

INSPIRING POSSIBILITIES.

*Help us give new opportunities
to Lincoln students.*

 **Foundation**
LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FoundationForLPS.org
Fall Newsletter 2015

Dear Friends,

The members of our team – staff and volunteers – wake up each day thinking about how they can help our community create opportunities for students to thrive.

While the Foundation has been serving the school district for 26 years, we are entering a very unique time in our history. Data about families in need is galvanizing people from all sectors to tackle some big challenges. Whether it is building a Career Academy, thinking about strengthening our Community Learning Centers increasing access to technology or building facilities to support our growing population...our school system has the interest and attention of its community.

We at the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools are honored to be the place where the community meets its schools, in partnership.

We are student focused, collaborative, engaged in outcomes, and ambitious with our ideals. Simply put, we are fulfilling the wishes of our donors – focusing on what's most important – students reaching their full potential.

That all sounds great right? But as we assessed this past year, we realized that we needed to go further. We wanted to know what our donors valued over the years, where they invested and what they – through us – really stood for. In reviewing our 400+ funds, we saw some relevant and emerging themes which we

call our four pillars, and you will see them in action in this newsletter. We hope you will see your own passions for education and philanthropy reflected in these efforts.

Thank you for your ongoing support, generosity, and belief in the potential of young minds. We count on you to further the mission of the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools.





Wendy Van
President

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Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools Mission

We believe all students should have what they need to reach their full potential. We engage our community to inspire students and educators, and create educational opportunities that enhance academic and personal success.

COLLEGE AND CAREER

Amazing opportunities await students at The Career Academy (TCA) this year. Students took their first steps into the brand new school building at Southeast Community College's Lincoln campus in August. Forging meaningful and productive learning experiences, tailored to fit their aspirations, these students have the potential to address real job demand needs within our business community. The Foundation's partnership with TCA is directly linked to this pillar of "College And Career."



Community involvement is the cornerstone of authentic experience for students and the key to a dynamic and impactful program. Working together, instructors and businesses are creating hands-on early exposure to high-demand careers that can launch students into professional success.

Immersion in one of 16 different career pathways allows students to work with industry leaders and to understand what it would be like to pursue a particular career path. They are challenged to collaborate across disciplines on relevant cutting-edge projects. We are already beginning to see students thrive at TCA after just one semester.

"We all want to be here.... If I miss the bus, I'm not going to stay home, I'm going to find my way here and weld because that's what I want to do." – Jade Blizek

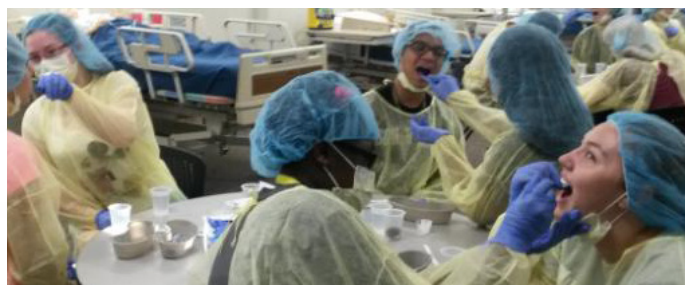
Jade Blizek and Kealy Barnes are the first generation of students to graduate from this specialized program at The Career Academy. Both Kealy and Jade have interesting insights on how TCA is going to help Lincoln students reach their full potential.

Jade, who is currently studying welding, had a battle with cancer early in his life. This experience shaped his goals, and helped him appreciate unique opportunities. Because of this, he is certain that TCA is an excellent fit for him. "We all want to be here, we're excited to come every day...if I miss the bus, I'm not going to stay home, I'm going to find my way here and weld, because that's what I want to do" said Jade.

Kealy is in the health sciences pathway, and is motivated by her mother's difficult recovery from a surgery. She is driven to be a great healthcare provider, for people like her mom.

In the first few weeks, Kealy has learned how to give vaccinations, administer IV drips and draw blood. She has spoken with nurses, EMTs and other healthcare professionals about what the job is like in real life.

Both students believe their classes are informative and interesting. They say, the connection with the business community is key. Over 130 businesses are participating in TCA through volunteerism or financial support.



TCA is up and running, doing great work with students thanks to the generous donors and local businesses who made it happen. Additional resources are needed to ensure a strong future for TCA. Support comes from sponsorships that construct valuable student experiences, provide state of the art equipment and allow students to attend TCA through tuition assistance. To date \$1.2M has been donated or pledged over the next three years. We still have quite a way to go to reach our goal of \$2.2M and great sponsorship opportunities exist across most of the pathways.

These sponsorships provide experiences that traditional funding sources cannot.

