



## Foundation Forum

July 2008

This is a monthly newsletter to keep you updated on projects and initiatives of the Pinellas Education Foundation. Please forward this to anyone you feel would be interested in learning more about the Pinellas Education Foundation.

### Make Your Voice Heard and Your Vote Count

Join the Pinellas County Council of PTAs and the Pinellas Education Foundation for the 2008 **Pinellas County School Board Candidates Forum** at Osceola High School on Thursday, August 21, 2008. Doors will open at 6 p.m. with the program beginning at 6:30 p.m. The forum will consist of three moderated debates, one for each of the contested seats in the upcoming school board election. Candidates will be asked four questions and allowed equal response time. If you are interested in submitting questions in advance of the forum, you may do so by visiting <http://blogs.tampabay.com/schools/2008/07/got-questions.html>. A panel of representatives from host organizations will select questions from these submissions. Each candidate will also be allotted one minute for an introductory statement and one minute for closing. The Forum will be moderated by Al Ruechel from Bay News 9 and Tom Tobin from the St. Petersburg Times. Forum sponsors are BrightHouse Networks, the Pinellas County Council of PTAs, the Pinellas Education Foundation, the St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, the St. Petersburg Times, and WorkNet Pinellas

### A Salute to Sweetbay Supermarket



The Pinellas Education Foundation salutes [Sweetbay Supermarket](#), our corporate partner of the month for August, 2008. Sweetbay Supermarket opened its first store in Largo, Florida in November 2004 and today there are 107 stores in Florida. Under the leadership of Richard Lebrun, South Pinellas District Manager and Corporate Ambassador to the Pinellas Education Foundation, Sweetbay has demonstrated its generous support of public education in Pinellas County in a number of ways including:

- The “Round it Up” campaign for education raised nearly \$7,000 in support of Doorways Scholarships.
- Presenting Sponsorship of the 2008 & 2009 Career Education Breakfast, bringing together educators and industry to learn the latest emerging issues and trends.
- Sponsorship of the bi-monthly Pinellas Education Foundation 101 Sessions. Click [here](#) to join us for a delicious catered lunch at an upcoming session!

We are also thrilled to welcome Sweetbay to Enterprise Village this fall. Watch for details on the ribbon cutting ceremony, and for information on a second “Round it Up” campaign in September.

### Students First Alliance Proclaims Pinellas County’s High Drop-Out Rate a Crisis

The Students First Alliance is a coalition of parents and community leaders, led by the Pinellas Education Foundation. Alliance members include the WorkNet Pinellas, PACT, the Pinellas Education Foundation, and community leaders including Pinellas County Sheriff Jim Coats. The Alliance is calling for a shift to school-based management, placing much-needed resources directly in the hands of principals and teachers who most directly impact student performance.

According to the Alliance, students are dropping out of school in alarming numbers. Thousands of talented and caring teachers are frustrated that they cannot do more to help address the problem and inspire their students to learn. In a recent study by Johns Hopkins University, 62% of Pinellas County’s high schools have been classified as “drop-out factories” compared to a national average of only 12%. According to the Florida Department of Education and Pinellas County Schools, more students received a standard diploma in 1977 than in 2007, even though 5,000 more students attended the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2003 than in 1973.

That single group of lost students from the Class of 2007 represents lost revenue to Pinellas County Schools of more than \$59 million. The economic and social impact to our community is much greater. Education has entered an era of greater financial competition for tax revenues, because of social security and national health demands. In a growing anti-tax environment and in the midst of a slowing economy, reducing our drop out rate will add revenue to our tax base. In 2005, high school dropouts earned \$17,299 annually while high school graduates earned \$26,933 annually. Raising the skill level of our students will keep them in school, keep jobs here and attract new jobs to Pinellas County.

To find out more or to let us know your thoughts, visit [www.StudentsFirstPinellas.org](http://www.StudentsFirstPinellas.org) .

## A Salute to 100 Years

The Pinellas Education Foundation and the Pinellas County School Board recently recognized career educator and Doorways Scholarship sponsor, Mrs. Aileen Chapman, for a lifetime of service to the children of Pinellas County. Mrs. Chapman served as an elementary instrumental music teacher from 1951 until 1968 and recently celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. During her teaching career she taught strings, woodwinds and brass instruments. Thank you Mrs. Chapman for the thousands of young people whose lives you have touched.

## Corporate Ambassadors Make a Difference

Our Corporate Ambassador Program provides opportunities for individuals in businesses throughout Pinellas County to assist in the work of the Pinellas Education Foundation and support the students and educators of Pinellas County Schools. Our Corporate Ambassadors serve as advocates for public education in their various walks of life, assist the Foundation with its fundraising efforts, and carry information about our many programs into the community. Thank you to all of our Corporate Ambassadors and welcome to our newest Ambassadors.

New Corporate Ambassadors are:

Bobby Mitchell	Clearwater Threshers Baseball Club
Crystal Matina	Imperial Legal
Linda Manley	National Aviation Academy
Bob Bibeau	Sweetbay Supermarket
Jeff Baker	Progress Energy

## Visit Us and Learn How You Can Change a Life

The Pinellas Education Foundation changes lives through learning by supporting the following programs:

- Enterprise Village & Finance Park promoting free enterprise and financial education for 5th and 8th graders
- Doorways scholarships & mentoring opportunities for financially deserving students
- Frances Stavros Career Education Fund opportunities & the Jacobson Culinary Arts Academy
- College-bound scholarships for graduating high school seniors
- Pinellas County Outstanding Educator of the Year honoring the profession of teaching
- Teacher classroom grants that inspire innovative projects
- Walker's Rising Stars competition featuring talented high school students in the Arts
- Seniors & Scholars breakfast series and events benefiting our 55+ population

We offer one-hour informational sessions to help educate members of the community about the Pinellas Education Foundation and how our programs impact the teachers and students in Pinellas County public schools. These one hour educational sessions include a tour of our world-renowned program Enterprise Village. Won't you join us?

For information on session dates and times, or to schedule a session, contact Marilyn Browne at 727-522-4816 ext 30 or [brownem@pinellaseducation.org](mailto:brownem@pinellaseducation.org).

**The Pinellas Education Foundation is a member of the [Consortium of Florida Education Foundations](#) and the [National School Foundation Association](#).**

**The Pinellas Education Foundation would like to acknowledge the donors listed below for their contributions during the months of June 2008. If you would like to contribute to the work of the Pinellas Education Foundation, [please click here.](#)**

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