



IMPACT *HP*

HIGHLAND PARK EDUCATION FOUNDATION: GIVING AT A GLANCE

DONORS & FRIENDS PROPEL HP SCHOOLS INTO 2024



A few of our 2023 donors.

Top to Bottom: Gail and Bob Clark, Sandy and Barry Moore, and Lauren and Rob Langley

The past year was unprecedented for philanthropic support to Highland Park Schools. According to Meg Boyd, Executive Director of Highland Park Education Foundation, **"Words just can't describe 2023. It is truly remarkable how this community has rallied to support our schools."**

The highlight for the year was the August launch of the public phase of *Lead for Tomorrow*, the campaign to raise \$40 million for the Tartan Endowment by 2026. The total raised has grown from \$19 million at the launch to over \$21 million as of January 31.

The campaign has seen the number of funds in the Tartan Endowment increase from 50 before the campaign leadership phase began in January 2021 to 160 and counting. Nearly all of these funds come from first-time donors to the Tartan Endowment, and the range of their gifts is from \$15,000 to \$7 million.

"This campaign represents us being much more proactive in positioning our school district as one of the strongest in the country," said HPEF President Bill Ogle. "The long-term impact of a stronger Tartan Endowment ensures future generations of HP students and teachers an even greater experience than those who came before."

Mad for Plaid, the annual fundraising campaign for HP schools, also had a banner year. The 2022-23 effort raised more than \$1.7 million between November and May. The current campaign is ahead of last year's pace, with over \$1.8 million raised as of January 31. All gifts from Mad for Plaid directly support HPISD teacher and staff salaries.

Continue reading for more details on both *Lead for Tomorrow* and Mad for Plaid and the impact both are having on every student, teacher, and staff at every HPISD school.

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TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Teachers across the District benefit from the support of generous donors, like the Clements Foundation and La Fiesta de las Seis Banderas.

KATIE MCDANIEL '10 - MIS/HPMS CHOIR DIRECTOR

Katie McDaniel graduated from HPHS in 2010, went to the University of Oklahoma to earn a degree in music education, and came right back to Highland Park to begin her teaching career. "I'm proud to be a third-generation Scot, following my parents and grandparents," Katie said. She's arguably the fourth generation since her great-grandfather was a Highland Park teacher just like her.

Today, Katie serves dual roles as the choir director at McCulloch Intermediate School and Highland Park Middle School while also coordinating theater productions. **"As an HP student, I had the opportunity to experience theater under Susan McCormick, who was a teaching legend. I'm trying hard to follow her lead and give our students the same wonderful experience I had."**

While passion and dedication serve her well as a teacher, theater productions often require additional funding to provide the kind of experience Katie wants for her students. She secured Teacher Innovation Grants from the HP Education Foundation last year for *Junie B. Jones - The Musical* and this year, for *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley Jr.*

She used last year's grant to rent a projector that casts background images for different scenes. This year's grant has improved the stage lighting for the show. "Having a professional set with great background scenes and lighting gives students so much more confidence," said Katie. Most of the students in these shows are performing for the first time, and Katie knows some are becoming inspired to consider pursuing theater and music into high school and possibly beyond. **"Kids don't know what they are capable of until they try something new or are encouraged to try new things,"** she said. "Thanks to HPEF and support from HP Arts - Jan Davison Whitcomb Endowed Fund and other donors, these students are gaining the confidence to grow and discover what they can achieve."



Above: Katie McDaniel '10 in front of a Junie B. Jones set piece. Top and Left: Professional lighting and projection made possible by generous donors enhance the theater experience for HPMS/MIS students

