



# Foundations

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



*Video Grant Highlights  
(really!)*

*Foundation President Sees  
Brighter Days Ahead*

*Donor Roll Call*

*A Virtual Cup of Coffee  
with Mach Makuei '04*

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**VIRTUAL CUP OF COFFEE**

**Mach Makuei '04**

Mach Makuei was born in Sudan during the deadly Sudanese civil war. After spending time in a United Nations refugee camp in Kenya, he and his sister and brother reached the United States. Mach graduated from East in 2004 and from Albion College in 2008. An entrepreneur at heart, today Mach runs Big Lake Movers, a residential and commercial moving company with locations in Grand Rapids, Holland, and Kalamazoo.



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

Jersey Junction for sure! I used to have a crush on one of the servers when I was in high school. She tried to give me her phone number and the owner intercepted the note because she wasn't allowed to give away her phone number at work...bummer.

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

I moved back to the Grand Rapids area after graduating from Albion College with a B.A. in International Studies during the Great Recession. I bounced around to different odd jobs until I decided to go into business for myself. I started a commercial and residential moving company with \$0 and zero experience (Big Lake Movers).

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

Setting high expectations. I feel like I was expected to succeed every day in the classroom, in sports and in life in general at East.

**What were you like in school?**

I was a friend for all! I was extremely social. I was co-captain of the wrestling and cross country teams.

**Did you have a favorite teacher or class?**

This is the hardest question so far because I had a lot of great teachers. I loved Janet Tombre because she was cool and importantly a great teacher. Her classes were never stressful regardless of the assignment because she's a great communicator.

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

Nobody's got it better than East. The community and alumni support is second to none.

**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?**

When I was in high school, the wrestling team managers (girls) gave me the first ever Team Flirt award at a team banquet in front of all the parents! I was somewhat embarrassed but everybody thought it was very funny.

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

Yes, I stay in touch with friends from East. I play flag football with a couple East graduates every Thanksgiving.

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

Don't forget about Jimmy Gerken's legacy. Empathy, kindness and a loving heart are essential in every profession. Rest In Peace, Jimmy.

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

Amy (Demarest) Sweet, Nick Fisher, Kevin Anderson

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

Politics and why I didn't play football in high school.

Want to read more? Visit [egrsf.org/coffee](http://egrsf.org/coffee).

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE**

*"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."*

**— Fred Rogers**

As you look through this publication, you'll find heroes from all around our neighborhood. Brian Schwartz, who leads the Foundation as president of our board. Brian Ellis, who along with Natalie Benecker served as co-chair of the Foundation's Now&Forever campaign. Nick Adamy, who volunteers his time as treasurer of the Foundation. Heroes all.

Every name you see on our list of donors is a hero, too. Every single one decided that we need to share responsibility for our world. They saw the need to support our students and our schools by supporting public education and the everyday heroes—the teachers, staff, administrators, parents and families— who make it work for all of us.

To all of you, I say: I consider you heroes. **Thank you!**

*Amy C. Stuursma*

Amy Stuursma  
Executive Director  
East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation

**QR LAUNCH**

Throughout this publication you'll see QR codes. Scan them with your phone's camera to see videos about grants that donors to the Foundation have made possible. Want a glimpse of the Tile Project the Foundation funded for Kabookie Week earlier this month? **SCAN HERE** →



Want to show off how smart you are? Tell us what QR stands for by emailing [jforstne@egrps.org](mailto:jforstne@egrps.org). But make your response quick! The first one to send the right answer wins a set of East playing cards.



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The **East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation's Donor Roll Call** recognizes those individuals, businesses and organizations that have supported the Foundation from **January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020**. This list also includes all supporters who made a pledge to our Now&Forever campaign through December 31, 2020. The Foundation's Board of Directors gratefully acknowledges all who have generously supported our mission through their gifts. We also thank individuals who have secured matching gifts from their employers, as well as the employers who have supported their employees' generosity through matching gifts.

**2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | One East Supporters**

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# GRANT ME KNOWLEDGE



GRANT VIDEO  
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## CLASSROOM LIBRARIES

Remember Johnny Tremain? Of course you do. We all had to read it. And it's a terrific book, but it's not the only terrific book. A few years ago, teachers came to the Foundation with an idea to change the way kids read: Put libraries in classrooms that are full of books those kids want to read. It worked! Now, thanks to Foundation donors, elementary, middle and high school students have access to thousands of terrific books right in their classrooms, turning kids into lifelong readers.



### MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

Looking back at 2020, it's hard not to think about how challenging the year has been. For most of us, it's the first time we've collectively encountered such difficult times. We've lived through political conflicts, economic crises, and natural disasters but it's the first time that we've lived through a global pandemic. This invisible enemy has challenged us all. Countries have been forced to contain a disease for which there was no immediate cure. There were lockdowns, an increase in joblessness, and deaths. Most of us know at least one person who's died from Covid-19. We've all been affected.

But what makes our world so amazing is that despite the challenges, communities have come together. Almost a year ago people who could sew were making masks for family members and health care workers. Companies were making ventilators for hospitals. Donations to food banks became the source of hope for those who lost their jobs, and "local first" became the rallying cry to keep small business owners afloat.

When I think about local first, I can't help but be overwhelmed by the generosity within our community. When our schools needed it most, we did it together. Whether it was a joint effort between the Foundation and a donor to purchase ultraviolet cleaning robots, the Family Food Fund, or the One East fundraising campaign that raised almost \$490,000, we did it together.

We've always known that our schools were at the heart of our community. Maybe we've taken that for granted, but we learned the hard way during the pandemic that some of that sense of community can be lost. We need to get it back, and we will. It will happen when we can gather again for football games and concerts and plays, when we can walk to schools for open houses and meet up for dinner afterward.

I'm optimistic about 2021 and beyond. The vaccine is a good start and working collectively will help us to dig out of an awful hole. East Grand Rapids is an amazing community and I know that with the help of its citizens, teachers, parents, and students, we will prevail. Hindsight is 20/20 so let's use that insight to move forward. Individually we are strong; **together we are stronger.**

Brian Schwartz, '86  
2020-2021 President East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation



One East check for \$490,000 presented to EGRPS



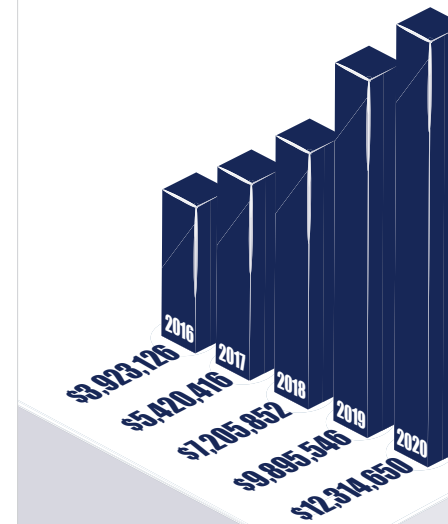
UV sanitizing robots in action



Partnering with local businesses

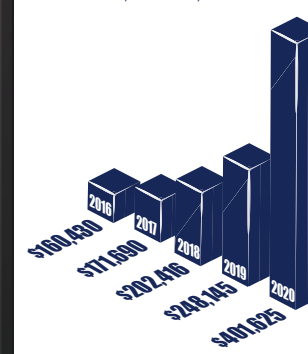
### ENDOWMENT VALUE

(as of December 31, 2020)



### ENDOWMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO EGRPS

(per school year)



### TREASURER'S REPORT

Because of the pandemic, 2020 put unprecedented demands on the Foundation's financial resources. This school year, the Foundation will contribute nearly \$900,000 to our schools. In an historic year, that represents the highest total ever contributed to EGRPS in a single school year. Thanks to prudent management and incredible community support, we were able to meet those demands while continuing to grow the Foundation's endowment.

By December 31, 2020, our endowment had grown by more than \$2 million since the beginning of the year to surpass \$12 million. The Foundation is financially secure, and with continued support from the community, we will continue to rise to meet the growing needs of our East Grand Rapids Schools.

Nick Adamy  
East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation Treasurer



# GRANT ME UNDERSTANDING

GRANT VIDEO



CLICK HERE

## WE THE PEOPLE

In January, as a constitutional crisis gripped the country, what were students on the EGRHS We the People team doing? Studying and debating the constitution, of course. Year after year, the Foundation helps the team attend competitions, including the state competition in Lansing and the nationals in Washington, DC. This year's nationals will be virtual, but the team already feels connected to DC. Just a few days after the storming of the U.S. Capitol, East's We the People team won the state championship.



## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Annual Fund Supporters

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## ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRPERSON REPORT

*What a rollercoaster ride!*

*I'm talking about the ups and downs of public school funding in Michigan and in particular East Grand Rapids. You might be surprised to learn that I'm referring to the last several decades and not just the past year.*

*Yes, we know we were told this past spring East Grand Rapids Public Schools would be facing a \$2.4 million deficit because of the pandemic. We know that by the end of the summer those projections had significantly changed, and we know that by the fall our schools were facing enormous, unpredictable expenses.*

*We also know about the years following the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009. For seven years, our schools were facing deficits that were seemingly insurmountable. Each spring thanks to the generosity of donors and the tireless work of volunteers, we were able to raise the funds needed through what became our annual EGRNow! emergency fundraising campaigns.*

*So, over the course of more than twenty years of being an advocate for public education, I've seen the highs and the lows. At times, it's been a hair-raising, unpredictable ride. Oh, and here's one other thing my experience has taught me: The ride isn't over.*

*That's why we embarked on our Now&Forever fundraising campaign more than three years ago. We knew that we could never be totally certain of school funding from the state. We needed to create a buffer— a stable, predictable source of funding that would smooth out the peaks and valleys of the school funding thrill ride.*

*Three years after the launch of Now&Forever, I'm extremely proud to say that's exactly what we've done. After raising millions of dollars in cash donations and pledges, we've been able to grow the Foundation's endowment to more than \$12 million! Soon, the investment income from that endowment should provide our schools with more than half a million dollars every year, now and forever.*

*It's already paying dividends. This school year, the proceeds from the endowment will provide \$401,000 in support for educational programs. This would not be possible without the generosity of our community.*

*Thanks to YOU, the Foundation can help make the vagaries of school funding more manageable so the drops on the rollercoaster ride are less breathtaking. When we started the campaign, we had no idea what this year would bring, but we knew we were planning for the unexpected. I'm thankful for the donors and volunteers who fueled the success of Now&Forever, **now more than ever.***

Brian Ellis  
Now&Forever Campaign Co-chair

**916** PLEDGED TO NOW & FOREVER  
**DONORS** **\$6,428,263.87**

**ENDOWMENT** Value as of 12/31/2020  
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# GRANT ME TECHNOLOGY

GRANT VIDEO



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## MIDDLE SCHOOL INNOVATION LAB

What if you gave kids the tools they need to innovate? What if you taught them to code and program machines? What if you offered them hands-on experience with the technology that drives our world? Grants from the Foundation for the Middle School Innovation Lab have done exactly that. The kids are taking it from there.

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# GRANT ME INGENUITY



## SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

An academic track meet. That's how Science Olympiad is described. All these different events happening at different times in different parts of the facility, but in each one, you have a group of students putting their talents and training to the test. Instead of the 400, the 1500, and the high jump, you have Disease Detectives, Dynamic Planet, and Boomilever. Donors to the Foundation helped start the East Grand Rapids Science Olympiad program, and now it's off and running.

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Sabina Hubjer-Rasoul  
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Greg & Carolyn Reese  
Beth Reid  
Mike & Trish '89 Reid  
Randy & Kris Renker  
Ryan & Whitney Renner  
Phil & Deb Rewerts  
Robert '49 & Margaret Rice  
Brian & Meg '93 Richards  
Paul '70 & Susan Richards  
Rachel Ries  
Brian & Bridget Rieth  
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Peter & Jessica Ruppert  
Guillermo & Bridget Sanchez  
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Tim Saunders  
Cynthia Savara, '75  
Bill & Barb Saxton  
Jeff Schad & Marilyn Lankfer  
Matt '90 & Diana Schad  
Tim & Cindy Schad  
Henry "Fritz" '62 & Karen '63 Schaefer—  
*In honor of Mr. Bert Froyland,  
beloved EGR English teacher*  
Bruce & Marti Scherpenisse—  
*In honor of their children & grandchildren*  
Shelley Schmidt  
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John & Judy Schneider  
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Mark Schwartz  
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Mike Sebastian, '65

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Jay & Helen Smith—  
*In honor of Amy Stuursma, '89*  
Bob & Colleen Smith  
Sara Smolenski &  
Linda Burpee '74  
Diana Snoeyer  
Dave Snyder, '86—  
*In honor of all past & current students*  
Stephanie Socie  
Rich & Abby Sorota

♦ Deceased

Daniel Spear  
John & Nikki Speer—  
*In honor of Carlye Allen*  
Sean '94 & Anna Sperling  
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*In memory of Irma Grace Stauffacher*  
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Scott & Angela Stropkai  
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Karen Steffensen Sturges, '58  
Jim & Ann Stuursma  
Peter '89 & Amy '89 Stuursma  
Judy Subar  
Tim & Karen '86 Sullivan  
Mary Sunshine, '75  
Keith & Meghan Swayman  
Stacey Szczepanski  
Eric & Stacey Tanner  
Charles '58 & Joyce Tappan

