



Foundations

East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation & Alumni Association **FALL 2021**

**Your Year,
Your Foundation**

Grant Testimonials

**A Virtual Cup
of Coffee with
Luke Glendening '07**

**Class of 2034
Lakeside PTO's
Summer Meet-up**



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VIRTUAL CUP OF COFFEE

Luke Glendening '07

Luke has played more than 500 National Hockey League games, all for the Detroit Red Wings until he signed with the Dallas Stars for the 2021-22 season. He's considered one of the best faceoff men in the league, as well as an excellent penalty killer and defensive forward. In the years since the NHL went to a seven-round entry draft, Glendening is the only undrafted player to have played more than 500 games for the Red Wings.



Luke Glendening as Red Wing, and at the Gerken Open.

You can only have one: Rose's caramel corn, an ice cream cone from Jersey Junction, or a Yesterdog. Which do you choose?

That's a tough one because when I'm home, I go to Rose's for dinner with my parents and then we go to Jersey and get an ice cream cone, so I get both. And then when I'm not here, what I crave is a Yesterdog. So I guess I'd say all three.

What was your path from East Grand Rapids to where you are now in life?

I went to Hotchkiss prep school after high school because I wanted to have one more year playing three sports so I could try to play one in college. The other option for hockey players is to play juniors but if you put everything in that basket and the basket breaks, you're not holding much. I played a whole football season at Hotchkiss and didn't get any interest. Then I was down to my last game of the hockey season there and I hadn't had any interest from colleges. Whenever people ask me who my favorite NHL player is, I always say Max Pacioretty because when Max left Michigan after his freshman year to go pro, that meant Michigan had a spot on their team. A Michigan coach came to Hotchkiss to watch two of my teammates, not me. Afterward the coach told me they might have a preferred walk-on spot for me, but if I had any other option, I should take that. Well, I didn't have any other options. I went to Michigan even though they told me I could probably only practice with the team and I probably wouldn't get to play in any games. Then, my freshman year, I ended up getting into quite a few games. Even at the end of the year, though, I remember talking to the coaches and they were talking about the next year. And I said, 'Am I still on the team?' After Michigan, I played in Toledo, Grand Rapids, then Detroit, and now I'm headed to Dallas.

What specific thing did you learn in East that has enabled you to be successful?

I'd say the value of hard work. My parents had instilled that in me from an early age, but I think it was reinforced at East. The other thing is the sense of community. I think that's so important in East. I've always felt there were so many people in East who are there to support you. There have been many, many times over the years when I've had people tell me I couldn't do something and there have always been people in East in my corner who believed that I could.

What were you like in school?

I was pretty involved, at least I tried to be. I was part of the STEP program that had high schoolers work with elementary kids, things like that. And I spent a lot of time with my family. My brother, who was two years younger than me, and my sister, who was four years younger than me.

Did you have a favorite teacher or class?

There were so many great teachers. Mr. Tompkins for team games, BClay (Brian Clay), Mr. Farmer.

If you had to choose one moment in one location to serve as the signature moment of your East school experience, what would it be?

The location would be right by the Jimmy Gerken statue, standing there, by the corner of the football field, seeing the lake. I didn't know Jimmy personally, but to me he just kind of embodies East Grand Rapids. I know his brother, Don Gerken, well and Don is the kind of person who will just do anything for you. It's incredible, really. So that's what I think of when I close my eyes and think of East Grand Rapids.

Do you stay in touch with many people from East Grand Rapids?

I do stay in touch with people. I wish I were better at it.

I've been very fortunate that, playing in Detroit, friends or classmates would come to games or whatever and I'd see them then. I've really enjoyed that, but I wish I were better at staying in touch with people.

What do you know now that you wish you'd known then?

I wish I would've known not to take things so seriously. If you get a bad grade on a test or you get your feelings hurt or something doesn't go the way you want it to go, you think it's the end of the world because right then, that is your world. You don't realize that there's so much more that you're going to experience. Those little things are opportunities to learn. They don't need to bring your whole world crashing down.

What advice do you have for young East alums who are just starting out?

Whatever it is you're doing, whether it's college or a new job or whatever, pursue it to the best of your ability. Put your best foot forward and give it your best effort. Have a "get to" attitude, not a "have to" attitude. Enjoy what you're doing. Too many people have the attitude that what they're doing is an obligation and not an opportunity.

