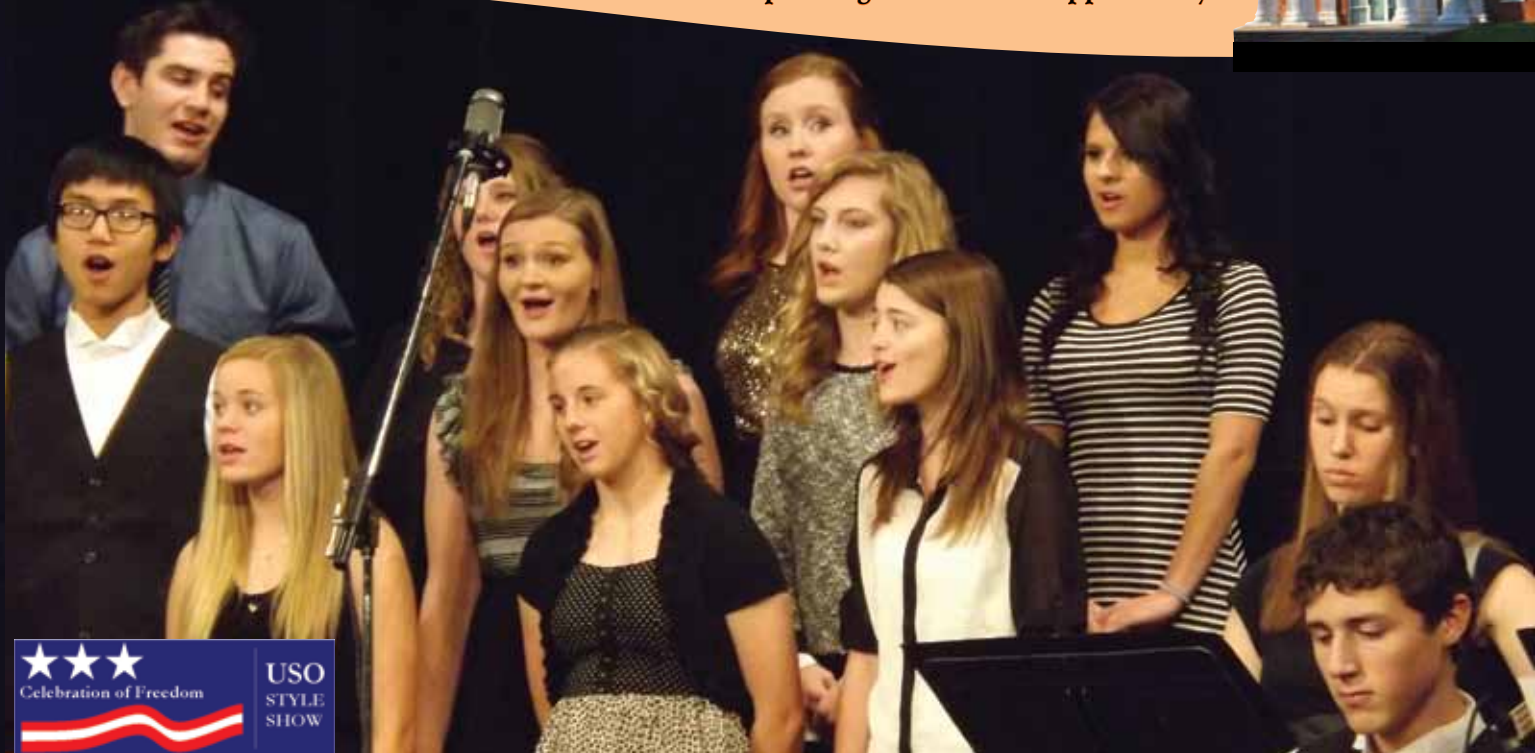


Extending the Horizon of Opportunity

# Hastings Public Schools Foundation

~Maintaining a Tradition of Excellence

~Expanding Educational Opportunity



## HPS Foundation Grows to Meet New Challenges

The Hastings Public Schools Foundation has good news to report! This past year (2013), the Foundation invested a total of \$272,144.00 into the educational process in this community (See page 3 for details). It is with a great deal of humility that the Foundation offers appreciation to those who so generously made contributions to the HPS Foundation. The list of donors found toward the end of this publication includes individuals inside and outside of our community; the list includes many in the Hastings area business and manufacturing sectors; the list includes alumni here and across the nation; and we hope this list includes you, our readers.

Comparisons are valuable ways to measure progress. In *Volume I: 2013* of the *Hastings Public Schools Foundation Newsletter* (our first newsletter), the HPS Foundation was able to report that \$45,686 was invested in the Hastings Public Schools to improve the learning environment for the entire year. The space of one column handled the list of investments nicely. On page 2 of that first edition, the headline read: “*First Steps in a New Direction . . .*” The HPS Foundation *was* headed in a new direction, having determined to seek resources not exclusively for scholarships for graduating seniors but also to include resources for classrooms within the District.

The Foundation is happy to report that our ability to make investments in the educational process increased by an incredible 496%. For this reason, we can say that the HPS Foundation has moved from taking “*First Steps in a New Direction . . .*” to taking “*Major Steps in a New Direction.*”

However, a note of caution is needed here. We have not, in any way, begun to meet our overriding goals. Our donors need to know that these strides were made for a few particular projects. The Hastings Public Schools District in 2010-2011 was the eighth poorest district in Nebraska as measured by the local property value available to support each student. This year our District has dropped to the seventh poorest district by this same measure. The HPS Foundation has evolved to begin filling the gap, but there is a long way to go. The Foundation has goals—goals that tax dollars don’t meet are goals that the Foundation can assume, but only so long as our donor base continues to support the efforts of the Foundation.



Winter Edition  
Volume II, 2013

**HPSF: Extending the Horizon of Opportunity  
for Students in the Hastings Public Schools!**

Volume II of the *Hastings Public Schools Newsletter* serves to present Foundation news and views and provides a 2013 year-end report to our readers.



