



Supporting Schools. Investing in our Future.

2021 Annual Report

25th Anniversary Commemorative Edition



Our vision is that all students—
regardless of race, culture,
socioeconomic status,
language, ability, gender,
sexual orientation, or other
identifiers—graduate as
engaged community members,
ready to contribute to their
fullest potential and navigate
the world's complexities.



As the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation marks its 25th anniversary in supporting students and schools in our community, it is an important moment for reflection.

Like most organizations, CPSF experienced both challenges and victories as we evolved into a successful, sustainable organization. However, nothing compares to the adversity we faced in the last two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the barriers it created for our schools and the families they serve. We are proud to share with you that CPSF was able to effectively pivot to respond to the needs facing our community.

This report is proof of some amazing feats. Our endowed funds, our programs, and our impact have all developed substantially over the past quarter century thanks to our generous donors, hardworking staff, dedicated Board of Trustees, and close relationship with the school district.

Never before have the services of CPSF been so important to families. Even as most of us struggle to envision the future right now, we know that CPSF stands ready and capable as the district's invaluable partner in ensuring excellence and equity in education.

In the midst of uncertainty, please know that we feel energized by the work ahead of us and gratified by the tremendous outpouring of community support. As a board and staff, we remain enthusiastically dedicated to our mission of supporting local schools and inspiring learning for a lifetime. We will continue our efforts to substantially grow our endowment and other financial resources, which will allow us to make a difference for students for generations to come. Your shared commitment to this vision means that we are positioned for advancement and success.

Thank you for being a part of our growth and development as an education foundation.

Ashlee Chavez

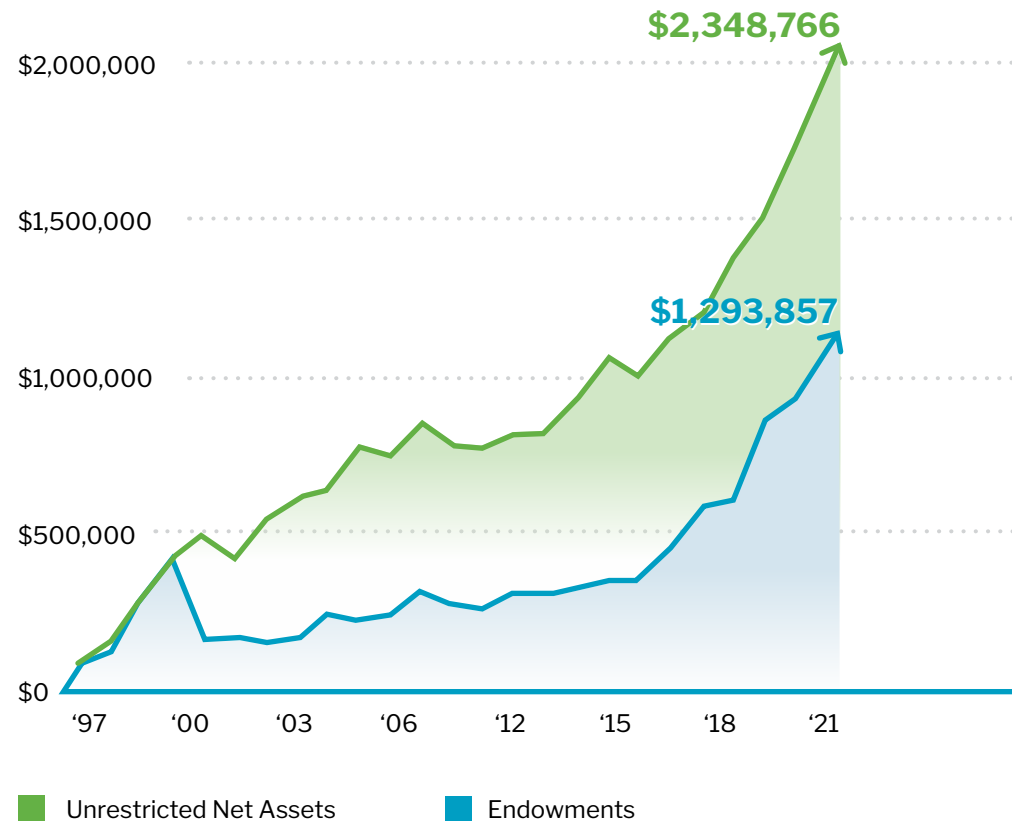
Ashlee Chavez
Chair of the CPSF Board of Trustees

Liv N. Gifford

Liv N. Gifford, MPH
CPSF Executive Director



Net Assets Over 25 Years



Funds Invested in Schools since 1996:
\$11,424,627

Commemorating our 25th Anniversary:

Original CPSF Trustee Comes Full Circle

The story of the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation starts, in some ways, with attorney Gretchen Morris—and a client in the mid-1990s who wanted to show appreciation for Corvallis schools.

