

This is a printer friendly version of an article from **chronicle-tribune.com**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Article published Feb 12, 2005

Grants lend to new teaching methods

Teachers able to bring digital photography, Asian painting into classes

BY JONATHAN BETHELY
bethely@marion.gannett.com

If you're interested in what's going on at Southeast Elementary School, you might not have to wait around for local media outlets to report news about school activities.

A new photographer and reporter's club for fifth-grade male students provides an opportunity for students to document activities in the school. So far six students are in the club, and they are learning how to take pictures with a new digital camera.

"We're trying to come up with ways to get the boys excited about writing," said Dana Bower, Southeast Elementary Title One coordinator. "We've only been meeting for a few weeks. Hopefully by March we'll have something for the newsletter."

Bower was able to purchase equipment and supplies for the reporter's club with money she received from a Kids in Need grant, which is sponsored by the School, Home and Office Products Association (SHOPA). A total of three Marion Community Schools teachers, including Bower, received grant money from SHOPA totaling \$1,500.

Local teachers are eligible because of support the foundation receives from the Marion School Employees Federal Credit Union.

Dick Kibbey, President and CEO of the credit union, delivered the checks and offered congratulations to each grant recipient. "The Kids In Need teacher grants fund innovative classroom projects for which no other funding is available. Because of lack of funds, these projects are often paid for by teachers themselves," said Dick. "The Kids In Need grants are meant to alleviate that burden on teachers."

Marion High School art teacher Jan McCune received a grant to purchase supplies that will enable students to learn an Asian fabric painting process called batik. McCune said the process has roots in Thailand, but has been used in Africa as well.

"This is something that I've always wanted to do, but I couldn't afford the supplies," McCune said. "It gets boring if you do the same thing every year."

In the coming weeks, students will learn to draw on specialty fabrics using hot wax. The fabrics are then died in various colors depending on the artist's preference.

"Most of these kids are not world travelers," she said. "The more we open them up to the world the better."

At McCulloch Middle School, physical education teacher Sue Sonnefield is hoping to get her students interested in monitoring their health, or heart, to be more specific. Sonnefield used the grant money she won to purchase heart monitors that seventh- and eighth-grade students will use to check their heart rates during physical exercise.

"I'm going to do a lesson on what their target heart range is," she said.

Students will wear the heart monitors while performing activities required under state statutes. Sonnefield said if the students don't achieve their desired heart rate, she may consider modifying some physical education

activities so that children can benefit from the activities.

Grant-winning teachers competed with teachers from across the country for an opportunity to make their project come alive in the classroom.

At the completion of the funded project, lesson plans from each teacher will appear in the SHOPA Foundation's *Best Practices Guide*, a compilation of the grant winning projects. The *Best Practices Guide* is available on the Kids In Need Web site, www.kidsinneed.net.