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Chris & Teri Tesseris  
Corey & Stephanie Thelen  
Peter & Lisa Theut  
Nick & Amy Thole  
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Charley '87 & Janine Thompson  
Winona Tinholt  
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Hannah Tobin  
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Rock '56 & Kathy '58 Tonkel  
Jeff & Julie Towner  
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Adam & Gretchen Townshend  
Dick '72 & Kathleen '73 Tupper  
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*In memory of Susan Emmons Nolan, '85*  
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*In memory of Patricia Wilkinson*

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Ben '94 & Meg '97 Zerfas  
Kyle & Gloriana Zimdar  
Brad & Fleur Zylstra



# GRANT ME ASSISTANCE

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## PARAEDUCATORS

Thanks to the money raised through last summer's One East fundraising drive, the Foundation was able to help bring back elementary paraeducators in a new, improved way. The new Elementary Interventional Paraeducator (EIP) program serves students at every grade level at all three elementary schools. EIP is one example of how the \$490,000 raised through One East is helping restore, add and maintain programs and educational supports this school year. See for yourself!



## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Memorial Gifts

### CHUCK ANDREWS, '57

Tom Ainsworth, '77  
Susan Andrews, '59  
David '55 & Mary Kay '57 Berles  
Bill & Kathy '59 Laidlaw

### GEORGE BARCHESI

Tom Ainsworth, '77

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The Conways— Cynthia '64, Greg '87  
Amy, Terri '11, Jack '15 & Andy '93

### JACK CLARY

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Joy DeBoer  
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Candace Titus  
Dennis & Carroll Velie  
Tom Walker & Judy Freeman  
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### RUSSELL (RUSTY) WALLACE HOOK III, '61

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Michael & Monica Sekulich

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### LINDA MEHNEY (continued)

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Robert Byram  
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Barbara Cone  
Andrew Conway '93 &  
Karen Frakie Doletzky, '93  
Cynthia Conway, '64  
Dave '57 & Nancy Cook  
James & Deborah Cook  
Patrick & Rosalyn Cwayna  
Richard '57 & Patricia Dunwell  
John & Penny '52 Edison  
EGR Class of 1988  
Brian '78, JoAnn & Susan Ellis  
The Michael '80 & Lynette Ellis Family  
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Mike Fishman, '56  
Bill & Mary Ford  
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The Tom '46 & Mickie Fox Family  
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### LINDA MEHNEY (continued)

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Katie McMaster Hocking  
Earl & Donna Lee Holton  
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Allen '46 & Helen Hunting  
Win '65 & Kyle '70 Irwin  
Chuck & Donna Jenkins  
Chuck '57 & Carol Jennings  
Tom & Margy Jones  
Janice Kirchgessner, '54  
Wally & Becky Knack  
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Bill & Kathy '59 Laidlaw  
Dale & Shirley Lausch  
James & Helen Law  
Jean Laxton  
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J. Kemper Matt  
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Jim '58 & Susie '59 Sebastian  
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Clark, Donna, Michele & CJ Suchovsky  
Chuck & Lill Thompson  
Candace Titus  
Kyle Travis  
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James '56 & Marcia Vogt  
Bill Weick  
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Peter '89 & Amy '89 Stuursma  
Rock '56 & Kathy '58 Tonkel

### JUDY GAMBLE SHEPPARD, '54

Janice Kirchgessner, '54

### WAYNE SIMON

Tom Ainsworth, '77

### DAVE STICKNEY

David '55 & Mary Kay '57 Berles

### SUE THOITS

Martheen '44, Tom '77 & Ginny '73 Wanty

### MARCIA E. TONKEL, '57

Libby Headrick, '57  
Sam '63 & Barb '64 Metcalf

### DAVID VER MEULEN, '72

Tom Ainsworth, '77

### GREG WILLIAMSON, '96

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Richard & Nancy Brebner  
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Libby Headrick, '57  
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Wake Forest friends of his daughter Krista—  
Cindy Freed, Moira Davis,  
Lillian Stokes, Tracie Dellinger,  
Stephanie Welton, Lori Mann,  
Susie Broecker Hanson





# GRANT ME A PLATFORM

**ELEMENTARY iPADS**

How long have you had your phone? A year? Two? How about ten? In 2011, a group of elementary teachers wrote a grant proposal for iPads to use in elementary classrooms and submitted it to the Foundation. Ten years later, those iPads are still used almost every day. And this year, more than ever, teachers found new ways to use them. All thanks to you.

GRANT VIDEO  
  
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## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Appreciation STAR Awards

Gifts to the Foundation were made to honor STARS (Staff, Teacher Appreciation and Recognition) in our school community. Below is the list of gifts made during 2020 recognizing a special teacher, staff member or school employee. Thank you to the many contributors and to the many outstanding staff members who make East Grand Rapids Public Schools a great place to learn!

