



**SPECIAL EDITION:
ROCK STAR WINNERS
OF OUR
IDEA OF THE YEAR
CONTEST**

**Jostens Renaissance Review
Rock Star Edition
May 14, 2009**

ROCK STARS ANNOUNCED

- Winners of our Idea of the Year contest

YOUR IDEAS

- Winners Ideas

Jostens Renaissance is pleased to announce the winners of our Idea of the Year contest.

Our winning idea is from **Linda Merrill and Patrick Lagace of Keene High School in Keene, NH**. For submitting the winning idea, they will be our guests at the 2009 JostensRenaissance National Conference including airfare, hotel, registration, limousine transportation and a VIP dinner and VIP seating.

Our Runner-Up idea is from **Melanie Lindsey of Foothill Technology High School in Ventura, CA**. For submitting the runner-up idea Melanie will receive free airfare, hotel and registration to the National Conference.

Honorable mention goes to **Dawn Powers of Middleburg High School in Middleburg, FL** and **Debra Summers of Timberland High School in St. Stephen, SC**. Each will receive a free registration to the National Conference.

Thanks go to everyone who took the time to submit an idea. They are all winners as they are making a difference at your school.

Enjoy the end of your school year and we'll see you in Orlando!

Your Ideas

The Winning JRR Idea - Graduating with Honor - Cords!

*Linda Merrill and Patrick Lagace
Keene High School
Keene, New Hampshire*

Graduation is the highlight for every senior and for every high school. Part of the pageantry of graduation is seeing students adorning their gowns with honor cords that they have earned through hard work. Most schools will award honor cords to a very small percentage of only the highest achieving students. At Keene High School we have embraced the Jostens Renaissance philosophy by allowing more students to receive honor cords at graduation. And the selection process is really simple yet very rewarding.

Each department sets their own criteria for their departmental honor cords. We have 14 different departments each with their own criteria. Here's a compilation of examples for criteria that are commonly used:

- 4-5 on A.P. test
- Grade of B better in at least three departmental classes
- Participant on the Math/Environmental science team for two years
- Marked improvement in GPA the last two years in departmental courses
- Tutored students who have struggled in classes, i.e. Math, Science, Writing skills

Each department's criterion is posted in the front window of each departmental office.

Each department decides on their honor cord color. Students receive their honor cords as they line up for graduation and each department head places the honor cord on the student. (We use an overhead in the staging area and list each department's honor cord winners. We do one department at a time. The excitement and clapping is more than you would ever expect).

This is our first year with this program. We graduated 425 seniors and 145 students received honor cords. This is above and beyond the National Honor Society Honor cords. Our graduation program has a code by the name of each honor cord winner and the department they received the cord from. The honor cord colors and departments are also listed on the program.

Also, each department marches into the graduation ceremony with their cap and gown plus their department's honor cord. We had 132 staff at the graduation ceremony all in caps and gowns!

Our parents thought this was the greatest thing they had ever seen. We had some students with 6 cords, some with 2 and a lot with one. We checked the list the next day and over half had never been recognized before for any academic achievements.

If you want to promote academic excellence to the community and students this is a venue you should not pass up!

For more information about Graduation With Honor - Cords! contact Al Chmiel at achmiel@sau29.org



Runner Up JRR Idea - Take Flight

Ms. Melanie Lindsey

Foothill Technology High School

Ventura, CA

Take FLIGHT, Helping your non-Renaissance Students Achieve Academic Success

At Foothill Technology High School, there has been growing concern to include all students in our Renaissance system.

It seems semester after semester the same kids don't "make Renaissance" and are feeling alienated on our campus.

We decided we wanted to have something for everyone and came up with the concept of FLIGHT. FLIGHT includes all students on our campus that are currently not included on the Renaissance list and provides an opportunity for them to feel a sense of academic achievement.

"FLIGHT" is a new subsection of the Renaissance program that is in place at FTHS. "FLIGHT" is geared to reach the bottom 30% of our student population; those not on Renaissance - yet. Many of these students have never felt academic pride, have never been celebrated for "academics." It is our goal to provide specific scaffolding and rewards to those students in this bottom 30% who might otherwise never experience what academic achievement feels like.

In addition, we strive to create meaningful relationships with these students and staff members so these students know we are behind them 100% and believe they can do it.

FLIGHT incentives include:

- A card with 12 slots on it which teachers sign when students earn an A, a B or make an improvement. Once the card is filled it is submitted for a drawing or prize. Students can fill multiple cards in a quarter.
- Relationship Building with staff members
 - Assistant Principals hold one on one meetings on a bi-weekly basis with ALL students who have dropped a full grade point.
 - Counselors hold one on one meetings monthly with their 25 students who are closest to making Renaissance to give them that extra little push they may need.
 - Class advisors meet with and provide incentives for the 25 students whose GPAs are the lowest in the class.
- All 9th graders receive a FLIGHT card 1st semester so that they are immediately part of the academic culture.
- The first four students to fill their FLIGHT card this semester will receive two tickets to Disneyland.
- FLIGHT co-coordinator sends out FLIGHT plans biweekly to all staff involved with the reward for the week.
 - Week one was kudos for attendance with stickers reading "I will try my best to show what it means to persevere and what it means to be strong".
 - Week three was smencils (a pencil made from recycled paper that has a smell to it - bubblegum, grape, etc.) for all students with two or more signatures on their FLIGHT cards

So far we have seen an amazing response from students with the implementation of FLIGHT. One of our teachers overheard a FLIGHT student as she returned to class after meeting with her Assistant Principal and said, "I'm so excited, Mrs. Duston is my academic cheerleader!"

