

July 17, 2007

JMF receives Dream Jar at Central Elementary School's Conservation Celebration

It was a night of celebrating student achievement that featured a presentation for parents, teachers, and local community members and groups that supported Central Elementary School's 2007 conservation project, and the Jarrett Meeker Foundation was the guest of honor.



Central's students made over \$42 in wishes for the Dream Jar.

Earlier in the year, Central Elementary School's dedicated third grade teachers, led by Sarah Mathy, contacted JMF looking for financial support that would enable their third graders to participate in the Wild Animal Park's Night Owls program. JMF board members were touched by the school's mission to inspire their students to believe their dreams can be accomplished and were impressed by their plans to integrate the overnight program into their classroom curriculum. The Foundation agreed to support all the third graders who wished to attend the overnight field trip.

Upon their return from the Night Owls program, Central's third graders were motivated to make a difference for the environment and quickly got to work on their very own conservation projects. The students came up with ideas for a recycling walk, door-to-door education campaign, and other such projects to help beautify their urban neighborhood and educate residents about the importance of protecting wildlife and the environment.

To further guide the students' efforts of giving back to the community and show that little kids can make a big difference, Central's Vice Principal, Cynthia Marten, started the Dream Jar. The Dream Jar became an opportunity for all of Central's students, from kindergartners to fifth graders, to make a wish for the future as they raised money to give back to the community. The kids were encouraged to collect coins they found around the ground in the community and make a wish while putting them into jars located throughout the campus.

The Dream Jar project concluded with a ceremony at the Conservation Celebration event held in the school's library at 5:30 p.m. on July 17th. After the third grade students handed out animal cracker refreshments to guests and presented the different conservation ideas they had come up with, selected students each dumped the smaller coin jars into the larger Dream Jar and presented it to representatives of JMF. The JMF board members congratulated the students on their accomplishments and assured them the money they raised will go back to helping other students learn the important conservation lessons they have.



Board members (from left) Rene Abarca, Kristina Velarde and William Weisman accept the Dream Jar on JMF's behalf.

Overall, the evening was touching and inspiring for JMF, and the Foundation looks forward to a continued relationship with Central Elementary School.