STORY OF THE YEAR

2021-2022 IN REVIEW

LAWRENCE SCHOOLS FOUNDATION
Lawrence Schools Foundation’s STORY OF THE YEAR is more accurately thousands of stories — one for each of the 11,000 students in Lawrence Public Schools, one for each of the 1,530 educators and staff, one for each community LEAP program partner, one for each volunteer, one for each donor no matter the size of the gift. In this report you’ll see snapshots of these stories, showing the myriad ways we all work together to carry out this important community mission — to inspire learning, enrich teaching, and enhance opportunities for all students, educators, and staff in Lawrence Public Schools.
DEAR FRIENDS,

A daughter of two educators, my parents instilled the importance of getting an education in me and my two sisters at an early age. An education is something no one can take away. For these reasons, supporting and enhancing public education in Lawrence has been a priority for me since our two children started school.

In my time on the Lawrence Schools Foundation Board of Directors, I have been impressed by the community support (and beyond) for the Foundation, whose mission is to provide resources that inspire learning, enrich teaching, and enhance opportunities for all students, educators, and staff in Lawrence Public Schools. The IC.A.N. Fund that provides immediate needs for district students and families has been instrumental in helping various families survive the pandemic and the challenges it caused. The countless stories are simply heartbreaking.

District teachers, staff, and students may apply for various grants, scholarships, and awards that Foundation and district staff present throughout the school year. Those are available because of generous private support. As a business, please check out the LEAP program if you are not currently involved to see how you can make an impact.

None of this is possible without our three dedicated Foundation staff members — Dena, Jamie, and Michelle. Their vision and passion for the community elevates the Foundation in making a difference. Please consider joining me and my fellow board members in investing in public education in Lawrence and see your enthusiasm grow!

Jennifer Berquist, President, Board of Directors

For more than 35 years, the Lawrence Schools Foundation has had the privilege of supporting the Lawrence community and our public school system through thoughtful philanthropy. As we take a moment to reflect, we celebrate another milestone of awarding more than $100,000 in grants, scholarships, professional development opportunities, and teacher and staff awards throughout our district this year.

This accomplishment is with thanks to many generous donors who have provided donations and established funds with us. We are proud to assist individuals, families, and businesses as they fulfill their charitable goals by establishing endowed funds with us for these purposes. We take stewardship of these funds very seriously by making sure they remain in perpetuity. The Lawrence Schools Foundation continues to seek support for the ongoing and ever-changing educational needs of our school district.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Foundation team, I invite you to celebrate and uphold our mission — whether it is through making an annual or planned gift, participating in any of our fundraising events, helping with community campaigns, volunteering, or supporting our community partners. Every dollar spent benefits the educators, students, and classrooms within the Lawrence Public Schools.

Our students are eager to learn and our educators are eager to teach, even when it is more challenging than ever. We are working every day to ensure that we have what they need to be successful in school. Whatever your WHY, when you donate to Lawrence Schools Foundation, you support and enhance public education in Lawrence and the community as a whole.

We invite you to contact us to learn how we can work together to accomplish your charitable goals. Remember, your contribution to the Foundation is a perpetual investment in our community — both now and in the years to come.

Thank you for making this possible!

Dena Johnston, Executive Director

Jennifer Berquist, President, Board of Directors
In September 2021, we welcomed “home” our Community Education Breakfast guest speaker Spencer Lott, 2006 Free State High School alumnus — a maker, writer, and puppeteer who recreated the iconic puppets from Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood in immaculate detail for the 2019 film A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood.

