

APIE NEWS



Austin Partners in Education

**Connecting the Community
and the Classroom**



Please Volunteer Now for January 2012

**Will you help once a week for 12 weeks?
Please register now for Spring Semester.
Training is scheduled for early January.**

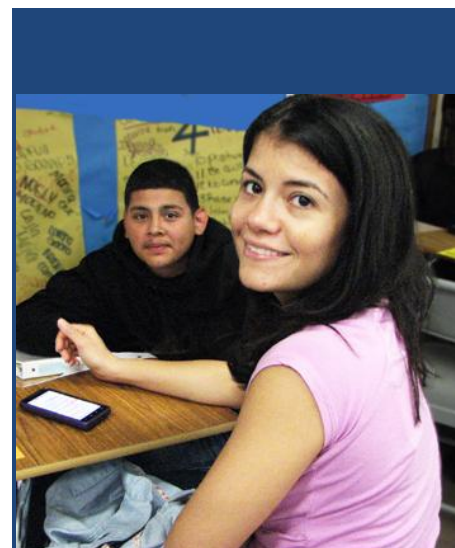
Every school requires an infusion of resources from the community to provide an enriched and academically rigorous experience for its students.

By engaging more than 1,500 volunteer tutors and mentors, more than 2,200 Austin ISD students from under-served communities are benefiting from weekly high engagement learning activities that promote an excitement for learning. During the fall, APIE succeeded in recruiting 883 volunteers filling 1,056 weekly coaching sessions, and more than 700 mentors leading and inspiring students weekly. We're delighted that some of our volunteers are university students. Some of these young leaders are experiencing the rewards of community service for the first time. As student schedules change for spring 2012, we have openings that must be filled.

We currently have about between 150 - 200 opportunities for tutor-mentors in our Classroom Coaching programs.

You can view actual openings, and volunteer at austinpartners.org/volunteer. Choose from elementary school reading (English or Spanish), middle school reading or middle school math. Additionally, there is a great need for mentors as more than 100 schools seek caring adults to support students.

APIE volunteers give just one hour per week and receive training and tools to provide students with the individualized support they need to succeed. We ask you to join us this January – May for an experience that can enrich your life and help students on their



Understanding the Struggle
of English Language Learners

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Ruby Martinez Zgabay

**IBM Electrical Engineer,
Political Refugee from Cuba,
and Classroom Coach**

In March of 1999, 16-year-old Ruby Zgabay stepped foot on the campus of Reagan High, terrified and unable

path to success in college and career.

To view openings please go to www.austinpartners.org/volunteer or call 512.637.0900 and we'll assist you with registration.

Please act now so we can be assured all classrooms will have the support they need when school reopens after the winter break.

Our Overarching Objectives

This fall, APIE has worked to strengthen our alignment with Austin ISD to prepare more students for college and career. Here's where we focus our efforts:



Improve student academic performance: with a focus on serving Austin ISD's Title I schools, Austin Partners in Education delivers innovative volunteer-driven programs in reading and math designed to improve student academic performance. By placing more adults in the classroom, providing high engagement learning activities and expanding opportunities for students to work collaboratively in small groups, APIE reinforces the district's mission to keep students in school and have them graduate college and career ready.

Engage the community: key to APIE's mission is effectively engaging the community in support of the educational purposes, goals and programs of Austin ISD. Community volunteers add to the quality and capacity of the campus programs, providing a vital extension of academic and social/emotional supports to students.

Leverage technology: driven by a commitment to continuous improvement, APIE has developed and deployed technology solutions that support effective community and school partnerships, enabling campuses to more easily access critical volunteer, monetary and in-kind donations. With a customized, state-of-the-art volunteer database solution, APIE has created a scalable model for leveraging community resources and supporting more teachers and students.

to speak any English. Ruby and her parents had just made an arduous journey from Cuba as political refugees seeking asylum in Austin.

Today Ruby, an electrical engineer with IBM and APIE Classroom Coach, looks across the small school desks at the faces of young English language learners, and remembers her youth.

