



## **IPEI Exceeds \$600,000 Campaign Goal**

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The Ithaca Public Education Initiative today announced that it has exceeded its \$600,000 goal during its Our Children • Our Schools • Our Future capital campaign designed to meet the growing demand from teachers and students for its educational grants and programs. An independent not-for-profit organization, IPEI facilitates community connections and innovative learning initiatives for thousands of pre-K-12th grade students and their teachers in the Ithaca City School District.

The campaign received \$624,326 in gifts and pledges from 228 individuals, corporations and foundations.

"The success of this campaign is fabulous because our community stretched and supported it!" said Terry Byrnes, IPEI board president. "The entire IPEI family is excited about expanding opportunities for teachers and students, and for strengthening our organization."

Over 100 IPEI volunteers, donors and friends gathered to celebrate with a "Sweet Success" ice cream party at the new Ithaca High School Wellness Center lobby. Purity ice cream flavors were renamed for the event: Mocha Chip was "Mission Chip", Vanilla was "Vision Vanilla", and Cookie Dough was "Campaign Dough". Code Red Robotics displayed the 2012 robot, and recorded background music was from a recent Boynton Middle School band concert.

Speaking to guests at the event, Byrnes said, "We are grateful that so many others share our belief that connecting teachers and students with Ithaca's vast resources is a vital part of a quality education, and that IPEI should continue its role helping to make this happen."

The successful campaign will positively impact the education of Ithaca children by increasing all of IPEI's grants and programs. "More than 150 requests for grants are made to IPEI each year, and IPEI is now able to approve even more worthy grant requests, and to fund new opportunities and community collaborations," according to IPEI Vice President Jennifer Engel.

The campaign will also allow IPEI to hire staff and to build an endowment to ensure that it can continue to support the schools for years to come. Julie Langenbacher, IPEI's first part-time staff member, was introduced.

IPEI Development Chair Mary Grainger unfurled the thermometer capital letter "I" showing the number grand total number of donors and dollars as of October 11. Cindy Daly, Belle Sherman Elementary School music teacher, provided a drum roll for the announcement.

Gifts toward the three campaign priorities are still welcome. Grainger thanked everyone who participated in the campaign including the former board members who served on the Campaign Council, and all donors. "Our community's generosity is inspiring. Stay tuned for updates as IPEI develops its plans for organizational strength and growth made possible by this generosity."

Since its founding in 1996 by a group of concerned community members and parents, IPEI has awarded over 1,100 grants totaling more than \$1.3 million to enable hundreds of teachers to undertake innovative projects. Grant applications for the first allocations of the 2012-13 school year are due in coming weeks: Oct. 22 for

Red and Gold Grants and Nov. 1 for Teacher Grants. Community Collaboration Grants are on a rolling basis, and Fine Arts Booster Group mini-grants are due Oct. 30.

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