



## STRATEGIES FOR VOLUNTEERS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND FUNDING

### **VOLUNTEERS**

*Strategies for recruiting volunteers for local and regional inventors fairs:*

- invite principals, administrators, or school board members to attend or volunteer to participate in fairs;
- have student inventors present at PTA meetings, staff meetings, local organization meetings, or business meetings;
- display student inventions at school in the office, library, and display cases or in community banks, libraries, and village halls, etc.;
- increase community visibility by preparing articles and pictures of young inventors and invention fairs for local newspapers, school newsletters, and school district newsletters;
- solicit volunteers at informational meetings for parents of present or potential young inventors.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS AND FUNDING**

*The following are some ways districts/schools have obtained funding:*

- a dollar amount is set aside for a specified number of entries that are budgeted and paid for by the district, school or PTO;
- a growing number of YIF participants are approaching local businesses, charities, foundations, and other local community groups for support;
- half of the entry fee is paid by the district/school and the other half by students' families;
- students' families can pay for the entire fee;
- Scholarships are obtained through YIF (fill out application form).

*Strategies to consider in seeking community funding:*

- invite local charitable organizations (American Legion, Elks, Lions, Moose, Odd Fellows, Rotary, VFW, etc.) to sponsor students or support your local program;
- when inviting local businesses (Target, Kmart, McDonald's, etc.) to support your program, check with your district or public library (business/education foundations are a source of revenue in some districts) for community-based corporations or foundations in your area. They are more likely to assist a local program.
- invite local patent attorneys and inventors to sponsor students;
- encourage young inventors to seek a community sponsor related to their invention (e.g., pet invention—approach a veterinarian or pet store owner);
- letters requesting support can include: information about this worthwhile program, names of district and local program people to contact, newspaper articles or photos of students participating in a local fair, invitations for both financial and in-kind support (refreshments, buttons, certificates for students, a site for a local fair, or volunteers);
- be sure to send thank-you notes enclosing photos to all who respond—ask supporters to volunteer as local judges, certificate presenters, or program presenters at your fair.