



Core Knowledge Foundation
Annual Report 2006



2006

Highlights of 2006

- New president for the Foundation
- Core Knowledge Development Program and Annual Fund established
- A suite of new products from the Preschool Department and a banner year for professional development enhance the learning experiences for thousands of children in CK preschool classrooms around the nation
- New Schools and Official Visitation Sites; the Schools Department shares success stories, including places across the country that have adopted Core Knowledge at the district level, plus strong turnouts for Leadership Training throughout the year
- Educational Materials releases *Grace Abounding: The Core Knowledge Anthology of African-American Literature, Art, and Music* and *A Joyful Noise: The Core Knowledge American Songbook*
- The Foundation secures funding and brings on new staff to begin production of Core Knowledge Reading, its new K-5 basal reading program
- New CK Annual Conference schedule

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The Core Knowledge Foundation

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Report from the President's Office

A Year of Transition

In October, 2006, after more than three years of service, Barbara Garvin-Kester left the Core Knowledge Foundation to pursue new opportunities. During her tenure at Core Knowledge, Barbara led efforts to adopt a new Core Knowledge constitution, laying out strategies, values, and business principles to govern the Foundation's future. She also implemented changes designed to improve management of funds, budget execution, and financial planning, as well as to increase the visibility of the Core Knowledge Foundation on the national level. We wish Barbara well in her future endeavors.

Linda Bevilacqua, long-time Core Knowledge Vice President and Director of the Early Childhood program, was named President by the Core Knowledge Board of Trustees.

In her ten years at the Foundation, Linda has proven her dedication to the Core Knowledge mission and her abilities as an outstanding educator and administrator. She created the Core Knowledge Preschool Program—by many measures the best early childhood program in the nation. She is well known



Linda Bevilacqua
President, Core Knowledge Foundation



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and admired by teachers, administrators, policy makers, and philanthropists, and is affectionately esteemed by her colleagues here at the Foundation. Further details regarding her background and focus are available in the January 2007 edition of the Core Knowledge online newsletter, "Common Knowledge."

Visits and Initiatives

Prior to her departure, former president Barbara Garvin-Kester visited schools in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. In addition to meeting with a number of schools in Minnesota, a visit was also made to a nearby, valued supporter of Core Knowledge: The Minnesota Humanities Commission.

Barbara also launched a new initiative aimed at fostering the Core Knowledge mission in new venues. The President met with several education organizations, policymakers, and civic groups to apprise them of the Core Knowledge mission and to seek ways in which this mission might relate to their own interests. These groups included the Alliance for Education Excellence, the American Federation of Teachers, Education Sector, The Education Trust, the National Alliance of Black School Educators, the NAACP, the National Association for State Boards of Education, the National Council of La Raza, the National Education Association, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and education advisors in the offices of Senators Lamar Alexander and Edward Kennedy. Visits to policymakers in Washington, D.C., were combined with calls to members of the media charged with the coverage of education issues, notably Jay Matthews of *The Washington Post* and Kathleen Kennedy-Manzo of *Education Week*.

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This year also saw changes to an initiative started in late 2005 to develop a national sales force to represent Core Knowledge publications on the national textbook market. Late in 2006, it was decided that sales force coverage of the entire United States was too ambitious to sustain under current budget constraints. Representation was scaled back to two large metropolitan areas, New York City and Chicago, both of which will be closely watched for future potential, with early signs being most positive.

Development Program

Another important change in the Foundation's administration was the establishment of a new position in the area of development. Leonard J. Doran—our inaugural Director of Development—has thirty years of experience in the field, including a tenure as Senior Executive Counsel of DeWitt & Associates, Inc., a nonprofit and management consulting firm of Richmond and Staunton, Virginia. Since 1992, he has been certified by the Association of Fundraising Professionals and counts his work in board development and strategic planning, as well as his work with independent schools, to be among the salient qualifications he can apply to Core Knowledge. Len will facilitate the raising of new funds and the creation of connections with other organizations interested in educational reform. For a summary of development activities during the second half of 2006, please see the Development report on page 21.



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Core Knowledge Board of Trustees

In addition to their quarterly teleconferences, the Core Knowledge Board of Trustees met in September, 2006, in New York City. The Board identified areas such as fiscal planning, resource allocation, research on the efficacy of Core Knowledge, targeted advocacy, and identification of partnerships and customer bases as areas of immediate focus. Funding and strategic planning for the Reading Program were also emphasized by the Board during discussions. A follow-up meeting was held at Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C., in December to assess the planning and initial implementation of the priorities identified at the September meeting.