"My mother always spoke her mind. Everyone loved her. She had her degree from University of Havana in Cuba and my father was a chemist. Everyone I knew in my family had education – they had all been to college," she recalls. "My mother studied English Literature in college and could speak English – which is never spoken on the streets in Cuba – she worked in the diplomatic sector for embassies – first Nigeria, then Cuba, then the equivalent of a U.S. Embassy –the Section of Interest they call it, because there is not an official U.S. Embassy in Cuba."

[Read More...](#)

DONOR SPOTLIGHT The Andy Roddick Foundation



Program Expansion – Step-Up Adds Classes in Burnet Middle School

Step-Up provides middle school students who are struggling in reading or math with intensive, systematic instruction in a high-frequency (3 – 4 times per week), small group setting. Using a differentiated curriculum and frequent monitoring, students receive concentrated instruction that builds foundational skills. Work is targeted to match students' individual needs. Trained tutors work with students in 2:1 or 1:1 relationships, providing opportunities for extensive practice and high quality feedback to accelerate academic achievement. Step-Up is offered in 6th grade reading and 6th, 7th & 8th grade math.



Beginning in January, APIE will offer Step-Up Math at [Burnet Middle School](#) to 7th and 8th graders, and Step-Up Reading to 6th graders. Students selected for the program will be enrolled in a Step-Up elective as part of their daily class schedule. We are currently looking for more than 50 volunteers who want to be part of this exciting expansion. You may choose to work with 1-3 students three days per week, or volunteer just an hour or two per week and share the instruction with another volunteer. To learn more, contact APIE Math Program Coordinator Jessica Skinner at 512.637.0985 or APIE Reading Program Coordinator Chris Brodie at 512.637.0984, or email apie@austinpartners.org. Please register at: www.austinpartners.org/volunteer.

With an early start to a stellar tennis career, Andy Roddick finished as the number 1 Junior in the U.S. in 1999, and was ranked as the number 1 Junior in the U.S. in 2000. Just one year after turning pro in 2000, Andy began the [Andy Roddick Foundation](#) with the goal of improving the quality of life and enhancing educational and economic opportunities for children, based on the principles of respect for family, education and morality.

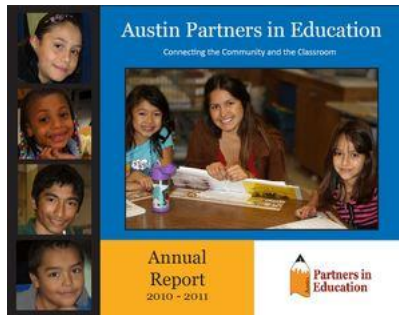
Since 2001, Andy has logged a 155 mile-per-hour tennis serve, and more than \$10 million in philanthropic giving to organizations that serve children in need. Believing that every child needs a support system to allow her or him to have hope for a bright future, the foundation raises money through events, galas, and endorsements including Andy's work headlining national advertising campaigns for Lacoste, Babolat, Rolex, Lexus and American Express.

The Foundation is a long-time generous supporter of Austin Partners in Education, providing recent grant funding to support our work in Classroom Coaching programs across Austin during 2011-2012.

Andy and his family are active throughout the year raising funds and awareness across the country for the causes the Foundation supports. Locally, he hosts the annual Andy Roddick Foundation Gala, an event that includes a live auction, dinner and top name entertainment. In 2011 the event at the ACL Live Moody Theater headlined a musician who played at Andy and his model/wife Brooklyn Decker's wedding – Sir Elton John (*pictured with Andy above*) – and raised \$1 million for charities that evening. [Read More...](#)

New Publication – Read Our Most Recent Annual Report

Read, download and share our [2010-2011 Annual Report](#) to learn more about the important interventions our volunteer-driven programs are bringing to Austin ISD.



College Readiness Introduces Advocates for Case Management Tutoring

This semester the College Readiness team added 12 new tutors and mentors to the staff to become Advocates in APIE's new case management approach to College Readiness. The Advocates work with a cohort of 240 seniors at seven of Austin's highest need public high schools. Each Advocate brings with them a wealth of experience, knowledge, and FUN to reading, writing, and math tutoring every week.

Students at Akins, Crockett, Eastside Memorial, Lanier, Travis, Reagan, and LBJ High Schools meet with their assigned Advocate once a week for COMPASS tutoring, a college readiness exam that determines if students will be able to avoid taking developmental classes during their first year in college. Advocates also help the students navigate the college admissions process, assisting with financial aid, scholarship and college entrance applications.

