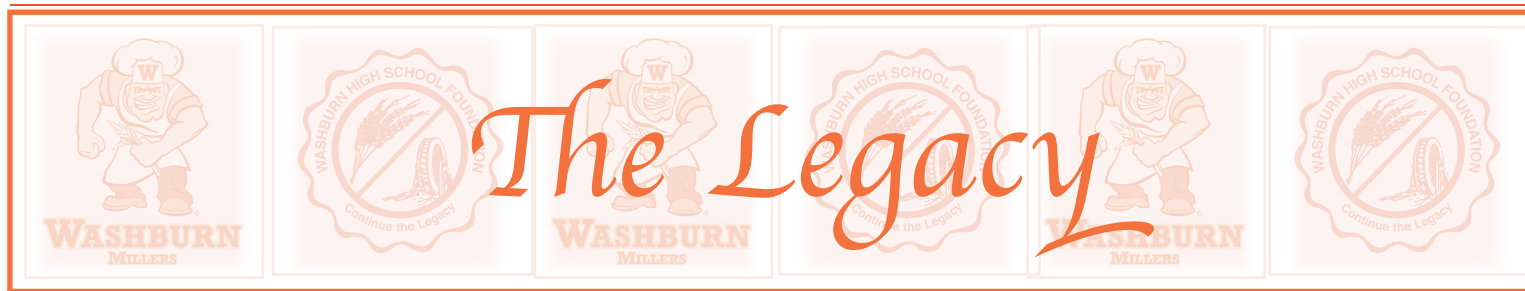




Washburn High School Foundation

FALL 2020

201 West 49th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419-2588



Dear Friends,

It occurred to me recently that it can be said with some certainty that none of us are experts in how to “be” during these uncertain times. None of us have any frame of reference for the various challenges that we are together facing, whether the COVID pandemic, political ideological polarity, or how to chart the best course going forward. That said, it is in the face of these great challenges that innovation and creativity can truly blossom and thrive.

This is certainly the case at Washburn, where Principal Dr. Emily Palmer and the Administrative Team, along with the awesome teachers, staff, coaches, and counselors, have implemented an impressive distance-learning program with admirable success. As we at the Washburn High School Foundation continue to work to advocate for and support Washburn and its students, we have been duly impressed by the efforts taken, the resilience shown, and the collective successes that we have witnessed as this new way of teaching, learning, and participating has unfolded this fall.

Examples include the tremendous achievement of getting Chromebooks and Wi-Fi hotspots into the hands of all students who needed them, video cameras to enable virtual field trips and tours, and teacher instructional support tools to aid in safety, health, and technology needs during the transition to a more rigorous distance-learning model. Various online teaching platforms have been tied in to traditional teacher-to-student communications in the process, with both teachers and students now having access to an ever-growing world of adjunctive instructional and resource tools. Black Box Theater was able to bring in a teacher assistant to lend support and help students create original online work.

Washburn’s student-athletes and athletics programs were made to pivot as well, and many were able to carve out some real competition and maintain their training in their chosen sport or athletic pursuit. In this newsletter you can read more about the TMT swimming team, the volleyball and football teams, the clay targets team, the girls’ tennis season, and the implementation of live-streaming games for the soccer program. Our Millers continue their legacy of success on the field (or pool, or range, or pitch, etc.) of competition!

Washburn’s continued success in academics is evidenced by the naming of five students as National Merit Semi-Finalists (only one other school in the state had more)! Additionally, nine more Millers received commendation for their performance.

Our School, our community, our nation, and our world will continue to face great challenges as we move forward. Our Washburn Millers are leading by example in terms of working together to find solutions, continuing to advocate for equality, and caring for and supporting each other in times of need. Thank you for your continued support as we collectively celebrate our Miller Pride!

Go Millers!

Mark Bachman, '91
President, Washburn High School Foundation

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ACADEMICS

Principal's Update

It's been an "interesting" fall at Washburn High School this year! I am beyond proud of how our teachers and staff have stepped up to the new Distance Learning format of teaching online while we all distance because of COVID. We are using Google Classroom for assignments and Google Meet for live online class meetings. It was a lot to learn in a short time, but we are rolling!

Thank you so much to the Foundation for your generous support! Almost all of the WHS budget goes to staffing, so your donations make a big difference. We purchased "Authorized IB World School" outdoor signs last spring, along with big blue WHS-logo tents for athletics & other events. This fall we were able to buy WHS face masks, t-shirts & lawn signs for all 450 freshmen to welcome them in August. Though we couldn't welcome them into the building, we made sure they feel like Millers!