In 2019, Spencer originated the role of Julia’s brother Samuel on Sesame Street. His puppetry credits also include America’s Got Talent (Live at Radio City), Red Bird Lane (HBO Max/Pilot), Good Morning America, The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, The Relationtrip (Hulu / SXSW 2017), Scarecrow (X-Factor’s Alex and Sierra), Night Train with Wyatt Cynac, Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade with The Muppets, and more! Learn more about this Lawrence Public Schools alum at www.misterlott.com.
In 2016, after a misdirected phone call to Lawrence Schools Foundation (his intended call was to Lawrence, New York), we had a wonderful conversation with Joe Satriano about our work in Lawrence, Kansas. With that, the Satriano family opened their hearts and generous scholarship opportunities to our students here at USD 497.

The Susan Satriano Memorial Scholarship Foundation was established in 2005 by Joe and his two young sons after Susan, his wife, a mother and former educator from Long Island, passed away from cancer. Their foundation provides scholarships to college-bound seniors who have lost a parent to cancer or have a family member presently battling the disease. They have helped thousands of students throughout the country with nearly $1 million. Many thanks to our generous supporters in New York. We look forward to the day that our friend Joe can visit our Lawrence. See susansatrianofoundation.com/foundation.php to learn more.

In June 2021, the Lawrence Free State High School Speech & Debate team competed in the National Speech and Debate Association National Championship tournament, hosted virtually this year. The largest academic competition in the world, this year’s tournament featured more than 6,500 competitors.

Having set records during the year by qualifying the most number of events and students for the competition, the students entered the tournament with high hopes and lofty goals — and they surpassed them in record fashion.

On the Speech side, LFSHS entered the tournament having had a combined total of two students in the school’s 24-year history advance to the elimination rounds of this tournament. This year the Firebirds advanced four students: sophomore Emma Hefty, junior Ezra Joseph, and seniors Emily Bial and Timothy Huffman. Bial finished in the quarterfinals of Program of Oral Interpretation. Huffman finished in the finals of Domestic Extemporaneous Speaking, placing 5th of 349 competitors, the first person in Free State history to make the semifinals, let alone the finals.

Collectively, our students earned the prestigious School of Outstanding Distinction Award, a first for any Kansas school. This award is given to the top 10 school programs in the country — out of 1,400 schools competing.

Not all heroes wear capes. Some are simply named Bob.

More than 25 years ago a group of civic leaders who share the same first name “Bob” created the Excellence in Teaching award through Lawrence Schools Foundation. The benefactors choose to remain anonymous to focus attention on the outstanding educators selected annually to receive the award.

The award honors a teacher who exemplifies extraordinary instruction skills, reflects commitment to quality education and dedication to teaching, focuses on individual student achievement, and administers to the whole child. It comes with a check for $10,000, as a gift for the educator to use as they wish. Nominations for this award can be made by parents, students, colleagues, alumni, and community members.

Since 1997, the Bobs have donated more than $260,000 to Lawrence Schools Foundation to provide gifts and cash awards for Lawrence Public Schools educators.

Are you a Bob or know of one (Bob, Robert, Roberta, Bobby, Bobette — you get the idea) who may be interested in joining this elite group? Get in touch today and be a part of the legacy! Call 785-330-1941 or email djohnsto@usd497.org.

For more about scholarships administered by Lawrence Schools Foundation, scan this code or visit LawrenceSchoolsFoundation.org/programs/#scholarships.

Visit LawrenceSchoolsFoundation.org/programs or scan this code to learn more about the John Davidson Debate Fund and how to support these programs.
We are grateful for amazing community partners! Thank you to Cottin’s Hardware & Rental for their generous donation of $500 to support the school gardens at Lawrence Public Schools. In addition, True Value Foundation has created Youth Up Matching Gifts to partner with retailers and expand the reach of donations designed to help kids achieve their full potential. With their assistance, this program enables Lawrence Schools Foundation to apply for a grant to match the donation from Cottin’s Hardware & Rental. We love watching our school programs (and gardens) grow!