The client was the grandparent of a Corvallis School District student. Morris asked how much the client wanted to donate.

“I was thinking maybe \$5,000,” Morris recalled. “The client said, ‘Oh, \$50,000 to start with.’ ... After I caught my breath and pulled myself off the floor, we talked about it, and I said, ‘You know, I don’t think you want

to just give this to the general budget; maybe there’s some way it could make a difference. How about if I talk to the superintendent?’”

The money eventually went to a computer lab at Highland View Middle School—and the superintendent asked Morris to brief the school board about the donation. The school board at the time included Larry Stuber, who asked Morris: “You wouldn’t

happen to have any more clients like that, would you?” Morris replied if she did, she wouldn’t have them donate money to the district’s general budget. She said: “You ought to have something like a foundation for it.”

The next morning, the superintendent asked his team: “OK, which one of you knows about foundations?”

Administrator Kay Reynolds was assigned to find out—and became the foundation’s first executive director, in 1996. As Reynolds assembled the first board, she ran the names by Morris, who had just one question: “Can I be on it too?”

She could.

After Morris retired from lawyering, she resigned from the board to spend time traveling with her husband, John.

Years later, Morris was having lunch with Liv Gifford, the foundation’s current executive director. Gifford asked Morris if she was interested in rejoining the board.

She was—and for the same reason she joined in the first place, a belief in the work that the foundation was doing.

“The reason I feel so strongly,” she said, “is that public education—and I get really emotional about this—is an absolute cornerstone of our democracy.” 🌱

