

John Baltrus

From: A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) [gail@appleamericanprofessionalpartnershipforlithuanianeducation.ccsend.com] on behalf of A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) [jonaspb@comcast.net]
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Aurimas Nauseda

The A.P.P.L.E. Seed

(American Professional Partnership
for
Lithuanian Education)

E-Zine

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Dear John,



Karl Janowitz

Message from the President

February is nearly here and the school year is near its midpoint. This winter has been incredibly cold and snowy for many of us here in the United States and we are anxiously awaiting spring.

Interesting applications have been received for A.P.P.L.E. 2014. We are in contact with our Lithuanian colleagues and are in the process of planning for the summer.

We look forward to A.P.P.L.E.'s spring meeting the weekend of April 5-6 in Orlando, Florida. Summer plans and future endeavors will be addressed.

This month's Ezine focuses on the Lithuanian Scholars' Fund. We congratulate all of the grant winners and thank our supporters for helping us fund this important program.

I wish everyone a wonderful month.

Karl

Dr. Karl P. Janowitz
President

Editor's Note: Last month's Ezine featured an article on last year's summer program, specifically the Storytelling Strand. We inadvertently failed to attribute the article to its author, Carol Ramsey. We apologize for the oversight.

Mission Statement:

"The American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.) is a volunteer international non-profit educational organization. With the support of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, A.P.P.L.E. partners with Lithuanian educators to foster the implementation of innovative educational approaches that contribute to the development of a democratic society."

Lithuanian Scholars' Fund Winners Announced

The Lithuanian Scholars' Fund (Lietuvos Mokytoju Fondas - LMF) is already in its eighth year of existence in Lithuania. A total of 151 projects have been financed by the LMF from 2006 to 2014. As one of the main conditions for submission of the projects is to choose the activities which involve as many members of the school community as possible, the projects funded by the LMF have really affected a lot of administration representatives, teachers, and pupils, including their parents and grandparents, of the educational establishments. The latter ones are very often involved into the project activities at the preschool educational establishments.

The main theme of the A.P.P.L.E. 2013 summer courses: *Real World Application of What We Teach*, called together a large group of Lithuanian educators to the Prienai Ziburys Gymnasium. The projects of previous years that were presented during the courses received lively interest, and the teachers who introduced them had an opportunity to answer a lot of questions about possibilities to submit projects, implementation terms, forms of settlement, etc.

As in previous years, the projects could be submitted by any participant in A.P.P.L.E.'s 2013 summer courses who developed their competences in Prienai and Kaunas.

We received 29 projects in total from different educational institutions: pre-schools (kindergartens), basic schools, secondary schools, gymnasiums and special educational institutions. The LMF funded 17 projects which reflected best on the theme of the

courses of the last summer. A total of over \$9,200 USD was awarded. A list of the winning projects can be found on the [A.P.P.L.E. website](#).

Hence, 17 Lithuanian educators whose projects distinguished for their creativity, innovative ideas, ability to involve into the project activities not only pupils and teachers but also parents of the pupils and all community of the school, will implement the LMF projects during the academic year 2013/2014 and will share their experience next summer during the A.P.P.L.E. courses.

The theme for the courses last summer, *Real World Application of What We Teach*, was not chosen deliberately. Application in real life of the theoretical knowledge is one of the key priorities of Lithuanian education and a tool for the student motivation to learn. Very often the application in real life of the theoretical knowledge becomes a real challenge for the student and their teachers. Therefore all projects include activities which help to integrate theoretical subjects of the natural sciences and social, art, ethno-cultural education into practice.

Two projects of the teacher Laimute Verseckiene from the Kaunas District Sauletekis Basic School of the name of A. Mickevicius were recognized to be the best projects. The teacher chose to implement the project *Let's Know the Native Land by Travelling*, the main activities of which are related to educational-cognitive excursions in Lithuania during which the pupil will learn to cognize nature, develop their love for native land and carry out different researches.