Thanks to the generosity of Lawrence Transit, Lawrence Schools Foundation receives city bus passes to help students and their families without personal transportation, so students can get to and from school. It also makes it possible for parents/caregivers to accompany younger students. The City of Lawrence Transit Fare Donation Policy makes annual fare donations available to Lawrence organizations that apply. In the last three years, more than $13,700 of fares have been distributed through this policy to 22 local organizations. The 2023 Fare Free Pilot Program will be introduced next year for all.

The Jefferson’s Foundation is committed to reaching all children who are less fortunate and living within our communities by offering them support when needed. Through this support, The Jefferson’s Foundation hopes to ensure these children receive the physical and financial needs to encourage a stable and healthy environment in which to grow and develop.

Lawrence Schools Foundation is grateful and proud to work alongside dedicated LEAP partners such as The Jefferson’s Foundation to help ensure that the physical, social, and emotional needs of our Lawrence Public Schools students and their families do not stand in the way of their success in school.

Will you be a classroom angel?

Since the pandemic, Lawrence Schools Foundation has provided more than $500,000 in funding to our district students and families in need.

Some children in our community are without running water or a mattress on which to sleep. Others are without shoes, socks, underwear, or maybe even toothpaste. Our goal is to make sure our school social workers, counselors, nurses, and psychologists have funds available to meet immediate and emergency needs such as these so students can come to school clean, confident, and ready to learn.

DONATE ONLINE Visit LawrenceSchoolsFoundation.org and select IC.A.N. Fund.
THANK YOU, PARTNERS

A strong educational system is the foundation of a prosperous community. Recognizing this, the Lawrence Public Schools and the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce collaborated to form the Lawrence Business/Education Partnership in 1993. The Lawrence Education Achievement Partners (LEAP) program matches schools with businesses and community organizations and magic happens. Approximately 115 local businesses partner with the Lawrence Public Schools. Many focus on scholastic enrichment — such as reading to kids in class, mentoring, tutoring or training, or donating classroom supplies. Others volunteer to help at school events or make monetary or in-kind donations to support them. Many sponsor Lawrence Schools Foundation signature events. Our LEAP partners enjoy being involved with the schools and learning from the students and teachers. They are the lifeline to the Foundation and to our community.

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- Broken Arrow Elementary
  - Capital Federal Savings
  - Hy-Vee
  - Mar Lan Construction
  - Pretzels, Inc.
  - Truity Credit Union
- Cordley Elementary
  - Capitol Federal Savings
  - Cottin’s Hardware & Rental
  - Dairy Queen–Mass. Street
  - Dillons Stores–Mass. Street
  - Lawrence Noon Rotary Club
- Deerfield Elementary
  - Hy-Vee
- Hillcrest Elementary
  - Commerce Bank–Iowa Street
  - Freddy’s Frozen Custard
  - Premier Martial Arts
  - The Merc Co-op
- Langston Hughes Elementary
  - Dillons Stores–6th & Wakarusa
  - Great American Bank
  - Hy-Vee
  - J&S Coffee
  - Truity Credit Union
- New York Elementary
  - Altrusa
  - Connect Church
  - Cottin’s Hardware & Rental
  - Empire Bank
  - Kiwanis Club
  - Lawrence Noon Rotary Club
  - Stevens & Brand, L.L.P.
  - Western Star #1 Masonic Lodge
- Pinckney Elementary
  - LMH Health
  - McDonald’s of Lawrence
  - multistudio

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- Prairie Park Elementary
  - Bank Midwest
  - Capitol Federal Savings
  - Hy-Vee
  - Mar Lan Construction
  - Pretzels, Inc.
  - Truity Credit Union
- Quail Run Elementary
  - Berry Plastics
  - Darin Domanian Agency–Farmers Insurance
  - Hy-Vee
  - Jefferson’s–West
  - Legends Dental Center
  - Pioneer Ridge
  - Premier Martial Arts
  - Rock Hill Church
  - Story Hill Church
- Schwegler Elementary
  - Dairy Queen–Iowa Street
  - Premier Martial Arts
  - Raising Cane’s
  - Runza
- Sunflower Elementary
  - Central National Bank
  - Freddy’s Frozen Custard
  - Premier Martial Arts
  - Truity Credit Union
- Sunset Hill Elementary
  - Meritrust Credit Union
  - Stephens Real Estate
  - The Merc Co-op