Who else would you like us to have a virtual cup of coffee with?

Tyler Oates '06

Bonus question: What are you glad we didn't ask you about?

My 91 Honda Accord that didn't start on a hot day. I vividly remember having to park it in the shade at baseball practice so it would start after.

Want to read more?

Visit egrsf.org/coffee.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

"If we lay a strong enough foundation
We'll pass it on to you, we'll give the world to you
And you'll blow us all away."

— Hamilton: An American Musical

Do you know the next line to that song? It's "Someday, Someday," but the truth is, that someday is already here. Thanks to our incredible donors, together we have built a strong enough foundation to support a world of opportunity for students in East Grand Rapids.

Over its more than 30-year history, the East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation has donated millions of dollars to our schools. In just the past few years alone, we've grown the Foundation's endowment from \$4 million to more than \$13 million. That impressive total will soon generate more than half a million dollars for our schools year after year.

That's only part of the story. Just as the foundation of a building provides a base for the rest of the structure, the Foundation supports all the other organizations in our community that are instrumental to our children's education.

We partner with East Grand Rapids Public Schools. We work with Parent Teacher Organizations in all our schools. We work with the Stage Boosters, Music Boosters, Team Boosters, Academic Boosters, and Leadership and Youth Development. We coordinate with the City of East Grand Rapids and the Gaslight Village Business Association. We organize and energize our loyal alumni.

In that way, the Foundation is the umbrella organization that connects all those individual institutions for the common good. We share ideas and best practices, pool resources, and create efficiencies that help our schools serve our students and in so doing serve our community as a whole.

Thank you for your support! Together, we're investing in our students, because the future belongs to Pioneers!

Amy Stuursma
Executive Director

EAST GRAND RAPIDS SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

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2021-2022 CALENDAR

AUGUST

- 8/8 First "Cheat Sheet" weekly update of the school year
- 8/11 Class of 1971 50th Reunion
- 8/17 Foundation presents Excellence In Teaching awards at EGRPS Opening Day staff meeting
- 8/28 Pioneer Post Alumni Online Summer Newsletter distributed by email and posted on egrsf.org
- 8/31 Foundation Board meets to consider fall classroom enhancement grant requests

SEPTEMBER

- 9/10 Big Check Day as Foundation board members surprise grant recipients at school
- 9/16 Class of 1955 Reunion
- 9/18 Class of 1980 Reunion
- 9/25 Class of 1981 Reunion
- 9/30 Foundation's Distinguished Alumni & Community Service Awards Dinner honoring Bruce Towne & Commander Bill Krissoff

OCTOBER

- 10/1 Homecoming Alumni Tent
- 10/2 "Foundations" Fall Newsletter printed and distributed online
- 10/9 Class of 1995 Reunion

NOVEMBER

- 11/24 Annual Alumni Hockey Game
- 11/27 "Pioneer Post" Alumni Online Autumn Newsletter distributed by email and posted on egrsf.org

DECEMBER

- DECEMBER Orchestra, band, and choirs holiday concerts

GRANT TESTIMONIALS

Outdoor Classrooms

MEGAN MILLER | Wealthy Elementary Teacher

We have been utilizing our outdoor classroom materials for 5th grade science for 3-4 years, thanks to EGRSF grants. Our mini camping stools and portable microscopes have allowed us to sit outside in nature (any time of the year) and observe, question, wonder, record data, and track organisms on our playground over time.

Then the pandemic hit. The uncertainty of the COVID-19 virus and its transfer, its effects, its impact on our long term health loomed. Masks, cohorting, constant cleaning, air filtering systems, and social distancing in the classroom and school building allowed us to continue educating and learning, but the outside was calling.

Outside, we were able to take a break from masks when we were distanced, reaping and breathing in fresh air. The calm that trees and plants and animals bring to our psyches allowed us to have meaningful team meetings, lunches, and time together outside. Thanks to our little stools and materials, we were able to use our science equipment in different ways to get outside even more.