MICHAEL BRUNER - HPHS CHEMISTRY

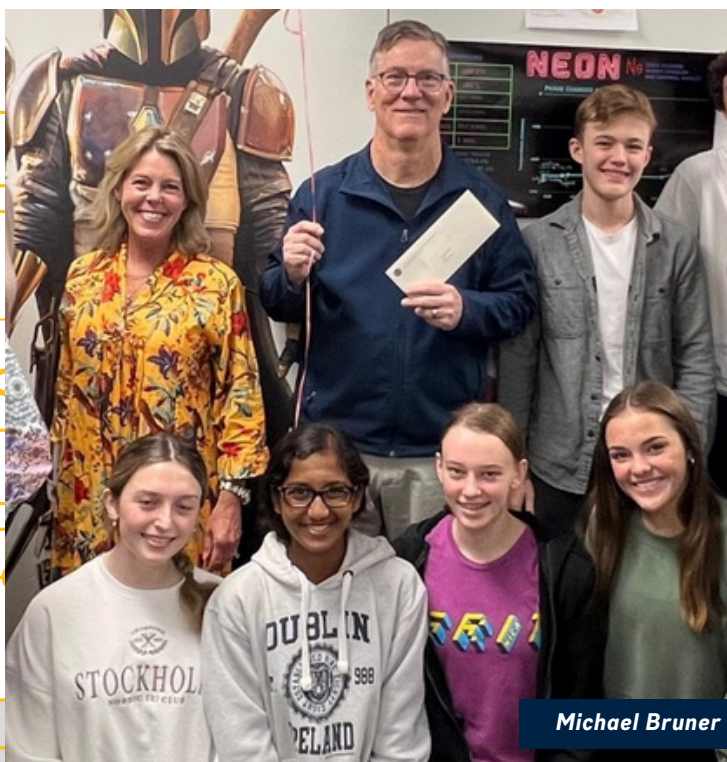
For Michael Bruner, a one-time Silicon Valley engineer turned science teacher, watching his HPHS students working in the chemistry lab is thrilling. A recent Teacher Innovation Grant awarded by HPEF and La Fiesta allowed him to outfit the lab with state-of-the-art technology that most teenagers would not ordinarily see until college.

"In our lab, we don't use thermometers anymore," explains Bruner, who worked in the semiconductor industry previously. "Now we have Bluetooth-enabled wireless sensors that project information to the students' cell phones. So rather than spending time collecting data, their devices collect data and they're able to spend the time analyzing it."

After retiring as an engineer, Bruner started teaching chemistry 10 years ago. "At my previous school, I spent a lot of my own time and money figuring out how to get the things I didn't have for my classroom because it was important for the kids," he explains. "At Highland Park, I don't have to spend time worrying about having the stuff I need."

But Bruner does spend hours and hours researching how to best integrate the newest technology into the curriculum. The payoff? Seeing his students excited to learn about science.

"I'm completely blown away by the environment at HPHS, especially the motivation of the kids," says Bruner. "It's almost like a magnet school, except it's not for any one particular skill. It's just especially for kids who are motivated and who want to learn. **And I'm motivated to get them the equipment that they're excited about."**



Michael Bruner (middle top) accepting his La Fiesta Grant.

It takes a village! Mad for Plaid would not be possible without all of our wonderful volunteers and community leaders. Thank you!

MAD FOR PLAID VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The 2023-24 Mad for Plaid campaign is building on the success of previous years, thanks once again to passionate volunteer leaders. Each year, Mad for Plaid raises critical support that goes directly to HPISD teachers. These funds represent approximately one percent of a five percent annual raise HPISD awards to the District's 400+ teachers. Combined with other efforts, including the 2021 Golden Penny election and the current *Lead for Tomorrow* endowment campaign, the Highland Park community is demonstrating its commitment to attracting and retaining outstanding teachers.

These volunteer-led efforts are most appreciated by HPISD Superintendent Dr. Mike Rockwood. **"Our success as a school district is inseparable from the tradition of volunteer leadership in this community,"** said Dr. Rockwood. "We simply could not provide the level of excellence for HP students without the countless hours and endless enthusiasm of these volunteers."

Mad for Plaid continues through the end of May. Please support our teachers and contribute to this year's campaign at hpef.org/supportmadforplaid or by calling 214.780.4060.



\$1.8 million raised **85+** volunteers

Mad for Plaid Co-Chairs

Claire and Andy Baker
Chris Palmer and Terry Steger
Kamela and Kenneth Aboussie
Mary Katharine and Martin Gill

Mad for Plaid School Reps

Armstrong- Natalie Lesikar
Boone- Tara Cosgrove
Bradfield- Rachel Reed
Hyer- Ann Higginbottom
UP- Melinda Smith
HPMS/MIS- Amanda Cejka
HPHS- Libby Johnson

Mad for Plaid Grandparents Committee

Cynthia and Louis Beecherl
Margaret and Syd Carter
Barbara and Ben Cervin
Margo and Bill Goodwin
Kay and Steve Head
Margaret and Doug Hunt
Sally and Ralph "Red Dog" Jones
Ann and Les Klein
Pat and Jay McDonough
Winifred and Will Munding
Claire Roberts
Marcy and Steve Sands
Ann and Jeff Swope

Thank you to our match partners!



