



**NEWS RELEASE:**

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**Catholic Foundation Grants Support Arts and Science Enrichment Programs in Diocese Schools**

Now more than ever, schools are fighting to keep students engaged and equipped for future success. Listening to music on tape does not compare to a live classical brass performance followed by a question-and-answer session with the musicians. A lecture-based biology lesson does not resonate as strongly as learning hands-on by dissecting a cow's eyeball. At Catholic schools across Dallas, students are participating in these and other arts and science enrichment activities, thanks to the generous donors of The Catholic Foundation.

The Catholic Foundation funds unique educational enrichment programs in several local Catholic schools. The Catholic Foundation has provided \$196,400 in grants to Big Thought since 2001 and \$89,900 in grants to the Perot Museum of Nature and Science and its predecessor (Museum of Nature and Science) since 2006. With these funds, teachers and administrators choose arts and science programs they would like to offer their students in alignment with academic areas.

"The Catholic Foundation is proud to step up and fill the gaps in our local Catholic schools with incredible programming from Big Thought and the Perot Museum of Nature and Science," said Matt Kramer, president. "Principals, teachers, students, parents and Foundation trustees who conduct site visits vouch for the value of these art and science programs in elevating our students' educational experience."

Kaitlyn Kramer, a kindergarten teacher at St. Mary of Carmel Catholic School in Dallas, schedules programs for both Big Thought and the Perot Museum of Nature and Science at her school. "Every teacher's goal is that students enjoy learning to increase their level of excitement and interest in education. These programs help us do that, and every student in our school is being touched in some capacity because of these partnerships," she said.

***Big Thought***

Big Thought serves Catholic schools through its ArtsPartners program, which gives students access to the wide variety of educational opportunities offered by the city's cultural organizations and helps educators build these learning experiences into their standard curriculum. The program, which includes a searchable online database of nearly 1,000 arts and cultural programs, has been shown to positively impact students' academic development in core subjects and attitude about school, decrease dropout rates and increase motivation.

At St. Augustine Catholic School, 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students are currently making class videos, taking on the entire process including planning, writing, acting and editing. Other classes are introduced to pottery, glass painting, musical performances and sewing.

"Generally these students don't have exposure to these types of activities. Because of these programs, many students discover a hidden talent, and they help with self esteem and confidence," said Lisa Mandac, a 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>-grade teacher.

Earlier this fall, St. Mary of Carmel Catholic School utilized a Big Thought professional storyteller to model storytelling to parents and empower them with tools to use at home. They also leverage the partnership for ballet performances and interactive workshops.

### ***Perot Museum of Nature and Science***

The Perot Museum of Nature and Science, whose mission is to inspire minds through nature and science, has brought science programming to more than 8,000 students served by The Catholic Foundation grant since the 2006-2007 school year. The programming helps students in Pre-Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade connect with scientific concepts and principles, inspiring them to improve their understanding of science while discovering a passion for pursuing these areas of study. The Museum offers 24 different classroom and lab-based programs that span the fields of Earth, Physical, Life and Applied sciences for students ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

“We are thankful to The Catholic Foundation for their continued support and partnership in inspiring the next generation of scientists, technologists, engineers, and mathematicians,” said Nicole Small, Eugene McDermott Chief Executive Officer of the Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

Kim Nguyen, a 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade teacher at St. Joseph Catholic School in Richardson, has used the grant for “in-school” field trips, where the Museum comes to her classroom three times a year for hands-on enrichment activities, like a recent program on the three types of matter.

“The school has limited funding for field trips, so this grant basically provides an opportunity for my students to experience the excitement and wonder of science in action. It teaches them concepts they can apply to their own lives,” said Nguyen.

St. Augustine Catholic School received a visit from the Museum’s mobile planetarium, which Diane Eaker, a 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher, said the kids loved. She also said the kids are still talking about the cow’s eyeball they dissected last year.

“Our students would never have access to these phenomenal programs if not for the grant,” said Eaker.

### ***The Catholic Foundation***

Twice yearly, The Catholic Foundation provides grants to organizations that demonstrate the ability to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the Catholic community throughout the Diocese of Dallas. A Distribution Committee conducts site visits, reports and ultimately decides on the recipients and amounts of each grant. Grants are made from the unrestricted Philanthropy Fund as well as restricted funds established through the Foundation by individuals or families, named or otherwise, to benefit their communities today and for future generations.

The Foundation’s next grant ceremony will be held on Nov. 20 at Holy Trinity Community Life Center.

Chartered in 1955, The Catholic Foundation was founded by a group of dedicated Catholic laymen with a vision that extended far beyond the charitable needs of the moment. This independent, nonprofit corporation has dedicated its resources to compassionate charitable giving through grants provided by benefactors through its many planned giving programs. Over the years, the Foundation has provided \$78 million through grants to various religious, educational and charitable organizations.

### ***Sidebar:***

***Below is a list of schools that have benefitted from Big Thought and/or Perot Museum of Nature and Science enrichment programming thanks to The Catholic Foundation***

- Bishop Dunne Catholic School
- Bishop Lynch Catholic High School
- Good Shepherd Catholic School
- Holy Family of Nazareth School
- Immaculate Conception School
- James L. Collins Catholic School
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help School
- Santa Clara of Assisi Catholic School
- St. Augustine Catholic School
- St. Bernard Clairvaux Catholic School
- St. Cecilia Catholic School
- St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic School
- St. Joseph Catholic School-Richardson
- St. Joseph Catholic School-Waxahachie
- St. Luke Catholic School
- St. Mary's Catholic School (Sherman)
- St. Mary of Carmel Catholic School
- St. Philip the Apostle Catholic School

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