### HIGH SCHOOLS

- Lawrence Free State High School
  - Capitol Federal Savings
  - Central Bank of the Midwest
  - Commerce Bank–Wakarusa Street
  - Eileen’s Colossal Cookies
  - Hy-Vee
  - Juniper Hill Farms
  - McDonald’s of Lawrence
  - Raising Cane’s
  - The Summit
  - The Merc Co-op
- Lawrence High School
  - Commerce Bank–23rd Street
  - Hallmark Cards
  - Hy-Vee
  - multistudio
  - Printing Solutions
  - Raising Cane’s
  - The Valley Church
  - Truity Credit Union

### DISTRICT-WIDE

- Best Western Lawrence
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence
- Chick-Fil-A
- Chili’s
- Climb Lawrence, LLC
- Crave Nutrition
- Dole Institute of Politics
- Douglas County Fire & Medical
- Edmonds Duncan Advisors
- Eileen’s Colossal Cookies
- Envista Credit Union
- First Student
- Goodcents
- J Magnuson Agency–Farmers Insurance
- Jason’s Deli
- Jefferson’s
- Kona Ice Lawrence Topeka, LLC
- Lawrence Habitat for Humanity
- Lawrence Police Department
- Lawrence Public Library
- McAlister’s Deli
- Merchant’s Pub & Plate
- Minuteman Press
- Papa Keno’s Pizzeria
- Pelathé District,
  - Heart of America Council,
  - Boy Scouts of America
- Pet World
- Printing Solutions
- RCB Bank
- Royal Crest Lanes
- Salvation Army of Douglas County
- Silver Lake Bank
- Solomon and Associates–Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
- Sonic
- T-Mobile
- Texas Roadhouse
- The Basil Leaf Café
- Toppers Pizza
- Truity Credit Union
- 23rd Street Brewery
- Wal-Mart
- Watkins Museum of History
- YARDI

### District-wide–Community Connections/C-Tran
- Applebee’s
- Lawrence Family Video

### District-wide–Early Childhood
- Jayhawk Breakfast Rotary
- Dr. Sharon Michel Green, O.D.
- Dr. James Otten, D.D.S.
- United Way of Douglas County

### District-wide–Fine Arts
- KU Theater
- Lawrence Arts Center
- Lied Center of Kansas
- Theatre Lawrence
- US Bank

### District-wide–Project Search
- Jayhawk Business Club
- Cottonwood
- KU Dept. of Human Resources
- LMH Health
- United Way of Douglas County
THANK YOU,
DONORS

Masters
($10,000+)
Dann, William

Scholars
($5,000–$9,999)
Bulgren, Janis
Davidson III, John and Shirley Schaeffer
DCCF
Durham (Debby) Family Foundation
Edmonds, Jason and Machaela
Edmonds, Steve and Chris
Empire Bank
Hite, Kenneth and April
McCown Gordon Construction
Moore, Martin and Durand Reiber
Naughton, Patrick
Roth, Stan and Janet
Shanmugam, Kannon K.
Srinivasan, Srinija
Truity Education Foundation, Inc.
Yellow Chair Foundation

