



Washburn High School Foundation

Spring 2021

201 West 49th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419-2588



Dear Friends,

As the 2020-2021 school year soon comes to a close, we are collectively exhaling and welcoming the easing of the Covid-19 restrictions that we have all been dealing with for over a year now. This year has been a year unlike any other for Washburn students, teachers, staff, and administrators, to be sure.

Here at the Washburn High School Foundation, we worked hard this year to creatively partner with the school to best meet the ever-changing unmet needs that the pandemic forced us all to wrestle with. In this issue of the Legacy Newsletter, you'll read about some of those means of support as well as many more shining examples of Miller success across the board.



In one example of the Washburn Community coming together to support each other, many staff pooled their mini-grant requests in order to purchase yearbooks for around 150 students who otherwise could not afford to purchase one. Needless to say, the memories of the past year will last a lifetime, and the yearbook will provide an important marker of this year in the lives of these future Miller alumni. The mini-grant program providing funds directly to teachers, coaches, and staff continues to be one of the most impactful means of support that the Foundation brings to Washburn.

With respect to community engagement, Miller Pride was on full display on the heels of the last year's civil unrest and social justice discussions. 11th-grader Nyagach Kueth created a GoFundMe fundraiser for the businesses on Lake Street and ended up raising an amazing \$82,000! These funds undoubtedly greatly helped many small business owners struggling with repairs and other negative impacts.

In a much-anticipated step toward "normalcy," Washburn seniors will be able to attend a Senior Prom and Senior Party and the Spring Play will go on... with an audience! Additionally, Washburn athletes have been able to forge ahead and display excellence in athletics and sportsmanship - check out the details inside.

Finally, we were very happy to be able to feature alumnus Mario Wimberly (WHS '95) in this issue and highlight his great work in helping to bring soccer, community engagement, and leadership skills to the youth of North Minneapolis via his new enterprise, PlayWithSol.com. Be sure to read more about how to support his efforts on page 8.

As always, your continued support of the Foundation is the only way that we are able to bring these mini-grant programs, scholarships, and administrative grants to Washburn. With the pandemic having taken a bite out of funding sources of many non-profits this past year, we encourage you to re-assess your support and consider a contribution to the Foundation at any level. You can do so securely online via WashburnConnections.org or simply mail a check payable to the Washburn High School Foundation. Let's continue to cheer for the Orange and Blue and celebrate Miller Pride!

Go Millers!

Mark Bachman, '91
President, Washburn High School Foundation

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Spring has sprung at Washburn!

Students are returning to school in person on April 12th after over a year away from the building due to the COVID pandemic. Each family was offered a choice of returning in person or staying in distance learning for quarter 4. We are pleased to share that our whole staff was offered vaccination appointments prior, and the district provided new sound & video equipment so that teachers can reach the students in the classroom and the students at home at the same time! It's a whole new frontier!

We are so excited to be making plans for prom, senior party and graduation in-person - all things that we didn't get to have last year as the pandemic hit us. We'll even have the IB Art Show and the Spring Play with audiences!

Our 9-year-old turf field had to be snowplowed this year for the first time ever - and it didn't go well. But we were able to have repairs made by the first week of April thanks to good weather in March. Now our track team - which didn't get to have a season at all last year - is out in full force with 185 athletes. Go Millers!

The Foundation was very generous with us this year as we navigated the pandemic. In addition to the usual \$500 mini-grants for teachers, we used \$10,000 of our administrative grant for supplies for teachers as well - mostly new software. Our teachers have learned so many cool new ways to teach online. ("Necessity is the mother of invention" was never more true for us than this year!)

Thank you to our alumni for ALL you do to support WHS students and staff! We appreciate your support so much, and we look forward to welcoming you to the alumni tent in the fall for what will surely be the best Homecoming game ever!

Emily



Spring Mini-grants

While the pandemic has been devastating world-wide, we continue to be impressed with the innovative approaches of the Washburn staff and coaches to maintain and foster growth in all students. The Foundation is thankful for all of your contributions to make mini-grant awards possible. From sports, to music, math, world languages, English and theater, the requests were creative, thoughtful, and heart-felt as distance learning has continued for over a year.

