

Mary R. Stauffer Foundation

2023 Annual Report

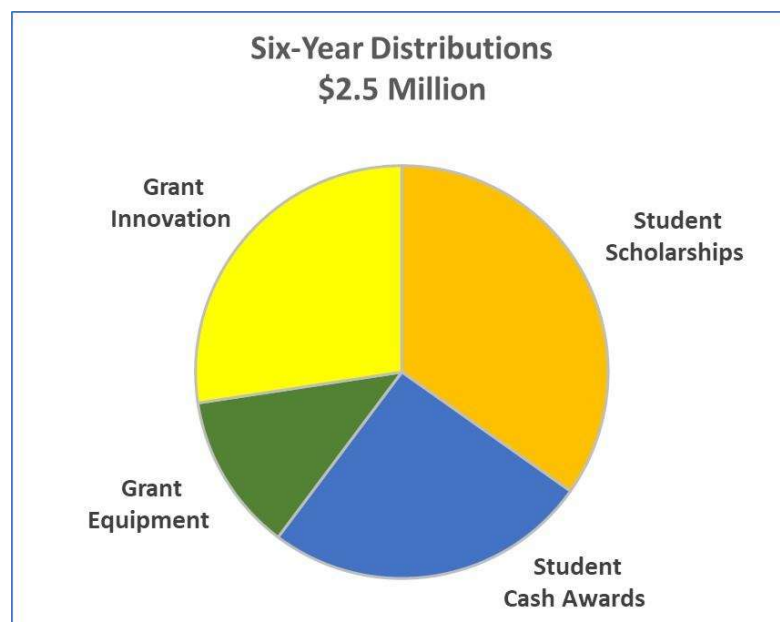
Contents

	Page
Letter from CEO	1
Foundation History	2
Financials	3
Distributions	5
Grants	5
Student Awards	12

VISION

June 2022

“The Mary R. Stauffer Foundation is an inspiration to give back to their community by facilitating educational opportunities that empower educators and encourage students to achieve their dreams through lifelong learning.”



MISSION

The Mary R Stauffer Foundation mission is to increase the intellectual, social and health assets of Downey by motivating students and teachers to reach their scholastic, athletic, and artistic potential.



Dr. Mary R. Stauffer August 26, 1917 – February 11, 2021 (2017 her 100th Birthday Celebration at Columbia Memorial Space Center)

BOARD

Family

- Janet Suzuki, Chairperson
John Stauffer
Dawn Martens
Katherine Rieth
James Stauffer

Community

- Phil Davis
John Kennedy

OFFICERS

- Janet Suzuki, CEO
Nancy Swenson, COO
John Stauffer, CFO
Regina Donahue, Secretary

ADVISORS

- Dorothy Knight
Flor Alvarez
Erin Hanohana

September 30, 2024

Dear Stakeholders,

As we continued to celebrate the Foundation's 30th Anniversary in fiscal 2023, we set out to shape the management of the Foundation to continue into perpetuity. To this purpose the board set the CEO goal of developing a dashboard for the board to see in a glance the status of the programs and finances. The first financial review by a third-party CPA was completed with no findings and a few recommendations that have been implemented, And a new chapter of public fundraising has opened up with legal advice that the foundation is not restricted by being a private operational nonprofit.

The committee that had focused on measuring the Community College Scholarships transitioned into a focus to measure the Foundation activities. The results from this committee are progressing and some ideas of measurement have been included in the FY2023 Annual Report. Their work continues with the additional challenge of measuring the performance of the CEO.

Separately, to support a community information fair about organizations in Downey hosted at Rio Hondo Elementary School, the Foundation created a tri-fold brochure concisely describing both the history and current programs that the Foundation funds. It organizes the programs into student awards/scholarships and grants. It became apparent that a document like this also can help fund raising efforts by inspiring potential donors to support the Foundation.

The managing board structure continued to be stable with active board members and officers. Nancy Swenson, who this year has also been serving as President of the DUSD Board, has been pivotal in maintaining operations and key relationships with DUSD staff. As the community memory of the founder fades with time, it is the hope of the family that the community will be able to provide the leadership to continue the work of the Foundation.

I have been honored to serve as the CEO of this foundation for the past five years, look forward to transferring the leadership to local talent, and to proudly continue to work together toward a continuing legacy of Mary R. Stauffer as an inspiration to give back to one's community.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Janet Suzuki

Janet Suzuki, CEO, Board Chairperson



Pop-up banner displayed at Foundation events

FOUNDER’S HONORS

1983 Ohio State Medical School Alumni Achievement Award, 1997 Distinguished Service Award from Capital University, 1998 California State “Woman of the Year” from Senator Betty Karnette, 2007 a Columbia Memoria Space Center founding director, 2007 Delta Kappa Gamma Chi State Distinguished Public Service Award, 2010 California State “Woman of the Year” from Senator Hector De La Torre, 2012 Downey High School Hall of Fame Honoree

Born August 26, 1917, Mary Ruth Schuh early showed a passion for education by graduating top in her class at high school, college, and medical school. In 1953, after 10 years of marriage, Dr. Mary R. Stauffer and her husband Dr. Floyd (Dal) Stauffer chose to raise their family in Downey, California, following his completion of service in the Navy. Here, she opened her own OB-GYN practice. In 1954, Dr. Mary joined the Downey Community Hospital Medical Staff and later in 1972 was chosen Chief of Staff.