Preschools

State Adoption and State Correlations

In 2006, the Core Knowledge Preschool Program was one of six comprehensive preschool education models approved by the state of Maryland. The alignment of Core Knowledge to Maryland's state standards, along with newly completed alignments for Pennsylvania and Florida, are added to the existing alignments with standards in Arkansas, Ohio, and Georgia.

Official recognition by the state of Maryland was gratifying, particularly in light of the long-term efforts in supporting the implementation of the Core Knowledge preschool curriculum in twenty-three Head Start classrooms in Baltimore County. It is anticipated that the successes in these classrooms will inspire efforts to introduce the Core Knowledge Preschool curriculum into programs throughout Maryland.

Growth in the number of classrooms using the Core Knowledge curriculum nationwide was augmented in 2006 by the addition of a large preschool program, Brightside Academy, which has forty-three classrooms in Pennsylvania and Ohio. The Core Knowledge curriculum was also implemented in new sites in Kansas City and the state of Washington. In addition, Christ the King Cathedral School in Lubbock, Texas, was added to official Core Knowledge Preschool Visitation Sites, bringing the total number of such sites to six.



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The current profile of the Core Knowledge Preschool Program is as follows:

- Total Number of CK Preschool Classrooms . . . 1,157
- Total number of CK Preschool Centers 287
- Number of CK Centers located in public schools . . . 69
- Public/State Funded Preschool Centers 97
- Head Start Agencies/Centers 36
- Private Preschool Centers 44
- Centers with Other Sources of Funding. 10

Professional Development

This was a banner year for Core Knowledge Preschool professional development. A total of thirty-five separate professional development training modules were held in Arkansas, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Texas, Florida, Washington, Virginia, North Carolina, Kansas, and Washington, D.C. Twenty-five onsite training sessions at locations across the country and ten regional workshops in Arkansas were completed.

Beyond the onsite and regional training sessions, the 2006 pre-conference institutes in San Antonio were also highly successful, with 149 participants in attendance, one and a half times the number originally projected. In addition to the one-day leadership training, six other two-day training modules were offered in San Antonio. Two additional training modules, “Getting Started” and “Phonological Awareness,” were offered as Summer Institutes in Charlottesville.

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Exhibits and Presentations

Core Knowledge presented and exhibited at the conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Atlanta in November, 2006, at which Core Knowledge consultants, Susan Smith and Deb Kee, made presentations on Phonological Awareness and Setting Up a Core Knowledge Classroom. Core Knowledge Preschool was also represented at six regional or state level conferences: Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children; Arkansas Early Childhood Curriculum Fair; Arkansas Core Knowledge Preschool Conference; California Core Knowledge Conference; and the Conference of the Washington, D.C., Early Childhood Educators.

Publications and Products

The Preschool Department placed considerable emphasis on the completion of several publication projects designed to bring awareness of Core Knowledge Preschool to the larger market. The year also saw the accomplishment of the following publication goals:

- Completion of the Core Knowledge anthology *What Your Preschooler Needs to Know: Read-Alouds to Get Ready for Kindergarten* and two accompanying activity books designed for parents to use with the anthology. Bantam Dell will publish the anthology and the Core Knowledge Foundation will publish the activity books.
- Production of the *Core Knowledge Early Childhood Social Skills Songbook CD* with songs designed to reinforce the social skills taught in the Preschool Program
- Production of new Stop and Think Social Skills Posters
- New online version of the *Preschool Assessment Tool*, or *CK-PAT*



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Grant-Related Projects

The end of the 2006 school year was the official end of funding by the Walton Family Foundation for the Core Knowledge Arkansas Delta

Preschool Initiative. The Core Knowledge Foundation is proud of its active involvement in the Arkansas Delta for the past eight years. The success of preschools recruited under the grant resulted in the adoption of Core Knowledge by many state-funded preschools both within and beyond the Delta region. Core Knowledge continues to offer monthly fee-based professional development in Little Rock. We presently have seventy preschools with over one hundred classrooms in Arkansas. (Evaluation reports documenting student progress are available on the Core Knowledge website at www.coreknowledge.org/preschool.)

The end of 2006 was also the end of the five-year initiative conducted in the Baltimore County Head Start classrooms funded by the Abell and Weinberg Foundations. These twenty-three classrooms continue to implement Core Knowledge effectively. (Evaluation report is online.)