Cover: The French Connection: Hastings High School chorus, performing at the USO Show. Pages 10-11



Mrs. Zabloudil with Alcott student Riley Decent, showing off new supplementary texts. Page 7

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Hastings High School student Connor Jordan dials in a brand new Sharp vertical knee mill. Pages 4-5



Scholarships presented in May 2013. Front, Jon Bohlke presents the Ardyce Bohlke Scholarship to Cody Newlun. Standing behind them are Matthew Karloff and Cassandra Dycus. Pages 12-13



Ball chairs make the difference in Rhonda Loetterle's 4th grade class. Page 6

### *Hastings Public Schools Foundation Newsletter* Volume II

Published by the Hastings Public Schools Foundation twice yearly—early winter (Annual Report) and fall (Update)

General text and photography by Betty Kort. Select photographs by Katherine Warrings, Christian Fruehling, and the *Hastings Tribune*.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Todd Soderquist beside his MPH BOSS 302 Mustang. (Photograph courtesy of the *Hastings Tribune*. Page 9





## The Hastings Public Schools Foundation at Work

*The accomplishments listed below are the result of income from endowment funds and generous donations to the Hastings Public Schools Foundation in 2013—expanding what is possible for students, staff and the District.*

### *Investments in the Educational Process: The List*

- **Thirty-one scholarships** granted to Hastings High School graduating seniors from the Class of 2013, funded by endowed scholarship investments, private donations and matching funds from the Kinman-Oldfield Trust: \$32,750 (See pages 12-13.)
- Investments were made in both **endowed and unendowed scholarships** as alumni from the community and across the nation pitched in with generous donations to solidify both existing and new scholarship portfolios. Total investment: \$31,700
- Generous memorials made possible the creation of the **Ardyce Bohlke \$4,000 (four-year) Scholarship** to be given annually. Total investment: \$40,919
- **Fifteen Staff Idea Grants**, impacting 25 HPS teachers, their classrooms and school buildings. Major funding provided by Five Points Bank, Pinnacle Bank, Bank of Doniphan, Hastings Philanthropic Yoga Society and continued support from the HPS staff and the Kinman Oldfield Trust: \$10,189
- The **Manufacturing Pathway initiative** (in progress) raised \$123,250 in the year 2013. \$60,000 in additional funds have been pledged. All funds will be expended expediently until the project is finished. (See pages 4-5 for details.) Thus far, the Manufacturing Pathway initiative has provided to the Hastings High School Industrial Technology Lab the following machines:
  - one CNC Torchmate Plasma Cutter
  - three tooled Sharp Knee Mills
  - one Haas TM-1P CNC Mill with tooling
 Total for equipment ordered in 2013: \$98,426.70.
- **Remediation.** Hastings Middle School support for math remediation: \$1,000.
- Funds to support the **Morton Elementary School Opera Program:** \$500
- **iPads** for Morton School, funded by the Morton PTO: \$2,793
- **Sports:** Support for the **Hastings High School Girls Basketball team:** \$500
- **Speaker** provided for all HPS fifth-grade students, funded by the Class of 1983 and matching funds from the six elementary buildings' budgets: \$1,000
- **Foreign Languages:** Funds to send a group of **Hastings High School Spanish language students to Costa Rica** in March of 2014, provided by the Ahmanson fund: \$2,400
- **Fund Raising Project:** HPSF administration of a **4-school district car raffle** (car donated by Frontier Ford Lincoln Mercury, Inc., of Hastings), raised \$27,461  
Each school raised funds through the raffle. The funds were returned for each school's individual use proportionally:
  - Adams Central Schools - \$7,436
  - Hastings Catholic Schools - \$4,547
  - Doniphan-Trumbull Schools - \$776
  - Hastings Middle School - \$414
  - Hastings High School - \$5,067
  - Hastings Public Schools (Elementary Bldgs) - \$6,473 (Remaining balance of funds covered expenses.)
- **Miscellaneous:** \$475

*During the year 2013, student-centered projects and scholarship portfolio investments total: \$272,144.00*



Rich Portwood  
Chair of the 2013  
HPS Foundation Board

**A Message from the 2013 Chair of the Foundation:** On behalf of the Hastings Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors, thank you for your support of our mission to fund the belief in our future—our children. Each person who donates time or money to the HPS Foundation is making a valuable commitment to the future of our community. Your donations will empower education through student scholarships and promote teacher excellence through the creation of programs that improve the educational process and motivate our children. Contributions to the HPS Foundation are making a difference in the education of children in the Hastings Public Schools.

*Rich Portwood is the retiring Chair of the Hastings Public Schools Foundation. He remains a member of the HPS Foundation Board of Directors and continues to serve as an officer in the organization.*

# The Manufacturing Pathway Creates New Challenges . . . . .

**The Manufacturing Pathway:** Manufacturing sectors in several communities in Nebraska are providing funding to upgrade technical industrial labs. The Hastings area business and manufacturing sectors have begun to provide private funding to supplement upgrades in the Hastings High School Industrial Technology Lab. The goal is to strengthen the pool of skilled craftsmen/craftswomen available for employment in local facilities.



HPS Superintendent Craig Kautz (right) talks with Corey King (center), a student in the HHS Manufacturing Technology lab. Corey is standing in front of a Haas TM-1P CNC Mill, which was recently purchased by the HPS Foundation with private funds raised through the Manufacturing Pathway initiative fund drive. Matt Hurt (left), instructor for the Industrial Technology program, looks on.

## Manufacturing Pathway Initiative Creating New Opportunities for Students

Alumni may remember the Industrial Technology Lab (IT Lab) as the old “Metals Room” at Hastings Senior High School. Recently the Hastings Public Schools has remodeled the area in preparation for the purchase and installation of new, modern equipment that will no doubt strengthen the pool of skilled craftsmen/craftswomen available for employment at local facilities. The new equipment is now arriving, thanks to donations from many entities in the Hastings area.

Making high school more relevant for students as they prepare for careers in the work world is a new emphasis for schools in Nebraska and particularly in the Hastings Public Schools. The Manufacturing Pathway initiative is creating new opportunities for students at Hastings High School.

In October the Hastings Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), the Hastings Area Manufacturing Association (HAMA), Central Community College Foundation and the Hastings



A student shows off a C-clamp created from a solid block of metal through the use of new technology in the IT lab. Matt Hurt, instructor, is at right.

Corey King, pictured above, is a junior at Hastings High School. Recently Corey became the state champion in Precision Machining Technology in the skills division. Corey then competed nationally and placed 24th in competitions involving machining different parts on a manual mill and lathe as well as the CNC mill and lathe.

Public Schools Foundation began working together to raise funds to support improvements in the Hastings High School Industrial Technology Lab. With the right equipment and technology coming into

# ..... and New Opportunities for Student Achievement

# Monster-Sized Machines Invade Hastings High School IT Lab!

*Special thanks to the donors whose contributions are responsible for the “invasion”!*

place, HHS students can more quickly become well qualified for manufacturing jobs that require a high degree of technical skill. Skilled craftsmen/craftswomen of this sort are in short supply in Nebraska right now.

