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For Continued Development of Urban School Enrichment Skillman Foundation Awards \$340,000 Grant to Detroit Archdiocese

The Skillman Foundation, a private philanthropy, has awarded the Archdiocese of Detroit Office for Catholic Schools a grant of \$340,000 to continue the development of “professional learning communities” for ten urban elementary schools.

In September 2006, supported by a grant of \$182,000 by the Skillman Foundation, an archdiocesan City School Resource Team initiated a three-year school enrichment program designed to maximize learning opportunities for children growing up in conditions of poverty.

During the first year, baseline data was gathered on student achievement, concentrating on reading and math scores. The team measured parent satisfaction, helped form improvement teams at each Catholic school, and provided in-service training for administrators and teachers.

The \$340,000 grant provides continued funding for the second and third year of the enrichment program, which will focus on promoting best educational practices, increasing parental involvement, and developing individualized learning strategies for students.

“The Archdiocese of Detroit’s City School Resource Team has made good progress in upgrading the quality of Catholic elementary education in the city, with five of the 10 schools involved last year becoming eligible for the ‘Making the Grade’ program in 2007,” said Tonya Allen, Skillman Foundation’s vice president of program.

She noted the team, consisting of Bernadette Sugrue, director, and educational consultants Mary Swinkey and Sr. Joan Christie, OP, will continue to provide technical assistance to improve the curriculum and delivery of high quality education for children in metropolitan Detroit.

Created in 1960, the Skillman Foundation is committed to helping children in metropolitan Detroit by improving their homes, schools and neighborhoods. The goal of the foundation’s programs is to achieve significant results for kids.

Skillman grantmaking primarily supports nonprofit organizations and agencies working in six Detroit neighborhoods – Southwest Detroit (Vernor & Chadsey-Condon), Brightmoor, Osborn, Central, and Cody-Rouge – and innovative, successful schools throughout the city of Detroit.

The Archdiocese of Detroit currently has ten elementary and two high schools in Detroit with student populations that are predominantly from low socio-economic backgrounds. For more information, go to www.AODonline.org.

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