

LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
4111 LAS VIRGENES ROAD
CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA 91302
Telephone: (818) 880-4000
Fax: (818) 870-4200
www.lvusd.org



BOARD OF EDUCATION

ANGELA CUTBILL

DALLAS LAWRENCE

LINDA MENGES

LESLI STEIN

KATE VADEHRA, M.D.

DANIEL STEPENOSKY, Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT

THE FOUNDATION COMMITTEE MEETING

January 25, 2022

Present: Kate Vadehra, M.D., Board Representative
Dallas Lawrence, Board Representative
Daniel Stepenosky, Ed.D., Superintendent
Karen Kimmel, Assistant Superintendent of Business
Mark Madnick, The Foundation President
Jeannie Abraham, The Foundation Vice President
Steve Litwin, The Foundation Treasurer

Absent: None

The virtual meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.

The committee welcomed Darci Miller, President of the Las Virgenes Educators Association (LVEA), to the meeting.

Mark Madnick wished everyone a Happy New Year and provided an update regarding recent fundraising activities. The Foundation hosted *The Foundation Room Holiday Magic*, a live, family-friendly digital event on Saturday, December 18. He thanked everyone for their support and efforts to share information regarding the event. He added that although people enjoyed the interactive event, it did not gain as much traction as anticipated which was most possibly due to the timing as it was in the midst of the holiday season and many people may have been out of town. Steve Litwin estimated that the event brought in approximately \$1000 gross, netting approximately \$730.

Mr. Madnick stated that The Foundation hosted the *Fall Family Photos* event which brought in approximately \$5000. The event was such a success that they had to create a waitlist to accommodate the many families wanting to register. They partnered with a different photographer for the Fall event and families were very happy with the quality of her work. The Foundation is working on a Spring Family Photo event and may enlist both photographers to create more options and availability for families to schedule. Looking forward, they are also looking to present a new and modified The Event this year, a basketball tournament, and many other enjoyable family events.

Dallas Lawrence commented on corporate/client events and the zoom-fatigue people may be experiencing. He stated that his firm has canceled all zoom events to focus on safe, in-person events.

Mr. Madnick shared that the next event scheduled is the Uncle Nearest Whiskey Tasting and Story Telling event scheduled for Saturday, February 26 at 7:00 pm. During the live, interactive event, attendees will hear the incredible story of Uncle Nearest and how he changed the spirits industry on a global scale. Attendees can purchase personalized Uncle Nearest Whiskey Mixologist Tasting Kits on The Foundation's website, \$75 for one person, \$95 for two people, and then join in with a special link to the live Mixology Event.

Dr. Vadehra commented on the event and asked if the family of Uncle Nearest (Nathan "Nearest" Green) was involved and recognized for his contributions. Mr. Madnick shared that the Jack Daniels family has embraced the history and incorporated it into the story they tell.

The committee discussed other potential events that would be educational and enjoyable. Dr. Vadehra asked for the history of Uncle Nearest and shared the story of Henrietta Lacks, an African-American woman whose cancer cells are the source of the HeLa cell line, the first immortalized human cell line, and one of the most important cell lines in medical research. Her cells became the first cells that could be duplicated and used for all vaccines and cancer testing. Henrietta's family was very poor and did not receive any recognition for her immense contributions until recently. Dr. Vadehra stated that it is very important that these stories are shared and people are aware of the history.

Mr. Madnick reported that they are reviewing plans to hold a new version of The Event this year, possibly on June 4, picking up where they left off in March 2020. They are considering hosting the event at the Sagebrush Cantina and designing it as a more relaxed and casual evening with more of a rock n' roll theme. Sagebrush will be providing a list of bands for their review and will have a variety of restaurants to cater the event. They will have a live auction, with possibly a silent auction as well, and will lower the ticket prices to attend. He reported that the 2019 Event netted approximately \$50,000, after the \$100,000 expenses. He asked for feedback from the committee regarding the tentative plans, location, and additional suggestions.

Ms. Abraham and Mr. Madnick added that they are looking for someone to chair the event, they will provide the back-end support, but would love to have a couple of volunteers to oversee the event. They asked the committee to please forward any interested volunteers to their attention.

Discussion followed regarding other potential in-person events, such as a basketball or golf tournament. Mr. Madnick commented that they are not only working to host events that raise funds for the District, but events that bring the community together and inspire goodwill and could become annual traditions. He added that a survey will be sent out to the community to gather feedback as to their preferences for upcoming events, and their thoughts on how to support the schools.

Mr. Madnick stated that they will host The Carnival this year, and are looking to select a weekend in September/October in order to avoid the heat of late summer, but will coordinate

with other local events. He noted that the Carnival had such a great turnout in 2021, but they have identified areas to further improve the event in order to continue growing.

Ms. Abraham asked the committee to keep them informed of any needs that the District has that they can work to provide support for. Mr. Madnick highlighted a report on the website, LAist, regarding the disparity in funding and the increased financial burden placed on schools in more affluent areas. He explained that booster clubs in more affluent areas have to raise more money to try to be on the same level as the state funding provided to schools in less affluent areas. LVUSD is at the lower level of funding which means the District must have other means of raising funds in order to be at the same level of funding as other districts that receive more state funding.

Mr. Lawrence estimated that the District receives approximately \$4000 less per student as compared to LAUSD. Ms. Kimmel stated that LVUSD would need to receive an additional \$35.2 million in order to be equal to the funding level per student received by LAUSD. Mr. Madnick expressed that the District does an amazing job with the funds it has which is due in large part to its community involvement. Dr. Vadehra commented on foundations in other districts which have been providing financial support due to large contributions from real estate donations. She added that in some states, such as New York, residents must pay school taxes, in addition to property taxes. Discussion followed regarding funding of comparable districts in the local area.

Dr. Vadehra shared feedback regarding successful donor drives she has been involved with and provided suggestions to the committee. She acknowledged the funding gap, but stressed the importance to focus on the positive elements and programs the District has created and continues to offer. Ms. Kimmel added that there are currently a few proposals to change the funding formula based upon enrollment vs attendance, but further information may not be available until June.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm