MOMENTUM FOR THE SECOND CENTURY

Graduating seniors of Highland Park High School will receive more than just their diploma in May. The Class of 2023 represents the district’s 100th graduating class. These 500+ young women and men will go on, as the 99 classes before them did, to a world of opportunity made possible by their Highland Park educational experience.

This historic moment coincides with a distinct rise in community support for our schools. Our district has a tradition of giving and volunteering that sets the standard for others to follow, but the past two years have been remarkable.

Donors are making transformational investments in the Tartan Endowment that will impact students and teachers far into our second century. And gifts to Mad for Plaid, which directly support teacher and staff salaries, are helping close the gap in pay levels with competing districts.

All this support is being raised in addition to the outstanding work of the PTA/PTO groups, Dads Clubs, and other volunteer leaders supporting Fine Arts, athletic teams, academic programs, and student activities. The combined efforts of all these volunteers and donors sets an inspiring example for this year’s graduating seniors and for those to come among our second century of graduates. We are grateful to everyone who has participated in Mad for Plaid.

There’s still time to be part of our community-wide effort. Give now until May 31 at hpef.org/donate. As we look to build even more momentum for the future, we invite you to enjoy the enclosed stories of inspiration and generosity.
By the Numbers

2,264 Donors

$1.8 million Raised to date

67 Volunteers

MAD FOR PLAID

The Clements Foundation and La Fiesta de las Seis Banderas recently spearheaded a successful effort that raised almost $300,000 for teachers in the Highland Park Independent School District (HPISD).

For the fifth year in a row, the Clements Foundation and La Fiesta stepped forward with a combined $100,000 challenge grant in support of Mad for Plaid, which provides critical salary support to HPISD teachers and staff.

“Our teachers are filled with creativity and enthusiasm for our students,” explained Michaela Dyer, La Fiesta Board President for 2022-2023. “We want to reward them for all they do to brighten the futures of our children.” La Fiesta is a community organization that supports HPEF and Highland Park public schools.

HPEF oversees the annual Mad for Plaid campaign that provides teachers and staff with supplemental salary support. Mad for Plaid aids the district in closing the salary gap, helping to attract and retain top teachers and preserve a culture of excellence. The Foundation also manages the Tartan Endowment, a permanent fund that addresses HPISD teachers’ enduring needs.

Both the Clements Foundation and La Fiesta not only champion the school district’s annual fund but also make long-term investments in the district’s teachers through the Tartan Endowment.

MFP LEADERSHIP SOCIETY DONORS GIVE BACK

As a child growing up in Highland Park, Kamela Hollis Aboussie ’98 watched her parents sacrifice so that she and her brother would have access to a warm, welcoming community with top schools. “My parents worked really hard to allow my family to remain in the district and Highland Park,” Kamela explained. “That wasn’t lost on me. Because of that, I grew up appreciating what I had so much.”

Now Kamela and her husband Kenneth are members of the Foundation’s MFP Leadership Society and hope to pass on that same sense of gratitude to their three children, Bowen, Benjamin, and Hollis. “As a parent, I now see so much of what makes Highland Park special is the family involvement. And, it means a lot to me that my children get to grow up in the same environment I did. As an alumna, I love that school spirit gets carried on to the next generation. There’s something that gets in your soul and stays,” Kamela explained.

For the Cornog family, the strength of Highland Park Schools and a strong belief in public education fuel their loyalty to Mad for Plaid. “The public education system in America is critical to the success of our society,” said Bill Cornog, a member of the Leadership Society. “Ultimately an educated society is a capable and productive society. You’ve got to equip people for the future, and you do that by educating them.”

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For Lori and Jon Altschuler, the combination of volunteering and investing in Highland Park Schools honors both the district’s teachers and their children, Evelyne ‘21, Elena, an 11th-grader, Eva, a ninth-grader, and Mark, a sixth-grader. “We enjoy giving our time to help out and always have a blast doing so,” said Jon, a member of the Leadership Society.

At Bradfield Elementary School, Lori helped run the supply shop for three years. Jon, a former president of the Bradfield Dads Club, engaged the marketing firm he co-founded, Slant Partners, to produce pro bono marketing initiatives for HPEF.

“We think the most important asset in our district is our teachers,” explained Jon. “Moreover, we feel the teachers are deserving of a stretch donation from our family every year. After all, we have four kids with various abilities and interests, all educated in an exceptional manner by HPISD, and it is a pleasure to support Mad for Plaid annually.”

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HPEF manages funds for more than 61 classes that often raise significant funds during reunion years to help give back to the district and the younger generations of Scots currently at HPHS.

“We are beyond grateful for the HPHS Class of 1976 to give back in such a meaningful way,” said Meg Jones Boyd ’96, director of alumni relations for HPEF. “Their contribution as a class has made a lasting impact on high school students and sets an inspiring example for other classes!”

Scottie Joe’s is a place for students from the HPHS 18+ transition program to shine, furthering the program’s mission to provide work and social skill-building opportunities to participants after they graduate. Current career-enhancing options for students in the 18+ transition program include the Scot’s Café catering service and Scottie Treats, a dog treat-making service.