- Jason Albaugh ..... Charlotte Borden
- Carolynne Allaben ..... The Borden Family
- Kaelynn Benham ..... Ellie Brandstadt
- Shelly Boeve ..... Primo Self
- Kristen Borak ..... The Hoekstra Family
- Jim Borst ..... David Lime & Family
- Holly Brownley ..... Brad & Andrea Hecksel
- Elle Burgess ..... Primo Self
- Nia Chen ..... Jayna Conway
- Michelle Day ..... Gary & Mary Sue Barnes
- Stephene Diepstra ..... The Lippert Family
- Jeff Dykhouse ..... Ava Hart Bardeggia
- Maggie Edison ..... The Stuursma Family
- EGRPS Lead Team ..... EGRPS Board of Education Members
- Mary Elderkin ..... Charlie Connor
- Peter Faber ..... Charlie Connor
- Sara Frank ..... The Hoekstra Family
- Tom Glendening ..... The Lippert Family
- Lori Goins ..... The Lippert Family
- Stacey Goodman ..... Cai Lewis
- Shelly Gullett ..... Ava Hart Bardeggia
- Michelle Harper ..... David Lime & Family
- Jane Hazle ..... Kate Frillmann
- Mary Hillyard ..... Addie Lewis
- Adam Horos ..... Serafina Ege
- Janyce Huff ..... Charlie Connor
- Janae Janca ..... The Hoekstra Family
- Lori Johnston ..... The Borden Family  
The Stuursma Family
- Tim Johnston ..... The Stuursma Family
- Tommy Kawel ..... The Stuursma Family
- Lakeside 5th Grade Team ..... The Brandstadt Family
- Holly Lampen ..... Drew & Mikey Wolford
- Lindsey Lantz ..... Ava Hart Bardeggia

- Kristen Lecours ..... Ellie Brandstadt
- Marissa Lehman ..... The Lippert Family
- Erik Lundeen ..... Charlotte Borden
- Socorro Mercado-Blackport ..... David Lime & Family
- Katie Michell ..... The Lime Family
- Katherine Miller ..... Charlotte Borden
- Megan Miller ..... E. J. Hunter
- Tracy Packard ..... Ava Hart Bardeggia  
Mikey Wolford
- Matthew Putnam ..... The Lippert Family
- Cheryl Radecki ..... Megan Conway  
Peter Wolford  
The Hoekstra Family
- Katie RietKerk ..... The Stuursma Family
- Kelsi Rode ..... The Hoekstra Family
- Cassandra Rood ..... Ava Hart Bardeggia
- Tim Saunders ..... Cai Lewis
- Linda Sawade ..... Fifth Grade Class
- Brett Scheidel ..... Ellie Brandstadt
- Stacey Sczcepanski ..... The Hoekstra Family
- Elizabeth Sprague ..... Charlie Connor
- Chris Stable ..... The Lime Family  
Charlotte Borden
- Winona Tinholt ..... Cai Lewis
- Scott Titus ..... Charlotte Borden
- Scott Tompkins ..... The Stuursma Family
- Lisa Valanty ..... Maxwell Peterson
- Kevin Vance ..... Drew Wolford
- Trent Wadsworth ..... EGR Performing Arts Community
- Carmen Weigel ..... Charlie Connor
- Craig Weigel ..... The Stuursma Family
- Jodi Westgate ..... The Hoekstra Family

## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Honorary Gifts

- Natalie Bernecker, '89**  
In honor of her service as EGRPS Board of Education President  
Anonymous
- Katie Davis Billmeier**  
Anonymous  
Susan Billmeier  
Karyn Keenan
- Dan Brown**  
Gaylen & Diane Demarest
- Jennifer Bruce**  
Laura Strickling
- EGR Alumni in the Healthcare Profession**  
Michael & Carole McDonald
- Bert Froyland**  
Fritz '62 & Karen Rasmussen '63 Schaefer
- Mary Hillyard**  
In congratulations for receiving the Excellence in Teaching Award  
Ty & Kathy Wessell
- Dave Kagan, '64**  
Amorak Huey & Ellen Schendel
- Allison M. Keller, '84**  
Norman Keller
- Pierce McDonald**  
In honor of his 2nd birthday  
Michael & Carole McDonald
- Carey Potter, '88**  
Steve & Mary Schwartz
- Caroline Rojas**  
In honor of her birthday  
Dr. & Mrs. Larry D. Snyder
- Brian Schwartz, '84 & Elizabeth Welch, '88**  
Steve & Mary Schwartz
- Karen Steffensen Sturges, '58**  
Martin '58 & Debby Hale
- Amy Stuursma, '89**  
Grosse Pointe Alumni and Friends

## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | EGR Family Food Fund & Gaslight Giveback Donors

Throughout the pandemic, our community has rallied to support people in need and to help our local businesses survive. The donors listed below helped feed families in need and helped Gaslight Village restaurants make it through state-ordered restrictions.