APIE Advocates spent the fall semester getting to know their students and building relationships. "The best thing about this year's program is seeing the individual relationships develop between the Advocate and student. Every one of our Advocates has taken the mentor/ mentee relationship to a level that we were never able to achieve before. The students are excited to come to tutoring because they are excited to see their Advocate," said Paige Elijah Kelly, APIE College Readiness Coordinator.

The College Readiness team's new cohort approach is already showing early success. A senior at Eastside Memorial HS who had been unsuccessful in previous attempts passed the writing portion of the COMPASS exam in December. "He had already taken the test before the APIE tutoring and had not done well. But after the tutoring he was able to improve his scores to become college ready in writing. It was wonderful to hear that he was screaming and

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT Kris Maniscalco Mendez Middle School



Thank you Mendez Math teacher Kris Maniscalco!

Kris is participating in our Math Classroom Coaching program at Mendez Middle School where she has taught for 5 1/2 years. Prior to joining Mendez Kris spent two years in AmeriCorps, one in Austin and one in Alaska working with at-risk students. She has received praise from our program coordinators and volunteers. Some of the reasons we are all grateful for her:

...Preparedness...

Her materials are always ready. She always provides a relevant introduction so all volunteers and students are clear of the expectations for each coaching session.

...Engagement...

Volunteers are always greeted with a smile. Kris shows her willingness to listen to volunteer opinions and observations. She integrates

jumping up and down when he received his passing scores. That is why this program is so wonderful ... for those types of moments,” Veronica Cavazos, APIE College Readiness Manager said.

Feel Inspired? Mentor a Child Get involved with APIE School Connections

The need for mentors in Austin ISD is great. Here’s how our school district looks:

Schools: 124
Students: 86,697
Percent of students economically disadvantaged: 64%
Percent of students English Language Learners: 27%
Schools requesting mentors: 120
Number of mentors placed this year: 700
Number of mentors needed: More!

APIE’s **School Connections** program provides a gateway to connect the community with the classroom. School Connections places volunteers throughout Austin ISD. These might include mentors for students of all ages, volunteers to chaperone field trips, materials to build animal pens for a 4H club, or cash to make up budgetary shortfalls for supplies and/or events.

More than 100 campuses in Austin ISD have identified a need for mentors to work with students. More than 700 mentors have been registered, cleared through a background check and are either ready for training or have been trained and placed with students. We could place hundreds of additional caring adults willing to spend an hour a week building a relationship with a child. Help a child know that you care that she or he came to school to learn and succeed in life. Help them set goals and make steps toward a bright future.

Additionally, more than 3,000 general volunteers have been registered and cleared through a background check, enabling them to serve as classroom or library volunteers, after school tutors, front office support, reading or math buddies, and many more volunteer roles on campus. By training campus staff to act as Coordinators for Mentors, Volunteers and Community Partners, APIE ensures that schools have a consistent and sustainable process for engaging these valuable resources.

Please consider joining us as a mentor this spring. Our School Connections program provides mentor training and placement year-round.

To learn more, contact Anne Buechler at abuechler@austinpartners.org.

volunteers smoothly and thoughtfully into the classroom.

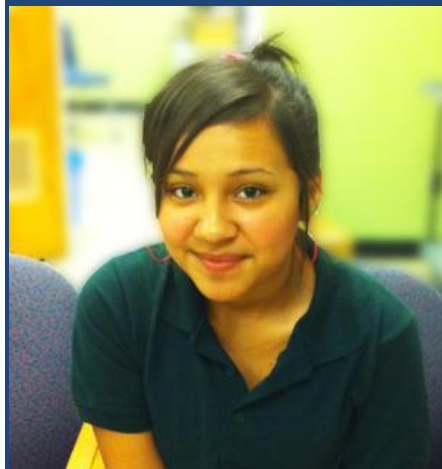
...**Classroom Management**...

Having a classroom that has behavior and actions managed in a positive way creates a great experience for students and volunteers alike.

...**Accessibility**...