To find out more about the The Career Academy, go to foundationforlps.org/projects/the-career-academy.html

STRONG, STABLE FAMILIES

Family literacy has a powerful premise: *Parents are their children's first and most important teachers.*

An investment in a family's education is an investment in our community's financial and cultural future. Family literacy programs believe in engaging families in the learning process and sharing lessons with parents - recognizing they will pass along those lessons to their children. At the Foundation, we believe family literacy is a compelling way to help build "Strong, Stable Families" - one of our four pillars.

What is family literacy?

Family literacy is a nationally-recognized and innovative educational approach with a powerful premise. It brings students and families together to learn - challenging parents, guardians and their children to identify academic and life goals that will improve the quality of their lives. Family literacy impacts the entire community. Research shows a mother's reading skill is the greatest determinant of her children's future academic success, outweighing other factors such as neighborhood and family income.

- Children who have parents who help them learn to read score 10 points higher on standardized reading tests.
- When moms and dads earn high school diplomas - or college diplomas - they increase the family earning power, but even more importantly, change and continue a family's cycle of literacy and educational achievement.

When parents and children go to school together, the entire community benefits.

Family literacy programs have been implemented in nine Title 1 school buildings in Lincoln Public Schools, but we need your help to support this program and help it thrive. Family literacy at LPS provides several components for mothers and fathers. During part of the school day, adults receive basic lessons in language and literacy, as well as parenting skills. The rest of the school day, they spend time in their children's classrooms, learning math right alongside them.

Upon program completion, parents are more likely to:

- Feel confident helping their children in school
- Read to their children
- Conference with teachers
- Volunteer in the classroom

Did you know?

- More than 60 different languages are spoken by LPS students and families.
- 29% of LPS students report an ethnicity other than White (7 schools are "minority majority schools").
- 43% of LPS students live in poverty (that number is 70% in the 14 highest poverty schools).
- More than 2,300 students are learning English as a second, third, or fourth language.

The results are powerful:

- 200% increase in English acquisition by parents at their children's schools
- 275% increase in parents reading in English to their children
- 222% increase in parent volunteerism in schools

Teachers report that students involved in the Family Literacy Program at LPS are more likely:

- To have good or excellent family support
- To have good or excellent classroom behavior
- To have future success in school

Family Literacy programs have broad impact by fostering development of the connecting language in our increasingly globalized community. This program works, the results are generational, and we are just getting started!



\$1 million is lost to a community per year for *each student* who does not graduate from high school.

By supporting family literacy with a gift, you're doing more than advocating for families seeking to begin a new chapter in their history, you are helping the future of our community. For more information about Family Literacy visit:

www.foundationforlps.org

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Opportunities to reach students “Beyond The Classroom,” one of our four pillars at the Foundation, is supported by generous donors who connect their passions to student needs. Wrapping resources around extra-curricular activities helps to give all students opportunities to participate, learn and improve themselves, benefitting our entire community.

We love to find ways that our donors can connect their passions to student needs. Diana and Lloyd Roberts are excellent examples of how this can make a huge difference in the lives of students with The Doane Leadership Conference, which they are sending them to for the first time this year.

The Roberts have a long history of support with the Foundation. They’ve given generously to the Lincoln community to honor the memory of their daughter, Brooke D. Roberts, a Lincoln East graduate. Recently, Diana and Lloyd have focused their efforts towards Elliott and Hartley Elementary Schools. Part of this focus is being able to reach students early in life, helping them grow as leaders. This was a core belief held by Brooke.

Diana and Lloyd feel that students today face many new pressures (whether from technology, social media, or elsewhere). Further, they believe the best way to prepare students for these new challenges is to give them opportunities to learn valuable lessons outside of the classroom, then take those lessons back into their schools.

The Doane Leadership Conference focuses on developing critical thinking and self-confidence for 4th – 6th grade students. Diana and Lloyd’s enthusiasm for the conference comes from their belief that it will create students who are thoughtful, less impulsive, and able to lead their fellow students. Their goal is to be a positive influence that creates long-term change in students’ lives by reminding them to forge their own path and inspire their peers.

According to Lloyd, in the many years they have supported LPS through the Foundation, the most

fulfilling aspect is seeing students take ahold of the opportunities they’re given, and watching them further their education.

Diana and Lloyd want to commend the principals of Hartley and Elliott Elementary for their hard work, and to note how much the LPS faculty members care about their students. By working closely with these principals, they have supported

students from each school to attend the leadership conference.

Says Lloyd, “I’ve traveled all over for my job, and I haven’t found anywhere else that has a better setting for their school system than Lincoln, Nebraska. The support from the community, the administration...I can’t believe all the work our teachers do. I’ve had chances to move my family to other areas, but nowhere compares to Lincoln.”



Lloyd Roberts, Wendy Van, Diana Roberts

NEXT-LEVEL LEARNING

Every two or three years, the Lincoln Youth Symphony (LYS) takes an overseas trip to share their music, and to give the youth involved the chance to experience a different nation's culture. As a part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland, LYS will be playing several concerts in Ireland this coming March. The trip will highlight a number of heritage sites on the Emerald Isle, and students will have the opportunity to share their music at St. Anne's Cathedral, and St. Nicholas Collegiate Cathedral.

