

Phillips County Family Education Services receives El Pomar grant

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

- Phillips County Family Education Services (PCFES) received \$16,667 in a grant awarded by El Pomar Foundation's Northeast Regional Council. They are one of 16 nonprofit organizations that were granted a total of \$188,000 in a presentation in Sterling on Tuesday, March 3.
- PCFES, located in Holyoke, is a county service program that provides low-income adults educational opportunities and family literacy programs.
- Kindra Plumb, PCFES' executive director, said the grant money will be used to enhance their facility's technology capabilities. "Our main focus is to provide a functional computer lab."
- The grant will allow them to purchase new computers as well as provide for tech support, set-up costs and training. Plumb said they plan to work with Computers Etc. to do computer training with staff and possibly with students. It is important to get the staff up-to-date on technology so the new computers can be fully utilized, said Plumb.
- In planning a move to the new building at the Phillips County Fairgrounds, PCFES wants to update their computers now so the technology will be up and running when they move to the new computer lab at the facility. Plumb noted it will be beneficial to have a separate room for the computers apart from the regular classroom.
- The new computers are "building blocks for the future," said Plumb. While the computers are only used for PCFES classes now, Plumb hopes down the road they can offer public computer classes at the new computer lab. "The possibilities are open," said Plumb. "The entire community can benefit from the technology."
- Plumb noted PCFES students use the computers for the internet as well as basic computer programs like Microsoft Word. She said, "We do want to use technology in the classroom, especially for the parents because their kids use it in school." PCFES aims to "equip parents with all the right tools to help their children succeed in school," said Plumb. Knowing how to use computers properly will help parents support their children in their education as technology is becoming more important in schools today.
- In dealing with the internet, PCFES classes not only cover the basics but also issues with internet security. They want parents and children to know how to use the internet safely.
- After applying for the El Pomar grant, Plumb said it was an interesting and unique process. PCFES teamed with the family literacy programs from Northeastern Junior College and Morgan Community College. After assessing their programs, they found that the one thing they all could use funding for was technology.
- Representatives from the three groups prepared a presentation for El Pomar's Northeast Regional Council which is made up of local community members from northeast Colorado. Plumb said the presentation aspect of the grant application was different from other grants for which she has applied. She also noted that since the council was located in northeast Colorado, the members were more familiar with the needs of this area.
- PCFES received a regular grant of \$8,334 plus a matching grant of the same amount. Northeastern Junior College and Morgan Community College also received grants for their family literacy programs at Tuesday's presentation.

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