

The Foundation Files



FOUNDATION
for Winona Area Public Schools

THE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

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*****Ex-Officio; Non-Voting**

Shelley Milek, **Executive Director**

August 1, 2021 through July 31, 2022

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we navigated the second school year with COVID-19, it became much more of a norm. We would never have thought we would have been in year two of the pandemic, but we felt confident that as needs changed, we adapted. **As a Foundation and as a school district, our communication has evolved.** We watched the community and school report on graph charts that helped us to understand the COVID-19 case numbers. We continued to wear masks throughout the buildings for the safety of all and it too became the norm. We were successful at keeping the majority of our students in the classroom learning but provided online learning for those students who needed it or felt more comfortable with it.



Executive Director,
Shelley Milek

The Foundation took queues from the Winona Area Public School's Administration on how we could best serve our students. Although some normalcy was back in place, we still had needs stemming from the pandemic and we were happy to support.

The third time was finally the charm as we were able to hold our fundraising event after two previous cancellations. The October 9th, 2021 **Nosh in Nashville** event welcomed those attending with a background vibe of country music which became the common thread connecting the life and soul of our guests who were all too happy to dust off their boots and fancy a shiny buckle or plaid shirt.

Our annual \$5000 **Dare to Dream** grant offering had more applications than ever. The grant awarded this year went to *The Outdoor Classroom*, written by Sarah Hedin and Amber Mlynczak, designed to fund an outdoor educational setting fitting for the current times at WMS.

We awarded 24 scholarships this past year to students who plan to continue their higher education and offered two new \$5000 scholarships to eager applicants. Funds held at the Foundation are set up to provide scholarships in memory and honor of people, as well as, multiple organizations who want to give back to students.

Grants are an integral offering from our organization. **We provided 47 grants to our schools to help enhance and enrich education for our students** by providing opportunities that students may not have had with normal school budgets.

The annual Haake Poetry Prize Competition awarded 10 prizes to students blindly selected by an esteem panel of judges. After two previous years of meeting via ZOOM, the judges were happy to meet this year in person to determine which WMS and WSHS poetry authors would capture the prize awards.

As the newsletter comes to print, we find a more normal time for all of us. We are fortunate to have community and business supporters who value public education. We are so appreciative we could continue to serve and we could not provide the assistance we do without you and the continued support of donations we receive. **Thank you!!**

VISIT US ON THE WEB!

Information on the Foundation for Winona Area Public Schools, its mission, Board of Directors, grants, and alumni connections can be found on our website at:

www.foundationwaps.org

Also, a **link for online donations** is available 24/7 for gifts in honor or memory of a special person, program or event.

**The Foundation is
on Facebook!**



FOUNDATION MONEY AT WORK!

Breakout EDU



Physics at Valley Fair



WK Elementary - Gala Dollars



FFA State Convention



FOUNDATION FOR WAPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS *Coming and Going...*

The Foundation has *always* been so fortunate to have community and business members provide time and expertise to help us continue to provide great benefits for our students. These four wonderful Board of Directors have each spent six years on the Board and have completed two terms. They will truly be missed.

Going.....

KATHERINE GILMER

Past President & Past Vice President

Kate shares what she loved about being on the Foundation Board of Directors. She said, "I love that the Foundation for WAPS can enrich the learning going on in our classrooms through the grant funds given to teachers. I especially enjoy reading the creative and innovative grant proposals from teachers. One of my favorite experiences is the Foundation for WAPS Event—It is awesome seeing the community come together to support our public schools! It is also really fun to hear my kids talk about a speaker or an experience they had at school and I can tell them that the Foundation for WAPS funded that!"



STACEY MATTHEES Co-Treasurer, Investment Committee & Event Cashier

Stacey feels, "One of the most important ways the Foundation for WAPS serves our students is by being able to offer grants that the teachers can apply for which gives our students some additional learning experience or opportunity that they may not get in the traditional classroom setting. One of her most favorite things she liked about serving on the Board was being able to cashier at the fundraising event. She loved the fun night shared with amazing people who support the Foundation for WAPS. She also said, "My time on the Board has flown by and I would suggest that if anyone wants to pay it forward and donate time to an amazing organization, they should consider serving on the Foundation for WAPS Board. You meet some pretty amazing people along the way as well as help make the Winona Area Public Schools a better educational system for the children in our Winona community."



ERICA PING Grants Committee

Erica said, "It has been an honor to be on the board and I have appreciated the opportunity to provide students with amazing experiences outside what the normal budget allows. Education is such an important part of the lives of any student and to be able to enhance that experience in any way is a lifelong benefit that will last these kids a lifetime. Besides working with a great group of people throughout different groups of the community, a favorite part of being on the board has been seeing how so many people believe in the importance of enhancing the education of our children in this community. People who are willing to go above-and-beyond to provide the resources needed to see that our Winhawks have lasting experiences that will guide them through their education and their lives. I've truly enjoyed feeling like I've been a part of making a mark in students' lives no matter how indirectly through such a great foundation. Thank you for the opportunity."