Dr. Mary Stauffer was one of the first obstetricians to offer expecting mothers an educational program. In 1976, after delivering babies for 23 years in Downey, she transitioned into general practice. Her desire to give back to the community was shown in 1987, when she was the first physician to qualify as a member of the Founders Gallery of Downey Community Hospital with a donation of \$100,000.

In 1993 Dr. Mary’s passion for education and philanthropy came together as the Mary R. Stauffer Foundation, a private educational foundation personally funded to give back to Downey, the community where she enjoyed a successful medical practice and her children graduated from the public schools. Her five children (Dorothy, James, Judi, Janet, John) and spouses have helped along the way with the Foundation’s formation.

**May 24, 1993 Incorporated
December 13, 1993 501 (3)c
November 24, 1998 operating**

June 30, 1997, at nearly 80, Dr. Mary retired from her 44-year medical practice in Downey. In 2014, the Downey Unified School District (DUSD) honored her contribution to DUSD by renaming West Middle School to Mary R Stauffer Middle School.

Each year the foundation touches the lives of over 900 students with merit awards based on GPA and scholarships. Additionally, every student in the school district is touched from the grants. Annually, the Foundation invites teachers to propose grants for innovative projects such as a Cooking Cart with lessons in math and science. The Foundation has helped fund initial startup costs of programs that later were adopted district-wide; including Project Lead the Way (now called STEAM), Robotics Clubs, and Character Counts. During the pandemic, some programs were suspended. In 2023 the mobile Autry Museum coming to 3rd to 5th grade classes resumed.

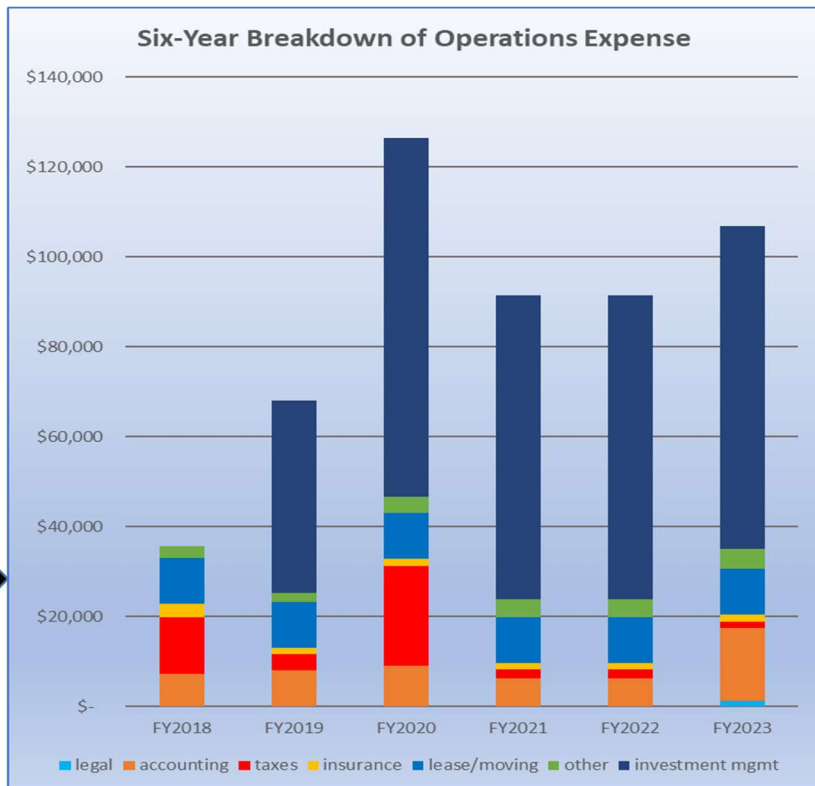
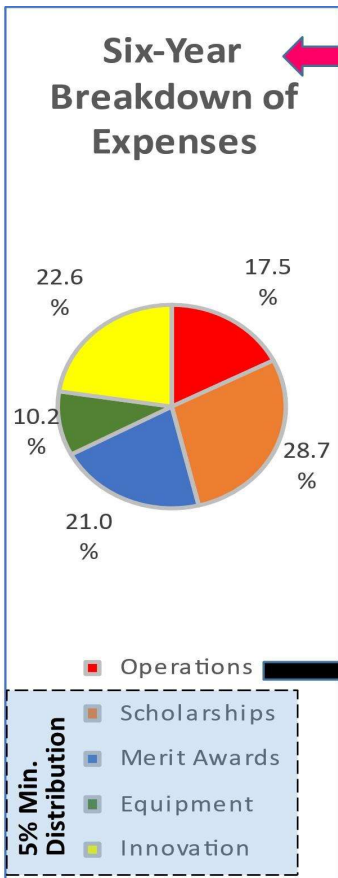
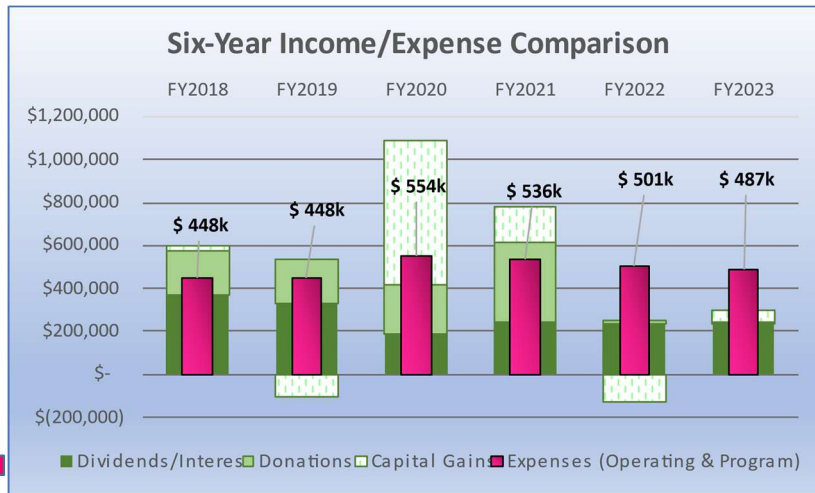
2023 marked the 30th Year Anniversary of the Mary R. Stauffer Foundation with \$7.9 million cumulative in educational grants and scholarships to the DUSD educators and students. Dr. Mary had hoped her foundation could continue in perpetuity and after her passing February 11, 2021, at the age of 103, her foundation is prepared to continue her legacy well into the future and motivate Downey students and teachers to reach their potential.