Our fifth graders continuously asked, "When are we going outside this week?" The motivation to spend time in nature skyrocketed, even more than I expected. I attribute much of this motivation to the camping stools, as these provide a comfortable and easy way to sit and watch and learn and eat and talk to each other. It's a subtle tool, but it creates a larger outdoor classroom as well as mini, individual classrooms that are convenient, fun and exciting for both students and teachers. I am looking forward to continuing the success we've had with our EGRSF materials this coming school year! I am so thankful for the EGRSF and all they do to support teachers and students in and outside the classroom!



COVID Response | ANTHONY MOREY

Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

The support of the Foundation from the very onset of the pandemic through today has been fundamental to the District's successful maintenance of our core educational mission. Long before any federal or state funding provided any meaningful pandemic resources, the Foundation rallied and mobilized behind our teachers and students. As a result, the Foundation empowered numerous critical decisions that simply would not have been otherwise possible. Pandemic learning plans required constant revision as each new state mandate was enacted and as surges in COVID cases compelled a response. The Foundation's steadfast commitment was a stabilizing force during these greatest times of uncertainty. Thankfully the worst scenarios were avoided last year and the District is now entering into a brighter, more stable future. Without a doubt, this would simply not be the case without the visionary leadership of the Foundation and its countless supporters.



ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

APPROVED FALL 2021

PICTURE BOOKS: Creating Safe & Supportive Schools

ELEMENTARY | Caroline Breault-Cannon, Carlye Allen, Stephanie Thelen

A picture book collection that mirrors & reflects our students' lives, experiences & backgrounds.

3D PRINTERS | HIGH SCHOOL | Patrick Reed

Four additional printers to enhance creations and alleviate wait times.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Culturally & Historically Responsive Education

BRETON DOWNS, LAKESIDE, WEALTHY | Caroline Breault-Cannon

Attendance to Kent ISD's conference where a national speaker will address culture, equity, antiracism, and culturally & historically responsive education.

KINDERGARTEN INDEPENDENT READING COLLECTION

LAKESIDE ELEMENTARY | Hannah Bailey, Shannon Brady, Renee Rowan

Classroom libraries that align with current libraries and Fountas & Pinnell benchmark system.

DATA COLLECTION DEVICES

HIGH SCHOOL | Science Department, Janyce Huff

Devices for science classes that interface with new software and student devices for real-time data collection and scientific studies.

COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT READERS

MIDDLE SCHOOL | Meredith Bonner, Steve Brinks

Classroom libraries of text in Spanish for students to select appropriate level and interest.

TURNITIN SOFTWARE

HIGH SCHOOL | Jeff Webb

Turnitin.com subscription renewal checks for originality and potential plagiarism.

LOCAL ARTIST PARTNERSHIP: Student-Designed Banners

MIDDLE SCHOOL | Holly Lampen

Local artist to work with students to create new & updated banners for the parking lot light posts.

IGNITE ENGAGEMENT: The Engaging Classroom Extension

BRETON DOWNS | Christy Gast, Bridget Rieth

Differentiated physical spaces and seating to meet learner needs and increase engagement.

BAND INSTRUMENTS

HIGH SCHOOL | Jake Castillo

Replacing old fiberglass sousaphones that cannot be repaired.

HAMILTON: An American Musical

MIDDLE SCHOOL | Pete Miller, Lorie Miller

Partial funding for tickets and transportation for 8th grade to attend Grand Rapids performance coinciding with US History curriculum.

GONE BOARDING ELECTIVE

HIGH SCHOOL | Terry Szpieg

Funding to add a section of the elective class for three years.

DIGITAL PIANOS

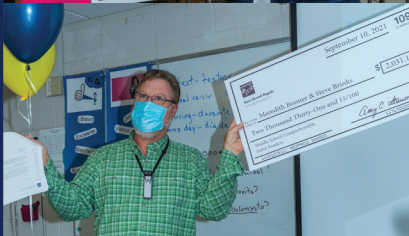
HIGH SCHOOL | Emily Verdonk

Two pianos for all five choir classes in choir room and multipurpose room.

CAMP BLODGETT: 6th Grade Team Building Experience

MIDDLE SCHOOL | Jeff Dykhouse, Jill Smith on behalf of 6th grade team, Michelle Kastanek

Foster connections between students who have not only just come from three different elementary schools, but who have also just experienced distance and separation from one another due to COVID.