As tough as 2020 has been, please know that our Millers are learning. School goes on. MPS has distributed Chromebook laptops to every student who needs one, so that no student has to even share with a sibling. We also have hotspots for students (they look like a cell phone) which create Wifi internet access where it's needed. In this way, we can ensure that all our students are logistically able to connect.

So in the midst of all the many emotions that come with leading in a time like this, I can tell you that my strongest emotions are love and pride for everyone at Washburn. There is no place I would rather be in the world.



Dr. Emily Palmer, Principal

Mini Grants

The changing times have certainly altered how everyone is approaching school, teaching, coaching, and learning in the Minneapolis Public Schools this fall. The Washburn High School Foundation Board is very excited to have been able to award all the Mini-Grant application requests for the fall 2020 cycle! Including:

- A special education teacher requested a Go-Pro video camera so that he can share virtual field trips to colleges and employment opportunities.
- The science department as a collective sought access to Gizmos, an online science platform for \$5,500.
- Live-streaming of soccer games reached hundreds of interested viewers.
- The Black Box Theater sought funding for a teacher assistant as students will be in virtual break-out rooms at times during class. The assistant, who ran an online theater camp at the Guthrie last summer, was able to coach students in creating online original work.
- The Spanish teachers wanted to access five different online platforms in order to engage students with more interactive and input-based learning.
- There were a number of requests for a few items basic to teaching remotely such as cameras, stand-up desks, and blue-light glasses. These will help teachers maintain good health - fewer headaches, back problems, and being able to sleep better!

National Merit Scholars

Washburn is pleased to announce that the Class of 2021 has five National Merit Semi-Finalists and another nine students were additionally commended for their performance. These 14 students represent the best performance Washburn has had as a school in at least 20 years and perhaps much longer. In fact, there was only one other school in the whole state who had more Semi-Finalists than Washburn had this year!

Congratulations to these fine students!

FINALISTS

Maggie Faust
Max Henschel
Austin Hunt
Etta Leugers
Kina Paguyo

COMMENDED

Olivia Bordon
Eli Feldman
Adele Fraser
Eleanor Friel
Sean McAneney
Anna Omdal
Andrew Peichel
Theo Prince
Reid Wooldridge



ARTS

This fall has brought changes to every aspect of the school, but one of the areas hardest hit is the arts. The arts teachers have risen to the challenge and strive to create community while they celebrate their students' talents.

Choir students practice during their virtual learning and record themselves singing their individual parts to create the whole. The Washburn Arts Council purchased special masks for instruments to prepare for the time when small groups can come together with band and orchestra teacher Tim Martin. The band and orchestra students are also learning how to use the online recording program called Soundtrap and each student will record one piece per quarter.

The band program and Mr. Martin also connected with the Minnesota Consortium of Black American Composers along with 50 other schools across the state to commission 12 composers to write pieces that reflect who they are and their times we are living in.

David Ritsema teaches guitar and said that teaching the students virtually is helping to teach them more independence as they submit videos of their skills. He said that distance learning is easier for kids with private workspaces and more difficult for students who share rooms or don't always have access to their instruments. Extra guitars were purchased this year by the Washburn Arts Council to help supply guitars to students.

In Rhea O'Shion's studio art and ceramics classes, students have an hour to meet in class and then an hour of independent work. They take photos of their art work and submit it online. The school provided art kits for students to take home. He is impressed with students' adaptability and ability to process all the technology and information. He misses the time to talk about life goals and struggles and ceramics is difficult without using the pottery wheels and tools at school.

Overall the teachers and students are resilient and are making beautiful music and art and the best out of a difficult situation.



Mr. Martin teaching virtual band.

ATHLETICS

Swimming

My name is Christine Kessens and I'm a Junior (at Washburn) on the girls' TMT swim team. TMT consists of 3 schools (South Tigers, Washburn Millers, and Roosevelt Teddies) and we all practice and compete together. Although we are extremely lucky and excited to have a season this year, it has taken some getting used to. COVID limited the pool space we were able to get, especially at the beginning of the season. Luckily, Phillip's Community Center, where we have practiced the past 2 years, opened their pool so we could practice! When we are at practice and meets, we social-distance in and out of the pool and wear masks when we are able. With the maximum number of swimmers being 24 at once (4 per lane), we need to split the team into 2 groups with different practice times, which is unfortunate. This has made it difficult to meet everybody. We have found ways to get to know each other such as having preseason zoom meetings and holding an outdoor pizza party. While practice has been semi-normal, meets have been very different. Out of our 7 dual meets, only one has been "in-person", where we got to go to the other team's pool and compete head-to-head. The others have been "virtual", where we compete at our own pools and combine scores. Since spectators aren't allowed to go to meets, we have been live-streaming them. Overall, COVID has changed a lot about sports. However, we are very happy to have a season in general and we have found ways to make it as normal as possible.



