

## High School/High Tech Funding Bulletin, December 2001

Volume 2, Issue 1

The High School/High Tech initiative has expanded management support through the *Workforce Development Collaborative for Youth with Disabilities (The Collaborative)*. The partners in the collaborative are: The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), Academy for Educational Development (AED), the National Center for Secondary Education and Transition-University of Minnesota, National Youth Employment Coalition, National Conference of State Legislators, TransCen and InfoUse. The Collaborative's High School/High Tech technical assistance team is headed by Joan Wills of IEL, and includes TransCen, InfoUse and consultants Donna Mundy and Lee Miller. This team will bring to bear their wide-ranging experience, expertise, and networks in workforce development, general and special education, transition, information services and service provision to youth with disabilities to successfully implement the goals of the High School/High Tech initiative.

InfoUse will email this Funding Bulletin to all High School/High Tech sites. Our purpose is to provide the latest information on funding opportunities, to offer tips on grant or foundation proposal writing, to profile successes and innovations in fundraising and to inform sites about significant initiative news and announcements. This email letter is part of the U.S. Dept of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy Workforce Development Collaborative for Youth with Disabilities.

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## **1. Private funding Sources and available grants related to assistive technology**

Students participating in High School/High Tech may benefit from assistive technology available through the schools or from other sources. This month highlights private funding sources (corporate philanthropy, community foundations, and private foundations) that have an interest in assistive technology. All of the foundations listed below are also listed in the High School/High Tech funding database located on the HS/HT web site, [www.infouse.com/highschool-hightech](http://www.infouse.com/highschool-hightech).

### **Corporate Philanthropy**

Because the High School/High Tech initiative will be most successful when it is strongly tied with corporations and high-tech companies, corporate philanthropy is of particular importance to sites seeking funding. Trends in corporate giving show that philanthropic programs are more decentralized with an increased use of employee committees and local executives in making decisions. Getting to know the local business leaders who might be interested in working with your site as an employer may lead to a contact for funding.

There are two main methods for carrying out corporate giving. Corporate foundations are funded by corporate allocations to the foundation to carry out grantmaking. The foundation is usually set up as a separate but affiliated organization and may or may not be located at a site within the corporation. Some corporations have both a foundation and separate corporate giving programs.

Corporate community giving programs may provide a wide range of community philanthropy. This form of corporate giving is often separate from the corporate foundation and may be decentralized to the communities where the corporation has a significant presence in plants, outlets or offices. These corporate giving programs may include cash contributions, contribution of company products, scholarships and volunteers for community causes.

The following are some examples of corporate philanthropists with interest in assistive technology.

#### **NEC Foundation of America**

Founded in 1991, the NEC Foundation was created with a \$10 million endowment by NEC Corporation and its United States subsidiaries. By providing financial support, the NEC Foundation of America is, "...advancing society through technology and enabling individuals to enrich their lives and

realize their full potential." See web site: [www.necus.com/company/foundation/msieindex.htm](http://www.necus.com/company/foundation/msieindex.htm), June 2001. Program areas funded are Science and Technology Education, Distance Learning, Technology and Teaching and assistive technology for People with Disabilities.

Some examples of grants for assistive technology for People with Disabilities are: "Louis," a database of accessible materials for people who are blind or visually impaired; "Breaking Down Barriers", a permanent exhibit on assistive technology and accessible design; and "The Seeing Eye," to purchase equipment that aids in the training of people who are blind. Source: [www.necus.com/company/foundation/presskit/assistive\\_technology](http://www.necus.com/company/foundation/presskit/assistive_technology), October, 2001.

The foundation will not give funds to individuals, but because of its support for assistive technology programs, it may be a valuable resource for receiving funds through a local organization. Grants are generally made for programs that are national in scope. For more information, see [www.necus.com/company/foundation.nsindex.htm](http://www.necus.com/company/foundation.nsindex.htm), or write to [foundation@necusa.com](mailto:foundation@necusa.com).

### **eBay Foundation**

In June 1998, eBay, the worldwide leader in person-to-person trading over the internet, established a charitable fund known as the eBay Foundation. It was funded through a donation of 107,250 shares of eBay's Common Stock. The Foundation says, "We want to live in a world where people have the skills, tools, motivation and the support of their community to help themselves become the best that they can be. We believe that by supporting organizations that creatively apply and teach technology to foster self-sufficiency, we can develop individuals' economic and social well-being and connect them to a broader, global community." See web site: [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com), September 2001.

"We are particularly interested in innovative, collaborative approaches that increase technology access and skills, empower individual entrepreneurialism and which serve as pilots for broader, national application." Source: [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com), September 2001.

One example program funded is called Residential Resources, which provides support to people with developmental disabilities and their families to live successfully in their community. Another example grant went to WGBY Center for Instructional Technologies (CIT). This funding will help create a series of twelve workshops at the CIT for the staff of community organizations who have computers for their clients' use.

eBay giving is limited to the cities that are major centers of operation, San Jose, California, and Salt Lake City, Utah. Funds will not be given to individuals. For more information, see the ebay entry in the High School/High Tech database.

### **The Prudential Foundation**

The Prudential Foundation is funded by the Prudential Insurance Company. "The Prudential Foundation provides support for innovative direct-service programs that address the needs of our communities in three areas: Ready to Learn, Ready to Work, Ready to Live. ..." The Company and the Foundation "...have been committed to making a difference in the communities where we live and work, through both volunteer work and corporate donations. Today, most of our philanthropic efforts are driven by one area-Community Resources-a powerful combination of three units." Source: [www.prudential.com/community/cmzzz1000.html](http://www.prudential.com/community/cmzzz1000.html).

The three programs have within them initiatives to address specific community issues. The following show areas that might be accessed for assistive technology. The Ready to Learn program addresses early childhood education. One of the initiatives included in this program is to "...provide school-based health and human services that reduce the barriers to learning..." The Ready to Work program focuses on initiatives that promote job readiness, job skills, workforce and business development. The Ready To Live program focuses on community health and safety. One of the initiatives of this program focuses on "...community-based health care and human services for economically disadvantaged populations..." "Source: [www.prudential.com/community/foundation/cmfzz1001.html](http://www.prudential.com/community/foundation/cmfzz1001.html), October 2001.

In addition, the Foundation gives emphasis and priority to direct-service rather than policy-oriented grants. It funds programs throughout the country and gives preference to areas that serve headquarters city of Newark, New Jersey and surrounding areas and cities where Prudential has a significant presence: Atlanta, Houston, Jacksonville, FL, Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Philadelphia.

### **Community Foundations**

Community foundations provide funding for a defined geographic area. They pool the resources of many donors and also provide a venue to assist smaller foundations in managing their assets and allocating their funds.

The following examples of community foundations demonstrate the broad scope and local community focus of these types of foundations. Funding has been granted based on the needs of the local community and the focus can evolve over time. These foundations may not be in your local High School/High Tech community, but they are intended to serve as examples of the hundreds of local organizations that are potential resources for additional funding. Contact your local community foundation to determine their funding areas of interest and to establish a relationship that may lead to funding for the High School/High Tech initiative in your area.

### **Columbus Foundation**

The Columbus Foundation of Ohio is an example of a typical community foundation, a nonprofit organization that exists to serve the needs of the local community. It has a broadly defined focus for funding. "Entrusted with the responsibility to improve the community's quality of life the Columbus Foundation embraces the following... To preserve and grow an endowment to address changing community needs in partnership with all stakeholders. To strive for measurable community improvement through strategic grantmaking in the arts, community development, education, health, social services, and other community needs. To promote and participate in partnerships on evolving community issues and to leverage resources to meet major needs." Source: [www.columbusfoundation.org](http://www.columbusfoundation.org), February, 2001.

Funding has been granted to programs in the education, technology and computer skills subject areas. Also available are donor advised funds which direct grants to the subject area of the donor's choice. Community Foundations can be located by searching the internet, visiting a local chamber of commerce or checking the local telephone listings.

### **Claremont Community Foundation**

The Claremont Community Foundation "has awarded grants to more than 60 programs and special projects, enriching the lives of youth and adults throughout the community." Source:

[www.claremontfoundation.org/about.htm](http://www.claremontfoundation.org/about.htm), July 2001. Program areas of interest include education, youth, children and disability.

