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## Grants announced by Caesars Foundation of Floyd County

The Courier-Journal

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About 850 New Albany-Floyd County students will be able to attend kindergarten classes free during the next school year thanks to a \$300,000 grant from the Caesars Foundation of Floyd County .

The award was one of seven totaling \$1.6 million announced today during a ceremony in the Bacchus Conference Room of the Caesars Indiana casino in Harrison County.

"Thank you so much for this. Children will benefit so much," said Dennis Brooks, school superintendent, after the award was announced.

The money will support an effort that began before the start of classes in August when Brooks and other school officials announced the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation had raised enough to pay for free kindergarten in 2007-08 and would continue a drive to do so during the next school year.

This year's program is being financed with about \$400,000 in pledges and contributions to the education foundation, and next year's cost will be the same.

With the grant from the Caesars foundation, Brooks said, about \$100,000 still must be raised but there's plenty of time to do so.

State funding of full-day kindergarten for all Indiana students is expected to start in the fall of 2009, so foundation funding won't be needed from that point on.

The other grants from the Caesars Foundation of Floyd County announced today:

--\$150,000 to the Falls of the Ohio Foundation to redesign the interpretive center at the Falls of the Ohio State Park in Clarksville. The park also serves Floyd County residents, including students.

--\$150,000 to Rauch Inc. of New Albany for an autism resource center.

--\$200,000 to the Cardinal Ritter Birthplace Foundation for renovation of the Cardinal Joseph Ritter birthplace in New Albany.

--\$200,000 to Guerin Inc. to help fund construction of two residences in Georgetown for senior citizens, to be modeled on homes rather than institutions.

--\$200,000 to St. Mary's Church in New Albany to restore its steeple.

--\$400,000 to BridgePointe Goodwill to help build a community center that will include a social service campus and other nonprofit organizations.

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