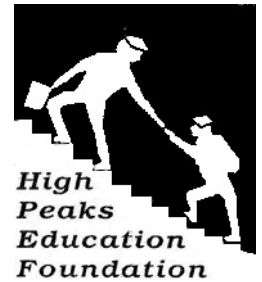


# High Peaks Education Foundation

## Autumn 2010 Newsletter

HPEF's mission is to ensure the long-term survival and health of Keene Central School.  
This newsletter is our progress report to the community.



HPEF is run by a volunteer board of trustees, with both full and seasonal residents. Sam Fisk is president. Cynthia Johnston, KCS Superintendent, and Board of Education member Matt Donahue are non-voting members. Funding for our work comes from charitable (and tax deductible) gifts from community members who understand the importance of a vibrant school to our town and our continuing responsibility to invest in the education of the next generation. Donations can be sent to HPEF, PO Box 475, Keene Valley, NY 12943.

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## Keene Kids Eat Their Vegetables!!!

No really, they do. They are eating their very own school-grown greens, beans, tomatoes...and someday soon apples, thanks to a \$5000 grant from HPEF, the dedication of KCS cafeteria staff and volunteers, as well as donations from the KV Congregational Church and Flowering Meadow nursery. With these funds our students are now learning to grow vegetables and fruit trees from the ground up.

The hexagonal "biodome" (it's more than a greenhouse) located next to the elementary classrooms is not only a cozy home for seedlings, it is also a place for lessons on sustainable farming in the North Country. The dome will function as a hot house for thought too as it will host science experiments and demonstrations with growing things.

Students can see first hand how light, humidity and heat storage can be manipulated to extend the growing season and provide fresh local produce well into the fall. When spring fever rolls around, it won't be boxed up indoors. Instead, it will have a healthy new outlet as our students get knuckle-deep in potting soil and seed beds.

To complete this biodome, a salmon tank will move from the limited space of the indoor biology lab to the greenhouse dome where it will serve as a heat sink and passive solar collector, helping to regulate the temperature and humidity. This aquaculture tank will also

provide an opportunity for all ages to view salmon eggs morphing into fry, fingerlings, fish!

Thanks to Cafeteria Manager and Garden Goddess Julie Holbrook (shown below with the biodome and school garden), KCS students and faculty eat foods as fresh as nature intended. She has brought such wonders to KCS as home grown salads, fresh baked bread and all in-house made entrees cooked up without any processed food. The cafeteria uses no hydrogenated oils, corn syrup sweeteners, nutrient-poor substitutes, or other artificial additives that have been implicated in a host of health and weight problems. There has been so much demand for Julie's fresh bread that HPEF granted the kitchen staff funds for a commercial bread-slicer so they can save time on making sandwiches.

The amazing cooks in KCS's cafeteria are supplementing what can be grown at school with "food shares" of organically grown crops purchased from Essex Farm, a local food cooperative, thus helping the local farm economy. They provide us with economical and healthy produce, and, when their seasonal harvest is particularly bountiful, KCS is given free extras like corn, tomatoes and squash to process and store for winter dishes that are warm with colorful and antioxidant-rich veggies. Thanks to our donors, KCS is growing healthy bodies and minds with projects that just keep giving like the greenhouse biodome and KCS garden.



	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Auditorium Design and Lighting	\$7,500			\$9,500			
Environmental Studies			\$6,375	\$3,862	\$4,150		\$500
Greenhouse and Food Program						\$5,000	
Mentoring		\$1,228	\$3,389	\$2,358	\$5,100		\$300
Multi-Age International Trips	\$2,500	\$2,000		\$15,575	\$2,000	\$1,750	\$7,500
Teacher Grants	\$5,000		\$320		\$3,000	\$4,182	\$3,550
Technology Upgrade						\$14,015	
KCS Website Redesign			\$11,580				
Outdoor Classroom							\$1,200
<b>Total for Year</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$3,228</b>	<b>\$21,664</b>	<b>\$31,295</b>	<b>\$14,250</b>	<b>\$24,947</b>	<b>\$13,050</b>
<b>HPEF Major Grant Programs 2005 to Present (Except Broadband)</b>							

## HPEF Fund Grows at ACT

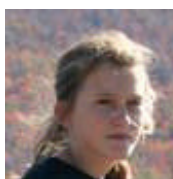
Our endowment is managed by the Adirondack Community Trust ([www.generousACT.org](http://www.generousACT.org)) and it has increased about 4% so far this year. In addition, it has benefited from two direct gifts. For the past few years, we have not had to draw on the endowment but we can if we need to. It is noteworthy that putting our funds under management by ACT helps raise the visibility of HPEF among some potential donors.

## Broadband Project Completed

The Town-Wide Broadband Project, HPEF's largest project to date, has achieved all of its goals. Now over 90% of homes in town can be connected to high-speed Internet. All homes with a KCS student or staff member are connected, allowing students to learn how to use this incredibly important resource in their studies. Today, the Town of Keene is the most fully wired town in the entire Adirondacks thanks to the generosity of our donors. If you are not connected and wish to get high-speed service, contact KVVI at 576-4510.

## Mentees on Mentoring

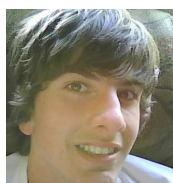
The mentoring program was started with grants from HPEF over the past few years and is now supported by the District. Here are quotes from student evaluations.