Honors Society
($1,000–$4,999)
Advanco, Inc.
Alderdice Family Fund
Anderson, Christopher and Shari
Bergquist, Craig and Jennifer
CEK Insurance
Central Bank
of the Midwest
City of Lawrence, KS
Commerce Bank
Cruz, Angelina
Dannevik, Robert
Davis, Joshua
Davis, Robert and Linda
Deiser, Jay
Denning, Dale
Dinsdale, Robert and Katherine
Dobski, Tom and Marilyn
Drahozal, Christopher and Kaye
Elbayouny, Moussa and Magda Khater
Envisat Credit Union
Flory, Bobbie
Flynn, Richard and Janie
Gish, Stephen and Bobbie
Glass, Stephen E.
Gould Evans Associates
Hallmark Corporate Foundation
Hummer, Raymond and Mary Lee
Imber, Jane and Michael
Johnson, Bob and Pauline
Kindred CPA
Laird Noller Automotive
Lheureux, Marie Alice
LMH Health
Lyerla, Estate of Karen Dale
Marsh and McLennan Agency
Meritrust Credit Union
PI Group, Inc
Pur-O-Zone, Inc.
Saunders, Margaret
Security Benefit
Senecal, Robert and Evelyn
Smith, Marsha
Stephens Real Estate Success By 6 Coalition
Sullivan, Mellonie and Warren
Thomas, Steve and Mistie Copas-Thomas Thompson, David and Maria
Todd, Nancy and Terry
United Way of Douglas County
US Bank
Vick, Gail and Kevan
Webber, Gary
Wooldard, Mickey and Roberta
Ziegler, David and Kathleen

Leaders
($500–$999)
Capitol Federal
Carson, Laura
Central National Bank
Cherryhill Properties, LLC
Clark | Huesemann
Clark, James and Shelly
Cotting’s Hardware, Inc.
DeBruin, Jeff
Dehart, Wilma and Frank
Douglas County Connection, Inc.
First State Bank & Trust
Gene Fritzell Construction Co., Inc.
Golden, Joan and Webster
Harper, Pati Broyles
Health, Chuck and Kathy
Henderson Engineers
Herron, Jene
Kaufman, Tony
Kurt Coezer Insurance Agency, Inc.
Lewis, Anthony S
Little, Shadde
Lopes, Steve and Lois
Penzler, Craig and Cindy
Silver Lake Bank
Spade, Gina
Srinivasan, Saroja
Stevens & Brand, LLP
Stubfield, Anna R
T.J.’s East, Inc
The Cure Church
Lawrence
Walden, James and Rebecca
Warren, Steven F.
Warren-McElwain

