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## Arenas Scores Big With Kids

\$215,000 Donated To Area Schools

By Timothy Wilson  
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By the time Washington Wizards guard Gilbert Arenas ended the season last month, he had racked up 2,105 points, earning \$215,000 for area schools -- 29 in the District -- that received donations from the three-time All-Star and team owners Abe and Irene Pollin for every point he scored.

As part of the "Gilbert Scores for Schools" program, 82 schools in the District, [Maryland](#) and [Virginia](#) received \$100 each time Arenas made a shot. At the beginning of the season in October, Arenas held a drawing and chose 41 schools, one designated to receive a donation for each of the team's home games. The Pollins matched his offer and chose another 41 schools for the away games.

"This is like Christmas in July," said Carolyn Brooks, principal at Truesdell Elementary in Northwest, which received \$4,300 when Arenas scored 43 points in a 109-106 victory against the [Sacramento Kings](#) in February.

Brooks said the school plans to use the money to buy uniforms for the boys' and girls' basketball teams, a purchase that would not have been possible without the donation.

In the District, 29 schools received \$63,400; [Montgomery County](#), 19 schools, \$57,200; [Prince George's County](#), 15 schools, \$38,800; [Arlington County](#), 8 schools, \$21,900; [Alexandria](#), 6 schools, \$21,100; [Fairfax County](#), 4 schools, \$9,000; and [Howard County](#), 1 school, \$3,600.

Nine additional schools received a \$500 donation when Arenas missed the final eight games of the season after injuring his left knee.

Arenas, who finished as the league's third-leading scorer with an average of 28.4 points per game, said he created the program so his success on the court could benefit schools. The donations could be used to purchase computers, athletic uniforms and equipment or to fund after-school activities.

"This program had a positive effect on so many different students and schools in this area," Arenas said. "I hope to continue to develop this program so we can help as many students and schools as possible."

The Pollins contributed a total of \$103,800.

"I thought it was a fantastic thing," Abe Pollin said. "This was something my wife and I felt was a great way to help the schools."

In December, the couple gave the program's largest donation of \$6,000 to [George Washington](#) Middle School in Alexandria when Arenas scored a career high 60 points in a 147-141 overtime road victory against the [Los Angeles Lakers](#).

"I was in disbelief," Principal Keisha Boggan said. "I would never have imagined it would have gotten to 60 points. The kids were definitely excited."

Boggan, who said she watched every minute of the game, expects to buy an LCD projector and then spend the remaining funds on after-school activities. The money "contributes to our goal to be the best middle school we can be,"

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she said.

William Wirt Middle School in [Riverdale](#) received \$5,100, the largest donation from Arenas, when he scored 51 points and made a game winning three-point shot at the buzzer in a 114-111 victory against the [Utah Jazz](#) in January.

"When he got to 20 points I thought that was great," Principal Wendell Coleman said. "Every shot he hit, I was, like, 'Yes!' "

Coleman said four basketball backboards will be purchased for the school's gymnasium, which began renovation in the fall. A new scoreboard has been installed, and Coleman hopes the gym floor can be done during the summer.

"We have great kids," Coleman said. "The students deserve these kinds of things."

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