After 30 years as a non-profit, the Mary R. Stauffer Foundation assets of about \$8.5 million are managed as an endowment.

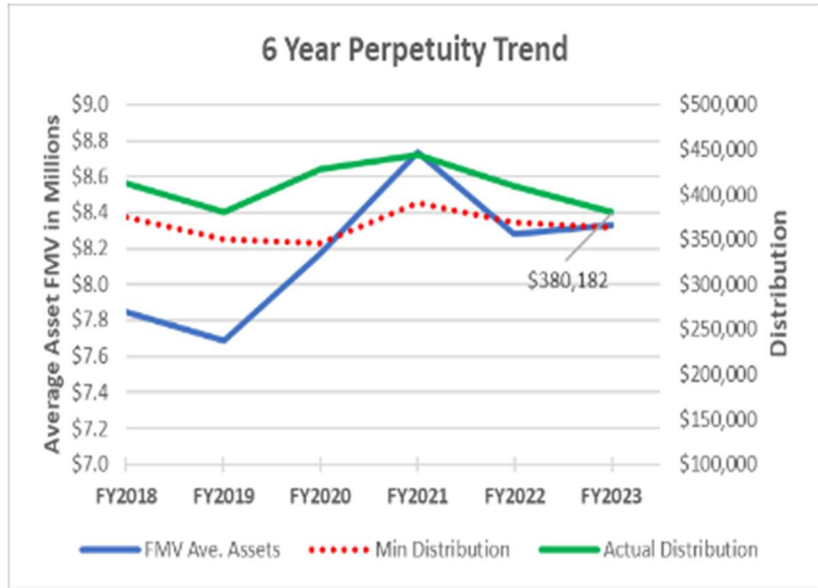
Six-Year Income/Expense Comparison:

- Setting up two investment managers by liquidating assets in FY2020 caused a capital gain surge and resulting tax liability that caused overpayment of estimated taxes which paid the taxes for the next 3 years. FY2024 taxes will normalize.
- FY2021 represents the first full year of Investment Manager expenses, which exceed all other operating expenses.
- The last donation by the founder’s estate was in FY2021.

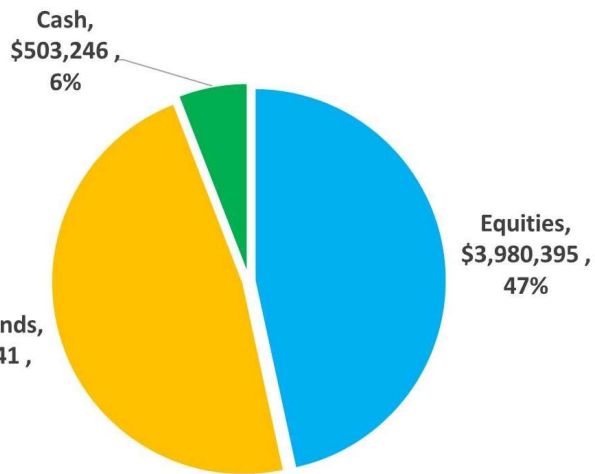


To assure perpetuity, in FY2023 the Foundation:

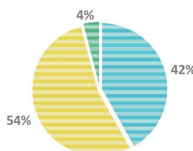
1. Obtained legal advice and found that a private operating corporation can in fact conduct public fundraising.
2. Increased oversight of portfolio managers with quarterly meetings. Within the same IPS, the asset distribution shifted slightly to more risky equities while increasing cash to avoid the need for liquidation of equities in a down market.
3. Monitored distributions to limit the amount to the 5% minimum required for a non-profit. Recognizing 50% of operating costs (including the investment managers) for the first time, reduced the distribution to the educational programs.



**April 2024 Assets
\$8.5 Million**



**April 2023 Assets
\$8.4 Million**



Mary R. Stauffer Foundation Balance Sheet – Tax Basis April 30, 2024

Prepared by Jesse Gallardo, CPA of J&E Associates, an Accountancy Corporation 10927 Downey Ave Ste A, Downey, CA 90241.

Financial Review: A third party reviewed the financial records against the procedures. There were no findings. Their few recommendations were implemented.

ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Davidson account 8331	\$ 2,270.90
Davidson account 6622	6,747.51
Davidson account 2673	2,905.80
Davidson account 4800	4,675.86
Davidson account 9649	111,293.94
Davidson account 6329	25,696.69
Davidson account 3931	8,896.04
Downey Federal Credit Union	90,212.79
Morgan Stanley account 046	55,239.03
Net Unsettled Purchases/Sale	(3,246.49)
Morgan Stanley:Mutual Funds Cash	198,554.00
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	503,246.07
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT -AT COST	
Fixed assets	1,346.70
Accum. Depreciation	(970.00)
TOTAL PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	376.70
INVESTMENTS -AT COST	
Davidson investment account 6329	1,723,760.84
Davidson investment account 6622	365,592.11
Davidson investment account 4800	493,038.13
Davidson investment account 9649	226,205.25
Davidson investment account 8331	508,996.77
Davidson investment account 2673	151,767.64
Davidson investment account 3931	259,251.89
Morgan Stanley	3,433,345.06
TOTAL INVESTMENTS - AT COST	7,161,957.69
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 7,665,580.46

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	
OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Outstanding award checks	\$ 27,450.00
Community College Scholarship	437,317.00
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	464,767.00
FUND BALANCE	7,200,813.46
TOTAL LIABILITY AND FUND	\$ 7,665,580.46

Operating Costs increased for the Financial Review and legal review of fundraising.

Scholarships increased due to unexpected high first year use of the FY23 CC Scholarships and from including as “Scholarships” awards that require an application from which awardees are selected by the Foundation.

	Year Over Year Comparison		
	FY2023	FY2022	Variance
REVENUE			
Donations	6,132	10,196	(4,064)
Dividend & Interest	238,286	239,237	(951)
Cap Gain	54,847	(125,391)	180,239
Total Revenue	299,265	124,041	175,224
EXPENSES			
Operating Costs	35,024	23,888	11,136
Investment Mgmt Fees	71,835	67,531	4,304
Operations Subtotal	106,859	91,418	15,441
Qualified Contributions			
Scholarships	121,000	91,000	30,000
Merit Awards	119,851	135,753	(15,902)
Equipment	54,996	53,690	1,307
Innovation	84,334	128,822	(44,488)
Total Expense	593,900	437,214	156,686
NET	(294,634)	163,080	18,538
Operating Costs % Expenses	5.9%	5.6%	0.3%
Operations All % Expenses	12.1%	15.4%	-3.4%

The foundation is always looking for ways to implement innovative learning experiences to help students and teachers reach their potential through the grants. Analyzing results of the grants to evaluate impact continues to be a challenge. Many grants include equipment, for which the impact is multiple years.

There are two major categories for grants:

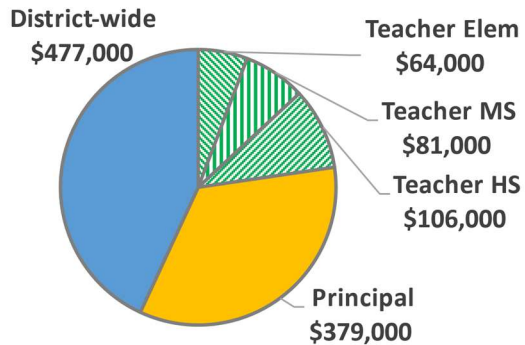
1. Community Grants: The Foundation does not solicit applications from the community but is open to receiving a grant application that supports the mission statement by targeting Downey residents as beneficiaries. In FY 2023, there were no proposals or applications from the community.

- **Downey Symphony** had been supported since 2008 but did not present a proposal this year for pro-bono tickets to DUSD high school students and their parents to encourage exposure of students to classical music.

2. Downey Unified School District (DUSD) Grants: In September after the school year starts, the Foundation sends an invitation for grant applications to the DUSD for three types of grants: District-wide, Principal, and Teacher Grants. These grants are administered by the Downey Unified School District (DUSD) using their Procurement Handbook for the Mary R. Stauffer Foundation. Although the average use rate in the last 6 years is 89%, **in FY2023 the use rate was 99%!**



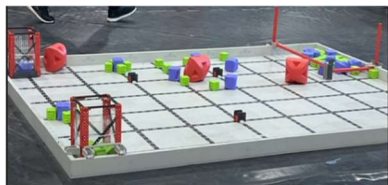
Six-Year DUSD Grants
\$1.1 Million



Excerpt from Results:
Start Up FIRST Robotics...
 ...WHS moving up to FIRST Robotics competitions. FRC is more expensive and bigger bots with less time to design.
 ...WHS won their first competition at SoCal Showdown.



Excerpt from Results:
VEX IQ Arenas... This allows more students at all elementary schools the opportunity to test their robotics skills. More students have time to practice with more fields at every school.



District Grants: Two proposals were submitted by the district and approved. The museum program *Autry in Residence* and start-up funds for Warren High school to move up from VEX to FIRST robotics. In February the Foundation sent a second request for District proposals. Two proposals were submitted and accepted. VEX IQ Arenas and funding for Competition Fees.

Amount	District Grant Project Briefs
\$19,000 4,100 Students	Autry in Residence at All 13 elementary schools: Continue program where trained Autry Museum teachers visit each 3rd - 5th grade classroom for an hour-long workshop that encourages students to become history detectives by analyzing objects from the museum related to the American West, right at their very own desks. Grade 3: The Tongva people (the first Angelenos); Grade 4 & 5: Migrants on the Overland Trails.
\$53,550 70 Students first year	Start up FIRST Robotics at Warren High School: Provide funding for the upgrade and transition of the Warren High Robotics Team from VEX to FIRST robotics. FIRST robotics attracts Industry professionals who dedicate many volunteer hours to support the program. Also, this upgrade utilizes all of our engineering and CTE programs and better prepares students for national level robotics competitions, college, career and beyond.
\$72,550	SUBTOTAL 2 District Grants
Amount	2 nd Phase District Grant Project Briefs
\$11,540 6,800 1st -5th Grade Students	VEX IQ Arenas: Providing a new VEX IQ competition arena to each elementary school to help them prepare for Robolympics. Primary students will also be able to use these arenas for robotics.
\$6,000 325 9th-12th Grade Students	Competition Fees: Skills USA Regional Registrations allow our CTE students to compete in the regional competition with the opportunity to qualify for the state and national competitions. First Robotics competitions allow our students to compete at the state level with the opportunity to qualify for the national competition.
\$17,540	SUBTOTAL 2 Second Group District Grants



Linda Kennedy: A year after Linda retired from 38 years of working in the Downey Unified School District, in 2005, Dr. Mary asked, and Linda accepted, the invitation to join the Foundation's board of directors. She also served as the Chief Financial Officer through 2016. Her most important contribution was to support and promote the establishment of Project Lead the Way, an engineering program at Warren High School, which was subsequently implemented at all the schools in Downey through a separate grant.

Excerpt from Results:

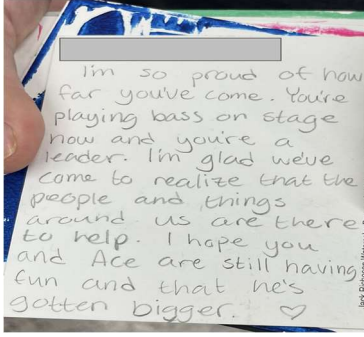
VEX GO Bundles... These kits are a great start for our littles at elementary students interested in robotics. This offers a great foundation for vertical alignment in STEM fields from Elementary to Middle to High school. Linda was an early advocate for STEM. She would have loved seeing this.



Principal Grants: The Principal Grants have continued since 2016 to honor the memory of Linda Kennedy for her tireless volunteer hours to the Foundation and for her personal support of Dr. Mary Stauffer. This grant inspires school principals to imagine new ways to benefit all students at his or her school.

The Foundation invited all 21 principals in the Downey Unified School District schools to present grant proposals for innovative learning. Out of 8 proposals received, 5 were selected to be awarded.

Amount	Principal Grant Project Briefs
\$800 600 Students	Playground Games at Old River Elementary: Purchase large playground games (some enlarged pieces of familiar more intimate games) to engage shy students in physically active games while connecting with other students.
\$450 280 Students	Sphero Mats at Price Elementary: For 4th and 5th grade classes, purchase Sphero mats and activity cards, which provide a simple way to learn block coding, basic distance and speed math principles, and collaborative and programming problem solving.
\$1,000 790 Students 30 Teachers	Drone Exploration at Price Elementary: Purchase six Drone kits complete with camera, controllers, and goggles to introduce elementary school students (TK-5th grade) to cutting-edge technology in our Innovation Lab, Innovators Club, and Robotics Club. A strong foundation for drone technology transitions into the high school's Drone Racing League.
\$2,500 102 2nd Grade Students	VEX GO at Price Elementary: Purchase a VEX GO construction kit to provide 2nd graders an opportunity to be part of a club and help prepare them for 3rd grade Robotics and beyond. VEX GO encourages students to explore coding and engineering, fostering a positive and fun educational experience in alignment with educational standards and curriculum goals.
\$1,650 120 Students	E Sports at Rio San Gabriel Elementary: Purchase an E-Sports team program including 10 game controllers for a fifth grade club to help them prepare for the middle, high school, and beyond in E-sports programs.
\$6,400	SUBTOTAL 5 PRINCIPAL GRANTS



Excerpt from Results:

Postcard to future self

They wrote goals to themselves. Their teacher will mail them to them to remind them of their goals. The students were proud to have their work displayed in the office and classroom.



Excerpt from Results:

Wellness Wednesdays at DHS...

This picture along with the acceptance letter was posted on IG. Comment: Thank you to the Mary R. Stauffer Foundation for the generous grant award to help us improve our promotion of healthy eating and Wellness Wednesdays.

Teacher Grants: Teacher Grants have become a tradition for the foundation to encourage teachers to try out innovative teaching projects and reach their potential. From 2007 the foundation has rotated between three grade level groups: Elementary (Kindergarten – 5th Grade), Middle (6th – 8th Grade), and High (9th – 12th Grade).

For 2023, the High School teachers were invited to submit grant requests. Of the 30 proposals submitted, the following 17 were approved.

Amount	Teacher Grant Project Briefs
\$800 300 Students ? Teachers	9 Square at Columbus High: Purchase a "9 Square in the Air" outdoor game, which engages all players in a group with rotating dynamic gameplay that teaches sportsmanship and team building skills.
\$500 315 Students	Campus Color at Columbus High: Purchase Poster Paint to replace crayons used on existing butcher paper to create school spirit posters.
\$1,300 150 Students	Postcard to Future Self at Columbus High: Purchase materials for 30 students working at the same time to carve their own design into a block, print on a postcard, and write a letter to their future self about goals for reflection. This is a student body that struggles with traditional school settings. The project is aligned with the national Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) frameworks and the National Core Standards for Visual Arts.
\$3,700 300 Students	Update Photography Studio at Downey High: Purchase various equipment: cool light bulbs to replace inefficient hot bulbs; multiple light angler kits with auxilliary equipment; and colored ink cartridges that will enhance printed photos. The improved quality of the student photo images will give students confidence to enter contests and display their images on campus.
\$3,550 300 Students	Wellness Wednesdays at Downey High: Building on a program started last year; purchase blenders, indoor grills and knives to prepare and serve nutritional recipes to all school staff members and monthly publish a newsletter that focuses on a wellness topic related to healthy eating and a recipe as part of their Food Science, Dietetics & Nutrition class.



