

## RAISE A GLASS TO WITS

On Monday, October 18, 2004, Grace Family Vineyards and Chef Charlie Trotter partnered together to celebrate the work of WITS in an intimate dinner party at the home of Abby O'Neil and Carroll Joynes. This second Grace Wine and Charlie Trotter dinner party was an even bigger success than the inaugural event held in 2003.

Renowned for donating rare, expensive wines to fundraising causes around the world, Dick and Ann Grace of Grace Family Vineyards in Napa Valley toasted the WITS organization and its numerous volunteers. "I'm so glad that we can play a part in helping out such a worthwhile organization," said Dick. "This dinner is a wonderful way of gathering generous individuals who really care about WITS, its volunteers, and its students. Not only are they enjoying an excellent dinner among friends, but they also benefit from knowing their generous contributions are helping numerous Chicago children in need."

Dick Grace donated three bottles of Grace Family Vineyards wine to the silent auction following the dinner. Adding a special touch to these bottles, a student from Jordan Elementary School custom designed each of the labels. Chef Charlie Trotter graciously donated staff, food, linens, silverware, and plates and treated the 37 guests to an eight-course meal.

The success of this unique wine and food benefit was due in large part to the tireless efforts of WITS Board Co-Chairs Ginny and Roger Carlson. "Participating in this event is such a rewarding experience for Ginny and me," said Roger. "Not only is it a lot of fun to plan, but it's also wonderful knowing that all of our efforts are paying off for these kids. The added bonus was having a WITS-tutored student and her teacher present. It's a perfect reminder of why we've all come together in the first place."

Before the dinner began, the teacher, Sharon Ponder from Brown Elementary School, and one of her students shared their positive experiences with a WITS Classroom Assistant with all of the guests.

Raising nearly \$140,000 for WITS – an impressive \$30,000 more than the prior year's event – the Grace Wine and Charlie Trotter dinner event proved again to be a huge success. The Graces and Chef Trotter have already begun planning the third and final event, which will take place again in October.



Charlie Trotter's Chefs



From left to right, Roger Carlson, Student from Brown Elementary, Dick Grace, Sharon Ponder, Charlie Trotter

### REPORT CARD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# of volunteers	<b>1,688</b>
# of partnering organizations	<b>40</b>
# of bus routes	<b>33</b>
# of schools	<b>31</b>

# GIFT REPORT

WITS is deeply grateful for the generous contributions of our donors. Your support of the WITS tutoring and mentoring programs is critical to our success in serving children in the Chicago Public Schools.

**Below is a list of WITS supporters from September 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005.** Due to space limitations, we are listing contributions above \$200. Please know that all donors' names will appear in the WITS annual report and accept our heartfelt gratitude.

WITS sincerely regrets any omissions or misspellings. In the event of an error, please call us at 312.368.9487 to allow us to make the necessary correction.

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UBS

# U-BEE-S STINGS ITS COMPETITION AT THE 2ND ANNUAL WITS CORPORATE SPELLING BEE



*Celebrity Judges: Stephanie Averill, Donna LaPietra, Ramsey Lewis, Scott Turow*



*Bee Winners: Bill Kurtis, Scott Turow, Tim Shields, Scott Pfister, Chris Walquist, Stephanie Averill, Donna LaPietra, Ramsey Lewis*



*Pronouncer Bill Kurtis*



*"Best Dressed" Peter Thompson, Mellody Hobson, Matt McGuire*



On March 3, seven teams of buzzing bees gathered for the second annual WITS Corporate Spelling Bee to benefit Working in the Schools (WITS).

Competition among teams was fierce but, in the end, the U-Bee-S team took home first place honors. Vying back and forth for second and third place trophies were the Chicago Tribune and Ariel Capital Management Bee Hive teams. But after a number of close rounds, the Chicago Tribune team finally stung its competition, coming in second place.

In addition to first place bragging rights, the UBS team won a year's worth of school supplies for the Chicago Public School classroom of their choice. Medill Elementary School is this year's lucky school as it is the site for UBS' Power Lunch program; 52 employees read with Medill 3rd graders every Tuesday. The school supplies were generously donated in a school supply drive conducted by the Association of Legal Administrators (more information on the supply drive can be found in the article below).