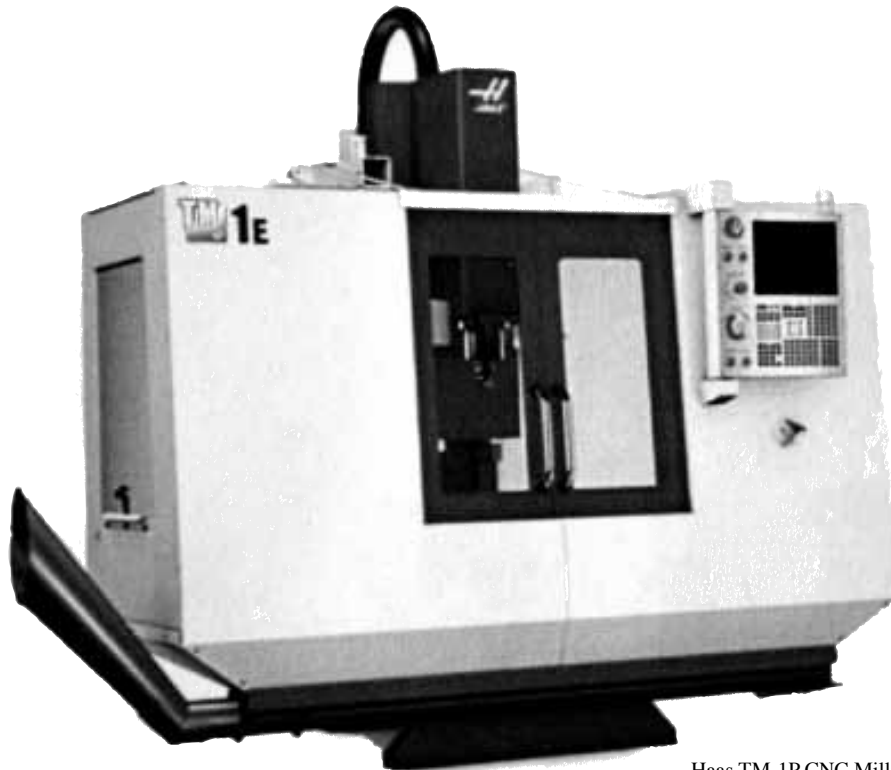
And so . . . drum roll . . . meet the new monster machines: One Haas TM-1P CNC Mill, three Sharp Knee Mills, and one CNC Torchmate Plasma Cutter are now installed in the IT Lab, thanks to major contributions from the manufacturing and business sectors in the Hastings area. Moreover, one more Haas TM-1P CNC Mill is scheduled to arrive in February and another is in the plans; in addition, one more Sharp Knee Mill and a number of other machines will be purchased to bring the IT lab fully up to date.

As of publication, \$142,450 in private funds had been raised to support this important upgrade with significant private donations anticipated in 2014, which will be used to cover the costs of the additional equipment envisioned.

Specifically the plan is to provide advanced instruction, in coordination with Central Community College (CCC), for students choosing the Manufacturing Pathway; establish high school and college dual-credits for specific advanced classes at the high school level; and offer a built-in, smooth transition for students to move from Hastings High School to CCC. These initiatives are certain to alleviate shortages in skilled production workers and directly impact economic growth in Hastings.



CNC Torchmate Plasma Cutter



Haas TM-1P CNC Mill



Conor Jordan works at a Sharp Knee Mill. Jared Mitchell is coming to assist.

The Hastings Public Schools has invested heavily in this project. HEDC, HAMA, and key financial institutions here in Hastings have pledged their full cooperation.

Along with private donations in support of the project, Hastings Public Schools and Central Community College will continue to make investments in the program until the project is complete.

Support for this initiative puts Hastings in league with Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island public schools which are also addressing critical employment needs in Nebraska’s manufacturing sector through both private and public donations. The HPS Foundation, which seeks to provide funding in support of projects that tax dollars are unable to support, is in full support of the private funding afforded this program.

This initiative may allow Hastings manufacturers to expand; other outcomes might include a burgeoning middle class as graduates of this program may well procure higher incomes. Right now our District is the 7th poorest in the state as measured by property tax value per student. This initiative may well improve the community’s ability to support the school system. In the final analysis, the economy in the Hastings community may improve.



**Staff Idea Grants continue to change the face of classrooms in the Hastings Public Schools. Innovative in nature, these grants provide the funds to carry out initiatives that would otherwise be impossible to achieve due to District funding restrictions.**

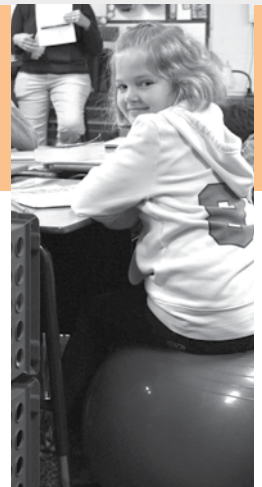
**Please Pay Attention! (Staff Idea Grants at Work . . .)**

How in the world do elementary teachers get wiggly children to pay attention? Rhonda Loetterle has one answer. Rhonda is a teacher at Hawthorne Elementary School and the recipient of a Staff Idea Grant, which provided funds for her to purchase ball chairs for her 4th-grade students. Mrs. Loetterle is very pleased with the results!

According to Rhonda, "Kinesthetic learners move their bodies in order to learn something new. These learners have a hard time sitting in a chair for an extended period of time. In the past some of these students have been labeled as hyperactive. Others have been called difficult to teach. . . . Research has shown that ninety-nine percent of all primary-grade-level students are kinesthetic learners, and their true learning style does not come into effect until their third-grade year when they begin reading text to learn." By the fourth grade, students are making definite choices as to whether they want ball chairs. Well over half of Rhonda's students have chosen to use the ball chairs. Rhonda sees the difference: "The ball chairs allow students constant movement without being disruptive in the classroom or a distraction to other students."



Tanner Baurer shows off his ball chair.



Connie Burt has some very positive things to say about her ball chair.



Betty Kort, Executive Director, HPS Foundation

**Balancing the Scales**

There are, of course, wealthy public school districts; but the majority of public school districts in the nation are routinely balancing resources against the educational needs of their student populations. The decisions of the Hastings Public Schools Board of Education in this regard are particularly wrenching: Hastings is the 7<sup>th</sup> poorest district in the state as measured by property value per student, and the demographic challenges within the district place it above the state average in every critical category.



received an outstanding achievement award. (See page 8.) Our teachers are obviously working very hard to overcome the obstacles presented by poverty, the special needs of students, and limited resources. The school system is, by every measure, a very well managed, efficient system. But education is in a rapid state of transition. Because of technology and the rate of knowledge expansion, our society is in a race to stay current against gigantic odds. To win the race (and it is critical that we do win), schools will over time demand more and more resources to keep ahead of the ever widening curve of knowledge and the explosion of 21st-century technological advances.

