

State College Area School District Education
FOUNDATION



**OUR FUNDS,
YOUR IMPACT**

CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO THRIVE.

ANNUAL REPORT ISSUE

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DIRECT, LOCAL, IMMEDIATE; THE IMPACT OF DONOR GENEROSITY

In the nearly ten years since the State College Education Foundation was founded, countless students in all grades and at every school across the district have benefited from the generosity of thousands of donors whose contributions have extended the district budget. The Education Foundation's flagship fund, the **MARDI LOWRY MCDONOUGH '87 STUDENT OPPORTUNITY FUND AND GRANT PROGRAM**, for example, has fueled innovative, educator-led initiatives by providing grants twice annually in the fall and spring. Grants have funded everything from musical instruments to lab equipment and from field trips to pollinator gardens.

The **MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS FUND**, established by the Education Foundation in partnership with the district, provides professional development for faculty and staff, mental health curriculum, awareness programs and even direct mental health services for students who aren't fully covered by insurance. Gifts to the **GWEN AND RICHARD BUNNELL FUND FOR**

THANK YOU! The Education Foundation thanks Nabil Mark, SCASD Media & Communications Manager, for the wonderful photography included in this magazine and our other communications.

OUR MISSION

THE STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATION FOUNDATION IS COMMITTED TO ENHANCING THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS WITHIN THE STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR INNOVATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

OUR VISION

AN ENRICHING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THAT CHALLENGES AND INSPIRES EVERY STUDENT TO REACH HIS OR HER FULL POTENTIAL.

The official registration and financial information of State College Area School District Education Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES are designated for enhancing extracurricular opportunities, and other special funds support opportunities in athletics, journalism and music. Combined, these funds have enabled enhanced experiences inside and outside of classrooms and created new opportunities for students to thrive.

In giving to the Education Foundation, donors seize the opportunity to invest their charitable dollars locally and make a direct and immediate difference for current students. Contributions make a difference in priority areas, identified by educators and administrators, that need additional funding NOW. District alumni, even those living outside the area, have rekindled meaningful connections with their alma mater by contributing to Education Foundation funds and major projects like Memorial Field renovations.

With students at the center of its mission, the Education Foundation has also created opportunities for friend-raising through its signature event, the annual Maroon & Gray Society Celebration, which began in 2018. Honoring distinguished alumni, dedicated retired faculty, exceptional teams and other noteworthy individuals, the event brings together families, friends, alumni, educators and other members of the SCASD



community for an evening of fun and friendship and to raise funds for important projects. The event contributed significant funds for new marching band uniforms, extracurricular activities, and seed funding for the Mental Health Matters Fund, and more.

AS IT APPROACHES ITS NEXT DECADE, THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION IS SEEKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUALS, ALUMNI, FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES TO CONTINUE MAKING AN IMPACT ON STUDENTS. LEARN MORE AT [SCASDFOUNDATION.ORG/WAYS-TO-GIVE](https://scasdfoundation.org/ways-to-give).

KEEPING THE BEAT WITH NEW SNARES

Donor generosity recently allowed the Marching Little Lions to upgrade their percussion section with the purchase of seven new snare drums. The drums not only sound better, but they are also lighter. Students love them! Some of the previous instruments were unreparable, making the purchase more urgent.

The band anticipates an increase in members in 2026-27, especially in the percussion section, so next up are replacements of the tenor and bass drums as well as the bell kits.

You can help:

Contributions for marching band instruments can be made online at scasdfoundation.org by selecting the fund from the campaign dropdown menu on the giving page.

Thanks to Katie Brumberg Photography for the photo!



THE MARDI LOWRY McDONOUGH '87 STUDENT OPPORTUNITY FUND AND GRANT PROGRAM

Established in 2016, this fund empowers donors to provide critical financial resources for teacher- and staff-led projects that elevate student learning. Named in memory of long-time SCASD educator Mardi Lowry McDonough, State High '87, this fund has unlocked countless new opportunities for students at every grade level, across every school in the district.