TINA SMEBY

Past President, Past Vice President, Past Secretary & Past Grants Committee

We asked Tina what she would like readers to know about her time on the board. She replied, "It has been an honor to serve on the board of an organization whose primary purpose is enhancing the education of our local public school students. What a feel-good experience!" She also added, "I really enjoyed my time on the Grants Committee. So many creative, forward-thinking grants are submitted every year! Being on the committee that reads through those grants and makes recommendations for funding these amazing educational initiatives was very rewarding."



Although it is always hard to see our Board of Director friends and contributors leave as they complete their terms, we are thrilled to welcome new Board of Directors and look forward to their enthusiasm, ideas and new life they add to our many working projects.

Coming.....

JENNIFER BAERTSCH Board of Director

Jennifer has a proud WAPS family with their daughter Tessa, 5th grade at the Winona Middle School, their son Chase, 3rd grade at W-K and her husband Jim who coaches Winona Middle School track and WSHS cross country. "With my opportunity to join the Foundation for WAPS Board, our whole family is Winhawk Proud!" She is the Marketing Manager at WNB Financial where she has served on their team for 13 years. She is also the author and publisher of the new children's chapter book, *Junkyard Tough: A "Tail" of Bravery.* She added, "I'm passionate about the Foundation's mission and hope my enthusiasm for public education will help contribute to the board's success. I strongly believe in giving back to create a wonderful community, and what better way to do that than through our schools, where we're shaping our future leaders." We are excited to work with you Jenny!



STACY COTTRELL Board of Director

We are looking forward to Stacy Cottrell joining the Board of Directors. Stacy works for Miller Mentoring, a program that works with the Winona Area Public Schools to promote and nurture relationships between mentors and students. She encourages positive relationships to help our students gain improved self-confidence, emotional maturity and academic success. Stacy said, "I am looking forward to learning more about all the great things the board does for students in WAPS and being a part of supporting our school community." We look forward to Stacy giving her insight into helping us to serve our students even more.



TRISHA JOHNSON WEA Representative

Trisha will be joining the Board of Directors as our WEA Representative. Trisha graduated from WSHS, received her undergraduate degree in Biology from Winona State, an undergraduate degree in Science Education from Mankato State University, and received a Master's in Education from University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. She taught 8 years at WMS, 2 years at WSHS, is married to Mike and has two college-aged daughters Emily and Lauren. Trisha said, "I am hoping to contribute to the board my enthusiasm for learning. I am excited to be a voice for all of the great things teachers are doing in their classrooms and in the Winona Community." Welcome to the Board Trisha!



BRANDI MOORE Board of Director

Brandi has lived in Winona for 25 years, is married to Torry, has two little girls, Siena (10) and Rowan (8), who are both in the district in the RIOS program. Her career is with Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor. She enjoys helping her clients reach their goals and dreams. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, running and biking, reading & challenging herself with continuing education in her field. Brandi said, "I hope to take some time absorbing and learning how the board operates and that long-term I can be impactful and thoughtful in my community as well as serve as a bridge between our public schools, teachers and the members of our community." Welcome Brandi!



Continued on next page.



Moving On Over.....



LUKE MERCHLEWITZ President, Event Chair, Past WEA Rep

Luke has been serving on the Foundation Board of Directors as our WEA Representative. Because he has announced his retirement, after 36 years of teaching, he will no longer be the WEA Representative but will still stay on the Foundation Board of Directors as a community member. We are so excited to have Luke continue to provide great leadership for the Foundation. Luke adds, "I have a passion for public education and ensuring that all students have the opportunities necessary to reach their full potential. Public education is a foundation of our society and I have dedicated my career to advocating for our students, our teachers, and our schools. I am excited to continue my advocacy as part of the Foundation for Winona Area Public Schools."

IN THE ARTS & MUSIC

Music and art are emotionally stimulating and can positively impact our student's academic performance by building social skills, providing an opportunity to show creativity and can keep them engaged and can provide an outlet for them.

The Foundation for WAPS supports music and the arts through grants. We were thrilled that trips were back on after the hiatus caused by COVID-19. This provides a glimpse of a few of the grants we supported this year in the arts and music categories.

WSHS Winhawk Marching Band trip to Florida

As almost a rite of passage, 94 Winhawk students had the opportunity to represent WSHS as well as the entire Winona community on a truly international stage by taking the WSHS Winhawk Marching Band trip to Florida. The trip offered every band student to be an ambassador for WSHS during their junior or senior year. Students were part of a major public performance and experienced ethnic and cultural backgrounds.