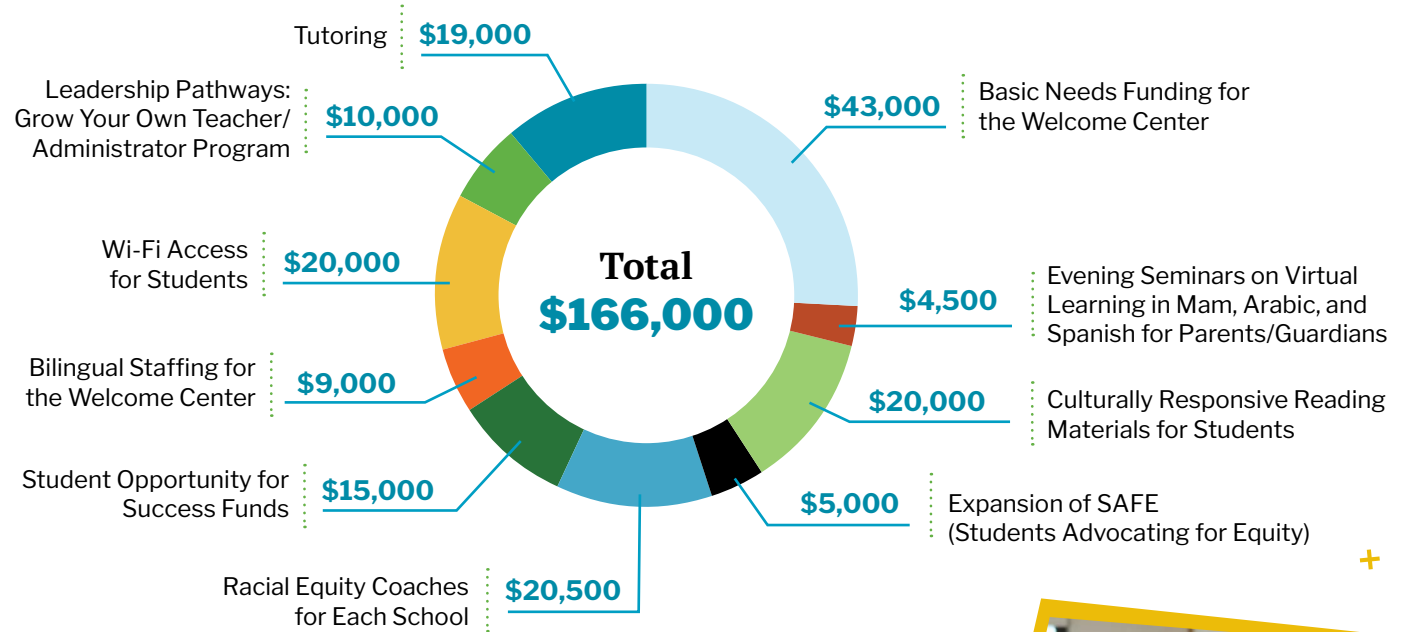


Gretchen Morris and district leaders Bob Johnson and Bruce Harter celebrate the launch of the Foundation.

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Grants & Projects in 2021

In the past year, we prioritized urgent, pandemic-related needs, identified in partnership with school district leaders.



For greater detail on these projects, visit: cpsfoundation.org/grants-awards/specialprojectgrants/2020grants



Empowered by the contributions of our generous donors, **Student and Family Outreach Advocates** provided support to more than **325 families** (575 students) through the Welcome Center.



1,200
bags of shelf-stable food



490
fresh produce boxes from Riverland Family Farms



400
laundry cards



700
grocery gift cards (\$20,000)



750
packages of cleaning and hygiene supplies



35
instances of rent/utilities assistance (\$9,000)

To learn more about the Welcome Center, visit: csd509j.net/students-parents/family-advocacy-support

Endowments in 2021

Total \$1,293,857 as of June 30, 2021

- » Anna J. H. Fang Scholarship for Journalism and Communications, \$29,097
- » Anna J. H. Fang Scholarship for STEM, \$27,090
- » Barbara E. Fry Endowment, \$111,928
- » Better World Endowment for Equity and Inclusion, \$117,009
- » **NEW!** CHS Class of 1958 Legacy Endowed Fund, \$25,786
- » CHS Class of 1966 Student Participation Fund, \$28,498
- » Cornerstone Fund, \$281,981
- » Corvallis High Schools Golf Committee Fund, \$96,991
- » David Zajicek Golf Scholarship Endowment, \$24,734
- » **NEW!** Dennis Staats Scholarship for the Arts, \$26,740
- » Doris L. Meyers Endowment, \$127,777
- » Eric Gorski Multimedia Scholarship Endowed Fund, \$20,483
- » Harold and Alma Moldenke Outdoor School Endowment, \$29,144
- » Hetherington Family Fund, \$27,030
- » The Joe Malango Endowment for Theatrical Arts, \$24,380
- » Lynn Lahey Somos el Futuro Scholarship, \$16,425
- » Mario D. Pastega Golden Apple Awards Endowment, \$35,892
- » Mario and Alma Pastega Professional Development Endowment, \$59,280
- » Midge Mueller Fund, \$57,032
- » Mid-Valley Bicycle Club Bike Safety Endowment, \$47,565
- » Olaf "Ole" Hedstrom Memorial Fund, \$13,244
- » Susan Small Hall Scholarship Endowment, \$35,199
- » Zel S. Brook Art Endowment and Educator Funds, \$30,552



Claudia Garcia-Aguilera

Student Spotlight: Claudia Garcia-Aguilera, 2021 Scholarship Recipient

“Any kind of education can be difficult when you have no one to show you a path and no one who can share their experiences with you. As a child from first generation Hispanic immigrant parents, it has been difficult to navigate my way ... since my parents did not have the luxury of getting far in their education.”

“My parents did not have the luxury of getting far in their education.”

“Though it seems as if my father is always working, he barely manages to make ends meet with his paycheck. I could never ask him to help me pay for college. Not only will this scholarship help me take out fewer student loans ... but it will help me pursue my dream of becoming a therapist and helping bring more diversity into the field.”





“We ought to do something that leaves a real legacy.”

Helping Future Generations: CHS Class of 1958 Legacy Fund

Corvallis High School, from the 1956 *Chintimini* yearbook.
(courtesy Benton County Historical Society)

It started as an idea to help celebrate the 80th birth years of the members of the Corvallis High School Class of 1958—but the gifts will be going to Corvallis High students for years to come.

COVID derailed plans for a 2020 gathering for the Class of 1958. But the idea to create a lasting gift kept gaining momentum.

James Woodcock, president of the Class of 1958, told his classmates, “Well, we ought to do something that leaves a real legacy.”