JANUARY

- 1/1 Spring classroom enhancement grant applications are due
- 1/11 Jimmy Gerken's Birthday
- 1/25 Foundation Board meets to consider spring classroom enhancement grant requests
- 1/28 Big Check Day as Foundation board members surprise grant recipients at school

FEBRUARY

- FEBRUARY**
"Foundations" Spring Newsletter/Annual Report printed and distributed online

MARCH

- 3/12 "Pioneer Post" Alumni Online Winter Newsletter distributed by email and posted on egrsf.org
- 3/19 Foundation spring event, "Hurrah! Together Again!"

APRIL

- 4/15 Student Board Member applications due
- 4/18 Foundation endowment grant calculation for 2022-2023 school year
- 4/21-4/23 Underwriter for High School spring musical, Legally Blonde: The Musical

MAY

- 5/1 Nominations due for Student Scholarships & Excellence in Teaching Awards
- 5/6 EGRMS Day of Caring
- 5/26 Graduation, members of Class of 2022 become newest members of Alumni Association
- 5/29 Last "Cheat Sheet" weekly update of the school year

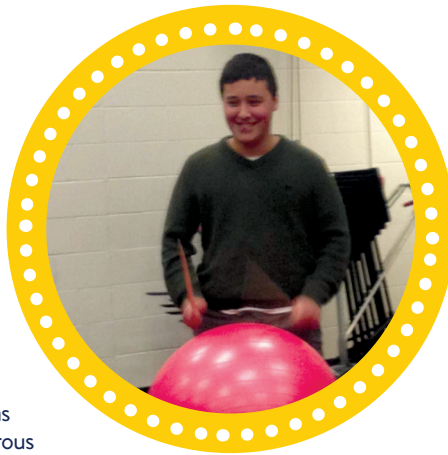
JUNE

- 6/3 Last day of school
- 6/8 Foundation's annual Gerken Open golf outing to benefit Team Boosters and the Jimmy Gerken Fund
- 6/11 "Pioneer Post" Alumni Online Spring Newsletter distributed by email and posted on egrsf.org

GRANT TESTIMONIALS

Cardio Drumming
CAROL LIPPERT | High School Parent

"My son, Wyatt, participated in Cardio Drumming after school as part of Lori Goins' Moderate Cognitive Impairment classroom," says Carol Lippert. "He graduated high school in 2020 and is now attending a transition program called CTC. I loved attending Cardio Drumming with my son, who has a diagnosis of Autism. He has always responded so positively to music so we jumped at the opportunity to participate each week. Not only was this class fun, it was beneficial for all the participants in numerous ways. First, the music and drumming aspect is recreational and actually good exercise. You must learn to keep a beat and be able to manage drumming on, under and around the exercise ball. You must follow directions, physically moving to the beat of the music, which helps with focusing and attending skills, as well as coordination. I loved helping out with the adults who were just as happy to listen to a variety of music from contemporary pop to '80s music, that we adults identified with, which made it even more enjoyable!"



"The best part is the social piece. It gives these classmates an activity they can enjoy doing together and have a great time. Our students are not always able to participate in organized or competitive sports or even participate in clubs. The LINKs students, who are the General Ed students who take part in the MOCI classrooms, are able to share in an activity that provides a great social opportunity in which they can get to know these students, their fellow classmates, inside and outside of the classroom."

VandenBerg Scholarship
BECKY MARTIN | Middle School Science Teacher

Becky Martin had the experience of a lifetime this summer! With the gracious support of the VandenBerg Scholarship as well as the Foundation, she was able to experience and study, firsthand, Isle Royale National Park. "The lessons and experiences will enhance all seventh grade science classroom teaching," Martin says. "We will be infusing more 'real life' stories and knowledge to our important ecology unit."



Michigan Tech created the program, aimed towards educators and scientists that offers a unique field experience in support of the ecological study of wolves and moose at Isle Royale. Becky joined a backcountry research team that hiked Isle Royale, off trail, for seven nights. She's excited to offer real life integration of aspects of earth science, botany, general ecology, and the use of literature in teaching science this year and for years to come. Over the past 17 years, the seventh grade science teachers have been using Isle Royale as a case study for examining ecology, population relationships, and food chains/webs.

