



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Bonnie Leung

Communications and Program Coordinator

Lake Washington Schools Foundation

P: 425.936.1414 | [www.lwsf.org](http://www.lwsf.org) | [bonnie@lwsf.org](mailto:bonnie@lwsf.org)

## ***BE THE BRIDGE RAISES \$230,000 FOR LWSD STUDENTS DONATIONS SUPERCHARGE LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOLS FOUNDATION'S MISSION***

*Redmond, WA, April 4, 2023* – For the first time since 2019, community members filled the ballroom at the Seattle Marriott Redmond for the Lake Washington Schools Foundation's *Be the Bridge* spring benefit. Backed by a generous matching donor pool, attendees and sponsors together raised an unprecedented \$230,000 to fund LWSF's mission to enhance academic access and nurture all students' emotional well-being in the Lake Washington School District (LWSD).

The event, emceed by Chief Meteorologist for KIRO 7 News Morgan Palmer, was a welcome return to tradition, featuring engaging videos produced by Eastlake High School graduate Eli Corriveau of HotSpark Media and testimonials from both students and teachers.

Liz Haggerty, the Library Media Specialist at Kirkland Middle School who spearheaded her school's use of an Inclusive Libraries grant from LWSF, joined Kamiakin Middle School student Robyn Le on stage to explore the importance of students seeing themselves and their peers reflected in school library collections and emphasize LWSF's ongoing \$200,000 commitment to revitalizing library collections throughout the district.

Community educator and consultant Dr. Danit Erlich spoke passionately about her experience providing Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid to hundreds of LWSD educators. Teachers Brian Healy and Haley MacInerney described specific instances in which Dr. Erlich's instruction gave them the skills, knowledge, and confidence to reach out and support students experiencing mental health crises, illustrating why this LWSF-funded training is vitally important for teachers.

Eastlake High School student Tanya Nair gave a candid and moving account of her experiences as both a youth participant and a teen Youth Board Member with Kids Coming Together, an LWSF program that provides opportunities for children to make new friends through community service events led by

high school students. Ms. Nair introduced LWSF Superintendent Dr. Jon Holmen, who described the district's ongoing work to support all students and expressed gratitude for the district's close partnership with the Foundation.

"Altogether, our sponsors, Trustees, Table Captains, Ambassadors, matching pool donors, and individual donors gave more generously than ever before. I'm honored and grateful but not surprised by the compassion of our community," said the Foundation's Executive Director Katy Philips, who has been with LWSF since 2018. "We extend our thanks to the speakers who appeared on stage and in video to advocate for the work we do, and to everyone who stepped forward to activate our mission for another year."

Major support for *Be the Bridge* was provided by Cornerstone General Contractors, Microsoft, Overlake Medical Center & Clinics, Amazon, and Lydig Construction, as well as Boeing, GLY, McKinstry, Pride Electric, PRK Livengood, Sodexo, and Waste Management, which also continued its long tradition of providing guidance to event staff to ensure that the event was zero-waste.

The Lake Washington Schools Foundation has been serving the Lake Washington School District for 18 years, providing resources and support to help students achieve their full potential. For more information on the Lake Washington Schools Foundation and its programs, visit [www.lwsf.org](http://www.lwsf.org).

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*The Lake Washington Schools Foundation gathers and deploys community resources to enhance academic access and to nurture all students' emotional well-being.*

*LWSF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, tax identification number 55-0891792.*