At first, the idea was a fund to award scholarships to Corvallis High School college-bound graduates. But two other ideas joined the mix: providing scholarships to students in vocational and trade programs, and supporting students with special needs and learning disabilities in the Life Skills Program. With these goals

in mind, the CHS Class of 1958 Legacy Fund was established at the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation.

The mix has appealed to donors like husband and wife Jerry and Julie Lear, both members of the Class of 1958: “I think that [having] those three pots ... appeals a lot more than just the standard scholarship thing,” said Jerry, a retired surgeon.

In May 2021, after less than a year of fundraising, the Class of 1958 crossed the \$20,000 threshold required for an endowed fund with the foundation. And it’s still growing: As of September 2021, the effort had raised nearly \$50,000.

Julie Lear, a longtime teacher, hopes other classes latch onto the Legacy Fund idea: “I hope that it’s catching for other classes,” she said. “I hope they’ll think about it.” 🌱

Trauma-Informed Teaching:

A Summer Course in English Literature

CPSF has been funding summer opportunities for students since 2014 as part of our commitment to increasing high school graduation rates. Since that time, graduation rates have risen by more than 20 percentage points, from 67 to 90 percent.

The room in Corvallis High School where Matthew King taught a summer 2021 class doesn't look like a typical classroom.

That's because it isn't a classroom. For his class on trauma-informed literature, King commandeered a staff room on the school's second floor, rearranged the couches and comfortable chairs into a circle and added lamps—in part because “I just don't like overhead lights,” but also because fluorescent lights can be irritants to students who have experienced trauma.

“One kid remarked that it looked like a therapist's office,” said King, who developed the summer class with help from a grant by the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation.

The class, which included 13 students, is an extension of King's work on “how traumatic childhood experiences affect the brain and how people view the world and behavior.”

“We're not necessarily talking about a class that is designed for people who are survivors of trauma or abuse or neglect,” he said, “although I think probably it might be a more friendly environment to those who are.”



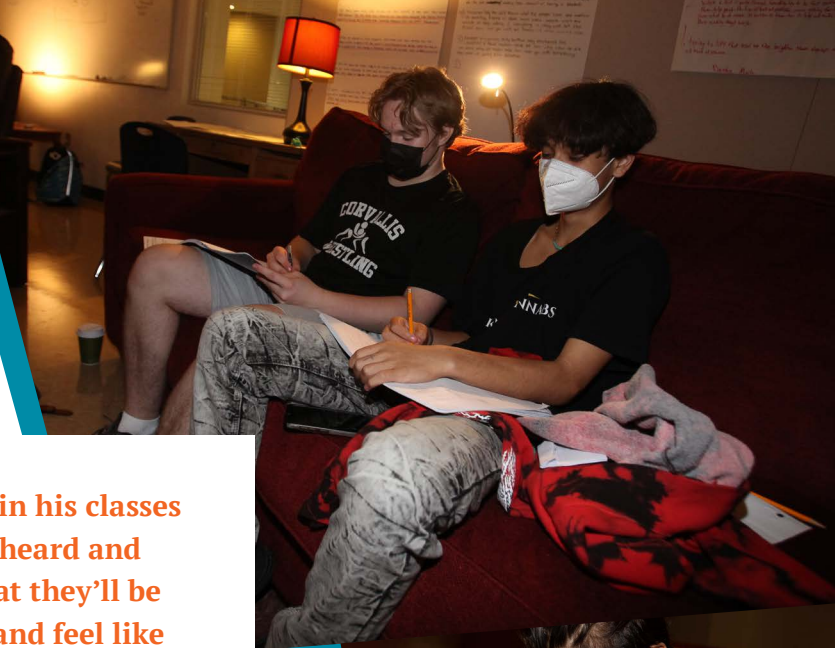
King hopes the students in his classes will “feel more seen and heard and understood at school; that they'll be able to walk into school and feel like there is someplace here that is for them and where they belong.”

So in the first week of class, for example, students watched and reflected on TED talks about how traumatic childhood experiences can affect the lives of survivors for years afterward—and can reduce their life expectancies.

Activities also included more traditional English class assignments—reading a variety of materials (including a novel written in verse) and writing.

King hopes the lessons he learns in developing and teaching the class will sharpen his skills when he returns to more conventional classrooms.