- Tom Ainsworth, '77
- Theodor Asgeirsson & Geirlaug Magnúsdóttir
- Richard & Cassie Axtell
- Tony '87 & Gwen '87 Barnes
- Sam Basham '19 & Ben Basham '21
- Ann Beene
- Nancy, Brandon '13 & Megan Michele '16 Belke
- Ren '55 & Cj Brander
- Pete & Angie Buck
- Brian & Sarah Calnan
- The Campbell Family
- Charissa Chapman
- EGR Class of 1977
- Dave & Dori Couvreur
- Dustin & Jill Daniels
- Rob & Allison DeVilbiss
- John & Sara Edleman
- EGRPS Board of Education Members—  
In honor of EGRPS Lead Team
- Amber Erickson, '03
- Jen Firlik, '90
- Kevin & Tracey Gort
- Joel & Shannon Iakiri
- Glenn Karpf, Andi Owen & Owen Karpf  
Beth Kromer
- Daniel Lorenz & Aletta VanderPlaats
- Gary & Pam MacDougal
- Michael & Carole McDonald
- Andrew Milnes
- Marc & Charlene Montpetit
- John & Ann Mooney
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Christopher & Kelli Smith
- David Smith '63 & Peggy Child '64  
Jeffrey Stearns
- The Turmelle Family
- Christopher & Sarah VanDeven
- Damian & Deanne Walters
- Matt & Laura Woolford
- Chad Zagel & Ellie Frey

## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Special Events

Although we were unable to hold our Recharge spring event in person, the following individuals and organizations honored their commitment to support the Foundation. To thank them for their commitment, they have been included in Foundation communications throughout the year.

### RECHARGE SPONSORS

- \$2,500 or more**
- Anonymous
- Brightformat
- Dearborn Federal Credit Union
- John & Deanna Green/  
Revolution Farms
- NPF Investment Advisors
- \$1,200**
- Nick & Shellie Adamy
- Joe & Katy Levan/Varnum LLP
- Miller Johnson Attorneys
- Valleau, VanDeven & Massie
- Dentistry for Children
- Damian Walters & Associates

- \$600**
- Martin & Catherine Blagdurn
- Baudville Brands
- Custer
- Joel & Shannon Iakiri
- KPC Packaging
- Andrea Leistra & Ryan Hekman
- Steve & Jenny McMahon
- Reagan Marketing + Design
- Brian Schwartz & Elizabeth Welch
- Sean & Anna Sperling
- Nick & Amy Thole
- David & Leigh Vander Molen

- \$300**
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- Ren & Cj Brander
- Christopher Orthodontics
- Marty & Ketti Collins
- Jeff & Sarah Conway
- Brad & Kim Ditmar
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- Rich & Abby Sorota
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- Russ & Chris Visner
- Wiser Contract Furniture

### Event Donors

- John & Lindy Bolling
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- Chris & Monika Fontaine
- Paul & Kerry Hegele
- Theresa Keyes
- Rob & Monica Kimball
- Brian & Megan Miller
- Brian & Racquel Self
- Jim & Mindy Seufert
- Bill & Pat Waring
- Adam & Ashley Young
- Ben & Meg Zerfas



# GRANT ME STRENGTH

GRANT VIDEO



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## THE JIMMY GERKEN FUND

Postponements. Cancellations. On again, off again. Games without fans. Players in masks. A six-month football season and a one-month hockey season. It's been a year. When sports return to normal, though, the Jimmy Gerken Fund will help our Pioneers be ready to lead the way. Take a look at this video to remind yourself what sports can mean to our kids. Long live the Pioneers!



## EVENT RECAP | 2020 Gerken Open

OCTOBER 5, 2020

Every year, the EGR Team Boosters and the Foundation join together for the Gerken Open at Thousand Oaks Golf Club. The Gerken Open supports the Boosters and the Jimmy Gerken Fund, which was established to remember Jimmy and ensure that athletics and co-curriculars—the activities Jimmy loved most—remain an integral part of our students' education. The Jimmy Gerken Fund also pays for student activities during Kabookie Week, keeping Jimmy's memory alive while encouraging students to continue to experience personal excellence, just as Jimmy would have wanted.