The teacher Daiva Ciegieniė from a small town in Vilkaviskis District included after-lesson activities in her project (Editors note: see article below). The activities are related to felting, needlecraft, paper cuttings, molding and other crafts. The teacher says that children are happy when they see a result. It is beneficial for them to engage in practical activities and to apply in practice the knowledge acquired during the lessons. This induces them to concentrate, to maintain concentration, to work as a team with other pupils, to gain practical skills and to feel joy of success. "It is important to make the pupil understand that not only money can buy. Pupils' little hands can make a lot of beneficial works which bring a joy", says the teacher in her project.

Kaunas Children' Rehabilitation Centre, which is engaged in education of children with autism syndrome and complex inabilities, submits every year projects for assessment by the LMF. Educators of the centre participate in the A.P.P.L.E. seminars every year and actively submit the LMF projects. Their projects are distinguished for their creativity and special emphasis on the improvement of the daily skills as well as world cognition of the children with special needs.

Three educators of the centre will implement the project *My Green Windowsill* during this academic year. The emphasis of the project is application of theoretical knowledge in practice. The special educator Audronė Gurevičienė says that "Work with children with autism requires application of acquired knowledge and skills in different environments in order to make such knowledge and skills become the daily competences of such children."

The children will plant and grow different plants during the project. According to the pedagogue Audrone, "touch of soil, seeding, and covering with soil will develop children's sensations and will help to reduce stress when children see the results. The self-esteem of children will improve".

The Lithuanian teachers sincerely thank the sponsors of the LMF from the A.P.P.L.E. community for their financial support. Though the support is not big financially, it provides opportunities for children's activities within a relatively short time period;

helps to team up school communities and to feel joy over successful results after implementation of the project within a half of a year.

Ramute Zemioniene
A.P.P.L.E. representative in Lithuania

LMF Project - Little Hands, but Big Crafts

One of the winning projects for this year's Lithuanian Scholars' Fund Grants mentioned above was a project submitted by teacher Daiva Ciegieniė from the Vilkaviskis region's Gražiskiu gimnazija. A synopsis of the project is given below:

Project:

Title: "Little Hands, but Big Crafts"

Project participants : 5 students in grade 3; 10 students each in grades 6-7 . A total of 25 students .

Project Need:

For this class, the technical subject matter will consist of felting , crocheting, work involving paper cutting, introduction to a variety of materials, steaming , ironing, tacking , drawing and so on. Often, students do not have materials because of the poor financial situation of their families, and therefore they cannot try various technologies. In the same way, there are a number of pupils with special needs who regularly fail to meet class and school standards. They are noisy, do not have motivation to act, and have poor self-esteem. They constantly say that they do not learn anything, they will not succeed and why do they need it. The students find it hard to work together, difficult to accept another's opinion, and to lend a helping hand. The children are not even motivated by their parents. The school is in a rural location, away from the city. Parents are usually unemployed and living on social benefits. Material purchases are a great luxury for them. Since the schools do not have a lot of clubs, after school kids try to engage in various activities - they can draw, crochet (in the fall, they made spider webs), sew dolls, mold clay and so on. They practice their social skills during this time. Kids feel good when they see the results of their work. Based on conversations with the technology teacher and primary school teacher it was decided that the children do benefit from practical work activities and the knowledge they acquire in their learning years is able to be put into practice. This encourages concentration and the abilities to maintain interest, work together with other students while gaining practical skills and experience the joy of success.

It is important that students understand that money can't buy everything. Rather, their small hands can create a lot of useful things that bring joy to others.

Goals:

- To develop communication and collaboration skills, peer support, compassion and concern in organized extra-curricular activities.
- To develop children's abilities to deal with their problems, self-reliance, initiative, independence, and a disposition to take on responsibility.
- To uncover and develop children's creative powers, to develop artistic and aesthetic excellence.
- To help validate acquired knowledge and broaden their horizons .

What are the expected changes, if your given project will be executed:

Who will benefit?