Kris is always available during class to answer volunteer or student questions. She has a calm and logical manner to answering questions that puts everyone at ease.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT Ana's Story



Warm and outgoing with her friends, Ana can be introverted in larger group settings. Paired with the work of gifted teachers, the personal attention of Classroom Coaching helped Ana excel last year.

“I don’t really like to raise my hand and ask questions in class,” she explains. “It stops the whole class and people stare. I loved my coach – she was so nice. I miss her. I could ask questions whenever I wanted. It helped me understand what we were

Are you new to mentoring? Read about the difference a mentor can make – get to know [Gilbert Cantu](#).

In Closing - A Message from the Executive Director

As we navigate the few weeks remaining in the year I am struck by the magnitude of transformation that has marked 2011. A year ago I was a Classroom Coach giving one hour a week to Austin Partners in Education. In April I joined the APIE team as Director of Programs, supporting the work of the 13 full time program coordinators, who this year filled a record number of coaching, mentoring and general volunteer positions. Then in September, just as the school year got underway, I accepted the role of Executive Director (interim). It has been rewarding, exhilarating and challenging to lead a non-profit of this scope as we focus on building ever increasing capability aligned to the strategic goals of our school district.

Some things though remain unchanged. I still volunteer one hour a week in the classroom. I know the commitment it takes to guard that hour in the calendar, to put those two or three students at the top of the priority list each week. I also know the reward of seeing my young scholars tackle new concepts and skills, and sometimes, show their appreciation for a volunteer who shows up and takes an interest in their academic success.

For those already giving your time to coach or mentor students, or act as an in-school volunteer - thank you. Austin is a better city because of you, and Austin Partners couldn't exist without you. As you look forward to 2012 please consider inviting a friend or co-worker to share the volunteer experience with you this spring. Training for new volunteers starts in January. Email us at apie@austinpartners.org and we'll help get them registered. Until January, all of us here wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday. We count you as the greatest present we'll receive this season, and we look forward to seeing you in our classrooms in 2012.

With deep respect,
Pat Abrams, Executive Director

Stay Connected

[Read Pat's blog - "Most Mondays"](#)
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[Watch YouTube volunteer stories](#)
[Join in on LinkedIn](#)
[Follow us on Twitter](#)



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learning better. Before I had grades that were bad – in the 60's – by the end of the year I had grades in the 80's because I understood!"

Ana, who is rightly proud of her achievement, adds that working on her reading skills has added benefits. "It helps me in my other classes like Science and Social Studies." Like many students in Austin ISD, Ana's family only speaks Spanish, so having the help from teachers supported by a Classroom Coach gives her an extra chance to practice and hone her skills.

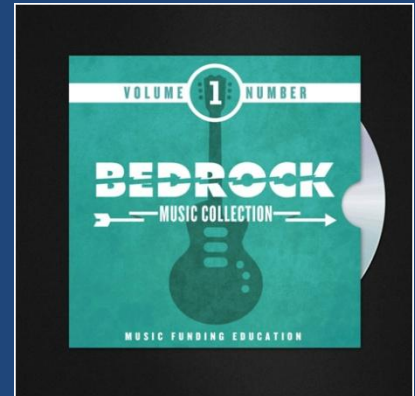
Get to know more about our students in our [Annual Report](#).

Giving Spotlight Try this for Holiday Shopping!

Use [Give as You Get](#) and a portion of every purchase benefits APIE! It's so easy. You buy what you want from the stores you know and love. You just go to one website first, and click twice before going to Amazon, iTunes, Barnes and Noble or any of 50+ top retailers. Start here at [Give as You Get](#) and then select your stores. Your carts, your privacy, your preferences all remain the same while a portion of every sale benefits APIE. If you are accessing Give as You Get directly, go to givesasyouget.com then select Austin Partners in Education from the Organizations drop down. Then, shop 'til you drop and have a happy holiday!

What's your [story](#)? Let's talk.

Did you enjoy this issue? Please forward this email to two or three friends and share the news about the caring adults who are transforming our community. Thanks, and here's to a great 2012 together!



Check out [We Are Bedrock's](#) Volume I! Want to share some Austin tunes with friends near and far? Purchase 14 great local songs for just \$12 from We are Bedrock and half of the sale price goes to APIE. There's something for everyone on this compilation. Deck your halls with music y'all.