Elaina Smith: "Having a mentor means you can do activities you would never think of doing"

Peter Craig: "I am happier and doing more activities.

The best thing about having a mentor is that you get a new friend"



Colton Venner: I look forward to meeting my mentor every week. We do a lot of fun stuff. You get to experience new things and you get to do things you want to."

## Teachers Use 2009 Grants for Reading and Science Aids

On August 26 the HPEF Board and a group of our donors attended a series of short talks on how some of our grants have made a difference at KCS. Here are summaries of two of the talks.



The Primary Teachers, Robin Jaques and Melissa LaVallee reported on how they used the grant to buy a digital camera and materials to enable students to make their own books, which were used to report on classroom activities and class trips to give parents more insight into what was learned.

They also reported enthusiastically on how a prior year HPEF grant fostered higher levels of reading at home though purchase of books that were designed for reading by parents and students together. The science teachers reported on how the Vernier lab equipment they purchased has enabled them to demonstrate a variety of data collection and laboratory data handling techniques. The equipment is modular and standardized so it can be used with a wide variety of sensors. The new data instruments are easier to use and can be set up more quickly than old ones, allowing the teachers to get more done in a class. They are being used to do water quality testing, and to teach graphing and estimation. The teachers were proud that they could conduct real science even in the lower grades with this new equipment.



In addition, the improved 6th grade newsletter was distributed showing how the color printer they purchased with our grant has enabled the students to produce something of high quality

## HPEF Technology Upgrade Grant Puts Students In Touch with Data

Last year, HPEF made a major grant to KCS to purchase updated new computer technology, including 30 new iPod Touch hand-held devices (photo below) that let students work with data in the classroom. Teachers are experimenting with myriad ways to work these versatile devices into their lesson plans. The funds also enabled KCS to purchase four smartboards that allow students to interact with maps and other information in the classroom, as well as new LCD projectors that allow a computer screen to be seen by the entire classroom. Our funds were combined with funds from the School District as well as money from the Federal Stimulus program.



KCS already anticipates the need to make further upgrades to laptops, primarily to go to teachers, as well as technology for a Computer-Assisted Design lab. When teachers receive new laptops, their old ones get passed down to students to use. We are hoping to receive donations to enable us to fund this next year. Our funds would be matched by the School District.

## Five 2010 Teacher Grants Spur Innovation and Creativity

HPEF's teacher grant program encourages teachers to try new things and enhance their teaching with new technology or other resources. Here is a summary of the five we have approved for the current school year. A grant to Bill Stokes, Musician in Residence, to buy two cellos. It was not possible for students to take the cello before and there are students who wish to do so. Teresa Cary, Reading Teacher, received funds to buy e-book technology and content, which will provide students with an alternative way to learn to read. Since in the future books will often be in e-book formats, it prepares students for the world they will live in. Megan Wellford, Sixth Grade Teacher will buy a document camera that projects a printed page, maps, art work or lab experiments for a class to see. Melissa LaVallee, Primary Teacher, will be able to continue the "Little 6er's Hiking Club" which encourages KCS students to hike as many mountains as possible while they are in grades K through 6. The funds will provide for a framed display to show progress in climbing the various peaks.

## Graduation Speeches Inspire

Last June, HPEF Board Member Dan Luthringshauser gave the commencement keynote, speaking to the graduates of the changing world they were entering, including the rise of China, increased global competition for jobs, and the need for continuous learning and higher level education. He encouraged them to focus on more than just themselves, to contribute to making our communities healthier, stronger and happier. KCS valedictorian Kevin Stolz spoke eloquently about our community, "*I have always felt cared for and cared about. I have always felt encouraged and I have always, always felt loved. That's what's special, maybe even unique about this community.*"

## HPEF Adds New Board Members

In August, the HPEF Board approved the nomination of three new members and we are grateful for their willingness to serve.



For 23 years, Joy McCabe taught high school English, directed the high school plays and was the adviser for the Forensic team at Keene Central School.



Kathy Smith served twice on the Board of Ed and was chief fundraiser for Little Peaks Preschool. She is a KCS mentor and volunteer for beaver pond projects.



Tad Zelski has been a resident of Keene for 14 years and a volunteer for many valley activities. He likes Marketing and works in the hearing aid industry.

## New Initiative: An Outdoor Classroom

An exciting new grant is initial funding to explore creating an outdoor classroom. The KCS Science Teachers, Mary Werner, Darrin Seeley and Katie Purdy thought up this innovative project and hope it will provide an alternate environment for classes, performances and meetings, as well as an Interpretive Center for students to learn through scientific inquiry. It will be designed to blend into the natural environment and be self-sustained. A solar panel will generate power for presentations, PCs, and lab activities. We are hoping to raise funds to move this idea forward.

The Science Teachers have also received a grant to start Phase II of the Sustainability at KCS program. They will buy a solar power generator to power one of the science classrooms and a rain water harvesting system for the biodome and garden at KCS.

To all our donors of the past 10 years, the Board of Trustees of HPEF  
and the Staff and Students of Keene Central School want to say  
You've made a huge difference.

# Thank You

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Mary & Samuel Allen  
Cynthia & Woody Andrews  
Emily & Joseph Andrews  
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Baxter Mountain Tavern  
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