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Join the ISM Foundation!

We are looking for folks who would like to become involved for the 2009-2010 school year.

- **Become a member of the ISM Foundation Board**
- **Become a Classroom Champion**

The Foundation meets on the first Saturday of every month at 9:00AM at MY Museum, 425 Washington Street in Monterey.

How To Give

The International School of Monterey is a 501(3)(c) non-profit organization. As such 100% of your financial contributions may be tax deductible. 501(3)(c) Tax ID# 74-3062542.

Please make checks payable to ISM Foundation, and mail to P.O. Box 711, Monterey, CA 93940. You may also leave contributions in the black box in the office at the school.

If you would prefer, we are now able to accept contributions online using Paypal at www.ismonterey.org. Make a one time payment, or if it's more convenient, you can now make a monthly contribution on your credit card.

Money orders and cash contributions are always welcome as well!

And don't forget, no amount is too small...or too big!

If you attended the Budget Townhall meeting in April, you know that the school funding situation at the state level has become dire. If you were not able to attend the meeting, you should know that ISM was directly affected by the recent state cuts. As a result, our 2008-09 funding has been cut by \$150,000! We expect this trend to continue through the 2009-10 school year as well.

As a result of the funding cuts, the gap between what the state provides and what ISM programs cost has grown from approximately \$1500 per student to approximately \$1800 per student. This is the first time, in the history of the school, that the amount has been raised, and we all know the school is worth it! In spite of these cuts in State funding, we are still offering our students Spanish, art, music, drama, physical education and a myriad of other amazing benefits.

Remember that the fiscal year is not over until June 30th, so anything that your family can do to help us through the end of *this* fiscal year, would be greatly appreciated!

But please do not think that all the news is dire! In the face of this tough economic year, we can celebrate some great successes.

This year, we have had **the highest level of participation EVER with 82% of our families giving**. With the tremendous work of the Classroom Champions, we hope to reach 100% participation next year!

We are also proud to announce that together, **we have raised \$338,000 this fiscal year** to support the programs that ISM offers!

Another amazing success this year - **we had many families exceed their Family Share amount**, helping other less fortunate families support the ISM education. This is the spirit of community that we embrace at ISM! Thank you to all those philanthropists.

Although the gap in State funding has increased to \$1800 per student for the 2009-10 school year, we hope that families will put ISM at the top of their charitable giving lists, and give as meaningful a gift as they are able. Our children's education is well worth it.

Thank you for all that you have done to help us have such a successful year!

The ISM Foundation Team

May Donor Profile

Every month we will feature comments from a family who has made contributing to the ISM Foundation a priority.



Wendy Bluhm & Scott Shillcock - "Supporting ISM During Difficult Times"

Wendy Bluhm works as a Realtor at Bratty and Bluhm Real Estate in Pacific Grove. Her husband, Scott Shillcock, works as a Simulation Engineer contracted with the Department of Defense. Wendy's son Spiro Pettas, 6th grade, has attended ISM since 1st grade. Her daughter Jordan Shillcock is very excited to be entering the ISM kindergarten class this fall.

I learned about the International School of Monterey (ISM) almost eight years ago, when my son Spiro was in kindergarten at Forest Grove School in Pacific Grove. I was managing an apartment building, and one day I processed a lease application for an ISM teacher.

I had never heard of ISM, which was relatively new at that time. I was so intrigued when the teacher described the philosophy of the school! Even though I was happy with Forest Grove, I felt that ISM's international focus sounded wonderful, and I put Spiro on the waiting list.

By first grade, he was in, and I have been an active school volunteer ever since. I have had six years to observe and appreciate how volunteers have enriched our children's education. I do wholeheartedly believe that volunteers are crucial to our school's success.

For several years, I was a single mom with a full time job. Initially, volunteering seemed impossible because I couldn't make it into the classroom. My previous exposure to school volunteering gave me the impression that classroom volunteer time was what was needed.

The Family Association helped me figure out how I could contribute time in other ways. Looking back, I feel that if they hadn't guided me, I would have struggled to work out alternatives to the classroom.

I was guided to volunteer at events like such as the gala, field day, the international festival - anything I could do in bulk! I also served as a room-parent entirely by email (an e-parent!). I am now the chair of the Family Association and will chair the group again next year.

If you find yourself struggling to figure out how to fit volunteer hours into your work and family schedule, I encourage you to contact us at the Family Association. Just call me at 277-8210, and I'll give you details.

There are many opportunities that will leverage your talents and time - without requiring you to be at the school during they day. For example you can help grade homework (at your home). You can label books for the library (at your home!)

Committed as I am to volunteering, I would like to make the point that, while donating your time is golden, it does not pay the bills.

I have heard people say "My volunteer hours are my contribution to the school."

As important as volunteer hours are, they do not pay the Spanish teacher or fix the copy machine. It is family financial contributions to ISM's Foundation - not volunteer time - that fill the gap in our budget between what we get from the state and what our programs actually cost.

I take seriously my responsibility to contribute my family's share of that gap. I also want to make it easier for other ISM families to make their contribution, so last year, I decided to contribute \$500 to ISM whenever I closed a purchase or sale of a piece of real estate for someone affiliated with the ISM community.

The donation goes to the school in the name of my client. Also, if an ISM family refers a client to me for a real estate transaction, and there is a successful closing, I will donate the funds in the name of the referring family.

This year, I am increasing that donation to \$800, since the gap between our budget and ADA income has increased.

This year so far, 82% of ISM families have donated to the ISM foundation to support the school's programs. I am so proud of those families who understand the importance of this financial participation!

It really give me hope that the rest of the ISM community will find a way to contribute some amount that they can afford so we can get to the 100% participation that we really should have by the end of the school year.

-Wendy and Scott-