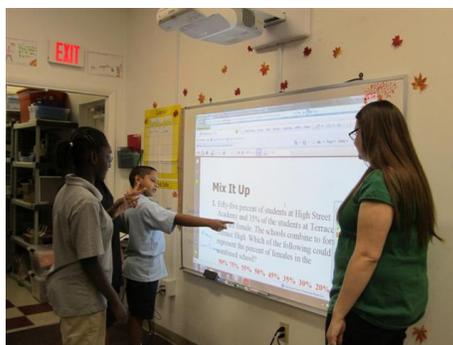




Verizon Grant Brings Smart Technology to Blossom's Classrooms

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"A picture is worth a thousand words," and new technology introduced recently to Blossom's classrooms is bringing the visual world to Blossom's students, thanks to a grant from the Verizon Foundation and Extron.

Three of Blossom's classrooms have been equipped with Epson BrightLink interactive pro-

jectors and Compaq laptop computers, allowing teachers to bring the internet, video, and interactive lessons to Blossom's students. In addition to the projectors and laptops, Extron has donated a Pole-Vault System to one of the classrooms, allowing the introduction of a DVD player, additional computers, a document camera and portable microphones to the system.

There are many new teaching tools available on the internet including Verizon's own Thinkfinity.org. These tools and this new equipment allow

teachers to enhance their lesson plans by giving students the ability to interact with the curriculum.

According to Blossom President Rich Engwall, "Many of us have seen smart boards in classrooms and this is the next generation of that type of equipment. Because all of the technology is contained in the projector, we were able to lower the cost and equip three classrooms for what it would have cost for a single classroom just a year ago. We can't thank Verizon and Extron enough for their generosity."

Did you know?

- Tampa Bay is home to the 4th largest deaf and hard-of-hearing population in the United States.
- 75% of deaf children reach the age of 18 reading at only a 3rd or 4th grade level.
- You can make a difference in the life of a child by sponsoring a Blossom scholarship.

An Evening to Remember

Once again this year, Chef Tyson Grant, Steve Westphal and the outstanding staff of the Parkshore Grill pulled out all the stops and created an evening to remember for Blossom's sponsors, staff, students and many new friends.

September's "Heart for Art" Wine Dinner at the Parkshore Grill raised more than \$6,000.

Guests were treated to one of Chef Grant's famous five course, wine-paired gourmet dinners. Accompanying the meal was an auction of art donated by Blossom students and local artists, including Dr. Dallas Jackson.

Our thanks to all who made this year's "Heart for Art" Dinner an evening to remember.



Eckerd Theater Company Brings Their Stage to Blossom



The award-winning Eckerd Theater Company created magic as they recently staged a performance of *The Hundred Dresses*, by Eleanor Estes, at Blossom for our students.

This production, along with several others throughout the year, was brought to Blossom through a partnership with Eckerd Theater Company and Ruth Eckerd Hall.

Funded in part by the City of Clearwater, Pinellas County, and the National Endowment for the Arts, Eckerd Theater

Company is the professional theater company of Ruth Eckerd Hall, performing both in residence and on tour throughout the Eastern United States and Canada.

Members of Blossom’s faculty provided shadow interpreting for each character during the performance. According to Carol Downing, Blossom’s Associate Director, “Bringing these productions to our students is critical to their appreciation of the arts.”

Blossom’s Parents Make a Difference

“Take a look at any great school and you’ll find inquisitive students taught by dedicated teachers, but what is often overlooked is the role of the parents,” says Blossom President Rich Engwall.

This school year, with the help of Blossom’s Director, Julie Rutenberg, and Business Manager, Tara Bonano, our parents have organized into the first Blossom Parent Booster Club.

Through the Blossom Parent Booster Club our parents can play an active part in fundraising, organizing family outings and school parent nights and activities.