Excerpt from Results:

Photo Gallery & Event Space DHS... This created a permanent photo gallery on campus. Their first event was in March with 25+ students participating and 70+ students visited the first day. There was a lot of positive feedback from the visits at lunch and break. The photojournalism students were excited to show off their projects. This will be used for many years.



Excerpt from Results:

Mulch Project at DHS... The DHS garden is home to 40 garden beds and 50+ fruit trees. This teaches the Botany students and visiting ES students about not wasting any part of the garden. The fruit trees and vegetables grown here are used in the Food Science class for projects such as Wellness Wednesday.

Amount	Teacher Grant Project Briefs
<p>\$250 185 Students</p>	<p>Interactive French at Downey High: Purchase the French "The Comprehensible Classroom" curriculum for a teacher inspired to teach a language (French) in a new interactive way. The program adds cooperative learning via Total Physical Response methods with reading and writing materials into the classroom.</p>
<p>\$4,850 40 Students</p>	<p>Engineering in the Biomedical Field at Downey High School: Purchase two 3D printers for use in advanced biomedical courses to not only introduce a larger engineering and technology component in the field of biomedical science and biotechnology, but also provide capability to prototype prosthetics, anatomical models, and diagnostic equipment.</p>
<p>\$6,250 70 Students Growth for 280 more</p>	<p>Photo Gallery & Event Space at Downey High: Purchase a 10' steel container and equipment to mount and display exhibits of work produced by students in Photojournalism, Newspaper, and photography classes. Students will have the opportunity to curate art exhibits and learn how to run a non-profit business on campus.</p>
<p>\$1,800 200 HS Students 150 ES Students</p>	<p>Mulch Project at Downey High (and all Elementary field trip visitors): Purchase mulching equipment to expand the sustainability of The Botany Garden so that waste from tree trimmings will be transformed into valuable mulch for the 40 garden beds and over 50 fruit trees and enhance the students' appreciation for plants and the environment.</p>
<p>\$750 200 Students</p>	<p>Add High-Interest Readers in German at Warren & Downey High: Purchase 3 class sets of high-interest graded readers--levels 1 to 3--written in German to be added to the German language classroom library at both high school sites.</p>
<p>\$10,000 2,000</p>	<p>Learning Lounge at Warren High: Purchase furniture and decorations to create an indoor/outdoor learning lounge within the school's L building that can foster collaborative learning and providing an alternative learning environment during a student's off period especially for students who seek additional help in classes they are struggling with.</p>
<p>\$1,300 50 Students</p>	<p>Women in Law Workshop at Warren High: Purchase supportive material for the <i>Bearristers'</i> Law Society, a student-led organization at Warren High, to hold their annual workshop with the objective of establishing a nonprofit organization on campus that will maintain mentor-mentee relationships and connect female students to resources for pursuing academic training in the legal field or civic life.</p>



Excerpt from Results:

Learning Lounge at WHS... This project covers the 2nd floor of the “L” building. social science, business, and english teachers have classes there. It is an innovative indoor/outdoor learning area to encourage group collaboration on projects or peer tutoring. It is also the hub for several clubs such as Interact, Book a Month, and College Corner.

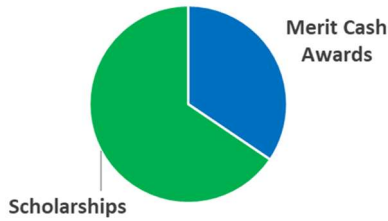


Excerpt from Results:

WHS Dance Competition Fees .. Brought home four 1st Place finishes in Show Production, Jazz, Lyrical, and Hip Hop at Hawaii World Finals

Amount	Teacher Grant Project Briefs
\$1,350 575 Students	Digital Microscopes at Warren High: Purchase 36 digital microscopes for the high school Science Department to enhance the educational experience of our students, particularly those in Living Earth, Marine Biology, and Geology. Unlike traditional optical microscopes, digital microscopes offer cutting-edge technology that captures high-resolution images and videos that can be displayed on a computer screen or projector in real-time.
\$400 40 Students	Heroes Journey Novels at Warren High: Purchase 5 copies of 8 novels for students to select one, be part of a small book club of students, and make connections between the class instruction of the classic "Heroes Journey of Odysseus" and the character's journey in their selected novel in a 9th grade Honors English Class.
\$6,750 200 Students	RealCare Infant Simulator at Warren High: Purchase 3 RealCare Baby dolls, 1 Shaken Baby doll, and a Fetal Development Kit will enhance instruction in Child Development classes with the capability to measure and record student responses to infant behaviors.
\$6,400 28 Students + 2 Teachers	Dance Team Competition Fees at Warren High: Pay for the competition fees for the Warren High School Dance Team, comprised of 28 students from grades 9-12, to showcase their passion and meticulously choreograph routines at a national level competition in Hawaii.
\$720 210 Students	Upgrade Python Programming Instruction at Downey High: Purchase updated Python programming books so that during Introduction to Computer Science class students can meet most colleges' expectation that incoming freshman have some Python programming experience.
\$50,670	Subtotal 17 Teacher Grants

Six Year Student Awards
\$2.3 Million



The Mary R. Stauffer Foundation presents two basic types of Student Awards: **Scholarships** and **Merit Cash Awards**. Evaluation of success of these awards continues to evolve. Currently two factors are tracked to measure impact: % Cash Rate (many checks are never cashed) and “Thank You” cards that reflect a personal impact from the award.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Additional scholarships are described under related Merit Cash Awards.