Benefactors
($100–$499)
715 LLC
Alexander, David and Helen
Alpha Roofing, LLC
Ambler, David and Mary Kate
Amon, Angela M
Anderson, Donald
Anderson, Dr. Curtis R
Antoine, Leona Rose
Au Yeong, Hannah
Bakerink, Larry
Barah, Kelly L
Barker, Thomas William
Barnard, Cheryl
Basham, Laura Ann
Baska, Lila
Bayer, Margaret
Belch, James L
Blevins, Melissa Joanne
BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas
Bowen, Mary
Boyle, Julie M
Briscoe, Charles and Mary
Brown, Amy Frances
Brown, Erma and Steven
Bryan, Charlie
Bubna, Caitlin C
Buck, Lindsay Nichole
Busby, Anna F
Bushouse, Pamela
Camblin, Pam
Carttar, Stephen and Cindy
Cates, Emily A
Chapman, Mary and Ed Hawkins
Clark, Valerie M
Class of ’54
CEO Charles Fisher
Cochran, Karen
Colliers International
Covenant Title
Cook, Mary Eileen
Cork and Barrett
Crone, Suzette Dawn
Deboard, Lysette A
Delta Zeta Alumnae
Denning, Gerald L.
Devin, Eric and JoAnn
Dozier, Joseph L
Eldridge, Kristin
Elkin, Lauren Anne
Ellett, Ryan S
Emerge LLC
Engnehl, Jamie
Erazo, Erik
Erickson, Rodger and Donna Ginther
Esau, John
Evans Williams Catering LLC
Fambrough, Preston
Folsom, Laurie L
Fox, Edward B
Francisco, Marc
Free State Dental
Fulbright, Mary
Gage, Martha
Gallagher, Elizabeth
Garcia, John and Heidi
Gault, Sandra
Gehrke, Kathryn
Gillespie, Rob and Rhonda
Glidewell, Catherine
Goforth-Walker, Karen
Graber, Myron D
Green, Laura Ann
Grosshans, Kay and Kip
Hack III, Alan
Harkin, Jeffrey W
Harrell, Kevin L
Harrison, Jonathan N
Hatfield, Larry and Teri
Heatwole, Julie
Heeb, Karen L.
Heffner, Steve
Heinrich, Anna R
Hempfling, Samantha Jean
Hilliard, Catherine
Hoey, Aline C
Houglund, William and Carolie
Howell, Mark and Lori
Huchingson, Janet
Huerter, Eric
Improvedge, LLC
Jefferson’s Downtown LLC
Johnny’s Tavern North
Johnson, David and Margarita Vargas
Johnson, David E.
Johnson, Denise D
Johnson, Gerelyn
Johnson, Peggy
Johnson, Ronn and Donna
Johnson, Sandy Thomas
Johnson, Thomas H.
Johnston, Dena Rae
Jones, Brian
Juneau, Theodore S
Keith Downing Trust
Keller, Erica L
Kelly, Judy and Tim
Kelly, Patrick
Kelly, Patrick and Amy
Kimball, Shannon and Jason
Kinney, Lauren
Krogger
Kwan, Derek
Ladies Auxiliary of Eagles #309
Landwehr, Aimee
Law, Brian C
Lawrence Family Vision Clinic
Lawrence Habitat for Humanity
Lawrence Podiatry Center, LLC
Leavings, April M
Liu, Kevin and Sofia
Livingood, Margaret and David
Long, James
Lotton Barker, Danielle
Lungstrum, John and Linda
Marshall, Mona Ann
Martin, Julie Ann
McAdoo, Ryan S
Mccary, Samantha Diane
McNeer, Amanda Michelle
McPherson Jr., Thomas Lee
Meikle, Shiloh-Rose
Melton, Lisa A
Moore, Allison V.
and James M.
Moore, E Allen and L Paige
Neises, Kimberly M
Neuenswander, Dan and Connie
Nitz, Barbara A
Ogdens Newspapers of Kansas
Peterson, Heath
Phalen, Chris and Amy
Powell, Lisa K
Prairie Land Insurance
Preut, Mark R
Ramos, April Mae
Ramsey, Wyatt and Diane
RCB Bank
Riggins, William and Stacy
Robertson, Amy Lynn
Roper, John and Valerie
Salvatore, Patricia R
Scheibler, Jennifer
Schmidt, Carla
Schmidt, Gary and Rose
Schnose, Dr Gregory and Linda
Scholz, Arne
Schreiner, Brenda
Scotten, Joshua Michael
Shelley, Jill
Shepherd, Jean F.
Sheppard, Linda
Sherman, Jim and Jan Sheldon
Slater, Lindsey
Smith, Rebecca
Smith, Russell and Martha
Sneegas, Randall and Ruth Anne
Stancliffe, Jaime
Stone, Tammy Christine
Strauss, Mike and Lisa
Thomas, Lynisha S
Thomas, Merle and Sharon
Thomas, Tiffany
Ward, Scott and Robin
Warlow, Lori
Wertzberger, Jacqueline Kay
Western Star Lodge
Number 1 FR.
Wilkens, Wendie D
Williams, Barbara K
Williams, Janella
Wycoff, Karen E
Young, Brandon and Brenna

Friends
(up to $99)
Adams, Eddie E
Aguirre, Rosina I
Ahlers, Staci Noel
Akkerman, Susan Ann
Albertson Sears, Jolynn

amounts listed are reflective of the 2021 year
Thank you, too, to all of our anonymous community and school district donors.