For more information about FLIGHT! contact Melanie Lindsey at Melanie.Lindsey@venturausd.org

Honorable Mention JRR Idea - Great Expectations

Dawn Powers

Middleburg High School

Middleburg, FL

The students at our high school sometimes need a reminder that there have been many students who have been successful that graduated from Middleburg High School. Our school is in a rural area, and many times students have the perception that they cannot be successful and have low expectations. We turned the negative phrase "What do you expect, I'm from Middleburg?" into a positive statement.

The Leadership Class asked the faculty for names of successful alumni and started the process of calling these people to set up interviews. We filmed the former students in their environments, and they talked about their successes

since graduation. We interviewed doctors, veterinarians, NFL players, and singers from Red Jumpsuit Apparatus. We had them speak about their accomplishments since high school. Each graduate that was interviewed ended their segment by saying "What do you expect? I graduated from Middleburg High School."

Right before statewide testing, we had an assembly for our students and showed the video that we created. We rolled out the red carpet and clapped for the students as they walked into the forum to make them feel special. They had no idea what they were getting ready to see. The leadership class briefly spoke about what success meant to them, and then asked "What do you expect?" and led students in the cheer, "If you're proud to be a Bronco, clap your hands." We then showed the video. Many students got really emotional, teary-eyed, inspired, and felt a strong sense of pride to be a Bronco. After the video, Tyler Robinson, a Jostens's representative, spoke to the students. The mind set was definitely changed. We plan on adding to the video each year and challenged the students to come back and be in the video one day.

For more information please contact Dawn Powers at DPOWERS@mail.clay.k12.fl.us

Honorable Mention JRR Idea - We Believe

Debra Summers

Timberland High School

St., Stephen, SC

To motivate students and staffuly, we always start off the year with a bang. We get students to sign pledge cards and graduation gowns, and we give all of our staffuly a Renaissance shirt to motivate them to do their best.

Then, the focus seems to shift about the time we come back from Christmas break. First semester is over and all everyone can think about is, "How long is it until summer break?"

To help our students and staffuly over the mid-year slump, we wanted to develop a project that would keep all minds focused on successfully finishing the year. We needed a project that would motivate everyone: students, staffuly, and even parents.

What could we do? I was staring at my *I Believe...* picture from the 2008 National Conference and started thinking... what do *We Believe*? As a result, *We Believe* was born. We created *I Believe* cards (similar to the ones from the 2008 National Conference) for students, staffuly, and parents. We bought post-card sized paper at our local office supply store, grabbed a camera, a pen, and some paper, and hit the hallways. We started the project with our staffuly.

1. We photographed each staffuly member and asked him/her to write down what s/he believes about education.
2. We approached our parents during our second semester Open House. We photographed parents and asked them to tell us what they believe about education. Then we posted all of the staffuly and parent *I Believe* statements on a bulletin


board (beside the cafeteria at the front of the school). We wanted the students and visitors to see that both staffully and parents are unified in education.

3. We targeted our freshmen population. We photographed them in groups (in each of their English classes) and had them write a class *I Believe* statement. We printed their photos and statements on poster-sized paper and hung them in the freshmen academy.
4. We targeted our sophomore and junior population. We photographed them and posted their *I Believe* statements in popular areas around the campus.
5. We targeted our senior class. We made a bulletin board showing each senior's college acceptances and posted their *I Believe* statements around their college acceptance board.

Now, all over the campus, students and staffully see positive messages about education. *We believe* this project will help the students and staffully end the second semester on a positive note!




I Believe...



... that education is the passport to any destination in life.
Kimberly Glaze

Parent Sample


I Believe...



... happy students make happy teachers and happy teachers make happy students.
Coach Perry

Coach/Staffully Sample

I Believe...



...that everyone needs an education to succeed in this generation.
Mr. Barnes

Custodian/Staffully Sample

I Believe...



... we all have untapped potential and ability. It is our job to push ourselves to find our greatest strength and in so doing change ourselves and the world (great or small) around us.
Mrs. Lowe

Teacher/Staffully Sample

For more information please contact Debra Summers at Summersd@berkeley.k12.sc.us

Events & Reminders

Events

Upcoming Jostens Renaissance Events

July 17-19, 2009 - Jostens Renaissance National Conference - Held at the Caribe Royale in Orlando, FL. For more information contact your local Jostens Sales Representative.

Reminders

Educator Services Website

Provides information about Jostens Renaissance. Register and get full access to all the program information. www.jostens.com/edserv

Renaissance Review Archive

Provided to you on our new website: http://www.jostens.com/edserv/renaissance/ren_400_20.asp

Post Cards - Personalize Recognition for Students

We've made post cards out of the three student related motivational posters. The cards are 5" x 7" and are packed individually. Cost is \$.10 per card. To order, email norma.christenson@jostens.com and list the number of cards you'd like and the address to ship them to. We'll put an invoice with the shipment.

Starfish Story Link

Send a powerful message to the faculty and staff of the important role they play each day. Every member of the faculty and staff can make a difference in every life that they touch. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wuSaNCIde4> If you'd like to purchase a copy of the Star Fish DVD, email Norma Christenson at norma.christenson@jostens.com. Cost is \$12.

Platinum Program Coupon Books

The 2008 - 2009 Jostens Renaissance Platinum Program Coupon booklet is bigger and better than ever! You can order yours now by clicking on this link - http://www.jostens.com/edserv/renaissance/ren_500.asp

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