- The first item to note is that a myriad of staff pooled their resources to purchase 150 yearbooks for seniors who cannot afford to buy them. They will be filled with memories of a very challenging year in high school.
- The language department will receive eight E-lit APP teacher plans. Teachers will have the ability to assign readings, track student progress, and create reading assignments. They will have the option to use novels, informational texts and short stories in both Spanish and French. The impact will reach all students at the novice and intermediate levels.
- Boys' tennis will be receiving funds to purchase shorts for all players at no cost to the students. This is a no-cut team, making it accessible to all who want to play.
- Girls' tennis (after winning the city championship in 2019 and 2020) will be buying banners for recruitment and pride. Interest has grown each year by 60 plus girls.
- Soccer continues to thrive and the Foundation is awarding funds for new shirts.
- The Trap Shooting Team will be getting a tent (for cover as it is all outdoors) and new reflective vests.
- Theater will employ a staff member to help students create a video/film piece from their verbal and written reflections.
- Science has requested another stand up desk, iPads and iPad pencils plus Alka-Seltzer™ tablets so students can do experiments at home!
- Music is building a classroom library of books with a welcoming tone. Bios of Black, Indigenous, and Latinx musicians will be included as well as books about their cultures. There will be books about music and the brain, and a guitar repair guide. See Photos on right.
- In math, a teacher has struggled with wired headphones and will be receiving the AirPods Pro which will allow her to teach from her stand up desk and also walk the classroom.
- A co-teacher in a "flipped classroom" will be more effective with an iPad, iPad pencil and a subscription to Explain Everything App.



"I just wanted to take a minute and thank the Foundation for giving us the opportunity to write grants to allow us to keep impacting students to the best of our ability."

"I feel very fortunate to have such a thing at our school where we have support that allows us to think big of how we can keep making an impact!"

"Washburn is a great place. I am proud of the level of academics. I am proud to work there and I am very grateful to have such a great Foundation."

Mike Gulliford, math teacher

The total dollar amount awarded this spring was \$16,000. Your support is critical to the success of our efforts to encourage and reward creativity and innovation at Washburn. It's clear that the expression we "bleed orange and blue" is still true. A heartfelt thank you!

Athletics

WHS Boys and Girls Alpine Skiing

- The combined WHS Boys and Girls Alpine Ski team had over 50 skiers this season, down slightly from previous years due to COVID.
- Both teams are very young with bright futures. The boys took 3rd in Sections and the Girls took 2nd, missing State by only 1 point!
- Two Millers qualified for State as individuals: Andreas Drekonja (10th grade) and Gabby Harritt (9th grade). They finished 40th and 37th in State, respectively.



Nordic Ski Team

The 2020-2021 Washburn Nordic Ski Team was like none other. Growing to 88 student-athletes with over 40 new skiers, the program saw improved performance at all levels: varsity, JV, and novice.

During conference races, no group dominated like the JV girls and Novice boys/girls who won every race and had the top individual in every race. The JV boys also found themselves on the podium at every race. At conference championships, the varsity boys, led by Nico Alexander's third place finish, came in second, while the varsity girls repeated as conference champs with Etta Leugers taking 1st place, according to Washburn Nordic team leader Jacob Polland.

At the section championships the boys placed 6 skiers in the top 22, finishing in third place. Nico Alexander and Derek Waddick were our top skiers finishing 8th and 9th, respectively, and qualifying for the state meet. The girls followed that up by placing four skiers in the top ten and finished second, qualifying for the state meet for the first time in 26 years. In the top 10 we had: Etta Leugers 3rd, Eleanor Wheeler 8th, Elaina Griffiths 9th, and Johanna Perry 10th.

At state, the girls had something to prove having gone all season without being ranked in the top 10. In the end the girls' team finished an amazing 5th place! Individual places: Etta Leugers 14th, Eleanor Wheeler 50th, Elaina Griffiths 55th, Johanna Perry 58th, Nora Bartlett 116th, Laura Pacala 127th, and Solveig Kleven 138th. After solid classic races both boys looked for strong skate races to move up and they did with Nico Alexander in 25th and Derek Waddick in 67th. Earning All-State honors this year were Etta Leugers and Nico Alexander.