Winona Senior High Orchestra Trip to New York

The WSHS Orchestra traveled to New York City to experience cultural learning, be part of the musical epicenter in the U.S., hear a live symphony at the New York Philharmonic, see the Metropolitan Museum of Art, attend the Broadway show, Hamilton, and see the many historical sites and views of New York City. This cultural and historical educational experience was beyond epoch.



Minneapolis Institute of Art Field Trip

AP World History students visited the Minneapolis Institute of Art through a Foundation sponsored field trip. Students viewed artwork from different regions and time-periods including Islamic art from the 900's, various Chinese dynasties and period rooms from the 1600's around the world. The Minneapolis Institute of Art's exhibits followed world history and the connections made between what the students saw and the content in class.



Minnesota Marine Art Museum

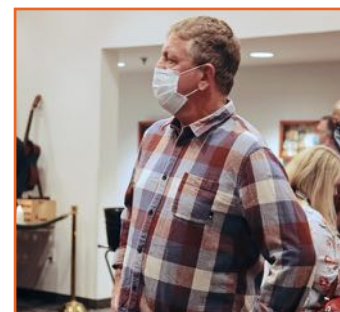
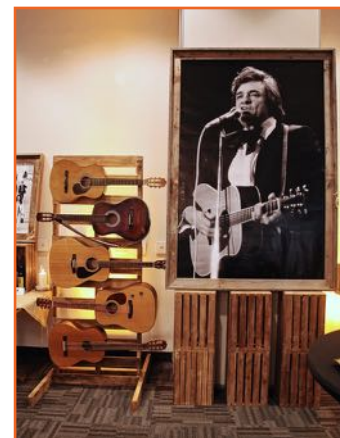
Sixty WSHS students, in the class Introduction to Art, got the experience of visiting an art museum and receiving a guided tour from a Docent who taught the students more about professional art. MMAM's works of art are separated into three main collections: European, American and contemporary. The museum, located on the bank of the Mississippi River in Winona has collections themed around oceans, the sea, rivers, and lakes. As students visit this local educational gem, the world is truly their oyster.



NOSH IN NASHVILLE RAISES OVER \$75,000!!!

Hey Y'all..It's a wrap folks!

Thank you to everyone who supported the Foundation for Winona Area Public Schools with the Nosh in Nashville fundraising event! Guests dusted off their boots, shined their buckles and bolos and got ready to enjoy an evening filled with Dolly and Johnny! Our Auctioneers, Luke Merchlewitz and Tim Gleason, kept the bid cards flipping as they kept the crowd on alert for the next fabulous item up for bid. We could not have had such a success without our lead sponsors Merchants Bank and WNB Financial, along with our Corporate Sponsors and all of the generous donors. Thank you to all of the hard work put in by the Event and Auction Committees and our Board of Directors. It takes a village to make this all happen for our kids. All proceeds were given proportionately to our schools for Academics, Athletics, Arts and Activities. *Until we meet again.... "We'll keep the light on for you!"*



EVENT DOLLARS & FUNDS AT WORK!



The Foundation for WAPS holds many funds opened with donations given in honor or memory and for many causes. One fund, the WSHS Softball Fund was started with donations to help the WSHS softball team. This year, the softball team bought a much-needed permanent sound system for the softball field. The previous one was not permanent and needed to be set up every game day. This system is Bluetooth compatible and gives our announcer more freedom during the game.



Early Childhood Event Purchase
2022 Light Lab

GRANTS

The Foundation for WAPS is proud to support our students and schools by adding enriching enhancements in education with grants.

Bike Club - Supply Expenses

The WALC Bike Club started with a grant from the Foundation for WAPS two years ago. Since then, the club has fixed and donated over a dozen bikes to WAPS students in need. Students have received life-long skills in learning how to fix and maintain their bikes.

With a second grant from the Foundation, the WALC Bike Club continues to be successful and have a positive impact on our students. The Foundation is proud to support this fun, educational and impactful work!



Science Story Time

Sarah Hedin, WMS 5th and 6th grade science teacher, wants to bring science to life by having her students read a novel and then initiate the science that goes along with it. With the help of a Foundation for WAPS grant, Sarah brought in Derek Barkheim from Wild Seekers to teach survival skills. Derek did just that by teaching the kids to start fires using hand drills, bow drills and flint and steel.



Spanish 4 Children's Books to Nicaragua

During the first semester of the school year, students of Susan Larsen's WSHS Spanish 4 class have generously created 13 children's books to donate to Wisconsin Nicaragua Partners (affiliated with the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point) for their library in Nueva Santa Celia, Nicaragua, and also, for the Rios Immersion Program at the Winona Middle School.

With the financial assistance of the Foundation for Winona Area Public Schools, the students had the opportunity to share their knowledge of the Spanish language in a beneficial and authentic way, while simultaneously contributing to a great cause.



