



FRANKLIN: Franklin eighth grade Honors English students learn from producer Christopher Faull that making scenes in their film look "spontaneous" requires lots of practice and repetition.



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Franklin Film Hoped to Reduce School Bullying

Whether by the old standby methods of gossip, lies, repetitive pranks or physical threats, or by a full-blown electronic cyber-assault, bullying hurts. Bullied children cannot concentrate on learning. They are likely to be anxious and depressed, feel isolated, and even to contemplate suicide. What can be done to stop it?

Twenty-seven eighth grade Honors Reading students at Franklin Middle School are involved in a film making project that just might make a huge difference in the incidence of bullying in middle schools in the future.

The class is collaborating on the writing and production of the first of two U.S. produced sets of films for **Promoting Positive Peer Relationships: Stories of Us – Bullying**. The other school involved is Irving Middle School in Lincoln, Nebraska. These schools were chosen because they are each close to one of the universities involved in the project, they are very different school environments, and both had a number of teachers and administrators who were enthusiastic about and interested in participating in the project. Producer Christopher Faull said that he was very impressed by the support shown for the project over the past couple of years by retired administrator Carol Stack, Franklin Principal Angela Smith and Franklin teacher Shameem Rakha. The middle school films will be completed in the spring of 2008, with elementary and high school versions to be produced shortly thereafter.

The **Promoting Positive Peer Relationships (P3R)** Project Team includes CEO Christopher Faull (the onsite producer at Franklin) and specialist consultants Dorothy Espelage, PhD from the University of Illinois, along with two other experts on bullying and school violence from the University of California at Santa Barbara

and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The professors will consult on film content, develop the accompanying teacher materials, and develop and implement the quantitative evaluation of the impact of the first two U.S. films on students in three states.

Dr. Espelage, a prominent researcher of bullying in U.S. Middle Schools at the University of Illinois, is particularly interested in measuring the effectiveness of these films at decreasing bullying. Dr. Espelage is concerned that while there are anti-bullying programs available to schools to use in their efforts to reduce bullying, none of them has shown consistent results through good prevention science methods.

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The P3R anti-bullying program is an expansion of the Australian **Stories of Us**—which showed unprecedented success, with "a measurable, statistically significant, positive influence on student attitudes toward victims." Further, researchers reported that after seeing the films and participating in the corresponding class work, there was a 20% decrease in those students who felt that "kids who get picked on usually deserve it."

"This is an amazing opportunity for these students," says their teacher Shameem Rakha. "Our kids had to acknowledge things that have been done to them and things that they have

done that constituted bullying. And, they had to acknowledge how hurtful bullying is and all the possible consequences it can have. They used all their own experiences in the script," she added.

According to Christopher Faull, "The power of the films is that they really show bullying as it happens to kids in school. These are their stories, told from their viewpoints—and the students in the audience frequently cannot believe the students in the films are acting." Faull said that elementary, middle and high school student audiences are riveted to the screen when the films are shown. "Interestingly," Faull says, "it is very common for kids to say they are glad that their teachers and parents will finally see what it is really like to be bullied."

Faull spent six weeks at Franklin this past fall, working on acting skills, blocking out scenes with a lot of extras, ironing out the final script and getting all the student actors accustomed to following his directions. And, he directed the final filming.

Students created blog pages about their experiences and about the process of making the film. One group also made a "The Making of Stories of Us—Bullying" video, interviewing students from other Franklin classes about their experiences with bullying.

In addition to the experience of actually shooting a film, they will see their final product premiered in Champaign next spring, and will know that it will be shown to others across the country. If all goes as planned, they will also hopefully know that they have made a difference in how middle school students across the country think about bullying.

For more information about this project, go to: www.champaignschools.org and choose Franklin, then Franklin in the News.

Stepping Stone Grants: \$50 - \$500.00

\$210.00

RECIPIENT:

Martin Beberman/Doctor Howard Elementary

TOPS FACTORY: This grant provides materials for creating and operating a spinning top factory that produces working tops. All members of the third grade class participate in this Simple Machines unit.