And he hopes the students in his classes will “feel more seen and heard and understood at school; that they'll be able to walk into school and feel like there is someplace here that is for them and where they belong.” 🌱





Our Finances in 2021

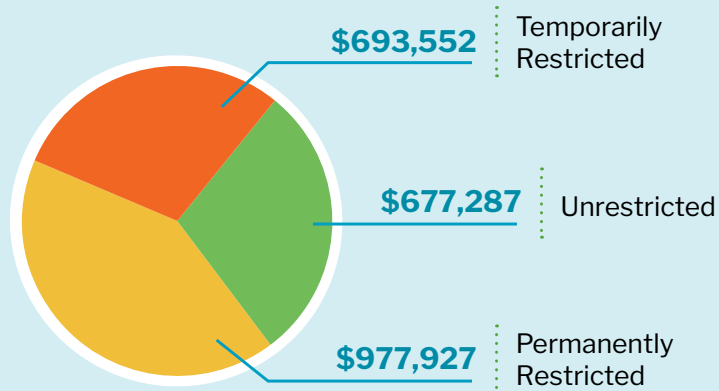
\$2,348,766 Net Assets

\$1,293,857 in Endowments

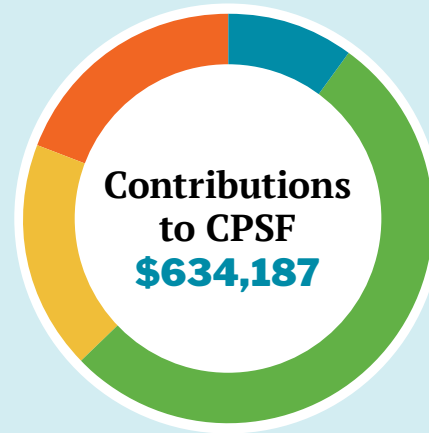
Net Assets

 Cash and Cash Equivalents:	\$482,497
 Investments:	\$1,866,269
<hr/>	
Total Net Assets:	\$2,348,766

Distribution of Net Assets: \$2,348,766

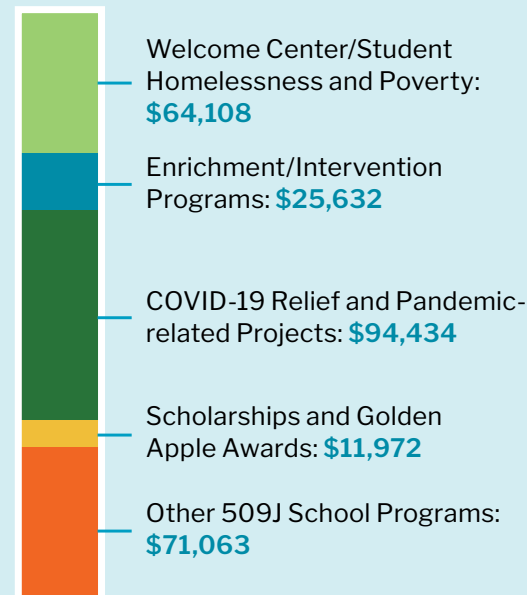


For a full financial statement, please contact us at (541) 757-5857. Thank you!



- Foundations and Other Nonprofits: **\$61,427**
- Households and Individuals: **\$337,138**
- Business and Government: **\$116,726**
- Fundraising Event: **\$118,896**

Program Expenditures: \$267,209



Celebrating Excellence: Congratulations to our 2021 Golden Apple Award Winners!



Maria Adams
Leticia Carson Elementary
School Teacher



Isley Gonzalez-Dumble
Cheldelin Physical Education/
Health Teacher and SAFE Mentor

See story on page **10**

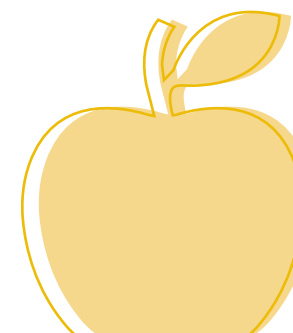


Matthew King
Corvallis High School English
Language Arts Teacher

See story on page **8**



Angela So
Crescent Valley High School
Educational Assistant



Walking the Talk on Equity and Inclusion: The SAFE Program



Each year, CPSF awards grants designed to encourage innovation and advance equity. Here is a glimpse of how one grant-funded program is making a difference.