Photo from Kemmetmueller Photography, inc. photoshopped from individual photos due to covid restrictions.

Volleyball and Football

In September the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) approved football and volleyball to have shortened fall seasons in October and November. The volleyball team is the defending 2019 city conference champions and will play a twelve-game schedule this fall. The football team opened its six-game 2020 season with a 48-20 win at Bloomington Kennedy where a limited number of fans were allowed to attend the game. Fans are not allowed to attend sporting events hosted at Minneapolis Public School sites. Instead games are livestreamed so that families can watch from home.

Tennis

WHS Girls' Tennis had another very successful year, its second under Varsity Coach Ryan Hoag. After a recent record of over 60 girls participating on 3 different teams last year, the program was forced to temporarily abandoned its "no cut" policy (given the new COVID-19 protocols) and were only able to allow 40 girls to participate this year. The varsity team won the City Conference for the second year in a row, putting an exclamation point on the program's resurgence. The team earned the 6th seed in the state's toughest section and eventually lost to the defending state champion Edina in a hard-fought match. Most importantly, the team received the All-State Team Academic Award with a team GPA of 3.89! While the team will lose some great senior leadership, the core of the varsity team is very young. Couple this with a robust number of junior varsity players and the future is very bright!



Clay Targets

The WHS Clay Target Team was started in the spring of 2017 with only 10 student-athletes and was the first (and still only) team in the Minneapolis Public Schools. A mere three years later, there are 25 student-athletes hoping to participate in the spring season in what is the fastest-growing high school extracurricular activity in the nation. The sport is co-ed, adaptive, and has both a fall and spring league ("Trap" in the fall, "Skeet" in the spring) therefore able to accommodate a diverse group of student-athletes. Teams compete "virtually" each week by posting their individual and team scores from their clubs online via the league website. The sport has made an easier transition than others to COVID-19 protocols given it takes place outside and athletes are naturally socially distanced from one another in the field.

We Are Millers!

By: Mike Wedl (Class of '89)

To say the least, 2020 has been a whirlwind of chaos and despair. So many things have rocked all of us and in a time where we need each other, where we need to connect better, the pandemic has forced us to isolate.

We are lonely, but we are never alone. Why? Because, while we are separated, living different lives, and dealing with different circumstances; we are all bound by one extremely relevant thread - our high school.

Washburn has a long history of community involvement, stewardship and pride and many alumni have gone on to contribute to the world in incredibly substantial ways. From Kathryn Finney (author, entrepreneur, CEO, world's first blogger - the list is long) to Astronaut Bob Cabana, to founding LPGA member Patty Berg, to hip-hop artist Sean "Slug" Daley, music producer/musician Jimmy Jam, world-class journalist Michele Norris, Jeanne Phillips (aka "Dear Abby"), even actor Richard Carlson who has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Washburn grads have played key roles in our world.

Washburn helps to create great people because we understand the importance of community, we understand and foster giving back to the world we live in and have an understanding that we are better "together." We have pride in Washburn, OUR high school, and we have spirit (yes, we do!). So while we shelter in place, distance learn, and fight injustice it is imperative that we remember; we are not alone, we all share a common bond, we support each other, and while we look different, have different backgrounds, cultures, and beliefs, we are one - We Are MILLERS!

Class of 2020 Fundraiser

Last spring we did a small fundraising campaign to raise money to support the Class of 2020. In a short period of time, the WHS Foundation raised almost \$7,500 with your help. THANK YOU! This was combined with another almost \$5,000 from the senior party fees that parents donated back and the plant sale done by Parent Council to help fund the senior party. One of the first things we did was help fund yearbooks for all seniors who hadn't ordered one, but wanted one. Mr. McCreary took photos of each senior clad in cap and gown and gave each several copies. Then we had hoped to have a celebration during the summer to make up for the missed final quarter, prom, senior prank and graduation. Unfortunately, we weren't allowed to have such a celebration. We were able to buy blue and orange Nalgene water bottles with a design done by senior Augie Bent and a sticker with "W, Class of 2020" to add to the water bottle or a computer. Recently, the social workers have been helping us find Class of 2020 students who have been negatively affected by COVID-19. We have purchased 6 computers for students attending college, paid for some textbooks, a phone, basic needs and money towards a car to help a student get a job. These Washburn alumni were touched that the Miller community is still supporting them. Thank you for spreading Miller spirit to the Class of 2020.

