

# 10 YEARS OF STORIES



## OPENING HUMBLE ISD CHILDREN'S EYES TO THE WORLD

Childhood experiences shapes our lives.

Just ask Meredith Mann. In first grade at Woodland Hills Elementary, she became fascinated with Australia when her class studied it in a special Education Foundation grant project called 'Corroboree'.

'Corroboree'-Australian for "festival"-is a cultural program at WHE. Each grade studies countries like Australia, Kenya, Egypt, Italy, Japan, or Mexico. Students learn customs, foods, geography, music and hands-on activities. It culminates with Cultural Celebration Day-where food tasting, craft making, native dress-up activities, and fun times of enjoying games of the land and more.

The Education Foundation grants makes events like Corroboree possible. Thanks to the Foundation, students travel via videoconferencing to an Australian museum, ride camels, enjoy Mexican folkloric dancers, hear an African storyteller and drummer, and get to practice the art of Japanese origami.

For Meredith, Corroboree was life-changing. "Meredith studied Australia through Coroboree and she longed to go to the 'land down under'. This is what inspired her," her mom, Marilyn Mann, said. Six years later, she got her chance. When People to People Ambassadors Program offered a student trip to Australia, Meredith had to experience this trip for herself. "Learning about Australia and then actually going was a great connection." Marilyn said. Meredith loved seeing first-hand things she had studied: The Great Barrier Reef, Sydney Opera House, and koala bears. "We sang Waltzing Matilda in first grade, and when I heard it in Australia, I remembered the song-every word!" Meredith said.

Principal Pat Buttermore said Corroboree inspires cultural curiosity. One child convinced her parents to schedule a family trip to Japan after her third grade study of the country. Of course, travel is often cost prohibitive-and that makes the value of a project like Corroboree even greater.

"Corroboree broadens students' minds," Buttermore said. "What students learn stays with them forever because it is such a fascinating, fun experience."

In the Foundation's ten years of existence, over \$3.1 million dollars have been awarded to Humble ISD educators to support innovative enrichment projects in our classrooms. For more information, please visit [www.humbleisd.foundation.org](http://www.humbleisd.foundation.org).