## 2020 DONOR ROLL CALL | Special Events (continued)

### GERKEN OPEN SPONSORS

#### \$1,500

- Anonymous
- Beacon Hill at Eastgate
- Scott & Natalie Bernecker \*
- BISSELL Inc. \*
- The Brad Ditmar Team/ Keller Williams Realty GR East
- EGR Home Collection
- Fox Acura
- Mark & Beth Hoekstra \*
- Hope Network Foundation
- Lacks Enterprises, Inc. \*
- Lovell Hand & Orthopedic Center \*
- Meijer
- Miller Johnson Attorneys
- NPF Investment Advisors \*
- Old National Bank
- River City Mechanical
- S. Abraham & Sons
- US Golf Cars
- Bob & Tracy Wolford

#### \$750

- EGR Music Boosters

#### \$600

- The Law Offices of Sean Patrick Cox, P.L.L.C.

#### \$300

- Christopherson Orthodontics
- Fredrickson Supply, LLC
- geckobrand
- GLT Packaging Corporation
- Grand Rapids Label Co.
- Growtrust Partners/ Tim Sullivan Investment Advisor
- Meg & Sommer Real Estate Team
- S. Abraham & Sons
- The Shreiner Family
- Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc.
- Two Men and a Truck
- Moving and Storage / GR North
- Jane Zawacki/ Greenridge Realty Gaslight Village

### Event Donors

- Beer City Dog Biscuits
- BSN Sports
- EGR Crew Team
- EGR Sailing Team/ McGovern Family
- EGR Team Boosters Spirit Shop
- Elite Activewear
- Hope Network Foundation
- Jay Forstner
- MicroKickboard USA
- Pet Supplies Plus
- Thomas Remien
- Gideon Sanders Family
- Brian Schwartz & Elizabeth Welch

### Gaslight Village Businesses

- Big Bob's Pizza
- Blackbird East
- Bowdie's Chophouse
- Crazy Charlie's
- Crescent Floral & Gifts
- Foo Yen
- Gaslight Family Chiropractic
- Jersey Junction
- José Babushka's
- Kilwins
- Lolë
- Pink Lemonade



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Gerken Open | WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021

Save the Date! You do not want to miss this fun event at Thousand Oaks. The Gerken Open supports athletics and co-curriculars through the Jimmy Gerken Fund and EGR Team Boosters. The Jimmy Gerken Fund also sponsors Kabookie Week at EGRHS.

This year's event is focused on bringing back the **strength & conditioning program for the 2021-22 school year**. Help tee-off this fundraising effort by texting "EAST" to 41444 or scanning QR code with your smart phone and contribute directly!



Questions?

Contact Maria Allen at [mallen@egrps.org](mailto:mallen@egrps.org) or (616)235-3535.

### Awards Dinner | THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Former EGRPS Custodial Supervisor Bruce Towne and CDR. Bill Krissoff, MD, Medical Corps, United States Navy (Ret.), will be the guests of honor at the **Foundation's Community Service and Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner**.

Towne spent 23 years as an EGRPS custodian, but that doesn't begin to describe the difference he made in our community. Towne's enthusiasm, friendliness, energy, and passion made him among the most well known and well loved people in town. Towne will be honored with the Community Service Award.

Commander Krissoff, who graduated from EGRHS in 1964, is an orthopedic surgeon who honored his fallen Marine son Nate in an extraordinary way. After Nate was killed in action in Iraq, Dr. Krissoff, at age 60, decided to walk away from his thriving practice to join the United States Navy Medical Corps. He served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, caring for injured soldiers. Commander Krissoff will be presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Please check [www.egrfsf.org](http://www.egrfsf.org) for updated event information.



# GRANT ME THE WORLD

Bruce



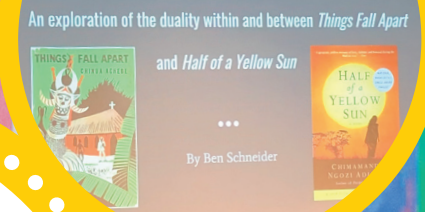
## INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

IB is an international academic program recognized and respected by the world's leading universities for its global focus and rigorous curriculum. Look at any list of the top schools in Michigan and you'll see that many of them are International Baccalaureate (IB) schools. The list includes lots of private schools. Lots of magnet schools. And only a few public schools that serve their whole community. East is one of them. Donors to the Foundation helped start the IB Program here with a grant in 2015. The IB Program is a point of pride for our schools.