Chromebooks and Wireless Hotspots

Add this one to the list of Herculean efforts to meet the challenges of Covid-19: since the pandemic began, WHS staff members have distributed over 500 laptops and 150 wireless hot spots to our Millers hunkered down learning at home. The team of teachers and support staff used survey forms, newsletters and shoe leather to identify students in need of a device, wireless internet or both.

To support the students, Mellissa Lee, part of WHS technology group supporting the students, estimates the group made 50 in-person visits (with the proper safety precautions) to deliver the devices or to assist students in setup and configuration. "Sometimes a student lives with a grandparent who may not be that savvy with technology," said Ms. Lee

When students need help with day-to-day issues, first teachers try to resolve them. More complex problems go to Melissa's group. There is also a district help line students can use.

What does an IT professional think of Washburn's efforts? "A company with 500 devices would usually have a professional IT manager with three or four trained technicians," said Paul Drangeid, Chief Technology Officer at Blue Net, a local IT services company. "Providing support to remote users like that is not easy. It is impressive what they have done," said Drangeid.

Thank you, donors!

The Washburn High School Foundation would like to thank the following people who made donations between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Because of you, we are able to continue our goal of making Washburn High School the top high school in Minneapolis with the best teachers, the best resources and the best-prepared students for the future. Thank you for your continuous support and donations!

Scholar: \$5,000 & More

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Honorarium/Memorial

In honor of
Aileen Berg Zeissler '50
In honor of Ann Marie Olson Riley
'87, Laurie Olson Wells '90,
Cooper Wells '18, Ellie Wells '21
In honor of Ben Anderson '20
In honor of Class of '76
In honor of Clifton E. French & in
memory of Joanne Cory French
In Honor of Dr. Anne Gearity
In honor of Earl Hacking,
Larry Hendrickson, John Simus
In honor of granddaughters
Isabel & Winnie Hoyt-Niemiec
In honor of Hi
In honor of Iris!
In honor of Isabel Hoyt-Niemiec
In honor of John P. Kennedy
In honor of John Sylvester
Scholarship Fund
In honor of Judith, Mike, Jack &
James Freeman
In honor of
Mathea (Thea) Greenberg and
in memory of
Matthew (Matt) Greenberg '55

In honor of Naomi Walthour!
In honor of Rolf Svendsen
In honor of Sam '18, Sophia '16,
Allegra '16 Abrams
In honor of Steve Stoll '61 and
Toni Stoll '59
In honor of Tanya Boettcher &
ALL seniors who's graduation
couldn't be triumphantly
displayed!
In honor of The Beck Family
In honor of the Class of '49's
70th Reunion
In honor of the Class of '64
In honor of the Class of '20
In honor of the Class of '20
and their amazing teachers,
administrators and support-
thank you!
In honor of Vicki Bunker
In honor of
Washburn Class of '60
In honor of WHS Class of '45
In memory of Alex Light Jacobs
In memory of
Benita Lander Hale '61
In memory of Bruce Kath
In memory of Cliff French
In memory of David Lafayette
In memory of
Deborah Morse-Kahn
In memory of
Dorothy Hesper Stevenson
In memory of Douglass Addison
and Steve Luers
In memory of Elaine Engelhard,
counseling office clerk
In memory of Frank Ario
In memory of Gary Stitz '58
In memory of George Wemier
In memory of Janet K Ankeny

In memory of
Jeffery Michael Christman,
Class of '80
In memory of Jim Erickson '64
In memory of John Sylvester
In memory of Jon Hirschhoff
In memory of Joyce Anderson
In memory of Judy Corlett &
Sharon Reardon '59
In memory of
Karen Moe Erickson '62
In memory of
Karin Larson Nordstrom '58
In memory of
Kristin Wright Loudon '59
In memory of Louise Everett King
and Bill Everett
In memory of
Marie Spong Mellgren '48
In memory of
Mary Goodoien Pearson '57
In memory of
Mary Sue Hanson Taylor
In memory of MaryLynn Boone
In memory of Parker Cramer '55
In memory of Pat Stubbs '61
In memory of Patty Dunne
In memory of Phillip Hansen '65
In memory of Robert Ireland
In memory of Sandy Pagal '59
In memory of Sophia Lewis
In memory of
Stephen Johnston '58
In memory of Sue Reid '76
In memory of Taunee Beekman
In memory of Tom Bennet '53
In memory of
Warren Wayne Larson '48
In memory of William Lydell,
former music teacher