Clark Potter, the conductor of LYS, is excited that the trip will be part of an important cultural exchange between different nations. "Music is a way to give to communities, and I'm really grateful for this opportunity."

These kinds of experiences help youth to understand their world better, and give them confidence in their ability to take on challenges as they learn to get around in a country different than their own. For many students, this trip will be their first time out of the country.

"Music is a way to give to communities." – Clark Potter

Senior Isabella Spaulding said, "We get to travel together as a group and perform in really cool places that have historical significance in terms of music."

The beauty of performing in this kind of environment is that it allows students to see that music is truly a universal language and crosses barriers of culture and language. Next-Level Learning, one of our four pillars at the Foundation, allows learning to happen outside of the classroom and gives students new



experiences which benefit them in many different ways. Bringing a new perspective back into these students' every day lives is valuable for the entire community.

Unique costs are associated with transporting an entire orchestra, and Foundation funds help make this possible. Because it's impractical to bring a bass or cello onto a plane, they'll be renting many instruments in Ireland. LYS is also hoping to sponsor the entire trip for a handful of students who would not be able to go on their own, so that everyone can benefit from this journey.

The Foundation for Lincoln Public schools is proud to have been a part of funding this trip. If you are interested in supporting Next-Level Learning, find out more about our funds at foundationforlps.org/projects.

Inaugural Donor Coffee

We would like to celebrate you and all that you have made possible for kids through the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools.

Please join us for our inaugural Donor Coffee on February 15th from 9:00-10:30 am at the Donald D. Sherrill Education Center 330 N. 56th Street. Experience this impressive LPS program, designed to support students with behavioral challenges in a positive learning environment where they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Connect with Foundation donors and supporters while enjoying coffee and treats. See first-hand how connecting donor's passions to student needs makes a huge difference in the lives of students and makes our community a great place to live!

This school year, you will be invited to attend three different donor gatherings for fellowship, updates, insights, to see new faces, to hear from kids, and to get inside some of Lincoln's newest LPS facilities and other places of interest.

Take time to find out more about the good work we are doing inspiring possibilities in our community. Please RSVP to Karon Tarletsky at ktarlet@lps.org or 402-436-1856.

2016 Educator Awards

Open for Nominations November 3, 2015 - January 6, 2016

Each year the Foundation sponsors Educator Awards that celebrate those who make education come alive in their classrooms. These educators go above and beyond the call of duty by teaching their students in creative and innovative ways. They make outstanding contributions that support and improvement of public education, and we believe it is important to recognize them.

Visit our website to see each award's criteria and corresponding nomination or application forms at www.foundationforlps.org/educatorawards. If you are interested in donating to, or creating a new educator award, please call us at (402) 436-1612, we'd love to talk with you.

Leaving a Legacy, Making a Difference

Have you ever thought of leaving a forever legacy that impacts students? With your help, we lift up our community through the public school system - Contact us to make a difference by creating your own personal legacy or a legacy for a loved one through deferred giving.

You can help young people develop the skills they will need as tomorrow's leaders and perpetuate the ideals you value - without changing your current financial situation.

Retirement Accounts make smart gifts. If you knew that your estate gift was revocable, would that make you more comfortable in planning an estate gift? We would love to talk with you about planned giving. Whether immediate or deferred, the kids win every time. Contact Kristin Holmes for more information kristin.holmes@lps.org 402-436-1859.





Our Four Pillars

As we work to provide opportunities along each of our focus areas, equity and student access to these enriching experiences is a driving factor. It is critical that students – regardless of their background and income – have opportunities to fully explore their public education experience and prepare themselves for future success.

College and Career

Helping students get ready to thrive.

Beyond The Classroom

Wrapping resources around extra-curricular activities.

Next-Level Learning

Partnering with the community to enrich student learning.

Strong, Stable Families

Addressing basic and emergency needs so all students come to school ready to learn.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

NOV

3
2015

Nominations Open for 2016 Educator Awards

Nominate an outstanding educator for a 2016 Educator Award!
Opens November 3rd until January 6th. Please go to:
foundationforlps.org/educatorawards

JAN

2
2016

Scholarship Applications

Scholarship applications open on January 7th.
Learn more at: foundationforlps.org/scholarships/

FEB

15
2016

Donor Coffee

Our inaugural Donor Coffee will be February 8th at Donald D. Sherrill Education Center from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. We would love to have you join us for coffee and conversation. Meet other donors and find out more about the great work being done in our school district and the community!

APR

14
2016

Inspire Awards

April 14th will be our second annual Inspire Awards! At these awards we celebrate an educator and a student from each school that makes a difference in their school communities.

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