Two years ago the HPS Foundation Board of Directors, with the supporting wisdom of the Hastings Public Schools Board of Education, made the decision to turn the HPS Foundation into an organization that could serve as a bridge to alumni and the community in order to find and wisely use private funds to improve the learning environment in the Hastings Public Schools and, in the process, bring more balance to the need vs. resources battle. Thanks to the Hastings community and our alumni, we are beginning to succeed in providing some of those needed resources that tax dollars cannot accommodate. The evidence is well documented in this edition of the Foundation's *Newsletter*. Our *Newsletter* and our communications are not just rhetoric: *Our donors can, and do, make a difference in the educational opportunities afforded to students in the HPS system.* Gifts to the Foundation can help to establish the necessary balance by providing classroom resources when tax dollars are limited.

Bottom line: tax dollars will not meet every need; but, thankfully, our constituents appear to understand the need for a balance of public and private dollars. A case in point is the Manufacturing Pathway initiative. Private funds are making possible the upgrading of the Industrial Technology Lab at the High School to meet 21st-century standards. In this situation, the Hastings Public Schools system is not alone. Our sister cities, including Grand Island, Lincoln, Omaha and others, are all making use of private dollars to supplement tax dollars. This has not always been the situation. We have a tradition of expecting tax dollars to handle the educational needs of communities, but we are wading into a new and challenging world.

To be effective, we must balance the scales again and again: extra effort and efficiency balanced against limited tax dollars; tax dollars balanced by private dollars. The Hastings Public Schools Foundation serves an important role in helping to balance the scales, both through the messages it sends and the resources it provides, all thanks to our donor base. The focus of the Foundation must be to send a clear and concise message to our community and alumni that we need private dollars to help meet needs in HPS classrooms.

—Betty Kort



Laura Zabloudil discusses one of the Staff Idea Grant supplementary texts with Sydney Johnson. Far left, Codi Hinrichs is reading another of the texts.



## Staff Idea Grant Brings Great Plains to the Classroom

Recently, I visited Mrs. Zabloudil's 4<sup>th</sup>-grade classroom at Alcott Elementary School. I was there to observe the effectiveness of one of the Staff Idea Grants awarded for this school year.

My first observation is that Laura Zabloudil loves books, and it is easy to see that her love of books is contagious! At any rate, her students seem to have caught the "book-lovin' bug." Mrs. Zabloudil is reaping the benefits of a Staff Idea Grant that brought to her classroom four class sets of books about the Great Plains.

Mrs. Zabloudil can hardly contain her enthusiasm for these lovely books. Each book set takes a different in-depth approach to an aspect of Plains history. For example, one of the texts explores the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Mrs. Zabloudil points out that the classroom textbook includes a mere three pages of information about Lewis and Clark. The supplementary text provided by the Staff Idea Grant, on the other hand, tells the Lewis and Clark story in detail with wonderful illustrations, page after page.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of these supplementary texts, Mrs. Zabloudil took matters into her own hands and "assigned" me to interview two students. Shelby Howard and Breanna Groves were more than happy to comply. The interview went as follows:

**Mrs. Kort:** What book are we going to talk about?

**Shelby:** We just finished *Life in a Plains Camp*.

**Breanna** (chiming in): It is all about Native Americans (and she proceeded to name about eight different Plains Indian tribes.)

**Shelby:** They live in tipis made of buffalo skins. The women prepare the hides. They build the tipis, put them up and take them down when the tribe moves.

**Breanna:** The Native American tribes were sometimes nomadic, sometimes semi-nomadic and some settled in one place.



Shelby Howard and Breanna Groves explain the culture of Native Americans on the Great Plains.

The 4<sup>th</sup>-graders went on to explain how camp was set up, how the Native Americans acquired horses from the Spanish explorers, and how the braves were rewarded when stealing a horse from another tribe or simply catching a wild horse. The girls went on to talk about foods and were particularly taken with a berry-buffalo combination that Native Americans enjoyed.

Breanna talked about the roles of men vs. women in the tribes. "I wouldn't want to be a woman in the tribe . . . it wasn't fair. The men would hunt, bring in the food and then relax or play games while the women prepared the meat, cooked the meals and pretty much did all the work in the camp," she explained. Shelby added that she could not imagine how these women also managed to take care of their children too.

They also discussed vision quests, explaining that a young brave would go out on his own to "find his dream" which would inform his life goals. He could find his vision through *praying* and having *gratitude*.

I was charmed by the narrative the girls presented. They were well informed and excited about the books. Mrs. Zabloudil related that the books are used for both reading and social studies. Students enjoy silent reading, book circles with oral reading and class explorations of social studies issues. Students often illustrate their own versions of the material they read. Mrs. Zabloudil emphatically expressed just how important it is for students to have their own individual copies of the texts rather than having to share.

I came away from this visit thinking about the students' attitudes in Mrs. Zabloudil's 4<sup>th</sup>-grade classroom. The students' explanation of the Native American brave's sense of *gratitude* came back to me. These students handled their new books with great respect. They were proud of the books, and their teacher had made sure that they understood what a privilege it is to have extra individual texts in the classrooms. Their *gratitude* was obvious.

—Betty Kort, January 2014

*Executive Director Betty Kort makes it a practice to visit classrooms where Staff Idea Grants have been awarded. Her objective is to explain to HPSF constituents the value of the grants.*

# Special Thanks to Donors Supporting the SIG Program . . . . .



**Guest Writer:** Mary Seiler, math instructor at Hastings Middle School, agreed to provide a guest editorial for this edition of the *Hastings Public Schools Newsletter*. Mary submitted a Staff Idea Grant on behalf of the Hastings Middle School math teachers who work together tirelessly to improve the performance of their students.

## It Only Takes a Spark

You might say we are fired up about ALEKS at HMS! If you google “ALEKS” you will find this:

Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces is a Web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system. ALEKS uses adaptive questioning to quickly and accurately determine exactly what a student knows and doesn’t know in a course. ALEKS then instructs the student on the topics he or she is most ready to learn. As a student works through a course, ALEKS periodically reassesses the student to ensure that topics learned are also retained.