CLEMENTS FOUNDATION

HPHS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS 2024

Join us at the **35th Annual HPHS Distinguished Alumni Awards!**

honoring Thursday, April 25, 2024 | Dallas Country Club

Presented by the HPHS Alumni Association, this event has recognized nearly 160 alumni, faculty, staff, and community leaders for their service and support of Highland Park Schools



Katherine Glaze Lyle '67
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient



Paige McDaniel '79
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient



Clayton Kershaw '06
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient



Jim Mouser
Distinguished Service Award Recipient

For **sponsorship opportunities**, email Tracy Flint, HPHS Director of Alumni Relations at tracy.flint@hpef.org

Learn more at hpef.org/alumni-awards

FACES OF PHILANTHROPY: DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN HIGHLAND PARK SCHOOLS



For more than 10 years, **Allison Holt Parks '95 and Robb Parks '95** have watched their children blossom within their neighborhood Highland Park Schools. During each of those years, the Parks said that giving to Mad for Plaid felt like the best way to support the teachers who were nurturing their children Lauren, 16, and Ben, 14.

"We just feel so passionately about our school community," said Allison, whose father and two siblings also are HPHS grads. **"We believe in our schools,** and we love that there are public schools that offer all of the opportunities that they do. We are hearing left and right that teachers are choosing other districts due to the difference in salary and thus HPISD is losing wonderful teachers. We feel that the Mad for Plaid campaign is an important avenue to help close that pay gap and secure the best teachers for our community."



The Parks Family



When **Bonnie and Paul Rowsey** moved to University Park 46 years ago, they had no idea they would watch their three children, and later their grandchildren, benefit from a Highland Park education. "The reason we wanted to live in the Park Cities is because of the tight community feeling and the melding of schools with the community," said Paul, whose children settled in UP and are raising the family's next generation there.

As a grandparent and 9-year veteran of the Highland Park ISD School Board, Paul wants to see the area schools flourish for years to come. To ensure that, the Rowseys established a Legacy Fund to grow the Foundation's permanent endowment and meet the ongoing needs of the District. **"My children had great experiences that enabled them to build on their education,"** said Paul, who served as the finance officer for the HPISD board of trustees from 2010-2018. **"Being able to support that in the longer term is important."**

The Rowsey Family



Lissie McCullough and Wayne McCullough '89 have many ties to Highland Park Schools, but the relationship they enjoy most is being parents to Amelia, a junior at HPHS, Charlotte '20, and Wayne Jr. '23. Over the years, the McCulloughs consistently participate in Mad for Plaid so that their children's teachers receive the extra support they need. "Annual giving is all about supporting the teachers, the District, and the awesome educators we have," said Wayne, who draws his inspiration for giving back from his parents Sharon and Mike McCullough, longtime HP supporters and parents to four HP alumni.

When Lissie and Wayne recently chose to create an endowed Legacy Fund through a planned gift, they did so because they wanted to benefit generations to come. "The whole point of a planned gift is so that we're able to give even after we're gone and to continue the great legacy of HP," he explained. **"We're giving to the schools but what we're really giving back to is future generations of kids and the community,"** Lissie said.

The McCullough Family



Amy and Bryce Benson grew up in Sherman, Texas, but their roots are firmly planted in the Park Cities with three sons benefitting from an HPISD education. The oldest son Carter '23 is a freshman at Texas A&M, Caleb is a junior at HPHS, and Barrett is a sixth-grader at MIS. "We're big believers in the District," said Bryce. **"The public schools are the heart and soul of this community."**

Bryce also serves as vice president of the HPISD School Board and liaison to the HP Education Foundation. His understanding of the District's financial pressures contributed to establishing the Amy and Bryce Benson Legacy Fund, one of more than 100 new endowed funds created through the *Lead for Tomorrow* endowment campaign. **"The reality of school financing in Texas means districts must be more creative.** Recapture is not going away," said Bryce. He also feels the campaign's early success in raising more than \$20 million is not unexpected. "I'm not surprised since this community is so supportive of public education. It just took some focus and organization. **I find it encouraging that people see the importance of securing HPISD's future through a stronger Tartan Endowment."**

The Benson Family