Bill Kurtis was at the top of his game in his second appearance as Pronouncer for the Bee. Also returning to the Bee for their second year

were producer and special "Queen Bee" Donna LaPietra, best selling novelist Scott Turow, and City of Chicago Beekeeper Stephanie Averill. Making his Bee debut, renowned jazz musician Ramsey Lewis served as the fourth celebrity WITS Corporate Spelling Bee judge.

Not only were the judges responsible for monitoring and guiding the Bee, but they were also charged with dispensing awards for the 'Best Dressed,' 'Most Popular,' and 'Miss/Mr. Congeniality' Bee Hives. 'Best Dressed' went to Ariel Capital Management, 'Most Popular' was awarded to City Hall, and the 'Miss/Mr. Congeniality' award went to the charming, albeit not terribly high scoring, Humana team. LaSalle Bank and Goldman Sachs also spelled off in this year's Bee.

Thanks to the in-kind donations of UBS, guests cheered on their favorite teams after swarming the grilled cheese, peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, and rice krispie treats at the beautiful UBS Conference Center.

To UBS, the team of celebrity judges, and all seven Bee Hive teams, WITS is forever G-R-A-T-E-F-U-L and already looking forward to the third annual Corporate Spelling Bee next year!

## HOLIDAY CHEER



*Top: ALA Holiday Party*

*Above: From left to right, Tim Shields, UBS Winning Speller, Ms. Butler, Medill Teacher, Mr. Metz, Medill Principal*

As part of its Annual Community Challenge Project, the Greater Chicago Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) chose to partner with WITS this year. This global initiative encourages the worldwide law firm community to positively impact the lives of those less fortunate through community enrichment programs.

Many ALA member firms participated in a month-long school supply drive, collecting approximately \$5,000 worth of notebooks, folders, pencils, arts and crafts supplies and much more, to be donated to WITS for distribution. When presented with a box brimming with supplies for her classroom, one grateful teacher remarked, "I never thought I would cry over #2 pencils!"

WITS was able to use six boxes full of these school supplies for the 2nd Annual Corporate Spelling Bee Grand Prize. When UBS

placed first, they awarded their Power Lunch classroom at Medill Elementary with school supplies for an entire year.

In addition, the ALA hosted a holiday party for the benefit of both Perspectives School students and the adult artists from the Arts of Life Center. As part of the community service enrichment curriculum at Perspectives, 8th grade students have spent the first part of the school year making bi-monthly field trips to Arts of Life, Inc. Studio, a non-profit arts studio that provides a workspace for artists with developmental disabilities.

Finally, the Chicago Chapter of ALA made a \$1,000 cash donation to WITS. The ALA salutes WITS and congratulates the ongoing efforts of the Perspectives students' commitment to community outreach programs.

## STAYING HOME TO BENEFIT WITS

- What:** 2nd Annual Stay at Home and Read a Good Book non-event  
**Date:** December 2004  
**Time:** Whenever convenient  
**Attire:** Comfortable (pajamas, socks, sweatshirts)  
**Why:** To benefit WITS



It was an event unlike any other—not only could those attending wear whatever they wanted, they could also read whenever it was convenient. And the options for dinner were endless—some ate steak, others ate lasagna. But the highlight of the WITS winter “non-event” was “staying home to read a good book.”

In preparation for the big event, guests visited bookstores or local libraries to choose the right book. Some attendees chose old classics like “To Kill a Mockingbird” while others opted for “Wicked,” in honor of the WITS spring event.

According to one Stay at Home and Read a Good Book attendee, “This event was so convenient for us! Not only did

I not have to buy a new dress, but I also didn’t have to coordinate a babysitter and spend a night away from home. Events don’t get much more flexible than this!”

While WITS donors around Chicago stayed home, WITS students and volunteers benefited from new books, supplies and valued transportation to and from the schools we serve. In the end, the 2nd Annual “Stay Home and Read a Good Book non-event” raised more than \$30,000! Thank you for staying home and making a difference in the lives of Chicago Public School children.