The Blossom Parent Booster Club meets on a monthly basis and has taken the responsibility for raising money for Blossom’s new Classroom Partners Program, researching in-kind

classroom gift opportunities, and assisting the Blossom staff in planning family events including October’s Halloween Extravaganza.

“Our children will be more engaged in their education if they know their parents are actively involved. We’d like every Blossom parent to take part,” said Tara Bonano.



Thanks to our Classroom Partners

What will \$180 buy in today’s economy? “For \$180 your business can become a Blossom Classroom Partner,” says Becky Rosko, Blossom Classroom Partners Representative.

Every dollar contributed to the Classroom Partners Program

goes directly to the purchase of classroom supplies including Montessori materials, computer software, teaching aids, printers and printer cartridges, educational resource materials, new books for the classrooms and media center, art supplies, and the list goes on.

In return, your name will be placed prominently adjacent to the door of your adopted classroom, you’ll receive a class picture and thank you letters from the students, and you’ll know that your gift has made a difference in the lives of our students here at Blossom.

Thanks to classroom partners:

Drs. Paul Denker & Paul Dimarco

Nurse on Call Home Health Care

Southern Pinellas Surgical, PA

Dr. Ronald Copenhaver, DMD

Superheroes and Scarecrows Abound

Once again this year, on Halloween Eve, the halls of Blossom were transformed into one of Pinellas County's scariest haunted houses complete with ghost, ghouls, superheroes and scarecrows for the Annual Halloween Extravaganza.

More than twenty staff members, parents, and volunteers transformed Blossom's halls and classrooms into a Halloween festival which included games, crafts, costumes, food

and the much-anticipated and always frightening *Haunted House*.

"For our students and staff alike, this is always one of our favorite events," said Blossom Director Julie Rutenberg.

"Everyone really gets into the spirit of the evening and the staff members work each year to outdo each other with the most outlandish costumes. In the end, it's all about a great time for our kids."



Toner Cartridges Mean \$\$ for Blossom

Many local businesses have found that by redirecting the same dollars they currently spend on copier and printer toner supplies at the superstores, then can save significantly if they purchase from Malvern Group Cartridge Services in Clearwater.

Malvern's Mike Farrell has been a friend of Blossom's

since the school's inception and Mike will donate 30% of the net profits on each cartridge sold to a friend of the Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf.

It's truly a WIN/WIN for any business that purchases copier toner on a regular basis and would like to see some of the money they are spending support the students at Blossom.

To find out more about this innovative and cost-effective program, contact Mike Farrell at the Malvern Group at 727-446-1469 or visit www.tampabaytoner.com and click on quotes.

"I am only one, but I am still one. I cannot do everything, but I can still do something."

Helen Keller

Blossom Students Read for Dollars

This fall saw Blossom's students turn 60 books into more than \$800 in the 2010 Blossom Read-A-Thon.

The Read-A-Thon challenged students and families to read each day, emphasizing the importance of reading and learning. Students and classes were

challenged to read as many books as they could and secure sponsors for their reading from their family and friends.

Through their hard work, and some help from their parents, 60 books were read and \$830.60 was raised for Blossom classroom needs.

In first place, winning a pizza party, was the 3-6 classroom with \$400 raised. Second place went to the 9-12 classroom, third place to the 6-9 classroom, and fourth place to the 12-15 classroom. Dollars raised will be spent on technology and reading programs.





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OUR VISION

To be the premier education and communication center for families with deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the state of Florida.

How Can You Help Blossom's Students Succeed?



As a non-profit, Blossom is continually seeking financial support for:

- Scholarships for students in need.
- Enrichment activities for our students.
- Professional development scholarships for teacher training.
- Technology to enhance student learning.
- Volunteer support.
- In-kind contributions including van transportation.

To become a partner of the Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf and help give our children a chance, please contact Rich Engwall at 727-539-7879 or by e-mail at rengwall@blossomschool.org.

Blossom School, Inc. is a 501C3 organization. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800) 435-7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State. #CH27378