EMPHASIS: SCIENCE

Fully Funded by the CUSF Carle Foundation Hospital Endowment for Educational Excellence.

\$350.00

RECIPIENT:

Patricia Plaut/Bottenfield Elementary

CAPS FOR THE NEEDY: This grant turns an after-school knitting club for boys and girls into a community service project providing knit caps for Provena-Covenant premature babies.

EMPHASIS: MANUAL ARTS/COMMUNITY SERVICE

Fully Funded by the CUSF Junior League of CU Endowment for Educational Excellence

\$360.00

RECIPIENT:

Marianne Whitacre/Robeson Elementary

BOOK NOOK: This grant funds Scholastic books for "buying" to take home. Books can be purchased by awards given for good behavior through a incentive system, through a trading system by bringing books from home and by paying 25 cents. Parents also donate books; and they manage the "store" along with the fifth grade leadership team.

EMPHASIS: READING/SOCIAL SKILLS

Partially Funded by the CUSF Carle Foundation Hospital Endowment for Educational Excellence

\$393.05

RECIPIENT:

Judy Rutan/

Champaign Early Childhood Center

READ TO YOUR CHILD PLUS: This take-home program includes an inventory of books in English and Spanish and provides tutorials for parents and guardians to help them learn how to read to their students at home.

EMPHASIS: LITERACY

\$477.70

RECIPIENT:

Missy Bostwick & Lisa Mosely/

Family Information Center

SOCIAL SKILLS SUPPORT FOR YOUNG

CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM

DISORDERS: Led as small groups by a licensed social worker and a speech language pathologist, early intervention in developing children with autism has shown to improve overall social skills that carry from school to home. Materials purchased with this grant are reusable and will be available to all Unit 4 campuses.

EMPHASIS: SPECIAL EDUCATION/SOCIAL

DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

Fully Funded by the CUSF Champaign Rotary

Endowment for Educational Excellence

\$490.16

RECIPIENT:

Shameem Rakha/Franklin Middle

FOSTERING LITERACY THROUGH AN

INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATION OF THE

HARLEM RENAISSANCE: Funding from this grant will expand a growing program that helps students explore the artists of the Harlem Renaissance and share their learning through living museum presentations. The Franklin Jazz Band and parents set up a Jazz café to go along with the museum at a culminating evening performance.

EMPHASIS: LITERACY/ARTS/HUMANITIES

This Grant is fully funded by the CUSF Hester Suggs Endowment for the Arts and Humanities

2007 CHAMPAIGN URBANA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION AWARD RECIPIENTS



Master Grants: \$501.00 - \$4,000.00

\$2,241.00

RECIPIENT:

David Hobman/Central High

STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR CENTRAL

HIGH SCHOOL: Cutting edge technology will be used to gain instant feedback from every student in a classroom through the use of SRS, a hand-held technology that records student responses and integrates them into a PowerPoint presentation.

EMPHASIS: TECHNOLOGY

\$1,225.98

RECIPIENT:

Jessica Weber/Franklin Middle

EXPANDING CULTURE WITH DANCE: Middle school physical education will be enhanced with the purchase of the Geo Motion Dance Set that includes electrified response mats, CDs and DVDs for interactive dance instruction. Many dance styles are included including popular and classical.

EMPHASIS: MUSIC/INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY

\$1,076.60

RECIPIENT:

Amber Owens and Karris Moline/

South Side Elementary & Bottenfield Elementary

MUSIC WITHOUT BORDERS: Integrating music into the study of world cultures will set the stage for this grade school after-school enrichment

program. Students will learn to play a variety of ethnic instruments on a weekly basis and perform throughout the year.

EMPHASIS: MUSIC ENRICHMENT

\$1,153.01

RECIPIENT:

Pat Mathews/Dr. Howard Elementary

WORLD WAR II MUSEUM PROJECT

— REMEMBER, RESEARCH, RESPOND, RECREATE:

The school library becomes the backdrop for an intensive study of World War II. Drama, posters, dioramas, wax museum presentations, research reports and artifact reproductions will bring this time period to life for fifth graders.

EMPHASIS: HISTORY ENRICHMENT

(continued on next column)