In September, Core Knowledge Preschool embarked on a new grant initiative in one of the delegated sites of the Baltimore City Head Start program. The grant is funded by the Abell Foundation and provides teachers with extensive professional development, including individualized coaching in the use of Core Knowledge classroom materials.



K–8 Schools

Expansion of the CK Network

With forty-seven new schools added to the network, 2006 saw significant growth in Core Knowledge K–8 Schools. Of the new schools, seventeen are public, twenty-one are public charter, and five are private. The greatest concentrations of these new schools are in New York City, Utah, Minnesota, and Arkansas, with the remainder scattered across other Midwestern, western, and southern states. The total number of schools in the network is now 591.

The Foundation is especially pleased to have worked closely throughout 2006 with five public school districts that are implementing Core Knowledge on a district-wide basis. These include the Independent School Districts of Hobbes, New Mexico; Helena/West Helena, Arkansas; Rockford, Illinois; Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Texas; and Paradise Valley Unified School District in Phoenix.

The expansion of the school network in 2006 was fostered in part by outreach in the area of exhibits and presentations. Core Knowledge sponsored presentations and exhibits at the National Association of Black School Educators Conference in Orlando, Florida; the Charter Schools Conferences in South Carolina; a conference sponsored by the New York State Reading consortium; as well as conferences in New York City and Washington, D.C.



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Leadership Training

Staff members involved with Core Knowledge leadership development program worked hard to keep pace with the expansion of the school network in 2006. Six Leadership Development Institutes were held, including two in Charlottesville and one each in New York City, Hollis (NM), Phoenix, and Minneapolis/St. Paul. The total combined attendance at these sessions was 110 participants. Four new consultants were added to the training program in 2006, all of whom attended the July leadership training session in Charlottesville. The receipt of a grant of \$110,000 from the Southern Bank Corporation assisted with the implementation of training in the Helena/West Helena District in Arkansas.

Official Schools and Visitation Sites

Five schools celebrated their Official School status in 2006: Buckner Fanning Christian School in San Antonio; East Texas Christian Academy in Tyler, TX; Randolph Heights Elementary School in St. Paul, MN; Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen in CO; and Taylor Elementary in Hobbs, NM.

Seven Core Knowledge schools were elevated to Visitation Site status this year, having met the criteria for comprehensiveness and excellence in curriculum implementation: Arlington International Leadership School in Jackson, TN; College Lane Elementary in Hobbs, NM; Excel Academy in Arvada, CO; John Hancock Charter School in Pleasant Grove, Utah; P.S. 124-Osmond A. Church School in Queens, New York; Piedmont Community Charter School in Gastonia, NC; Timpanogos Academy in Lindon, UT; and West Manor Elementary School in Atlanta, GA.

Educational Materials

New Publications

In addition to editing internal documents and developing a range of marketing materials, the Educational Materials Department developed and released the following in 2006:

- *Grace Abounding: The Core Knowledge Anthology of African-American Literature, Music, and Art*
- The website www.grace-abounding.org, which provides supplemental resources for teachers using the book
- *A Joyful Noise: The Core Knowledge American Songbook*
- *Little Women: Core Classics Plus Study Edition*
- Teachers Kit for *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- The *Grace Abounding* Teacher Kits
- Three editions of “Common Knowledge: The Core Knowledge Foundation Newsletter”
- Two catalogs of CK publications (spring and fall)

Administrative and Sales Summary

This was a highly productive year in the Educational Materials Department, despite a few unforeseen events and delays. Energy in the first half of 2006 was devoted primarily to the in-house development and production of the publications *Grace Abounding* and *A Joyful Noise* as well as to the organization of a national sales force. These major projects had two goals in common: expand the Core Knowledge name to new places and increase revenue to help sustain other Foundation initiatives.



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Overall Sales Report

Despite ending below initial projections for 2006 due to delays in the release of new publications, final sales for 2006 were strong. Mainstay products such as the Core Classics series, *Teacher Handbooks*, “Grader” books, *Listen My Children* series, Text and Art Resources, and the *K–8 Sequence* continued to sell well in the Core Knowledge schools network. Interestingly, actual unit sales increased significantly over 2005, though revenues were affected by higher costs for certain books and reduced prices for others. This was due in part to the release of major products by other publishers, namely the Scholastic Core Knowledge Libraries, which have been well received by the schools. *Grace Abounding*, though released late, sold steadily through the last quarter of 2006, and—as of the end of the first quarter of 2007—it is already in its second printing.