TEACHER & STAFF PAYROLL DEDUCTION PARTICIPANTS 2021-2022

Our teachers once again spent the 2021-2022 school year continuing to work hard for our students. Even with making sure teachers met the student's educational needs, they also continued to keep the students in mind by donating personally to the Foundation for Winona Area Public Schools through our payroll deduction program. Please take note of the staff members who participated in the Foundation's Payroll Deduction Program benefitting the Winona Area Public Schools. Their support provided over \$13,000 for our student's education. We are humbled by these gifts and this grand support.

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
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PAYROLL DEDUCTION GRANT AWARDS

The Foundation awarded two \$250 grants from the pool of staff candidates who provided payroll deduction donations to the Foundation. This year's grant winners were Tim Gleason and Karen Whitney-Throne. The grant money was used to purchase items that will enhance and enrich education for our WAPS students. Tim Gleason used his funds to purchase an inspirational book for his basketball team that he coaches and Karen Whitney-Throne also used her funds to purchase books that will help students in the counseling office.

Tim Gleason & Karen Whitney-Throne
2022 Payroll Deduction Winners



RHOADES FAMILY DONATES \$250,000 TO THE FOUNDATION FOR WAPS!

Dr. Bruce and Katherine Rhoades donated \$250,000 to start the Rhoades Family Scholarship Fund. The scholarship was created to support academically successful students who demonstrate intellectual promise, motivation and determination to succeed in higher education, and who will benefit from financial assistance to help fund the best possible college experience.



Dr. Bruce Rhoades graduated from WSHS in the Class of 1957. While attending WSHS he enrolled in an academically enriched program with other highly motivated, successful students. Dr. Rhoades credits this program with setting a successful course for his subsequent academic success. This scholarship is intended to honor Dr. Rhoades' legacy by assisting academically promising, highly motivated scholarship recipients to reach their higher education goals.

A \$5000 scholarship will be awarded annually to the chosen applicant for up to four consecutive years, pending documentation of academic success. Grace Quinn was the first recipient.

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Jon & Ruthanne Weispfenning	Jack Richter Mary Galke John & Shelley Milek	WMS Staff Gratefulness Marie Holmquist
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Mitzi Henderson Ray O'Loughlin & Jamie Henderson	Beth Wright Jon & Ruthanne Weispfenning	
Don Klagge Birthday Marie Holmquist	WMS Classroom Honors: Shannon Bechly, Joe Cynor, Amber Mlynczak, Mary Tuffvesson, Cassidy Wade, John Weaver	
Brenda Merchlewitz William & Judy Davis Family Fund of the Winona Community Foundation Sharon Flatten	Anonymous	

Leave A Legacy...

THROUGH THE FOUNDATION'S LOWELL NELSON SOCIETY

In 1997, the Foundation Board of Directors established the Lowell Nelson Society in honor of former District 861 Superintendent Lowell Nelson. Membership in the Society is accorded to those who help build the Foundation's endowment by naming the Foundation as a beneficiary in their wills, qualified pension plans (including IRA's, 401k's, Keoghs, etc.), insurance policies, trusts, or other types of planned gifts.



Please consider the Foundation when you are updating your will or developing your estate and retirement plans. Our office is here to help you make a difference in the lives that follow.

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Dr. Donna Helble*	Linda & Don Olson	Joyce & Pete* Woodworth

(*deceased)

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Donor Directed Science Fund

Judith Johnson-honoring Vic Johnson

Miller Mentoring Program/Summer Programs

Jerry Miller & Wm. Miller Scrap Iron & Metal Co.

Miller Mentoring

Dick & Sharon Flatten-honoring the staff
Hugh Miller
RTP

Miller Mentoring Program in memory of

Becky Kouba

Rich & Denise Pflughoeft

Special Athletic Competition

Kiwanis Sunrisers Project Account
Saint Charles Schools

WAPS K-12 Music Department Fund

Jean Knutzen Fund of the Winona Community Foundation

WAPS Science Fund

Judith Johnson in honor of Vic Johnson

WK Bob Hogenson Fund

WK Library Book Dispenser

F O E NO 1243 Gambling Fund
Elizabeth Callender King Foundation

WSHS FFA

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WSHS Business/Economics Dept.

Helen Imm Trust

WSHS Touchdown Club

Winona Touchdown Club

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EVENT 2021

Grant Donation
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*Donations received to date prior to the event

Nosh in Nashville Friend

\$250 Friend

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Class of 1974 Memorial Scholarship

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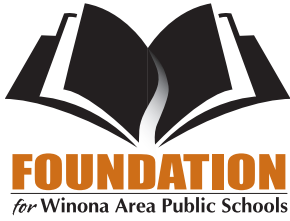
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