

Arts Reach

Giving grants is sometimes called “watering the seeds”. Teachers come up with great ideas and the boosters water the “seeds” with grants. Good ideas need to be watered. It is fun to see what grows.

Since 2001, the booster group has been awarding mini-grants of relatively modest sizes from \$75 to \$500. Grantees submit final reports on the grant results. The mini-grant investment is often paid back tenfold. Teachers are expert at fully utilizing resources.

One project funded in 2012, the Memory Project, reached all the way to Ecuador. Ithaca High School Students, under the guidance of art teacher Carol Spence, participated in an exchange with students in Ecuador. The Ecuadorian children, all orphans with few possessions, were partnered with Ithaca High School Grade 10-12 art students. Working from photographs, the Ithaca students created portraits of the children. Each child received the art work and a letter, beginning the exchange between Ithacan and Ecuadorian.

Portrait work has always been a part of the ICSD art curriculum. Creating portraits, as memory and in an exchange, helps ICSD students understand that art can be a powerful tool for transformation, connection and social change. Carol Spence states, “It was an emotional and beautiful project... Art can make a difference!”

This small grant had an international impact. The power of a portrait transcended language and country. The power of Ithaca High School student’s brushes and colored paint transcended the technology of a photograph. Arts do have reach.

Follow this link to view the children with their portraits.

<http://www.memoryproject.org/Ecuador-CarolSpence.zip>



Spence