"My eyes were opened to the world of research and real time data collection," Martin says. "The hiking, data collection at moose kill sites, frequent tracking/visiting sites where wolves frequent, and the general ecology of the island as seen through researcher's lenses were all crucial to understanding the island ecosystem. The chance to experience such an adventure will bring new zest and real life infusions into our current unit as a 7th grade department. I can't wait to share this experience with my science team as well as my students. The impact of such an adventure will be far reaching for years to come!"

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION TREASURER

The past eighteen months have proven to be tremendously challenging for non-profits in general and school foundations in particular. Limits on in-person get-togethers have hampered organizations' ability to raise funds through events. Our Foundation is no exception, as we had to cancel our spring of 2020 community event just days before it was scheduled to happen.

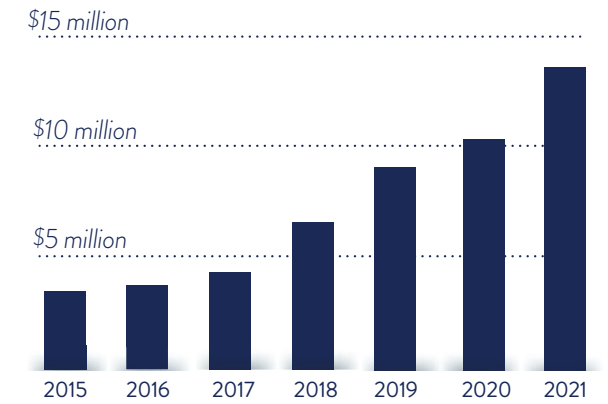
We're extremely fortunate, however, that the recent Now&Forever endowment campaign put us in a position to weather a situation like this. It's a sustainable funding model for us, one that we knew would help us meet future challenges. We just didn't know how soon those challenges would come. It makes us even more grateful for our community's support.

Despite a scaled-back event schedule, our community has continued to show broad support for our schools. Donor support, coupled with the boost from a strong stock market, has put the Foundation's endowment on a solid footing to support EGR schools for generations.

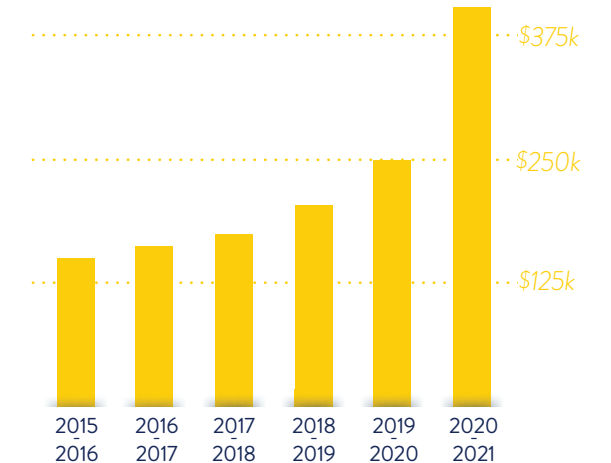
Nick Adamy

ENDOWMENT VALUE

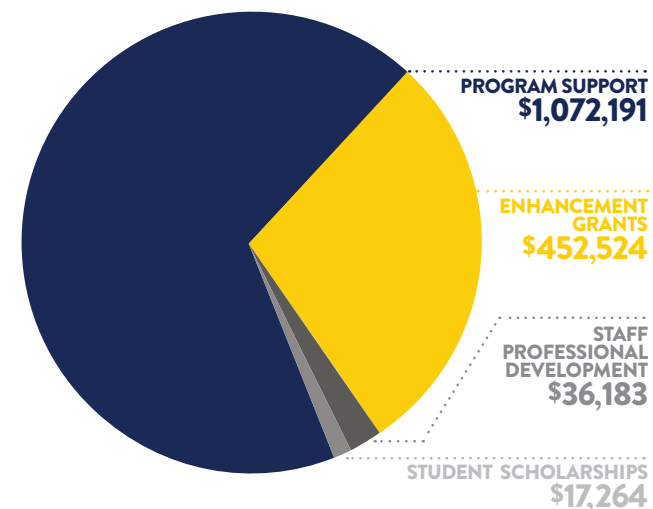
(as of June 30)



ENDOWMENT DISTRIBUTIONS TO EGRPS



FOUNDATION SUPPORT | 2018-2021



FUNDING BY GRADE LEVEL | 2018-2021