Planning for 2007 and Beyond

In EMD, planning for 2007 centered on shifting priorities to The Core Knowledge Reading Program, completing a number of smaller publishing and internal editorial projects, marketing existing publications with the goal of maintaining and increasing revenues, and planning for future publishing projects. Two small teams of sales representatives remain under contract in the major markets of Chicago and New York City.



Core Knowledge Reading

Major Developments

When 2006 began, the Reading Program had only one full-time employee, Project Director Matthew Davis. By the time the year ended, there were ten full-time employees.

The early months of the year were focused mainly on planning and fundraising. The Foundation was able to hire new Reading staff members and begin producing materials after receiving a generous grant from the Louis Calder Foundation in July. Interviews were held in August and six new editorial staff members began work after Labor Day. Two graphic designers came on board in October and November. The team also added a project manager who works on a consultant basis.

The team spent the fall working to develop materials for the kindergarten program, which consists of two strands of instruction: a Skills Strand, which features phonics-based reading and writing instruction, and a Listening and Learning Strand, which aims to build background knowledge through read-alouds and discussions on topics in the *Core Knowledge K–8 Sequence*.

By the end of the year, staff members and freelance writers had created draft lessons for all 150 kindergarten lessons in the Skills Strand and all 150 kindergarten lessons in the Listening and Learning Strand. Many of these lessons have now been edited and are ready for print; others are being edited now.



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Funding

The Reading Program received its second grant from the Gleason Foundation in December of 2006. The Challenge Foundation has agreed to match this grant and all future grants up to a maximum of \$2 million on a one-for-one basis. The Foundation is working to secure additional money from other sources, including funding to pilot kindergarten materials during the 2007–08 school year. We hope to have completed materials for the early grades on the market by the fall of 2008.

The Reading team's current focus is on preparing the kindergarten materials for a pilot program in fall, 2007. This is no small task, since the materials include 34 teacher books, 13 student books, 14 disks, and other miscellaneous materials such as letter cards and posters.

For more information on The Core Knowledge Reading Program, visit our website: www.coreknowledge.org/reading.

Annual Conference

San Antonio Conference

The 2006 Annual Conference held in San Antonio, Texas, from February 23–25 was attended by 2,175 enthusiastic teachers and administrators and 48 exhibitors. Its theme, “The Knowledge Frontier: New Directions for Reading Success,” was promoted by several sessions featuring nationally known reading specialists, including Sally and Benjamin Shaywitz, Joseph Torgensen, Keith Stanovich, and Connie Juel. The conference also saw the launch of E. D. Hirsch’s new book, *The Knowledge Deficit*. The publisher, Houghton Mifflin, provided advance copies prior to its April publication date so that the book could be bought by devoted Core Knowledge teachers and signed by Dr. Hirsch at the conference.

The selection of Bill Nye the Science Guy as keynote speaker was prompted by requests from CK teachers who have long lobbied for more attention to science in conference programming. Teachers who recall Nye’s popular series on PBS were pleased with his entertaining and informative presentation at Friday’s luncheon session.

For the first time, online conference surveys were available to conference attendees. The costs of survey preparation, distribution, data collection, and analysis were covered by Marriott International, a longstanding Conference partner. The attendee response rate of 60 percent was outstanding. Over 90 percent of respondents rated the Conference as either excellent or good.



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New Conference Schedule

A dramatic increase in the price of hotel lodging and meeting-space rental, paired with fewer contractual concessions, prompted inquiry into moving the National Conference from the traditional February/March meeting schedule. Teachers and administrators at Core Knowledge schools around the nation were surveyed several times during a twelve-month period about changing the dates of the National Conference to an October/November schedule—a time when most hotels offer booking incentives and value rates. Feedback from participants was consistent: a significant majority of the respondents indicated that they would attend a Core Knowledge National Conference in October or November. Consequently, in 2008, the Core Knowledge Conference will be held in Anaheim, California, November 20–22. As usual, Preschool Institutes will be held during the three days preceding the conference.

The Core Knowledge Foundation will also host its first regional conference, November 9–10, 2007, in Colorado Springs. The two-day conference will be 60 percent the size of the National Conference and will offer a variety of workshops, subject-area content sessions, and classroom unit presentations, as well as thirty-five booths in the exhibit hall.



Finances

2006 Financial Summary

The Core Knowledge Foundation continued to practice careful financial management in 2006 to ensure financial stability. The operational financial plans, detailing what the Foundation earns and buys, continue to be interfaced with the Foundation's program planning efforts through organizational and individual performance contracts. Performance contracts show how the activities of the Core Knowledge departments support the Foundation's strategic goals and objectives. Monthly financial data was reviewed and analyzed and, with departmental participation, in-depth analysis was conducted quarterly.

