



Helping Teachers and Students

Mrs. Owens, Nystrom Elementary

My name is Mrs. Owens, and I'm a second grade teacher at Nystrom Elementary School in Richmond, California. My favorite part about teaching is the students and learning from my students about their lives, about their experiences, about the world. Educational supplies are very important in my experience. On a general basis, teachers pay between \$200 and \$400 a year for supplies from their own income. A few years ago I learned about DonorsChoose.

Carolina Martin, DonorChoose.org

DonorChoose.org is an online charity that supports teachers across America where teachers can post proposals and request microscopes, books, library materials – any kind of teaching resource material that they might need.

Mrs. Owens

Ever since I learned about DonorsChoose, I've been writing grants on a regular basis, and this year there were matching funds from Chevron. They matched 50 percent of the grants that were paid.

Carolina Martin

It's really exciting about Chevron, and that they've really stepped forward and said, 'We're going to fund half of projects – basically match projects – where we operate,' and focusing K through 12 science, technology, engineering and math and taking a bite into education and saying, 'We're committed.'

Mrs. Owens

So included in the matching grant funds that I got from Chevron were place-value flip charts, and they're aligned with the "Number of the Day" program that we received through the grant. They love anything they can touch and manipulate. Then finally I asked for a butterfly project, which was raising butterflies in the classroom. And we've done that over the last month and a half, and the students have just been mesmerized by the process – the cycle of the butterfly's life and connecting it to the cycle of life and the cycle of animals. I think I've had more "aha" moments in this classroom since we've had more hands-on material and newer material. The children are so thrilled to have these items in their classroom. My class has a level of community that has really surprised me and thrilled me, and in the future, when they become successful or – or just in their lives – when someone needs something, to give it back, to pay it back and that that process will continue, that cycle will continue even with their children and the children beyond them.