

Appleseed This Week

eNewsletter - August 6, 2009



A nonprofit network of 16 public interest justice centers in the U.S. and Mexico, Appleseed is dedicated to building a society in which opportunities are genuine, access to justice is universal and equal, and government advances the public interest.

QUICK LINKS

[Appleseed Website](#)

[Subscribe to ATW](#)

[Archive](#)

[Donate](#)

[More About Us](#)

[Publications](#)

**New Ways to
Support
Appleseed!**

Appleseed is now a

New Grant Propels Education Reform

150K to Address Opportunity Gap and Parent Involvement

Appleseed will continue to advance educational quality and equity in communities across the country, thanks to a generous grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

A major funder of Appleseed's education policy program since 2006, the Mott Foundation approved our most recent request for \$150,000. The grant will fund continued work on [parental involvement](#) as it relates to provisions of No Child Left Behind, as well as resource equity within school districts.

The latter project, "Erasing the Opportunity Gap," focuses on the uneven distribution of resources within single districts, a phenomenon that causes the respective quality of education in well-off and poor neighborhoods to diverge sharply. This disparity is reflected in such things as Advanced Placement course offerings; the assignment of principals, teachers and guidance counselors; and the age and re-conditioning of school buildings.

According to Edwin Darden, Appleseed's Director of Education Law and Policy, when the best resources are persistently allocated to more affluent areas in a school district, inequity becomes a repeating pattern locked in over decades. The result is an opportunity gap that finds some students receiving an inferior education simply because of their zip code. Appleseed seeks to engage the issue in a three-step process:

1. Identify the extent of the problem by highlighting disparities over a three-year sample period.
2. Identify those "mobilization moments" when community organizations ought to be present at the table (but usually are not) to better represent economically poor and politically powerless individuals.
3. In conjunction with existing local and national organizations, advocate through Appleseed Centers

member of two combined giving campaigns: United Way of the National Capital Area (UWNCA) and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

Both campaigns kick off in September.

Please make a note of the Appleseed designation codes below.

UNWCA: 9639

CFC: 10758

and the National Office to enact change.

Appleseed Centers participating in the "Opportunity Gap" project include Alabama, Chicago, Connecticut, Georgia and New Mexico. A total of \$100,000 from the Mott grant will be applied to this project network-wide.

The remaining \$50,000 will allow Appleseed to continue its long-running parental involvement project, which seeks to boost student achievement by helping public schools better engage parents - particularly those in low-income communities - in their children's education.

Portions of the Mott funding will be awarded to Centers in Chicago, Connecticut, Georgia, New Mexico and Texas to further parent involvement efforts in each of those regions. Appleseed is grateful for the generosity of the Mott Foundation and looks forward to continued efforts at ensuring a quality education for all children.