

THE G.A.P.S. FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2010

The supporting Foundation of the Northwest Regional Education Service District | www.nwresd.k12.or.us

"Generating Assistance for Public Schools in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties, Oregon."



ANNUAL NEWSLETTER: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES



LEFT: ESD Board member Earl Fisher, Margaret Fisher, and Board member Renee Bruce attend the G.A.P.S. Fourth Annual Benefit Event.

The G.A.P.S. Foundation held its fourth annual benefit dinner and auction May 6 at Portland Community College/Rock Creek Campus.

More than 170 guests enjoyed bidding on silent and live auction items to benefit life-changing programs in public schools in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and friends, over \$61,000 was raised — \$9,000 was donated specifically to fund a special appeal made by students in an at-risk program run by Northwest Regional ESD (\$40,000 will support the annual G.A.P.S. mini-grant program. See page 3 for information).

The special appeal was made by Jose and Matt, students from Cascade Academy in Beaverton. They shared that during the 2009-10 school year, students in Julie Sanders Language Arts class at Cascade were irrevocably impacted by a project based on The Freedom Writers Diary — the true story of a group of at-risk high school students from L.A., who in the years

following the 1992 Rodney King riots used writing to change the world around them.

Following in the footsteps of the original Freedom Writers, students at Cascade used readings and discussions to gain personal insight into the Holocaust, race riots in L.A., and other stories of prejudice, racism, persecution and the hatred these things breed.

They wrote journal entries about the adversities they face on a daily basis, everything from gangs, immigration, drugs, and violence, to death, anorexia, dyslexia, divorce, and suicide.

Along the way the students discovered that writing is a powerful form of self expression that helped them deal with their past and move forward to make positive changes in their own lives.

Guests were very moved by the special appeal and generously donated enough money to cover the cost of sending the class to the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Museum of Tolerance in L.A. this past spring, and to continue the project during the 2010-11 school year (see box at right).

Update: Cascade Academy's Freedom Writers



Cascade Academy students take a break from visiting the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, California this past May.

The May 14, 2010, field trip to the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles turned out to be the amazing opportunity the students had hoped for. When asked to briefly describe their experience, here is what they submitted:

"Remarkable!! Amazing. More than cool. Different and exciting. A real adventure! A great experience. Awesome! Excellent and inspiring."

Thanks to the fabulous generosity of friends who donated to the special appeal at the G.A.P.S. 2010 auction, the students will re-connect with the Freedom Writers Foundation this fall.

Plans are underway to bring one of the original Freedom Writers, Darius Garrett, to Beaverton for two-days of face-to-face meetings with at-risk high school students from the four-county region. Over 100 students will hear the philosophy of the program and learn of the impact that the Freedom Writers Project has had on his life.

GENERATI HERE



LEFT: A \$1,000 mini-grant helped at-risk and special ed students in the Social Competencies Classroom in the Astoria School District build a solar greenhouse as part of a school-based, farm-to-table pilot project.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2010 BENEFIT SPONSORS

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2010 Wine Sponsor: REX HILL

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Over the last four years, The G.A.P.S. Foundation has funded a large number of excellent educational activities and programs for over 14,000 students with disabilities and special needs in the public schools of Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, and Washington counties. These foundation grants have provided extra services to students that would not otherwise have been available through their school districts or the Northwest Regional ESD. The G.A.P.S. Foundation depends upon a large number of volunteers in order to successfully provide these services.



Webster's Dictionary defines a volunteer as "a person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking," and as, "a person who performs a service willingly and without pay." The G.A.P.S. Foundation depends upon people like you. We need your help to continue and expand our service to children with special needs.

There are many ways to help The G.A.P.S. Foundation and the students we serve. Your service may include:

- Becoming an annual corporate or individual sponsor
- Serving as a G.A.P.S. Foundation Board Member
- Providing an ongoing or one-time cash donation
- Donating items to our annual auction
- Volunteering to serve on a specific Foundation committee
- Assisting at a Foundation fundraising event

I invite you to join our team. Whatever help you can give to The G.A.P.S. Foundation and the students of Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, and Washington county schools will be sincerely appreciated.