Last spring, a small group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders received the first math intervention using the ALEKS program when the company gave our building eight licenses to try the program. When our math PLC realized the potential of this intervention, we decided to apply for a \$1000 grant from the Foundation in order to fund more licenses for the 2013-2014 school year. Our idea was to compare the NeSA math scores of our selected students from spring 2013 to spring 2014 and use that data to inform future plans. Early in the school year, each grade level math team selected 16 students who did not meet the state standard last spring and came up with a plan to implement ALEKS for those students.



Students use the ALEKS website both in individual classrooms and in lab settings.

After Middle School Principal Dave Essink attended our training session with the ALEKS representative and saw the immediate possibilities to help a larger pool of students, he encouraged us to think of ways to get more students enrolled in the program without delay. He provided funds for

additional licenses, and one of the laptop carts we inherited from the High School became dedicated for ALEKS use.

Each grade level has different scheduling challenges and had to think outside the traditional class structure in order to make this new plan a reality. About 18 sixth-graders work during their ELO (this is our guided study time at the Middle School) two days a week with the support of a paraprofessional in the computer lab. Team-taught classes (the resource teacher teaches with the math teacher) on both 6<sup>th</sup>-grade teams work on ALEKS during their math class once every week. There are 16 seventh-graders who work with the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade math teachers during ELO two or three days per week. Team-taught math classes split into small groups to have either direct instruction with their math teacher or ALEKS with the resource teacher on alternating days. 8<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers have a similar plan during team-taught math class, but an additional eight students per semester have been assigned to take ALEKS as one of their exploratory classes and meet each day in the computer lab with a teacher.

Last year, eight students....at the moment, about 200 Middle School students are receiving a math intervention that we hope will set them up for future success. Many of the students are starting to take pride in their progress as they start to “fill in their pie” of math topics. Some begin to feel more confident in their regular math class as the additional individualized practice helps them to fill in the gaps in their math knowledge. There are also several students who are enrolled in ALEKS in order to accelerate their math skills beyond their current grade or course level.

We are so grateful to the Hastings Public Schools Foundation for providing us with the grant money through their Staff Idea Grant program; it was the spark we needed to get this fire going!

Thanks to the generosity of Dave and Marje Little (counselor at HMS), additional funds have been earmarked to continue to support and expand ALEKS.

### In the News . . .

In December Superintendent Craig Kautz announced that the Hastings Middle School had been awarded the Breakthrough Schools Award from Metlife and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

No other school in Nebraska has received this award, which has been given to only 30 middle schools in the nation over the last six years. The award is based on collaborative leadership, personalization, curriculum, instruction and assessment. In order to receive the award, a school must have at least 40% of its students qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunches (Hastings is at 57%). Accompanying the award is a \$5,000 grant to the Hastings Middle School.



**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:** The Hastings Public Schools Foundation is privileged to recognize alumni here in the Hastings area, throughout the country and around the globe. Here the Spotlight features 1992 graduate Todd Soderquist, whose travels as an engineer and business man take him around the world.



## Todd Soderquist is Passionate about Cars—Ford Cars

In this issue of the *Newsletter*, our Alumni Spotlight turns to Hastings native and alumnus of Hastings High School, Todd Soderquist, who has a passion for cars—Ford cars in particular. Todd works for the Ford Motor Company and is presently Chief Engineer for Global Fusion and Mondeo Programs, where he is responsible for leading a global team that plans, designs, develops and manufactures approximately one million cars per year. Specifically, Todd oversees business planning, design studio, engineering, testing, finance, manufacturing, marketing and quality for Ford mid-sized cars, specifically the Ford Fusion and Mondeo.



As manager of a global engineering/design team, Todd’s position takes him to Mexico, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey, China and Australia. His responsibilities in manufacturing include the United States, Mexico, China, Spain and Russia; and he oversees vehicle sales in almost every country.

Management is obviously the key word here, considering the extensive nature of Todd’s work. “If there is one thing I have learned leading a diverse team, it is to leverage the strengths of others,” Todd quipped. This and constant global travel are important aspects of his job.

Todd’s résumé hardly reflects his first job here in Hastings, de-tasseling in the cornfields. Later, in high school and his early college years, he held a summer job at T-L Irrigation in the Parts Department in Hastings. This was followed by summer internships at Donnelly Corporation, an automotive supplier in Holland, Michigan. For the past fifteen years, Todd has worked in product development for the Ford Motor Company with ever increasing responsibility. Accolades include recognition from the Society of Automotive Engineers for delivery of the Ford Escape and Escape Hybrid. SPEED Channel featured Todd leading the team that recreated the 2012 Mustang Boss 302.

Todd is the son of Hastings resident Doug and the late Julie Soderquist. His entire education K-12 was completed in the Hastings Public Schools, where his mother Julie was an elementary

music teacher. According to Todd, he “inherited a passion for the automobile from his father and left Nebraska for a small college on the shore of Michigan in an attempt to get closer to the Big 3 and a future career in the automotive business.” At Hope College Todd majored in physics and engineering and minored in mathematics. His ties with Hope College remain strong. Todd was on the Alumni Board for nearly six years and for the past 15 years has served on the Engineering Department Advisory Board. Though he completed his Master of Engineering degree at Cornell, which landed him interviews with auto companies, Todd credits Hope College for his strong engineering background. Todd was presented the Hope College Young Alumni Award in 2011.

While at Hope College, Todd met his future wife. They were graduated together in 1996 and married in 1997. Karen now practices dentistry in the community where they live. Their son Calvin is four years old.

Nebraska connections are still important to Todd. His father lives in Hastings. In addition, Todd is a minor partner in Motorsports Park Hastings (MPH) where he stores a few special vehicles he’s worked on at Ford over the years. Todd hosts an annual Ford/Mustang weekend at MPH and brings some of his Ford colleagues and enthusiasts to Hastings.

Todd attributes his successes at Ford to “a broader educational foundation and work ethic acquired while growing up in the Hastings Public Schools.” Todd adds that having a mother who taught elementary music at HPS gave him “an extra insight into the strong passion that is present within the teachers in this school system.” Todd adds that he “would come to work at Ford every-day even if they stopped paying me.” He loves what he does and rarely thinks of it as a “job.” He is sure that his mother felt the same way about teaching her young students. “I’m glad to see that the Hastings Public Schools Foundation is there to help support teachers with that passion.”

*As my own son starts Kindergarten this fall and we debate his schooling options, it makes me think back to the many great things I experienced in the Hastings Public Schools. I want to find a way to replicate the opportunities that I was granted, but also expand them. I think that my personal desire mirrors what the Hastings Public Schools Foundation is trying to accomplish for so many other parents’ children. —Todd Soderquist*

## Staff Idea Grants Bring Innovations to Classrooms . . . . .



**The Staff Idea Grant Program** is in its third year and growing. The Hastings Public Schools Foundation appreciates the many contributions made in support of these grants. Contributors included Five Points Bank, Pinnacle Bank, Bank of Doniphan, Hastings Philanthropic Yoga Society, and support from HPS employee donations, private donations and matching grants from the Kinman Oldfield Trust.