GRANT VIDEO



CLICK HERE



### ALUMNI NEWS | Calling All Pioneers!

You can connect with other Pioneers through our website, [www.egrps.org/alumni](http://www.egrps.org/alumni). There, you'll find alumni profiles, a growing, preliminary list of notable alumni, class news, and reunion information. You can also update your contact information through the site so you'll receive alumni newsletters and other news. If you're planning a class reunion, or would like help organizing one, please contact Maria Allen at [mallen@egrps.org](mailto:mallen@egrps.org). And if you're on Facebook, check out the East Grand Rapids Alumni Group. There are already nearly 1,000 members!

#### In Remembrance

We extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of the following alumni and former EGRPS staff who died since our last publication. They will be greatly missed. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please help us stay informed by calling us at (616) 235-3535 or emailing to [egrpsf@egrps.org](mailto:egrpsf@egrps.org).

**1939**  
Betty (Kennedy) Neighbors

**1941**  
Jacqueline Deeb

**1943**  
Philip Cornelius

**1944**  
Marilyn (Bersie) Heibel  
Anne (Goodspeed) Lewis

**1945**  
Donald Herman

**1946**  
Robert Stekete

**1950**  
John Layman

**1952**  
Charles Hoey

**1952**  
Lawrence Post

**1953**  
Lavonda (Helms) Heintzelman

Joyce (Baird) Clay  
Frederick Sheldon

Edward Finkelstein

**1954**  
Judy (Gamble) Sheppard  
Richard Cook

**1955**  
John Eman  
Glen Young

Patricia Ayers (Chase) Saltsman

**1956**  
Margaret Mary "Peggy" (Osier) Fairbanks  
Katherine (Aument) Aziz  
Ellen (Moser) Wittkowski

**1957**  
Charles Andrews  
Marcia Tonkel  
Elva Susie (Stubbs) Thomas  
Charles Road

**1958**  
Margot (Luce) Saladino  
David Wood

**1959**  
Timothy Holt

**1960**  
James Forrest  
Theodore (Ted) Burba

**1961**  
Donald Yaw  
Russell Hook, III  
Thomas King IV

**1963**  
William Berger  
Jon Muth

**1965**  
Thomas Markus  
Harvey Wahn  
Mary (Libby) Child

**1966**  
John Luton  
James Lee Nass Bortell  
James Singer

**1967**  
William Bruce White  
Robert Beaumont

**1968**  
Phil Blok  
Alison Mason

**1970**  
Paul Clements  
Gary Thompson

**1971**  
Steve Liu  
Michael Devine  
Jayne (Abbott) Schafer

**1972**  
David Ver Meulen

**1974**  
Robert Becker  
Douglas Davis

**1976**  
Henry Gignac  
Kellie Gantos

**1978**  
Kenneth Keizer

**1979**  
Sarah (Devroy) Collins  
Susan (Doelle/English) Lyman

**1980**  
Patrick Wagner  
Thomas Sterling

**1981**  
Martin Francis

**1985**  
Andrew Heidenreich

**1992**  
Lisa Andre

**1995**  
Eddie Lampton III

**1996**  
G. Peter Coroneos

**1998**  
Christopher Blynt

**2002**  
John C. Miles  
Ian Duff

**2019**  
Ella Thorne

**2020**  
Chase Tasker  
Harrison (Bear) Tasker

**Former EGRPS Board President**  
David D. MacDonald

**Former EGRPS Staff**  
Arlene Hill  
Annette Vogelsang  
Martha Imrie  
Ricki Chowning

## Every donation to support education is an investment in the future.

Funding school programs gives students of today and tomorrow every opportunity to succeed. A donation made through planned giving takes that investment in the future one step further. Planned giving to the East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation is an investment in education for generations to come.

When individuals name the Foundation in their estate plans, they become part of the Louise Neesley Legacy Society.

### Thank you to the members of the Louise Neesley Legacy Society:

REN BRANDER, '55

LINDA KEHM ♦

LOUISE HITT NEESLEY ♦

MARJORIE NEUBIG ♦

PETER ♦ AND JOAN SECCHIA

RICH AND ABBY SOROTA

JANET L. STRAUSS ♦

♦ Deceased

We'd be happy to talk to you about making a lasting investment in our community and our children's future. If you have any questions about the Louise Neesley Legacy Society, or any aspect of planned giving, please contact Amy at [astuursm@egrps.org](mailto:astuursm@egrps.org).



LOUISE NEESLEY

"As a member of the East Grand Rapids community, Louise recognized the importance of education and understood the value of our schools and the impact the Foundation can have on our public schools. By making the Foundation part of her estate plan, Louise demonstrated her understanding of how important our schools are to our community."

—Amy Stuursma  
Foundation Executive Director

East Grand Rapids Schools Foundation



For more information visit us online at [egrpsf.org](http://egrpsf.org)