This foundation has funded Ability First for the development of a Computer Lab with access to the Internet for children with physical and developmental disabilities; the Computers for Kids Foundation, to help provide computers, printers, software, and free training ; and Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic for support for one recording booth for one day in the 1996 Pomona Valley Unit's Record-A-Thon which records books for those with visual, physical or perceptual disability. (1996) Source:

[www.claremontfoundation.org/list.cfm?id=5](http://www.claremontfoundation.org/list.cfm?id=5) , July, 2001.

Funding is limited to Claremont, California and the surrounding metropolitan area or to regional organizations that serve Claremont and other communities in the Inland Valleys.

### **Private Foundations**

Private foundations are funded through resources from a single source – a family, an individual or a corporation. These selected foundations are included because they have funding priorities or example grants related to assistive technology.

### **Charles Stuart Mott Foundation**

Based in Flint, Michigan, "...The Foundation's mission is "to support efforts that promote a just, equitable and sustainable society." Source:

[www.mott.org/about/mott.htm](http://www.mott.org/about/mott.htm), June, 2001. Of primary interest to this foundation are new or innovative methods to solving community problems, programs that promote change and projects that can be shared across communities.

The C.S. Mott Foundation funds programs related to children and youth, education and work, and the poor and disadvantaged. The Foundation has supported numerous programs related to the High School/High Tech focus. Applicants should highlight their role in the nationwide efforts of the High School/High Tech program.

Programs from all across the United States are considered and they prefer to accept proposals in the first quarter of the year for which funding is requested. When applying for a grant, it is important to note that this is a large foundation that likes to see an established project network as well as the potential for residual and replicative projects.

For more details, visit the High School/High Tech web site or visit the foundation directly at [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org).

### **Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation (CRPF)**

The Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation was formed in 1999 when the American Paralysis Foundation merged with the Christopher Reeve Foundation. The main funding focus of this foundation is to support research to find a cure for paralysis. However, CRPF does provide grants to improve the quality of life of people living with a disability, and lists assistive technology as one of their fields of interest. "The 34 grantee programs help improve opportunities, access and day-to-day quality of life for families and individuals living with disabilities. The grants, awarded twice yearly, recognize programs that enable people with disabilities to live independent and active lives." Source: [www.apacure.com/quality/index.cfm](http://www.apacure.com/quality/index.cfm), November, 2001.

Assistive technology grantees in 2001 include the Prairie Independent Living Resource Center, for the purchase of a fully accessible computer workstation; the Redwood Rehabilitation Center, to provide computer access for individuals with degenerative and central nervous system disorders; and the Rehabilitation Institute at Santa Barbara to train patients with spinal cord injuries to use advanced technology. This foundation does not give grants to individuals, and there are no stated geographic restrictions. For more specific information on the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, visit the web site at: [www.apacure.com](http://www.apacure.com).

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## **2. Tips on Fundraising/working with funding sources: Approaching Corporations**

Corporate financial support comes from various departments depending on the way the company chooses to organize its giving. Marketing, public affairs, communications and government relations and the company foundation are all possible sources of grants, volunteers and in-kind donations.

There are many reasons why corporations provide funds to non-profit programs. The list ranges from encouraging and promoting philanthropy as an end in itself to self-interest and promotion. Corporations exist to make a profit and giving tends to be in line with the corporate mission and interests of customers, therefore the grantmaking style is unique for each organization. Each company has its own set of grantmaking criteria and a customized approach will most likely provide the best results.

Research is the first step to approaching a corporation for a potential grant. It is very important to know the grantmaking priorities, the interests, products and services sold and to develop specific ideas as to why your initiative meets the needs of the company. The High School/High Tech web site is a good place to get an overview of a corporation in your geographic area. Once a name and areas of expertise is gathered, making personal contact can be a good way to introduce your initiative and determine mutual interests. Some corporations will only accept official grant proposals, while others have a local funding representative and may be open to developing a relationship.

A professional but personal initial contact can provide a good first impression. If possible, a mutual acquaintance or business contact to make an introduction can create a smooth transition to a first meeting. In the meeting (or letter if a meeting is not possible) make a short presentation of your case supported by previous successes and detail the uses for additional funds you are requesting. Don't forget to stress the how the funds will benefit the initiative instead of providing a laundry list of items for which the money will pay. Because companies are interested in accountability, make sure documentation of results and evidence of strong board relations management practices are communicated. As with any professional contact, always follow up with a thank-you letter.