\$15,000 California Lutheran University (CLC) Scholarship: This scholarship is for a Downey high school senior, renewable for 4 years and is offered every four years. It honors the founder’s heritage in the Lutheran faith at CLC, where she started a continuing scholarship in honor of her mother, Amelia Schuh. In FY2023, no applications (resume and essay) were received. So, this year the scholarship was not awarded.

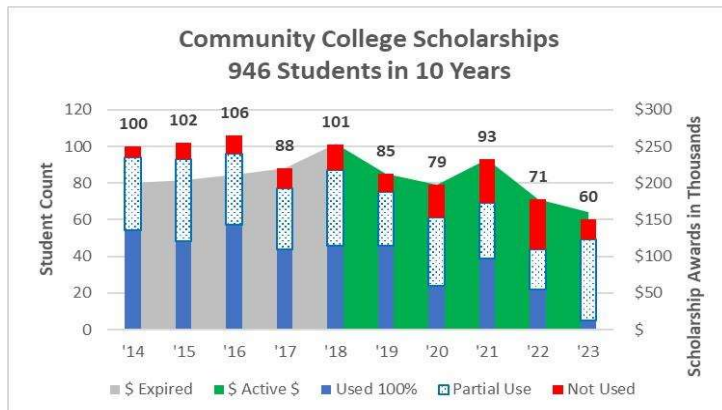


Students from **Columbus High School** receiving the Community College Scholarship at graduation. This is a particularly special group of students who struggled with school and now aspire for higher education.

\$2,500 Community College Scholarship (CC): Since 1995 the purpose of this award is to give graduating high school students a needed vote of encouragement to continue their education at a community college, trade school, or career certification program. Several students use the community college degree as a stepping stone to a four-year degree. It is disbursed in four \$625 payments to the student by their high school bookkeeper each semester or equivalent. Students have 4 years to use it, allowing time for working students. Requirements for disbursements are initially proof of registration in a qualifying program with an equivalent of 10 units, and subsequently registration in the next semester with 10 units while maintaining a GPA of 2.5. The DUSD Bookkeepers present their records of disbursement to the Foundation twice a year for review and analysis.

In March 2023 a Results Metrics Task Force started an in-depth analysis of the Community College scholarships (CC) and surveyed the 2022 recipients. They concluded that periodic follow-up by the Foundation is needed to better accomplish the mission.

An amazing 82% of the 2023 recipients used some of their scholarship in the first





The use rate of the awarded dollars peaked at 85% in 2011 and has leveled off since 2015 at about 70%. While “some used” rate appears to be maintaining over 90% “and all used about 50%.

CC Scholarship requires a minimum 2.5 GPA and an application that includes an essay and a resume. After at least two Foundation volunteers evaluate the essays based on a consistent rubric, selected students are then invited to an in-person interview. The interview itself offers some graduating seniors a first-time experience of being interviewed.

Sixty (60) \$2,500 CC Scholarships valued at \$177,000 were awarded in May 2023 from 107 applications from three high schools and one adult school in the DUSD. This was down from 71 the previous year. These scholarships are presented at the high school’s Senior Awards Night at the Downey Theater.

MERIT CASH AWARDS:

During the 2023 Fiscal Year, the Foundation presented 1,177 merit cash awards and related scholarships valued at \$163,400 to students in the Downey Unified School District with an average cash rate of 80%. Certain merit awards offer recipients the chance to apply for special related scholarships. There were 40 of these scholarships valued at \$14,000 with a 93% cash rate. Many students qualify for multiple awards.



The College Savings Awards are presented in the Fall to middle school students and family at the high school the students matriculate to. The other Merit Cash Awards in May are presented to high school students at a special Stauffer Awards event for parents and students at Warren and Downey High School. Students are awarded one at a time and congratulated by School Board and Foundation Board members



2023 Merit Cash Awards	Student Count	Total Awarded	% Cashed
\$150 College Savings	472	\$70,300	68%
\$200 Jr. 4.0	213	\$42,600	96%
\$100 Scholar-Athlete	277	\$27,500	91%
\$100 Performing Arts Scholar	81	\$ 8,100	81%
Grand Total	1,043	\$ 148,500	81%



2023 Merit Award Additional Scholarships	Student Count	Total Awarded	% Cashed
\$500 Scholar of the Year	8	4,000	88%
\$125 to \$500 Outstanding Senior	32	\$10,000	100%
Grand Total	40	\$ 14,000	96%



Over the past six years a letter has been included with the cash awards that explains the purpose of the award and encourages the recipient to deposit the award in a college savings account. The foundation has a long-standing policy to reissue a stale check when requested. This causes % cash rate of prior years to continue to go up, especially after the student graduates, moves out, and stale checks are found.

\$200 Junior 4.0 Merit Cash Award: The Jr. 4.0 award honors the founder Dr. Mary Stauffer’s personal excellence in education: valedictorian at Bexley High School near Columbus, Ohio; top in her class at Capital University; and top in her class at Ohio State University School of Medicine 1943.

