

## STELLAR SERVICE BY A VOLUNTEER

**Karen Herther** – *AB Parent Involvement Project*

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Many in Acton-Boxborough (AB) may not know that PIP stands for Parent Involvement Project, but they do know about PIP events such as Grocery Market Math at Roche Bros, annual Astronomy Star Parties, the biennial Science and Technology Career Fair at the high school and have seen Karen Herther's name as PIP Co-Chair. For the past 10 years, Karen has been the spirit behind AB PIP, a volunteer organization of parents, educators, and community and business partners who support Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. AB PIP began as a Massachusetts DOE and National Science Foundation elementary grant program through the Acton Public schools in 2000. Over the years,

Karen grew the organization, collaborated with the Acton-Boxborough Schools, found business sponsors, involved community partners, and expanded it to K-12 delivering fun engaging hands-on family math and science events.

PIP's hallmark programs include: take home math and science kits, 3rd and 5th grade Market Math Mania, 4th grade Star Parties, Family Math Game Nights, Discover STEM Interactive Career Fairs, Green Energy Fairs, STEM Book Clubs, advanced teen driving classes featuring the "physics of driving" and an interactive web site at [www.actonpip.org](http://www.actonpip.org). PIP offers Summerskills Math & Language Arts Books as a service fundraiser, and recently helped launch an award winning AB Robotics Club, a local Nature Guide and 'waterwise' eco education placemats. Karen serves on the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce School Business Partnership, The Discovery Museum Education Advisory Board and Green Acton representing PIP.

Karen Herther's ability to provide fun innovative math and science programs has led thousands of Acton and Boxborough families and community members to participate in PIP events. Karen's success comes from her marketing background as the Principal of Market Dynamics HYPERLINK "<http://www.marketdynamics.info>" [www.marketdynamics.info](http://www.marketdynamics.info), a marketing consulting firm offering innovative brand and market visibility solutions, her commitment to community, education, hard work, and sense of humor. Karen promotes collaboration and community and business involvement by encouraging adults and students to get involved with PIP. As a result, hundreds of AB students have earned community service hours and recognition through the PIP STEM Leadership Scholarships and Service Awards.

Karen's approach to both her community and business is to build connections and foster innovative partnerships that lead to visibility and success. A hallmark of her volunteering is giving credit to her collaborators, community and business partners. Karen's hope is that PIP continues to lead the way with fresh ideas and new STEM family programs engaging a new generation of community-minded volunteers.