Finally, it is important to note that approaching a corporation should be treated like approaching an individual. Sometimes a relationship must be built on a series of progressive interactions instead of jumping straight to one resulting in dedicated support. Making phone calls and personal visits are ways to develop rapport and mutual respect which will pay off in the long run. Although the primary goal of a relationship may be to obtain cash, many companies also provide volunteers and in-kind donations. If a grant is not available this year, by allowing the corporation to be involved with High School/High Tech in other ways, you are taking steps to strengthen a relationship which can yield financial support in the future.

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#### **4. Successful and Innovative funding: Collaboration**

Building successful collaborations with other employment initiatives is an important element of successful HS/HT funding strategy. The importance of collaborations is illustrated in a recent grant announcement from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA). (<http://wdsc.doleta.gov/sga/sga/02-100sga.htm>). This solicitation for grant applications (SGA) announces availability of approximately \$6 million in competitive grant funds for multi-state employment and training projects serving people with disabilities. Addressed to private non-profits, including non-profit disability organizations with national scope and the capacity to administer multi-state training and employment programs, this announcement stresses the importance of establishing good linkages in implementing a successful initiative. "...applications should represent strong linkages with adult, dislocated worker and youth programs operating under the WIA such as Job Corps, Youth Opportunity Grants, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker programs and Indian and Native American programs...Proposals must demonstrate a significant integration of services to people with disabilities in the One-Stop system, such as using Individual Training Accounts to support training objectives, joint funding of on-the-job training by One-Stop partner programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation, or other significant collaborative activities which leads to integrated services for people with disabilities in One-Stop Centers."

ETA will fund a number of grants for \$300,000 to \$500,000 each. Proposals for this program are due by December 21, 2001. For High School/High Tech participants, an announcement like this provides several opportunities for fundraising.

First, this may be an opportunity to participate in a proposal, if a proposal is developed by your established organizational affiliation, or your existing collaborations.

Second, even if you are not ready now for such an ambitious program or proposal, this is a "wake-up call" about the importance of building linkages and collaboration with others working with employment and disability in your community.

Successful employment and employment training initiatives rely on schools, business, social services, employment services and others in the community. For HS/HT, this means working closely with others in your locale who focus on opportunity for youth, as well as established employment organizations.

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## **5. High School/High Tech Initiative News and Announcements**

### **Use the Funding Database of Private Sources**

The initial HS/HT funding database has information on over 500 public and private funding sources. This is an excellent place to start your search for possible grants as each listing has been pre-qualified for interest in programs related to youth, disability, employment, education and workforce development. The database is searchable by funder name or location. You'll find contact information, mission, areas of interest, example projects and limitations and deadlines. To access the funding database, visit [www.infouse.com/highschool-hightech](http://www.infouse.com/highschool-hightech), go to coordinator's corner and choose the Funding option.

### **Bulletin Coordinator**

Monica Slater of InfoUse will be coordinating the content and production of the funding bulletin this year. Monica has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, with a specialization in marketing; she is a graduate of Indiana University's Fund Raising School. In her previous work as an account executive for United Airlines, Monica was the local civic and community affairs manager for the state of Wisconsin. She established United's local sponsorship and corporate giving strategy and evaluated grant and funding proposals. She has experience in data collection and analysis, and in identification of services and funding resources for people with disabilities. Monica will contribute her industry experience to the development of successful funding strategies for HS/HT sites. Monica is also interested in mentoring and community education. In addition to acting as a peer mentor in her work, she participated in the Madison Youth-Business Mentoring Program and is currently a volunteer tutor in the Oakland Second Start Adult Literacy Program.

### **Feedback**

Your input and ideas will help us make this bulletin effective in support all of the sites' fundraising efforts. Any feedback on the bulletin format and content is welcome. Specifically we'd like to know: Did you use any of this information for fundraising at your site? What foundations have you contacted? What techniques did you use? Were you successful? Did the topics in the bulletin introduce you to new ideas, or would some other information be more useful?

Please contact Monica Slater to discuss your ideas and to have your news and announcements included in this newsletter. She can be reached at (510) 549-6520 or via email at [m Slater@infouse.com](mailto:m Slater@infouse.com)