Background: Hastings High School choral group performs at USO Style Show in the HHS Auditorium, directed by Tim Canady. Center left inset, Artist in Residence Keri Chryst, vocalist and lead performer; center front, Artist in Residence Jeff Hoffman, guitarist; and front left at the piano, Artist in Residence, Philippe Petit.

### Staff Idea Grant Helps Bring “French Connection” to HPS

Let’s go “Rollin on the River” or to “Chicago” or maybe “Kalamazoo”! Inspirational! Amazing! Fabulous! These were some of the adjectives used to describe a week of multicultural music-making at Hastings High School, Hastings Middle School, and Hastings College. The HPS Foundation in collaboration with Hastings College and a variety of organizations and individuals in

the Hastings area supported the week-long Artist in Residence Program, which brought three artists, all with connections to France, to the Hastings community. The week culminated with a rousing Saturday night musical performance at the Hastings High School Auditorium.

Rick Matticks, Hastings High School and Middle School band instructor, was the recipient of a Staff Idea Grant called “The French Connection” through which he was able to bring Keri Chryst, Jeff Hoffman and Philippe Petit to Hastings to work with

students across a wide range of ages from Hastings Middle School students to Hastings College students. These students experienced an entire week of learning and preparation for performances. From choirs and jazz bands to linguistics classes and French language classes, the visiting artists kept busy. Their goal was to instill the idea that there is a connection between America and France—and especially between American jazz music and French music.

In addition, and singular in these artists’ approach, was a sense of professionalism. “The show must go on” and “you can do it if you try!”—regardless of how difficult the task might be. Keri, Jeff and Philippe were able to strike a stance that set them apart as professionals—confident of themselves as they performed solo or alongside the students. If you have been to an actual live performance on Broadway, you know the difference. These artists in residence reached deep into themselves to bring out an energy seldom seen on local amateur stages.

That students could sense this energy and professionalism close up, both in classes and as they performed on stage, is exciting. Students’ expectations of themselves were tested! This is inspirational; this is motivating; this is education at its finest!

Performances were held during the week at the Hastings High School and the Hastings Middle School Auditoriums for school assemblies, at the Kensington for assisted living residents (the







Standing next to the American flag, Rick Matticks makes introductions at a "French Connection" event.

Rick Matticks, Hastings Middle School and High School band director, is a member of the Kansas National Guard. His tours of duty have included Afganistan. Rick was chosen by the HPS Foundation Board of Governors to receive a Staff Idea Grant for "The French Connection."

artists stayed in this facility during their visit), at Lochland Country Club and at the Grand Island, Nebraska Veterans Administration Hospital. The culminating event was the *USO Style Show* community concert, featuring the solo work of the artists in residence led by Keri Chryst; performances by select individual students; student groups from the Middle School, High School and Hastings College; and even HPS Superintendent Craig Kautz on drums!

At the end of the concert, a group of current and retired teachers from Hastings Public Schools and Hastings College performed with the artists in a grand finale, improvising to "show their stuff"—and there was no doubt that Jim Kaiser on saxophone stole the spotlight! Wow!

The show ended with a long, standing ovation. The local newspaper streamed the concert live through [www.hastingstribune.com](http://www.hastingstribune.com) via the HT media news channel. As a result, the concert was viewed in at least four different countries.

The USO-style community concert, coming the week before Veterans Day, honored all veterans in the audience. Special recognition was accorded to local veteran Joe Schroder, who recently returned from service in Afganistan. A free-will offering after the event brought in over \$500 to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project.

Matticks, while stationed in Africa as a member of the Kansas National Guard, discovered the group of artists. The artists were working through the U.S. State Department to help African high school students learn about American jazz music. Matticks eventually managed to bring the group to Hastings for the benefit of his students. All three artists have strong connections to France: Petit is from France; Hoffman has lived there for about 20 years; and Chryst has made France her residence for the last ten years.

Soon Rick Matticks will begin preparing for the next artists in residence opportunity. According to Matticks, "These events take almost two years to plan and execute. Matticks hopes to involve more area schools and "make the Artist in Residence program bigger and better than ever." Rick asserts that "The Foundation played a large part in making this project possible. I am very excited about future Artist in Residence projects, considering the support we received for this year's Artist in Residence program."

Far left on page 10, Jeff Hoffman plays the guitar; page 11, top to bottom, another view of Jeff Hoffman's guitar; HHS tenor saxophone soloist Lindsey LaBrie surrounded by HHS students from left, Annie Grealish, bass guitar, Colin Spilinek, guitar, and far right, Kenzie Carson, vibraphone; two views of Keri Chryst performing; and bottom right, members of the Hastings Middle School jazz band, front row from left to right, Sam Johnson, trombone, Arich Frueling, alto sax, and Joe Keele, valve trombone.

Photographs of event on cover page and pages 10-11 courtesy of Christian Fruehling.



# Graduation—A Time to Honor Achievement . . . . .



Larry Rader has been one of the strongest HPSF Board advocates for HPSF scholarships. Here Mr. Rader proudly hands Jonah Schulz a Class of 1958 Alumni Scholarship.\* The scholarship is valued at \$1000.

In 2013, the number and size of scholarships available to Hastings High School graduates increased dramatically due primarily to the generosity of donors. Because the majority of the scholarships are endowed, they have the potential to be given out yearly in perpetuity.

## Honors Night Brings Rewards For Outstanding Achievement



Rich Portwood, Chair of the HPSF Board of Directors, is delighted to present a HPSF/Kinman Oldfield Scholarship to Taylor Williams.

Rich Portwood stands next to Sean Selko who received a \$4000 Johnson Scholarship\* (\$1000 each year for four years of post-secondary education). Next to Sean is Will Reimer who received a \$2500 Johnson Scholarship\*.

No one can match the enthusiasm of HPSF Board Scholarship Chairperson HoneyLou Bonar here presenting a \$1000 Johnson Scholarship\* to Daniel Rousseau.

Jon Bohlke stands with Cody Newlun, who has just received the first Ardyce Bohlke 4-year scholarship supported by the Kinman Oldfield Trust. After Ardyce's death in February, Ardyce's husband and sister made a determination that a major portion of Ardyce's memorial funds would be used to support a scholarship. Ardyce previously administered the Kinman Oldfield Family Trust; in appreciation for her work, the Kinman Oldfield Trust has been generous in support of the Ardyce Bohlke Scholarship.

