



Contact: Gretchen Wolfram
317/916-7304
317/255-2640 (home)

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Lilly Endowment's CAPE to cover more counties

Lilly Endowment has announced that its statewide, community-based education initiative called CAPE (Community Alliances to Promote Education) will be opened up to include more Indiana counties. At the same time, the current CAPE grantees in 44 counties will be offered an opportunity to sustain their successful CAPE programs. The Endowment expects to devote up to \$50.2 million to these new efforts.

Launched in 1999, CAPE was a complement to other Endowment efforts to raise the educational attainment levels of the state. It encouraged local community foundations to determine the most compelling education needs in their counties. They convened groups of citizens from all walks of life – government, human and social service organizations, business, labor and arts groups, and so forth – to identify and prioritize their local education needs and then come up with plans that would effectively address them.

Issued in three “installments” totaling \$186.5 million, CAPE was a competitive initiative that offered up to \$5 million for each county served. Residents across the age spectrum were benefited by programs focusing on literacy issues to lifelong learning and from reading deficiencies to computer skills.

One CAPE grantee devised a collaborative program that focuses on reading and literacy from kindergarten to third grade. Students (and their parents) can get extra help at schools, libraries, social service agencies, community centers all across the county.

(more)

CAPE
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Another grantee, in a county where the school districts cannot offer a full range of science courses or Advanced Placement courses, has established an all-purpose community center where high schoolers can take classes like physics via the Internet and adults can log on to take advantage of other educational opportunities. The center also offers lifelong learning opportunities for adults such as computer skills classes and GED courses.

Another grantee has trained enough care-givers to open two new preschools, set up a districtwide all-day kindergarten, established an alternative school and arranged a full series of adult education classes covering everything from financial management to Internet navigation and from GED classes to American sign language.

Each CAPE grantee participated in or facilitated an exhaustive, collaborative process to determine the education priorities for its county. So too will the community foundations applying for their first CAPE grants. Each interested community foundation is encouraged to canvass its county, convene interested citizens and gather the thoughts and suggestions of those in different areas of civic life. Through this collaborative effort, an assessment of the county's most compelling education needs should emerge. The Endowment then expects the CAPE applicants to propose promising strategies to address these needs.

For these community foundations new to the initiative (or charitable organizations the community foundations endorse), the Endowment offers two levels of grants: first, foundations in counties with populations of 50,000 or more will be eligible to apply for up to \$1.5 million per county served and second, foundations in counties with populations of less than 50,000 may apply for up to \$750,000 per county served. The Endowment expects to provide as many as 10 to 15 grants under this competitive component of CAPE.

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CAPE
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An information meeting for interested community foundation representatives from across the state will be held in early November.

The deadline for applying for new CAPE grants is April 30, 2005.

For the current CAPE grantees serving 44 Indiana counties, the Endowment offers a supplemental grant of \$800,000 per county served to help them sustain all or part of their successful CAPE programs. Programs in that initial effort have been largely effective and successful. Many grantees, however, have expressed a need for a little more time and resources to sustain the progress they have achieved. This component responds to that need.

June 30, 2005, is the final deadline for current CAPE grantees to submit their proposals, although the Endowment will accept proposals from foundations that are prepared to send in proposals before then. Although this component of CAPE is not competitive, funding is not guaranteed and only proposals that show promise will be approved.

“The Endowment is most pleased to be able to offer these new implementation and sustainability grants for CAPE programs,” said Sara B. Cobb, Endowment vice president for education. “Our experience with the first CAPE grants has been most gratifying. All across the state we see citizens getting together in their own communities and neighborhoods to do the difficult work of assessing their education needs and then doing the equally difficult task of finding and carrying out appropriate solutions. We want to help build on this momentum.

“The community foundations and their partners have forged successful efforts in raising community awareness about the importance of education – not only for individuals, but also for the communities and the whole state. They have formed partnerships that have had positive effects in many communities. All this comes at a time when it is becoming more and more obvious each day that education is absolutely pivotal in the future success of individuals and communities. It is in everyone’s interest to ensure the best education possible for all our citizens,” she said.