In 2006, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Core Knowledge Foundation committed significant funds to building in-house publishing capacity. This investment of \$1.1 million from endowment funds reflects the Board's commitment to the development of an innovative, and potentially revolutionary, basal reading program. (See Reading Program report, page 15.) These expenditures covered start-up costs for the reading program, such as the salaries of the project director, an editorial assistant, senior art designer and a graphic artist, as well as the purchase of desktop publishing software and equipment, which was also used in the development of *Grace Abounding: The Core Knowledge Anthology of African-American Literature, Music, and Art*.



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While this \$1.1 million investment resulted in a 37 percent decrease in the end of the year endowment fund level, as compared to 2005, the Foundation is confident that its commitment to ensuring educational excellence and equity for all children will be well served. With the receipt of grant funding in July, 2006, the reading program is no longer dependent upon Foundation assets for its operating expenses.

Significant earnings on invested endowment funds, as well as generous contributions totaling \$599,987 from supporters of Core Knowledge, helped to offset expenditures so that net assets at the end of 2006 remained fairly constant at \$5.8 million, representing a \$100,000 decrease from 2005.

The unrestricted asset balance (operating funds and the Foundation endowment) remained steady at the end of 2006 at approximately \$4.5 million. The restricted asset balance (grant funds) remains at \$1.3 million, consistent with the varying cycles for grant allocations. In 2006, total Core Knowledge operating expense activity, including grant expenses, was \$4.5 million. Cash flows remain stable and sufficient to meet the day-to-day needs of the Foundation.

Development

New Department

A formal development program was inaugurated in the latter half of this year in recognition of the fact that an ambitious reading program and other Core Knowledge initiatives would need an equally ambitious funding effort. This program is intended to reach out and identify new financial resources beyond the support provided in the past by a small but loyal number of friends and donors.

Annual Fund

An annual giving program was initiated with an internally generated list of friends with prior connections to Core Knowledge, none of whom had been asked for donations previously. The target established for the annual giving program—with a three- to five-year framework for accomplishment—is 10 percent of the annual Core Knowledge operating budget. Given that the solicitation was a first-time effort, response from one hundred donors is considered promising.

Other phases of the program—already in progress—involve the identification of major gift-givers, the development of a planned giving program, and the identification of partners such as schools and other organizations. Partnerships are seen as a



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most appropriate way to overcome the geographical and programming obstacles that often constrict fundraising. Our work in 2006 with the Minnesota Humanities Council, Southern Bank Corporation, and other organizations are examples of our commitment to partnering with groups that concentrate on issues in their home regions. Such relationships will continue to be vital for the Development program in the years to come.

The Core Knowledge Foundation is extremely grateful for the generosity of past donors, most of which came unsolicited and were inspired solely by the work of our founder, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., who continues to work tirelessly to advance the cause of Core Knowledge. During the past year, he has traveled throughout the country to speak at many national conferences and is a frequent contributor to both scholarly and general publications. He receives no remuneration from the Foundation or from the book royalties it generates.

We hope that future donors will be equally generous and inspired by our mission, as stated in our charter, to “offer all children a better chance in life and create a fairer and more literate society by educating America’s youth in a solid, specific, sequenced, and shared curriculum.”

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Donor Recognition

The Core Knowledge Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of our many friends and benefactors. The information contained in this report covers the period January 1, 2006, through March 31, 2007. We thank each and every donor for their generosity.

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Diane Smith
Gerald Terrell
Patricia K. Whitley
Priscilla Whitley
Rachel Wright
Steve & Julie Wrinn

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William Chrisman Memorial Gifts

The following individuals and organizations contributed funds in memory of William Chrisman:

Christian & Elizabeth Bredup
Farmers National Corporation
Ed & Karen Goodsmith
E. D. & Polly Hirsch
E. W. & Helen K. Jaeggi
Joan B. Jaynes
Beatrice Nelson/Beatrice Parker Hodge Trust
Colonel Marcus Oliphant
Gerald Reilly
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Betsy Taylor
Michael & Susan Turner
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Dr. Joseph P. Voorhees
The White Family
J. W. & Teresa Wilhoit
Elizabeth Williams

Every attempt has been made to insure that the information in this report is accurate. Please inform Len Doran in the Development Office at Core Knowledge (ldoran@coreknowledge.org or 434-220-3377) of any errors or omissions. Thank you!