Athletics



Athena Award – Megan Twomey

Megan Twomey has been named the 2021 Athena Award Winner for Washburn High School. The Athena Award honors one outstanding senior female student-athlete at every high school in Minnesota. Over the past four years Megan has excelled in four sports: tennis, basketball, softball and track & field. She has earned nine varsity letters, and she was captain of the tennis team. With her contagious positive attitude and her great work ethic, Megan shows her leadership on and off the court as she is a member of the National Honor Society and she is on the yearbook leadership team. Congratulations Megan!

National Signing Day 2021

Congratulations to our 11 athletes who have committed to play at the next level! - Lillian Selberg - Gustavus (Soccer) - Ben Schlieman - Western Illinois University (Soccer) - Tucker Hanson - North Central College, IL (Lacrosse) - Wes Nelson - Labette Community College (Baseball) - John Lyman - Labette Community College (Baseball) - Jake Gueldner - St. Olaf College (Baseball) - Nyle Dickel - South Dakota (Football) - Andrew Gotziaman - Gustavus Adolphus College (Football & Baseball) - Will Byrd - Gustavus Adolphus College (Football) - Evan Knofczynski - Augsburg College (Football) - Vincent Gladbach - Augsburg College (football & wrestling)



Arts and Celebrations

The Show Must Go On.

After 13 months with no theater at Washburn High School, there will finally be a production this spring! The play, **After Juliet**, by Sharman Macdonald, takes place a few weeks after Romeo and Juliet have died. The Montagues and Capulets are at odds again and must figure out how to co-exist.

Auditions were held at the end of March and rehearsals started on April 12th. The cast is rehearsing in the theater with masks. A live production is planned for May 20th-22nd, with advance ticket sales, so the audience can be spaced out in the auditorium. The students, especially seniors, are so excited to be back in the theater working on a show!



Prom and Senior Party

The senior parents are working hard to offer some end of high school activities for the Class of 2021, which has missed out on so many celebrations this year. Both prom and the senior party will be held outside to keep kids safe and comply with state guidelines. After exploring a lot of venue options, the parents landed on the Minneapolis Institute of Art for prom and the Washburn Commons, outside the school, for the senior party. With support from the Washburn Foundation, ticket prices will be lower than usual, so the events will be accessible for everyone. Prom will include a dance, of course, and food. The senior party will have a DJ and a dance floor, as well as food trucks, lawn games and an inflatable gaga pit. These fun events should be a great celebration of our Class of 2021!



One Act Play Takes First in 6AA Region Sub-sections

Washburn's competition one act play came in first place at the 6AA region sub-sections earlier this year. Because the plays had to be recorded and sent in, sisters Mary Bair (junior) and Catie Bair (freshman) represented Washburn with a two woman play entitled, **'Night Mother**. Congratulations to Mr. Lynn and the cast of **'Night Mother!**

Poetry Out Loud

Ebba Nordstrom, a senior, took 2nd place in the state Poetry Out Loud competition on March 11, 2021! Her performance was terrific and showed months of hard work. She will receive a cash prize and a trophy. The school will also receive a check for \$200 to spend on enhancing poetry and Poetry Out Loud in our school. Washburn's Yahanna Mackbee won in 2020, and Grace Ulferts captured third in 2019 in the state Minnesota State Poetry Out Loud contest. State finalists three years in a row for Washburn! Whoo-hoo!!!!



Other News

Washburn Cares

Washburn Cares is a committee of staff, parents, community members and students whose mission is to support our homeless and highly mobile (HHM) students. We are part of the Washburn Parent Group and work closely with the school social workers. Our main fundraiser is a winter greens and poinsettia sale in November. Throughout the year we collect gift cards and donations to purchase gift cards. The gift cards are given to our HHM students by the social workers to help them cover basic needs. We also provide Thanksgiving meals, snacks, winter gear, feminine hygiene products, and personal care products. This school year we have given out \$5,600 in gift cards, winter gear and bags of toiletry items and winter gear. We did free senior photos for 7 students and subsidized yearbooks for our HHM students. The Foundation generously supported us with a \$3,000 grant this year to help during these difficult times.



Washburn Junior, Nyagach Kueth, raised \$82,000 for local businesses on Lake Street

Question: What led you to start a **GoFundMe** fundraiser for the businesses on Lake Street? What was the total amount you raised? What did you learn from that experience?