This award remained unchanged from the Foundation’s inception in 1993 until 2022 when the award amount increased from \$100 to \$200 and the cash rate shot up to 93%. The award’s purpose is to recognize and encourage hard-working 11 grade students at a time that they can include the award in their college applications.

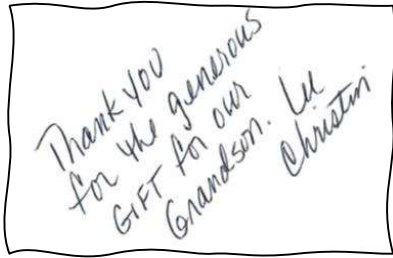


Two hundred thirteen (213) \$200 Jr. 4.0 merit awards were presented in May 2023 to every Downey and Warren High School junior who had maintained at least a District 4.0 cumulative GPA.

\$100 Scholar-Athlete (SA) Merit Cash Award: This award was started in 1997 by the founder’s husband, Dr. Floyd (Dal) Stauffer, who was inspired by a similar award in high school. Dal was both a scholar and an athlete. He was valedictorian of his high school and inducted into both the International Masters Swimming Hall of Fame (2006 for diving) and the University of Chicago Athletics Hall of Fame (2007).



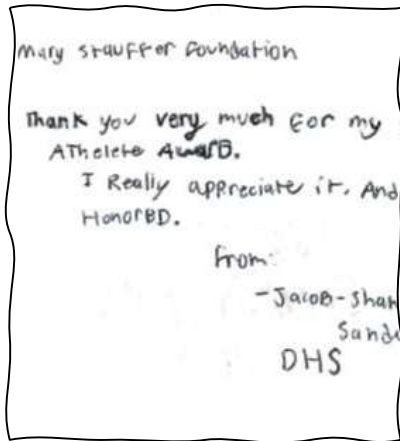
Two hundred seventy-seven (277) \$100 Scholar Athlete merit awards were presented in May 2023 to every Downey and Warren High School 9th through 12th grade student who had maintained at least a District 3.8 cumulative GPA and competed at the varsity level in at least one competitive sport.



\$100 Performing Arts Scholar (PA) Merit Cash Awards: The purpose of this award is to include groups of students such as the band along with Scholar Athletes. This award is for students in music and drama that demonstrate “giving back to the community” by working hard to represent their school in a larger geographic area and maintain academic excellence. Starting in 2022 the Performing Arts Scholar extended the Scholar Athlete merit cash award to performing arts students who compete at a varsity level and maintain a District 3.8 GPA.



Eighty-one (81) students in grades 9 through 12 received this award in May 2023.



\$125 to \$500 Outstanding Senior Scholarship: Starting in 1997 this award supplemented the Scholar Athlete merit cash award by recognizing outstanding seniors who received a Scholar Athlete merit cash award or since 2022 a Performing Arts Scholar merit cash award. Scholarships are awarded based on 1) GPA and 2) a sports/competition resume showing team captain leadership, individual or team awards, and participation in multiple or community teams.

Thirty-two (32) Seniors (16 from each High School - Warren and -Downey) received this Outstanding Senior Award in May 2023. Scholarships ranged from \$125 to \$500, with a total value of \$10,000. The cash rate of these outstanding awards was 100% for the second year in a row.!





\$150 Stauffer Scholar (529 College Savings) Cash Merit Award: Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) in 1996 authorized tax-free status for 'qualified tuition programs'. The Foundation saw this as an opportunity to encourage high achieving students to financially plan for college. In 2002 the College Savings Award started for 5th and 6th graders with straight A's. With the change of non-alpha-graded elementary school work in 2015, the award was changed to middle school students based on grades earned in 6th and 7th grade in core subjects. This award is payable to a college savings account.



After 13 years, in 2015 the Cash Rate of this award was only 36%! The foundation efforts to improve the cash rate include:

- 1) Instead of making all checks payable to Scholarshare, collect information on existing college savings accounts from parents.
- 2) Include directions on how to deposit the check with the award.
- 3) In January send a reminder letter for undeposited checks.
- 4) Present to parents a College Savings Workshop partnering with financial institutions. (Done 2020 to 2023.)



Efforts to improve the rate saw the rate improve to 80% in 2019. Due to the pandemic, the cash rate dropped to 67% and has not yet recovered.



Four hundred eighty-four (484) 7th and 8th graders at the four Downey Unified School District middle schools qualified for this award with a GPA of 4.0 in the core subjects in the previous academic year. And the parents of 472 applied to receive the \$150 College Savings check in addition to the Stauffer-Scholar Certificate by completing a promise to open a college savings account. The awards are presented in-person at Awards Night on the high school campus to which the middle school students matriculate.



\$500 Stauffer Scholar of the Year Scholarship: Stauffer Scholars are invited to apply for this additional award. The application includes an essay and a resume that shows school and community involvement and service. Essays were evaluated by at least two volunteers using a standardized rubric. Selection is based on the essay, overall GPA, and resume demonstrating "Character Counts!" pillars (especially giving back to the community), and overall GPA.



One student is selected from each of the four middle schools and each grade level (a total of eight). Presentation of this award is the highlight of Awards Night at the high schools.. The award includes a \$500 college savings check, a "Stauffer Scholar of the Year" T-Shirt, and the student's name added to a permanent plaque at the student's middle school. In addition to the \$150 award. The foundation used its team of volunteers to evaluate the resume and essay based on a standard rubric.