John Young, Ed.D.
President, The G.A.P.S. Foundation

VISIT US ONLINE AT www.gapsfoundation.org/giving

NG ASSISTANCE & NOW



ABOVE: A \$1,000 mini-grant was used to purchase jerseys and basketballs for Forest Grove United Sports, a Special Olympic contending team made up of special education students and their peers.

BELOW: Thanks to a \$400 G.A.P.S. mini-grant, Levi Anderson Learning Center in Beaverton was able to purchase guitars for their music program. [Levi Anderson is a residential treatment center serving adolescent boys, ages 12 through 18, with severe emotional and/or behavior impairments at St. Mary's Home for Boys in Beaverton.]

FALL 2010 MINI-GRANT OFFERING



THE GAP IS REAL

The G.A.P.S. Foundation's grantmaking program was created to respond to the needs of public school educators as they work to increase graduation rates and provide greater opportunities for success for children with disabilities and those who are at risk.

Thanks to your generosity, we are able to provide much-needed support to schools—support that is rapidly becoming invaluable in light of the unprecedented decline in state revenue and the resulting gap in funding. As we are all aware, districts are having to drastically reduce their budgets at a time when the demand for services to students in special education programs is increasing.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

IN SEPTEMBER 2010, \$40,000 will be awarded to public school educators throughout the Northwest Regional Education Service District's service area (Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties).

Each of the 20 school districts in the region will be awarded at least one grant, with individual grant amounts of between \$100 and \$1,000.

Grants will be awarded for projects, supplies, activities, technology, curriculum, etc., that enhance classrooms, programs, and services in these five specific areas:

- At-risk youth
- School-age special education
- Early childhood education
- Northwest Outdoor Science School
- Vocational/professional/technical programs

For more information and a list of projects funded in past years, please see the recipient lists at www.gapsfoundation.org/grants

"G.A.P.S. has made an amazing difference to our students' education and we are very grateful for the resources you have provided us with."

*Grant recipient at St. Helens Middle School.
Awarded \$798 to purchase a class set of National Geographic Atlases.*

YOUR DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Supporting education is our focus. We are driven to help students succeed in school, in the workforce, and in life — but We Can't Do It Without You!

Funded by corporate and individual donations, the annual mini-grant program supports projects that create opportunities, make connections, and address the highly specialized needs for students who are at-risk of not graduating from high school, for young children and students with special needs, and for students desiring to increase their employability through coursework in professional/technical and vocational programs.

BY SUPPORTING THE G.A.P.S. FOUNDATION, YOU WILL . . .

- ▶ Help a child hear for the first time
- ▶ Give hope to parents with children who are medically fragile, autistic, or developmentally delayed
- ▶ Make a difference in the life of a teenager at risk of not graduating from high school
- ▶ Help train tomorrow's workforce in the auto tech industry, the field of engineering, culinary arts and more
- ▶ Send 5th and 6th grade students to Outdoor Science School, giving them the opportunity to participate in real scientific research in a natural setting

Please send your tax deductible donation to 5825 NE Ray Cir., Hillsboro OR 97124 or donate online at www.gapsfoundation.org.

WHO ARE WE?

Contact us at
(503) 844-5716

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

G.A.P.S. is governed by a volunteer board of community members who use their time and talents to make a positive impact the lives of students and families in our region. If you are interested in joining the board, please contact the G.A.P.S. office at (503) 844-5716.

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ABOUT THE G.A.P.S. FOUNDATION

SINCE NOVEMBER 2006, The G.A.P.S. Foundation has been raising funds to benefit all children of public schools in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties served by the Northwest Regional Education Service District.

The Foundation exists to provide financial assistance to public school programs by funding grants and seeking special-project funding.

Funds are distributed to educational programs that serve youth, birth to 21, who are underprivileged and at-risk, and those with special needs.