Right, HPSF Executive Director Betty Kort explains the importance of recognizing donors of the fine scholarships offered by the Foundation. Standing to the left of Betty are Jon Bohlke, who is about to present the first Ardyce Bohlke scholarship\* to Cody Newlun. Next to Jon is Dr. Jessecia Meeske, who presented the Meeske-Pankratz Scholarship\* to Alisnaydis Tomasen-Vila. This scholarship is supported on a yearly basis by Dr. Meeske and her husband Dr. Todd Pankratz.



Mrs. Bonar presents the \$500 Dean F. Cecrle Memorial Scholarship to Lindsey Johnson.

### HPSF Hosts Reception Following Honors Awards Program

Following the Honors Program at Hastings High School held in May of 2013, the Hastings Public Schools Foundation hosted a reception for all students, parents, and guests of the event. Connie Halloran, chair of the HPSF Courtesy committee, and members of the committee arranged the reception and greeted guests.

\*The scholarship is supported by Kinman Oldfield Trust matching funds.

Photographs courtesy of Katherine Warrings.



The HPS Foundation continues to receive memorials and donations for scholarships. In 2013, scholarships awarded to students increased 265%. This is one more way the Hastings Public Schools Foundation is *Extending the Horizon of Opportunity!*

## Class of 2013 HPSF Scholarship Recipients



**Dalton Anderson - \$500**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Jacinda King - \$500**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Anthony Julian - \$500**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Ethan Dixon - \$1000**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support  
Central Community College  
Foundation Support



**Kayla Kluver - \$500**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Caitlin Kalvelage - \$1000**  
Class of 1958 Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Cassandra Dycus - \$500**  
Dr. Jong-Tseng and Lei-Hwa  
Wang Yen Legacy Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Maddison McConaughay - \$1000**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Matthew Karloff - \$1000**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Mattie Eddleman - \$1500**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support  
Hastings College Support



**Cody Newlun - \$4000**  
Ardyce Bohlke Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Emma Keele - \$1000**  
Jack Horsham Memorial  
Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Sierra Edmisten - \$1000**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
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**Will Reimer - \$2500**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support  
and Roy Bassett Scholarship - \$250  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Kelsey Kimminau - \$1000**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support  
And Central Community College  
Support



**Tuesday Frasier - \$1000**  
Johnson Family Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Meagan Reiners - \$500**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
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**Sean Selko - \$4000**  
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**Tania Hernandez - \$500**  
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**Tyler Ripperger - \$1000**  
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**Mason Spilnek - \$1000**  
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**Brenda Jaurigui - \$500**  
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Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Daniel Rousseau - \$1000**  
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Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Madeline Svoboda - \$1000**  
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Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Lindsey Johnson - \$500**  
Dean F. Cecrle Memorial  
Scholarship



**Elizabeth Schafer - \$1000**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support  
And Hastings College Support



**Alisnaydis Tomasen-Vila - \$1250**  
Meeske-Pankratz Opportunity  
Scholarship Supported by  
Kinman Oldfield Trust



**Sam Johnson - \$500**  
Charles and Margretha D. Uerling  
Family Memorial Scholarship



**Jonah Schulz - \$1000**  
Class of 1958 Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support



**Taylor Williams - \$250**  
HPS Foundation Scholarship  
Kinman Oldfield Trust Support

**Recognizing our Donors!** The list below represents donations to the the Hastings Public Schools Foundation from January 2013 through December 2013. The Hastings Public Schools Foundation Board of Directors extends heartfelt thanks for these donations.

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**The Manufacturing Pathway Initiative began in earnest in October of 2013. Over \$123,000 was raised by the end of December. These funds are entirely restricted to purchases of 21st century equipment to modernize the Industrial Manufacturing Lab located at Hastings High School. A double asterisk indicates donations to this initiative.**

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... and This is Why We Are Succeeding .....

**Memorial gifts are a wonderful way to recognize a loved one and provide support to the HPS Foundation. Gifts of this nature “keep on giving” as opportunities for the youth of the community and as endowed funds that continue to give in perpetuity. Because of major contributions, the Foundation is recognizing, in particular, the Ardyce Bohlke Scholarship. These memorials are marked with an asterisk.**

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\*Individual donations to the Ardyce Bohlke Memorial Scholarship.  
 (\*)A portion of the donation went to the Ardyce Bohlke Memorial Scholarship.  
 \*\*Donations to the Manufacturing Pathway Initiative.  
 (\*\*)A portion of the donation went to the Manufacturing Pathway Initiative.



When your name appears on the list below, YOU are "Extending the Horizon of Opportunity" for the youth in the Hastings Community. On their behalf, the Hastings Public Schools Foundation thanks you!

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Contryman Associates, In Kind Donation: Office support in the amount of \$199.00

Janelle Ernst in honor of Ron Pfeil, \$20.00

Steve and Karen Hohman, in memory of LaVerne Vermeer, \$20.00

Craig and Lesa Kautz in honor of the administrative staff and clerical support staff, \$181.00

Dennis and Marlene Mullen in honor of HoneyLou and Darrel Bonor on their wedding anniversary, \$50.00

## Searching for a unique gift for a special person in your life?

The answer may be to purchase a brick from the Hastings Public Schools Foundation!

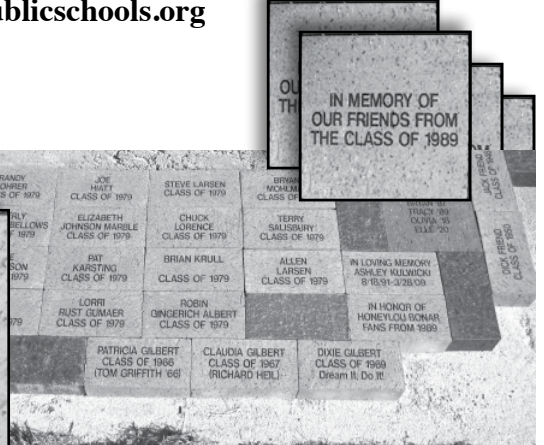
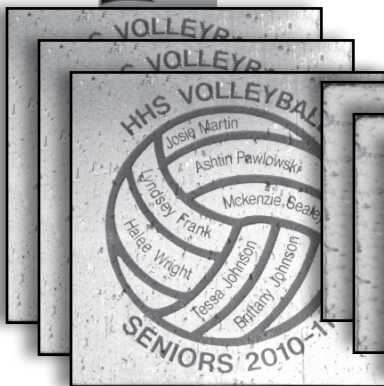
If you are looking for a reason, here are a few of possibilities—

- honor a student, teacher or parents
- memorialize a loved one
- create a lasting legacy of your time at HHS
- make a statement about your graduating class
- remember a classmate

*A percentage of the purchase price of bricks is tax deductible.*

Bricks are being laid to form a courtyard around the sign near the new science wing at Hastings High School. Bricks can be purchased anytime of the year and for any reason. With the purchase of a brick, you are contributing to the success of Hastings Public Schools Foundation programs which support classroom learning in the Hastings Public Schools.

