our thanks to PSC in Winter Haven for allowing us the use of their Fine Arts Auditorium and to all the schools and divisions who participated. Your desire to recognize those who help you succeed is the driving force behind this program. Our congratulations to the 2009 finalists and winners:

Elementary Division Finalists

- Elementary Partner of the Year: Clear Springs CEMEX
- First Presbyterian Church of Haines City

Secondary Division Finalists

- Secondary Partner of the Year: Lakeland Electric
- Lake Wales Arts Council
- College Board

District Office Division Finalists

- District Office Partner of the Year: United Way of Central Florida
- Polk County Tax Collector's Office
- Bright House Networks

Also recognized were the Commissioner of Education's Business Recognition Award winners. Two organizations from Polk County are nominated each year for this award, usually given in person by the Commissioner of Education. Due to budget cuts last year, that program was cancelled, but we always take the opportunity to recognize these winners locally at this program. Our congratulations to:

Commissioner of Education's Business Recognition Awards

- TECO Energy
- Citrus Center Kiwanis Club



Cindy Price of TECO as she receives her award from Dr. McKinzie



Superintendent Dr. Gail McKinzie with the District Office category winners from the United Way, Terry Worthington and Penny Borgia. School Board member Lori Cunningham stands at right.



Superintendent Dr. Gail McKinzie with Kathryn Koch-O'Malley and Eric Hines of the Citrus Center Kiwanis Club

All of the finalists and winners pictured with the Superintendent and other school board members



Polk State College...

...honors Polk Education Foundation Contributions

PSC recognized the PEF for donations totaling \$300,000 made over the last few years. Funds were designated for scholarships for selected students to attend PSC.

l to r: Susan Copeland, PEF Exec. Dir., Amanda Sikes, 2010 Lake Wales HS graduate and PEF scholarship recipient now attending PSC, Lou Ann Antonelli, PEF staff.



Star School Board Member

Tim Harris wins 2009 - 2010 Star School Board Member Award

For the last three years, through a program administered by the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations, local education foundations were invited to nominate a school board member who they felt had a large impact on their organization. The Polk Education Foundation nominated Tim Harris for his many years of support. Mr. Harris was instrumental in the PEF obtaining the building they are now housed in, provides funds for scholarships and has served on the PEF Board. He is also part of the MIDFLORIDA Credit Union Board that provides Platinum Sponsorship (and exciting gifts like the 2010 Chevy Camaro!) to the Teacher of the Year program. The PEF congratulates and thanks Mr. Harris for his continued support!



Stepping Out for Education

Stepping Out for Education dance event raises \$36,000 for PEF!

The first annual *Stepping Out for Education* event was held on Friday, June 18, at the Lakeland Yacht and Country Club. Over 250 guests watched as local "celebrity" dancers, leaders in the Polk County community, strutted their stuff ballroom-style. For ten weeks the dancers took professional dance lessons from Lakeland Ballroom, and then performed at the event with their professional dance partner.

Jerry Miller from Progress Energy took first place in the competition with his professional partner Vicki Seaton. They performed the Tango and the Swing. Bonnie Parker from SunTrust Bank and her professional partner, Todd Staley took second place, performing the Tango and the Salsa. Dr. Gail McKinzie, Superintendent of Polk County Schools, placed third. She and professional dance partner, Gene Kallenborn, performed the Quick Step and the Jitterbug. Tracy Porter, Executive Director of Polk State College Foundation, and professional dance partner Bill Bryant performed the Waltz and the Cha Cha. Tim Harris, MIDFLORIDA Credit Union and PCSB Board member, and his dance partner Ariel Trazaskos danced the Tango



Jerry Miller, First Place winner, showed his rhythm during the Swing, along with Vicki Seaton, partner.

and the Rumba. Ariel, a trained dancer from Lakeland Ballroom, is a 2010 graduate of Lakeland High School and received a scholarship from the Polk Education Foundation this year. Bonnie Parker also took home the Audience Favorite Vote (voted on by audience after seeing both rounds of dance that night) and the People's Choice Award (for raising the most \$1 votes done online a month prior to the event and added to cash votes taken that night). 5th Grade students from Highlands Grove Elementary who trained in ballroom dance last school year wowed the audience with their performance prior to intermission.

The PEF thanks Debbie Boatright and Lakeland Ballroom, along with the professional partners.

A special *Thank You* to our event sponsors:

- Gold: TECO
- Silver: MIDFLORIDA Credit Union
- Bronze: ASC Geocities, Barney and Carol J. Barnett Fund within the Community Foundation of Greater Lakeland, Citizens Bank, Dr. and Mrs. David Misch, Polk State College, SunTrust Bank.
- Costume: Morgan Stanley Smith Barney - The Scheck Group.

Thanks, also, to those who attended this first annual event and participated in the People's Choice cash voting.

Thank you to all 2009-2010 Sponsors, Donors and Supporters!

Thank You, Super Lube



Thank You, Florida's Natural



Thank You, Wachovia



Thank You, Horace Mann



Thank You, Belk Foundation



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*Paving the Way for
Better Education*

Teacher Appreciation Week!

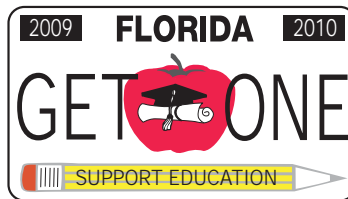
110 Teachers Win Gifts during *Teacher Appreciation Week!*

The PEF created a program for *Teacher Appreciation Week* by which all teachers had the opportunity to enter into a prize drawing. Each day during *Teacher Appreciation Week*, winners were selected from the teachers who had entered and multiple prizes were awarded each day.

Thank you to our prize donors who made this program possible and congratulations to the winners! The Polk Education Foundation appreciates the work Polk County Teachers do! *Teacher Appreciation Week* 2011 is May 2 - 6. Will you be a donor? Please contact us.



License for Learning



\$20 from the purchase of each *License for Learning* tag is returned to the Polk Education Foundation.
Support Education... Get One!

Introducing... **Free Teacher Market**

Do you have supplies / materials that you don't need anymore? Don't send them to the landfill! These supplies / materials are valuable resources for Polk County teachers and can be used as teaching tools in our schools.

All donated items will be given away free to our public school educators!

Check our website for additional information:
www.polkeducationfoundation.org/market

Staff Offers



. Banking Perks . Athletic Events . Ann
nent . Theme Parks . Vacations . Movie
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The Polk Education Foundation can help local businesses advertise their goods and services to over 12,000 PCSB district employees!

With a nominal fee paid every month, your business or organization has the opportunity to post information regarding special deals, discounts or services on the "staff offers" page of the PEF website:

www.polkeducationfoundation.org

Contact the PEF office if you're interested in this monthly advertising campaign to provide special discounts to teachers and other PCSB staff.