The benefit will be for the school's students, teachers and the school community and parents. Students will validate the acquired knowledge in practice by better communicating with each other, learning to work as a team, and developing a strong sense of responsibility. It is very important for teachers to have a good relationship with the children. Therefore, a variety of projects carried out during after-school activities provides an opportunity for simple interactions with students that they can accept. The students open their secret corners, more often ask questions about things that concern them, and express their opinions. The teacher becomes a friend. The school always celebrates the students' work. That is why once again their work, which represents their school, is to be donated to their guests and parents.

What are the benefits?

- * Students will validate theoretical knowledge by practice. They will have the opportunity to take come in closer contact with well-known materials and try new ones.
- * Students will communicate and work with each other, with parents, teachers and guests.
- * They will develop self-sufficiency skills.
- * They will search for relevant information from different sources.
- * The implementation of ideas will require known and new techniques and how to safely use them.
- * It will evoke a lot of positive emotions, improve imagination and creativity.
- * It will strengthen self-confidence.
- * It will help develop tolerance of others.
- * It will improve performance skills.

How will you evaluate the changes?

The project will be presented to the school community, informing students and their parents. Information will be hosted on the school's website. A photo exhibition will be organized, which will present snapshots of the work and the joy of success. An interview will be held with the students to ask about the benefits of the project for each person. Pupils' communication, collaboration, mood, and feelings will be constantly monitored and discussed after each day's work, as well as at the completion of the project. Their thoughts, their finished products, and photos will be placed in a public space in the school lobby. The finished products will then be donated.

What supplies (books, posters, materials, etc.) will be purchased or made?

Supplies will be purchased to perform the intended tasks. Pennants will be made with the school's logo, poured candles, handmade soap, cut patterns.

Project implementation period and the project duration:

Project implementation period: March - May, 2014.

Project schedule:

February

- * Presentation of the project to the school community, preparation of information leaflets for parents.
- * Presentation of the project for students , discussion activities , the distribution of the groups

March - April

- * Paper cutting projects
- * Travel to Vilkaviskis' Virbalio middle school to monitor the wool felting machine.

* Wool pennant making (dry and wet) .

May

- * Candle making
- * Soap production
- * Project exhibition preparation
- * Candle and soap gifts in celebration of Mother's Day
- * Reflection

The project grant was 1021 LTL ~ \$400 USD

Fundraising Corner

You can help us support more good proposals that were received seeking funding from the A.P.P.L.E. Scholar's Fund by making a donation to A.P.P.L.E. You can make a direct donation to A.P.P.L.E. by [clicking here](#) and using PayPal. Make sure to add a note if you wish that your donation be specifically used for a Lithuanian Scholars' Fund grant.

What will different levels of donations accomplish?

- For \$100, you can provide an ink cartridge and paper so that A.P.P.L.E. can distribute lesson notes to teachers.
- For \$200, you can provide a stipend for a translator.
- For \$450, you can underwrite the distribution of our newsletter.
- For \$500, you can sponsor a Scholar's Fund Grant. Lesser amounts will be combined to fund a grant.

A minimum donation of \$25-individual or \$40-family will enroll you as a member of A.P.P.L.E. for one year. Of course, donations are still welcome by mail: A.P.P.L.E., 105 Sturbridge Lane, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

A.P.P.L.E. is a 501(3)c organization, which means that your gifts are tax-deductible. Our tax-exempt number is 23-2682202. Because of strict IRS regulations, we cannot accept donations intended for specific people. If you would like to support relatives or friends, please do so directly. The A.P.P.L.E. scholar grants are intended for Lithuanian educators who do not have contacts in the United States.

This electronic newsletter is designed for quick delivery of A.P.P.L.E.-related news to an audience that includes current A.P.P.L.E. members, friends of A.P.P.L.E. and interested potential members both within the United States and Lithuania.

Increasing communication and the exchange of ideas among our members increases the strength of our organization and our ability to be relevant to our Lithuanian constituents. Exciting and pertinent events occur all year round, and we want to keep all of you abreast of what is happening, when it's happening.

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