“Not only does Scottie Joe’s fuel students, faculty, and staff throughout the school week, but the proceeds from the shop’s sales support both the 18+ transition program and the Moody Advanced Professional Studies (MAPS) program, which provides opportunities for high school juniors and seniors to combine traditional coursework with collegiate-level classes and hands-on experiences from industry experts in the fields of science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and business.”

Student employees at Scottie Joe’s Cafe who use wheelchairs will be able to quickly exit the high school during an emergency, thanks to a generous gift from the Highland Park High School’s (HPHS) Class of 1976.

After spending the day touring the high school as part of their 45th class reunion, the tight-knit group of former classmates gave $1,200 from their class fund for an emergency evacuation wheelchair that will help students bypass the stairs during a fire drill or actual emergency.

“We loved everything we learned about Scottie Joe’s,” said Carroll Baker Moore ’76, who co-chaired the reunion with Valerie Rees-Jones ’76. “The opportunities it provides for students are very impressive. We were excited to come together as a class and support it.”

Donors have a new option to support Highland Park Schools, and this form of giving also gives back to the donor. Thanks to a partnership with Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT), donors can now establish a charitable gift annuity to benefit Highland Park Schools as part of their estate planning.

Gift annuities provide donors with a guaranteed income for life. Payout rates are based on the donor’s age and whether the annuity is for a single life or for two. They can also provide substantial tax advantages, especially if the annuity is funded with a gift of highly appreciated stock.

For single-life annuities, CFT retains nine percent of the annuity after the donor passes away to cover their management services during the annuity’s duration. The remainder is distributed to HPEF to support the purpose the donor requested at the time they established the annuity (for two-life, the same process follows the passing of the second annuitant).

“Gift annuities are a safe and thoughtful method of giving for older donors,” said Wes Livesay, director of charitable gift planning with CFT. “We are delighted to partner with HPEF to offer this giving option to donors who care for the long-term future of Highland Park Schools.”

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IN OUR DISTRICT, THE TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATION, AND EVERYBODY WANTS TO DO THE BEST FOR THE KIDS...
YOU HAVE TO INVEST IN THE SCHOOLS.

Through Susan and Jim Baldwin’s daughters Sarah ’11 and Marie ’14 have long since graduated, the couple continues supporting Highland Park Schools through their 20+ year tradition of giving to Mad for Plaid.

“In our district, the teachers, administration, and everybody wants to do the best for the kids,” explained Susan. “I like supporting that mission even though my kids are gone. It’s an investment in our community,” she said.

Jim is a proud graduate of the Class of ’79, putting down roots that have kept the Baldwins in HPISD since the 1980s.

Susan has nurtured the roots in their community, volunteering in the classrooms at John S. Bradfield Elementary, working with the PTA to cook lunch for teachers, and serving on the Talented and Gifted Board at the middle school.

“You have to invest in the schools,” said Susan. “These kids are just all so smart, and we’ve always been committed to supporting them.”

Katrina and Houston Bolin met each other while running cross country at TCU, then got married and moved to Addison. When it was time to buy their first home, the couple felt pulled to Highland Park.

As a 2004 graduate of Highland Park High School, Houston explained, “I saw how the teachers are what really drives everything in our schools. It’s how I grew up and I wanted that for my kids.”

Dedication and nurturing from teachers are the primary factors that Houston believes have helped his sons, Walker, a kindergartner, and Knox, a second-grader, steadily develop and improve in the classroom.

“Highland Park has always been able to attract top teachers,” he explained. “I support Mad for Plaid as the district’s way of communicating our support of their extraordinary efforts. My wife has a teaching background, and we really understand the importance of that.”

Decades ago, Houston’s parents started the family tradition of supporting Highland Park Schools by volunteering for the PTA and giving to the Highland Park Education Foundation.

Katrina, a former Highland Park teacher, keeps the Bolins’ tradition alive by volunteering, as well as serving as a substitute at Hyer Elementary, even teaching first grade in the same classroom where her husband got his start in elementary school.

“I saw how the teachers are what really drives everything in our schools.”

Growing up in Highland Park, Dr. Paul Peters ’76 said he loved his “old fashioned neighborhood” that had a strong sense of family and place.

When it came time to raise his family, there was only one place he wanted to go. “In fact, we joke that Paul only knows how to get anywhere in Dallas via Beverly Drive,” said his wife DeEtte Peters.

And so the next generation of Peters were all raised in Highland Park Schools to be proud Scots.

“The schools gave them the same great foundation they gave me,” said Dr. Peters, a renowned orthopedic surgeon who was a recipient of the 2022 Highland Park High School Distinguished Alumni Award. “Now we support Mad for Plaid as a way to give back to the community that supported us.”

When the Peters’ daughter Taelor Fisher ’08 was an art teacher at John S. Bradfield Elementary School and Highland Park Middle School, the couple became more aware of the needs of educators.

“To recruit, maintain and attract teachers, we have to support our district,” said DeEtte, who also served as president of the Highland Park Choir Booster Club and vice president of HP Arts. “We support Mad for Plaid year after year because we want to help meet the needs of our teachers.”

TO RECRUIT, MAINTAIN AND ATTRACT TEACHERS, WE HAVE TO SUPPORT OUR DISTRICT.
CONGRATULATIONS!
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