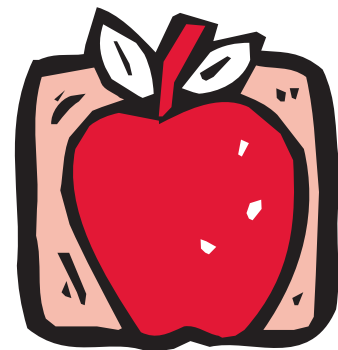


On Monday, December 20, 2004, UBS invited members of the non-profit community to a grant award luncheon featuring Maggie Daley as the keynote speaker. WITS was one of 40 agencies to receive funding from UBS.

**We thank UBS for their on-going support.**

## WITS BENEFITS FROM COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

Deb DeHaas, Deloitte Regional Managing Partner, Strategic Client Services presented WITS President Ron Sonenthal with a Community Impact Award for his outstanding community involvement, passion, excellence, and leadership. The award money was then graciously donated to WITS by Deloitte in honor of Ron. *We thank Deloitte for their generosity and Ron for his commitment!*



## WITS VOLUNTEER PROFILE: JAY ROSENBLOOM



Jay Rosenbloom has worked as a market manager for the Chicago Board of Exchange (CBOE) for 20 years. Through CBOE, Jay has volunteered as a mentor in WITS' Workplace Mentoring program for five years with students at Drake Elementary, at 2722 South King

### What motivated you to become a WITS volunteer?

A close friend of mine volunteered for a similar program and found the experience very fulfilling, so when I first heard about WITS, I thought I would give it a try. I really enjoy working with kids, so I've greatly enjoyed being a mentor.

### What activities do you focus on with your students?

The primary activity that I work on with my student, Ashley Willis, is reading. I have also tried to supplement the reading cards with current event articles from the newspapers. We also spend time each session discussing the school and family activities she is participating in.

### Is the program rewarding for you?

Yes, the program is very rewarding. Just being able to bring the students to the CBOE is a great facet of Workplace Mentoring. They get to see where the people that mentor them work and they get a positive change of scenery. It's really fun to see their faces as they take it all in. I met my wife in college and we've been married more than 16 years. Kathy is a physician, specializing in Allergy and Asthma. We have three daughters; Lindsay (13), Haley (11), and Mallory (8), and we live in Highland Park.

### What book is on your nightstand right now?

I am currently reading *The Broker* by John Grisham.

### What advice would you give children today?

I would recommend that children read anything they can get their hands on. Books, magazines, and newspapers help kids expand their horizons so much. I believe everyone should set goals and strive to achieve them. Once you reach your goals, make new ones.

### What advice would you give other mentors?

I would tell all mentors to recommend the WITS program to friends and fellow workers. Once you get involved, it is a great experience to be a mentor. Sometimes I think I get more out of it than my student does!

### CBOE Workplace Mentoring Snapshot:

- CBOE has been involved with Workplace Mentoring for five years.
- A total of 37 volunteers from CBOE are participating in the Workplace Mentoring program this 2004–2005 school year.
- Volunteers work with students in fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh grades from Drake Public School.
- According to last year's program evaluation, Workplace Mentoring students were all African-American (100%), male and female evenly split (51% and 49%) who came from low-income families (94.6% qualified for free lunches).
- Evaluation results show that 85% of all students mentored by CBOE volunteers improved their ITBS reading raw score between 2003 and 2004.

## We Moved!

WITS is thrilled to announce that we recently moved to a new location! Our new address in Chicago's downtown is:

200 West Adams, Suite 1205  
Chicago, IL 60606

Our new phone number is 312/368-9487 (WITS) and fax is 312/368-7011.



### New Corporate Partners:

WITS would like to welcome tag, ltd. as our newest corporate partner.  
Thank you for your commitment.

**CLICK HERE!**

Do you want to receive our newsletter via email?  
Send your email address to  
[jen@witsontheweb.org](mailto:jen@witsontheweb.org).

We at WITS extend our most heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Richard Gottlieb, a dedicated volunteer who passed away this February. Along with his students and teachers at Schiller School, we will miss him dearly. WITS is truly honored to be the recipient of the many recent contributions in his honor.



**WORKING IN THE SCHOOLS**

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*Working In The Schools (WITS), a tutoring and mentoring program involving community members, area businesses and local high school students, provides volunteers to support the education and development of children in the Chicago Public Schools.*

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