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Connecting Triton with world via digital projectors

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BYFIELD — Driven by the goal of bringing digital projectors to students in the middle and high schools, the Triton Education Foundation Connect Triton group is determined to raise \$120,000 to put this powerful technology in all classrooms by the end of the year, bringing the outside world into the classrooms.

"Triton teachers do a wonderful job in our classrooms, but there are tremendous teaching tools on the Internet that they cannot access and use," said Joann Anderson, Triton Connect's chairwoman. "By installing digital projectors in all 72 classrooms, we will bring the far-flung resources of the Internet to our students, allowing access to information anywhere on the globe and opening the lines of communication and collaboration with students and experts all around the world."

Once installed, the technology will be used on a daily basis for sharing schedules, lessons, visiting websites, collaborating and publishing. "Really, the list is endless and only limited by time in class," Anderson said.

Ask Shirley Faulkner or Ann Welch, middle school foreign language teachers, how this technology has changed their classrooms, and they can't stop talking about the positive aspects of it. Faulkner and Welch's classrooms both received digital projectors last year, courtesy of TEF.

"One of the best things about the projector is that we can virtually go somewhere every day," Faulkner said. "I have taken students on virtual tours of all the major art museums in the world, we have used live maps to examine the countries we are studying, and in reviewing how to tell time in French, we went to a site with a live shot of the Eiffel Tower at night — bringing the time zone difference to life with an image. This is an awesome teaching tool!"

Faulkner and Welch also use the technology tool to augment lesson plans with live Web shots, and frequent a site called www.teachertube.com that lets them show students content in both Spanish and French that matches the subject they are working on. Sites that are companions to the textbooks used in class provide additional material for the teachers to use as reinforcement of a particular area of study, or provide extended lessons for those students who require additional reinforcement.

"The excitement the students demonstrate when using this new tool is priceless," Faulkner said. "Students are so at home in the computer world; by augmenting their learning in the classroom with the projector, we can achieve deeper and more meaningful connections to our curriculum."

Right now only a small fraction of rooms have projectors. The Triton Connect team has received bids to outfit the remaining 44 projectors at the high school and 28 at the middle school with the new technology. Digital projectors will be installed as funds are available, instead of waiting for the entire \$120,000 to be raised.

"We are seeking funds from across the community from individuals, local foundations and businesses, as well as writing grants and sponsoring activities to make this important endeavor become a reality for all," Anderson said. "A donation of \$1,600 will connect one classroom."

Fundraising events, such as the current raffle for Patriots tickets and a night's stay at a Marriott, will be ongoing all year long. The raffle is open to all. Just send \$10, or three tickets for \$25, with the following information: name, phone number, e-mail address and a check made out to the Triton Education Foundation for the number of tickets desired. Drawing will be on Nov. 27. Raffle money and/or additional donations should be sent to: Triton Education Foundation Inc., P.O. Box 752, Rowley, MA 01969. Visit www.tritonedfoundation.org for additional information.

"This is a great opportunity to make a substantial difference in augmenting learning for our students and making the classrooms more dynamic and hands-on," Anderson said. "We are excited to bring this technology to Triton and let the world and unprecedented amounts of information in."

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