Phone the HPS Foundation Office: 402-461-7564  
or visit our website: [www.hastingspublicschools.org](http://www.hastingspublicschools.org)





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**The Class of 1965 Tribute to Teachers**

The Class of 1965 has put together a remarkable publication of tributes to teachers they admired while enrolled in the Hastings Public Schools. Jean Dworak Cross, a member of the Class of 1965, edited the publication. In an effort to share these tributes, the *HPSF Newsletter* is spotlighting tributes to former HPS teachers. This issue features two student tributes to Hastings High School Biology Teacher Rodney Epp.

Lyn Royer Krabiell, Class of 1965: One memory stands out the most and that happened in my Junior year. I was in Mr. Epp's Biology class. We were in pretty much a college prep track, and one of our major projects was to design a research project that would run an entire semester. My project was a dietary experiment involving rats. I raised the rats and chose 3 from the same litter and of identical size and sex. One was a control rat, and the other 2 were placed on specific diets. They were weighed and measured daily and fed carefully controlled feed with plenty of water provided. The rats were supposed to show the effect of different diets on growth and development. About 3 weeks into my project, no changes were showing up. Upon closer examination, Mr. Epp and I discovered that a woman science teacher and her classes were feeding my rats and basically ruining the experiment. Mr. Epp spoke to the other teacher about the problem but it continued, so we moved the rats to the Chem lab. storage room. One of the rats escaped. We were unable to capture the critter but continued with the experiment with the remaining two, leaving feed and water out for the escapee. Long story short, though my experiment did not have the great outcome I had hoped for, I was able to show enough results to prove my theory; and we eventually recaptured the escaped rat, who showed definite examples of what poor diet does to a growing youngster. If Mr. Epp had not been the amazing teacher he was, I probably would have received a very poor grade for the semester; but because he worked with me, I learned how to overcome frustration and setbacks. . . . Hastings High continues in its dedication to preparing students for life. I will always love my time spent there.



Rodnew Epp, science teacher.

Susan Lamphiear, Class of 1965: Mr. Epp, with a grin and gleam in his eye, begged his biology students to do ourselves a favor and just devote 15 minutes each day to biology. I didn't always follow his advice, but I remember so well his pleas. He was giving us good advice about so many areas of life: "You have to keep up. Don't wait until the last minute. Devote regular time each day to things that are important. Learn something new each day." I also remember how excited he was about DNA research break throughs at that time in history when we were his students. I did get a few extra questions correct on a biology test after rhyming biology content in preparation for a test. . . to the tune of a Beatles song "All my Loving." "Arthropods are segmented, their legs are jo-ented. And they have a big dorsal heart. Close your eyes, you'll feel chitin...They're successful and delightin' . . . " If only I had spent 15 minutes a day, maybe I'd have composed a one-of-a-kind book of lyrics, "The Beatles sing Biology."

*Did you have a favorite teacher at HPS? Tell us about a teacher who made a difference in your life.*

***Planning a class reunion?***

*Let the HPS Foundation know the date and place.  
We'll place your information on our facebook page and our website.  
The Foundation is happy to provide information and support to class reunions.  
The Foundation can provide a web page for your class and help locate missing classmates.*

**Memberships** are essential to the ongoing work of the Hastings Public Schools Foundation. If you are not a member, we invite you to join. If you are now a member, you will receive a letter from the HPS Foundation encouraging you to renew your membership on a yearly basis.

### A Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors:

As president of the Hastings Public Schools Foundation, I would personally like to thank **YOU!!** *You*, who became a member of the HPS Foundation. *You*, who renewed and/or increased your giving level. *You*, who had an idea for helping children in our District. *You*, who made an impact through scholarship or grant gifting. *You*, who can see what motivation and encouragement can do for kids. Each of *you* has helped make the Hastings Public School Foundation grow. Please continue to help extend the opportunities that this Foundation is making for the children of the Hastings Public Schools. Again, thank **YOU** and let's not ever stop striving to expand the possibilities.

—Brent Gollner, Chair  
Hastings Public Schools Foundation



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*Cut or tear along this line, fill in the information, and send this form, along with your tax deductible membership contribution to the HPS Foundation.*

### BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HASTINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION!

I want to join in the effort to *extend the possible* so that all students in the Hastings Public Schools have the resources to reach their maximum potential.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Level

(Check your choice for kids!)

- \$2500 Merit Benefactor
- \$2000 Merit Sponsor
- \$1500 Benefactor
- \$1000 Sponsor
- \$500 Advocate
- \$250 Patron
- \$100 Sustaining member
- \$50 Member (family)
- Other (Amount \_\_\_\_\_)



#### Method of Payment:

- Check enclosed (Make checks payable to HPS Foundation)
- Pay Pal (Contact Foundation for Instructions)
- Visa     Mastercard     Discover     American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Please join at the highest level you can manage.*

**REMEMBER:** Your membership is 100% tax deductible.

*Enclose this page in an envelope and send to*

**HPS Foundation  
1924 West A Street  
Hastings, NE 68901**

*You can also join online at*  
**www.hastingspublicschools.org**  
(Click on Hastings Public Schools Foundation)

*Please join at the highest level you can manage.*



**Extending the Horizon of Opportunity:** *A new world awaits our children—  
a world we may not so much as recognize! Knowledge doubles at a faster and faster rate . . .  
technology is creating a new world of opportunity that is changing the way we live and work and play. Will  
our children be ready? Your donation in support of the HPS Foundation will help make certain that students  
have the knowledge to successfully meet tomorrow's challenges!*

## Hastings Public Schools Foundation



Rhonda Loetterle and her Hawthorne 4th-graders behind their ball chairs.

Hastings Public Schools Foundation  
1924 West A Street  
Hastings, NE 68901

ADDRESS

**Every Child Counts!  
Every Child is a Budding Citizen!  
Strong Schools Create Strong Citizens!  
Strong Citizens Create Strong Communities!  
Strong Communities Create a Strong, Resilient Nation!**