All efforts have been made to make this report as accurate as possible. If you find an error or omission, please accept our apology and notify us at 785-330-1941.
### BY THE NUMBERS

**Donated:**
- Via campaigns and events: $149,446, $796,155
- For specific district betterment programs: $960,793, $1,630,157

**Funds:**
- Grants, programs, and awards: $1,708,053, $2,023,538
- Scholarships: $405,330, $1,838,858

Lawrence Schools Foundation is a qualified 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Federal Tax ID#: 48-1016950

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**MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS** You may donate in honor or in memory of someone special. At your request, your gift can benefit the unrestricted fund or be earmarked for a special purpose or scholarship.

**EMPLOYER MATCHING GIFTS** Please check to see if your employer has a matching gifts program. All or a portion of your donation may be matched.

**PAYROLL DONATIONS** In 2021, Lawrence School District staff contributed $22,791.21 to help support Foundation programs. One hundred percent of the money collected from staff goes directly back to our schools to support our students, classrooms, and educators.

**PLANNED GIVING AND TRUSTS** The foundation can accept gifts through bequests, charitable remainder trusts (annuities and unitrusts), charitable lead trusts, appreciated stock, life insurance, real estate, individual retirement accounts, and company retirement plans. A bequest through your will or living trust may result in tax savings to your estate. In your will, you may designate a specific gift, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder after specific distributions are made. Please talk with your attorney.

**DONATE ONLINE** Visit LawrenceSchoolsFoundation.org. You may donate any amount to the area of greatest need or to the project of your choice.

Scan this code with your phone to donate now.
1980s
The Carl Knox Endowment Association was founded in the 1980s to honor former superintendent Dr. Knox and to provide opportunities for staff development. This organization evolved into Lawrence Schools Foundation, which has continued the tradition of awarding grants to educators each year, as well as expanding its mission. Over the years, the Foundation has awarded more than $20,000 in funding to support professional development.

1988
The first Lawrence Schools Foundation-administered scholarships were offered to graduating high school seniors Travis Glass & H. C. Stuart. The Foundation now administers more than 72 scholarships and awards more than $58,000 annually in scholarships to our local high school seniors.

1991
The Foundation Follies got its start to raise money for staff development grants and awards for teachers in the district. Event proceeds later helped support the Early Childhood Program. The first event featured Rep. Barbara Ballard on vocals and a Dixieland band including former band instructor Jack Brookshire and long-time jazz musician, Clyde Bysom. By 1992, professional singer Kelley Hunt was part of the cast, and former superintendent Randy Weseman, as well as Ric and Jeanne Averill, had become annual acts. In 2006, the district’s Lunch Ladies brought down the house.

1992
The School Business Task Force, chaired by Ed Meyen from the University of Kansas School of Education, suggested that the Lawrence Public Schools and the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce could cooperatively prepare a qualified workforce.

1993
The Chamber and the School Board formed the Lawrence Business/Education Partnership, hired its first director, and formed a Board of Directors.

1997
Several Lawrence businessmen and educators, all named Bob, approached the school district with the plan to recognize an outstanding educator each year. The group has grown to include 15 Bobs, including female Bobs and even a nationally known Bob from out of state. Over the years, the Bobs have donated more than $260,000 to Lawrence Schools Foundation to provide gifts and cash awards for Lawrence Public Schools educators. Additionally, they have inspired their adult children to also give generously to support district educators.

1998
Lawrence Schools Foundation held its first annual Community Education Breakfast event to celebrate public education in Lawrence. It featured as its keynote speaker 1989 Lawrence High School graduate Srinija Srinivasan, an inspiring and accomplished alum who related her public education to her success at Stanford and in business.

1999
The Lawrence Business/Education Partnership changed its name to Lawrence Education Achievement Partners (LEAP). To date, LEAP has approximately 115 community partners.

2000
The adult children of the Bobs created the Dedication to Education award to honor a dedicated teacher each year with a generous $5,000 gift. This group has provided more than $75,000 in funding to award and celebrate our outstanding educators.