Nyagach: I joined a group called Minnesota Teen Activists and with the riots, I realized that stores on Lake Street were being destroyed. I was worried about all the small businesses in that area, businesses that me and my own mother go to. These are the places that the people in my community commute to every single day. Some of the stores had lost some, if not all their inventory. So, I started getting the word out that the businesses were really struggling. I wanted to raise money for them because, before the riots started, I knew that they were struggling financially due to the pandemic. That's when I started the **GoFundMe**, expecting to raise like \$500. However, it blew up like crazy and there were tons of donations. There were even donations from other countries like New Zealand and Germany. We ended up raising \$82,000. I learned that when something is arranged by a kid, people tend to be skeptical. But, my idea to create the GoFundMe page was important because it helped a lot of people who really needed it. It's important to think about your community. People say that we destroyed our own city, but in reality our community was brought closer together.

whzzzBZZZwhzzz...

Walking into room 120D on most afternoons you might think that mosquito season has already started, and you wouldn't be completely wrong, though our mosquitoes are electromechanical and don't usually bite.

This is Washburn's second year of drone racing. Students race small drones called "tiny whoops" in the Youth Drone Sports Championships (YDSC: <https://www.youthdronesports.org/>) league. These whoops have a small camera mounted that sends video in real time to goggles worn by pilots as they fly. This gives the pilots a First-Person-View (FPV).

In addition to the racing team, Washburn has also added a one-semester drone course and an after-school club. The course is designed to prepare students to pass the FAA Remote Pilot exam, and also includes coding autonomous flight and photo/videography. Upon passing the exam, students become commercial drone operators and can be legally paid for any drone work they do, like photo/videography, and inspection. So far, at least one of our newly minted pilots got a paying gig after the course.

Quads Qclub is our non-competitive drone club that focuses on photo/videography. Students in this club recorded several soccer and football games this past fall, including some livestreaming. One clip made it into MaxPreps top 5 videos of the week! (<https://twitter.com/maxpreps/status/1331309921950785536?s=10>)

In addition to support from the Washburn Foundation (thanks!), Miller Mart, and Minneanalytics, Washburn alum Ethan Oscarson (2012) facilitated a donation of two large industrial drones by his employer Sentera, a local agricultural drone company. These drones (DJI Matrice 100) are designed to be modified and we are looking forward to using them for projects in our engineering courses.

For further information, contact Peter Grul (peter.grul@mpls.k12.mn.us).

WHS Alum Mario Wimberly Launches Soccer Program in North Minneapolis

My love of soccer and my interest in business were the two reasons I chose to attend Washburn High School. As a 4 year Letterman and a Minnesota All-State Player, Washburn soccer gave me the opportunity to develop, compete and connect through the beautiful game. Academically, I was challenged and drawn to my international business courses. In those classes, I learned how the beautiful game influenced the world. I knew that my two passions of soccer and business would have to be a part of my future. The confidence I gained at Washburn reinforced my dream to play Division 1 soccer at Howard University in Washington, DC.

After a phenomenal senior year, I joined Howard University Men's Soccer Team.

While it was a dream realized for me; my time in the District of Columbia and my studies at Howard University would reveal to me how severe the socio-economic disparities were, especially in sport, especially in soccer.

My passion has always been soccer, but as a father, my desire for teaching the game developed. Many licenses and certifications later, business and soccer are my life's work. For the past 2 years, I've been diligently connecting soccer/futsal to the kids of North Minneapolis. This year, I'm launching PlayWithSol.com - Sol Of The Cities Community Futsal League.

Our mission is to bridge the gap between underserved communities in access to sport, health and wellness, housing, and employment. Set in the heart of North Minneapolis, every weekend for 6 weeks, North Commons Park will be transformed into a lively, multifaceted community experience providing community service, healthy meals, health screening and vaccine administration, employment opportunities, talented coaches/mentors, youth employment, small business exposure and housing support in a safe and positive environment.

This community needs your sponsorship and support. Every part of this experience from weekly meals to uniforms will be offered at no monetary cost; however, each player will complete 1 hour of community service weekly.

Go Millers!

of Mario Wimberly, WHS '95

To get involved, email: Support@TCSolFutsal.com