It was 2017, and Yannie Reyes-Alvarez, then a senior at Crescent Valley High School, was answering questions as part of applying for a spot with a new Corvallis School District initiative, Students Advocating for Equity (SAFE).

One question stopped her: Have you ever experienced racism in Corvallis?

For Reyes-Alvarez, the answer was “yes.”

“I was about 16,” she recalled, “and I was with my mom and a cousin who had just moved from Mexico. ... This man and

his girlfriend just came up to us and started yelling at my mom, telling her that she was stealing and that she was the reason why this country was the way that it was and to go back to her country. I just remember feeling powerless, completely, because I had never experienced something so hateful in my life. I froze.”

That incident inspired Reyes-Alvarez to seek a spot on the district’s first SAFE team, a group of diverse high school students charged with providing a student perspective on race and inclusivity in Corvallis schools. She made the team.

Since that first year, SAFE has grown. In the 2021-22 school year, thanks to funding from the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation, the program will expand to every district school. In addition, one teacher at each school is being appointed to focus on equity issues.

SAFE students meet at their schools and, before the pandemic, met monthly at the district office. In the 2020-21 school year, most of the meetings were virtual.

SAFE offers students a safe place to discuss issues of race and equity. And sometimes it helps students work through issues of identity. College Hill High School student Maria Coppola has a father who identifies as Middle Eastern North African. Her mother is white. Coppola sometimes has felt caught in the middle.

“SAFE has helped me feel more confident that I can be



“SAFE has helped me feel more confident that I can be somewhere in the middle of white and not-white and still be whole and be worthy.”





somewhere in the middle of white and not-white and still be whole and be worthy,” said Coppola.

The students say their SAFE mentors—teachers and administrators—are inspirational.

And the mentors say they draw inspiration—and hope—from their students.

“The students have changed,” said Isley Gonzalez-Dumble, the SAFE mentor at Cheldelin Middle School and a 2021 Golden Apple Award winner. “They stand up for each other more; they care about each other.”

Germaine Joseph-Hays, a SAFE mentor at Corvallis High School, has seen her students “just finding their voices, feeling secure about who they are ... and feeling like they can actually have conversations with peers that probably they were not able to have before.”

Reyes-Alvarez found her voice, thanks in part to SAFE: “I don’t want to freeze ever again,” she said, recalling that verbal venom aimed at her mother. “I want to be able to stand up for myself and for my mom.” 🌱



Sharon Rackham King

Donor Spotlight: Sharon Rackham King

“For Corvallis artist Sharon Rackham King, the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation is at the intersection where many of her passions meet—art and education and, more recently, speaking out about the importance of mental wellness.

King and her husband, Andrew, are frequent donors to the foundation, and many of their donations have concentrated on programs focusing on mental health.

It’s an issue that resonates with King, who moved to Corvallis in 2009 because she and her husband “wanted our two kids to have a really good educational experience.” She volunteered at Mountain View Elementary, including a years-long stint as the school’s artist in residence. At the time, she suffered from mental-health issues, including depression, but “I felt very awkward talking about it because there certainly was more stigma around it ten years ago.”

Reading statistics about mental health and youth—especially LGBTQ+ students and students of color, who may experience higher than average levels of stress, as well as barriers in accessing programs geared at addressing mental health—gave her additional motivation to speak out.

“It’s just hard to ignore that there are some vulnerable populations that can use more help,” she said, “and going to

school is one of the main ways where they automatically have access to a delivery system.”

Even a little bit of money can make a big difference. “Sometimes, it’s just snacks,” King said. “It’s snacks, so counselors can dangle a box of doughnuts and say [to students], ‘come talk to me.’ Sometimes we imagine the solutions to be out of reach more than they are.”

Her contacts with district employees working with students have been thrilling—and humbling, she said. “It’s humbling to know that a person or set of people in the district did the extra work, committed the extra time to using this gift to the betterment of students. It wouldn’t happen without that.”

“I’ve treasured my opportunity to partner with the foundation to make things that much better for our students.”

And that leads to a sense of gratitude.

“Not only have I had the opportunity to be a parent,” King said, “I’ve also been a volunteer in all the schools my kids have gone to, I’ve taught art alongside certified teachers—amazing teachers—and I’ve treasured my opportunity to partner with the foundation to make things that much better for our students.”

Join us!

Hands Across Corvallis Benefit Event

Thursday, February 3, 2022

Details to be determined

Call (541) 757-5857 or cpsfoundation.org to register



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