2001
Lawrence Schools Foundation updated the mission statement to reflect the growth, purpose, values, and goals in alignment with the district. Lawrence Schools Foundation provides resources that inspire learning, enrich teaching, and enhance opportunities for all students, educators, and staff in Lawrence Public Schools.

2002
Lawrence Schools Foundation and Lied Center of Kansas were proud to announce the very first district-wide talent show for middle and high school students. Ovation! benefits Lawrence Schools Foundation and showcases the amazing talents of USD 497 students. Held on the main stage of the Lied Center with full production, the event brings the community together to celebrate the immense talent among Lawrence youth.

2003
The IC.A.N. Fund was established with an initial gift from the 2018 Leadership Lawrence Class, along with fundraising efforts from private donors and the Lawrence community. This fund provides funds to school social workers and counselors within Lawrence Public Schools to be used for emergency needs for students. The fund aims to ensure that students’ physical, social, and emotional needs do not stand in the way of their success in school. Since 2018, the Foundation has provided more than $500,000 in funding to the district for urgent and immediate needs of our Lawrence Public Schools students and families.

2004
Also in 2018, the A.C.E Award (Acknowledging Classified Employees) was established to recognize and applaud classified employees whose efforts benefit students, faculty, and staff, and others within and outside the USD 497 community. Students, faculty, classified staff, and administrative staff may nominate any permanent part-time or full-time classified employee. Award recipients are announced each fall and spring. Recipients of the A.C.E Award also receive a $500 award. Since the award was established, the Foundation has celebrated 16 employees and awarded more than $8,000.

2005
The Foundation shifted efforts to meet the heightened needs of students and families brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. We worked with our community and corporate partners to serve free community breakfasts and lunches — 34,286 of each in April and May 2020 alone, continuing until students could be back in school physically.

2006
The Foundation Board of Directors approved the district’s request for funding in the amount up to $80,000 for training for Montessori-certified teachers to obtain Kansas licensure for the purpose of staffing a public Montessori program to be located at New York Elementary, the first public Montessori School to be established in Kansas.

2007
Lawrence Schools Foundation and Lied Center of Kansas were proud to announce the very first district-wide talent show for middle and high school students. Ovation! benefits Lawrence Schools Foundation and showcases the amazing talents of USD 497 students. Held on the main stage of the Lied Center with full production, the event brings the community together to celebrate the immense talent among Lawrence youth.

2008
The IC.A.N. Fund was established with an initial gift from the 2018 Leadership Lawrence Class, along with fundraising efforts from private donors and the Lawrence community. This fund provides funds to school social workers and counselors within Lawrence Public Schools to be used for emergency needs for students. The fund aims to ensure that students’ physical, social, and emotional needs do not stand in the way of their success in school. Since 2018, the Foundation has provided more than $500,000 in funding to the district for urgent and immediate needs of our Lawrence Public Schools students and families.

2009
Also in 2018, the A.C.E Award (Acknowledging Classified Employees) was established to recognize and applaud classified employees whose efforts benefit students, faculty, and staff, and others within and outside the USD 497 community. Students, faculty, classified staff, and administrative staff may nominate any permanent part-time or full-time classified employee. Award recipients are announced each fall and spring. Recipients of the A.C.E Award also receive a $500 award. Since the award was established, the Foundation has celebrated 16 employees and awarded more than $8,000.

2010
The Foundation shifted efforts to meet the heightened needs of students and families brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. We worked with our community and corporate partners to serve free community breakfasts and lunches — 34,286 of each in April and May 2020 alone, continuing until students could be back in school physically.

2011
The Foundation Board of Directors approved the district’s request for funding in the amount up to $80,000 for training for Montessori-certified teachers to obtain Kansas licensure for the purpose of staffing a public Montessori program to be located at New York Elementary, the first public Montessori School to be established in Kansas.

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everybody benefits from great public schools