Distributed in the fall and the spring every year, grants have funded nearly 150+ proposals submitted by teachers and administrators. **In total, nearly \$225,000 has been awarded, thanks to the generosity of donors.** From STEM learning and literacy to music education and extracurricular activities, these grants make an immediate, tangible impact on the lives of students.

The number of grant applications has increased significantly, with more than 100 requests totaling over \$100,000 in the most recent cycle. The success of this program hinges on the generosity of our donors, whose contributions help make innovative, high-impact projects a reality. Your support ensures that students

experience dynamic learning opportunities that go beyond the classroom, helping them thrive academically, creatively, and socially.



“THE NUMBER OF GRANT APPLICATIONS HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY, WITH MORE THAN 100 REQUESTS TOTALING OVER \$100,000 IN THE MOST RECENT CYCLE.”

Join us in shaping the future by making a donation to the Mardi Lowry McDonough '87 Student Opportunity Fund. Your gift will fuel the aspirations of both teachers and students across the district, enriching the educational experience for all.



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS FUND

The mental health and well-being of students is a priority that cannot be overlooked. In 2018, recognizing the growing need for mental health support in our schools, the SCASD Education Foundation partnered with district administrators to create a permanent fund dedicated to supporting student mental health.

The Mental Health Matters Fund provides essential resources such as professional development for faculty, mental health awareness programs, curriculum support, and direct services for students whose needs are not fully covered by insurance.

In collaboration with Penn State's Herr Clinic, this fund also offers one-on-one mental health services, addressing a critical need within our district. Since this partnership began, the Education Foundation has

contributed nearly \$40,000 to its success. In 2023-24, the Herr Clinic partnership provided nearly 1,000 hours in counseling for students. In total, donors to the Education Foundation have provided nearly \$300,000 in support of programs for student mental health.

Your contribution to the Mental Health Matters Fund is more than just a donation—it's an investment in the emotional and mental well-being of our students. By donating, you help ensure that every student has access to the support they need to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

“DONORS TO THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION HAVE PROVIDED NEARLY \$300,000 IN SUPPORT OF PROGRAMS FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH.”



● OUR FUNDS, YOUR IMPACT

PERMANENT FUNDS

Donors have the opportunity to make a lasting impact through several specialized permanent funds, each designed to enrich different aspects of the student experience. Whether it's supporting future journalists or enhancing extracurricular opportunities, these contributions go beyond one-time needs to create

enduring benefits for students. By contributing to these permanent funds, you are making a commitment to the success of students in areas where they excel.

Consider contributing to one of these lasting initiatives. Your support will ensure that students for generations to come have access to the resources, tools, and opportunities they need to succeed.

THE JUDY & PETE LYSAKER JOURNALISM SUPPORT FUND



By contributing to the Judy & Pete Lysaker Journalism Support Fund, you are investing in the voices of tomorrow, helping to foster creativity, critical thinking, and storytelling among State High's students.

The Judy & Pete Lysaker Journalism Support Fund was established to honor the memory of Judy & Pete Lysaker. Judy was a dedicated educator who devoted 35 years to teaching English and Journalism at State High.

This fund empowers the next generation of young journalists by supporting State High Publications students in attending the prestigious Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) Spring Scholastic Convention. Contributions to this fund enable students to gain invaluable experience and skills in journalism, which extend beyond the classroom and shape future careers. Your support can provide these budding writers, editors, and broadcasters with opportunities to explore their passions and develop their talents.

- Save the Date -



2025
Maroon & Gray Society
Celebration

May 2, 2025

THE GWEN & RICHARD BUNNELL FUND FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Created in memory of Richard M. Bunnell, a fourth-generation State High graduate and long-time SCASD board member, and named for Richard and his wife, Gwen, this fund is dedicated to enriching students' extracurricular experiences.

Bunnell's legacy of service to the community lives on through this fund, which provides support for student activities that go beyond

the classroom. By funding these enriching pursuits, your donation ensures that students have access to a well-rounded educational experience that fosters personal growth and community involvement.

BUNNELL'S LEGACY OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY LIVES ON THROUGH THIS FUND.

Support the Gwen & Richard Bunnell Fund and help students discover their passions and build lifelong skills that extend beyond their school years.



● OUR FUNDS, YOUR IMPACT

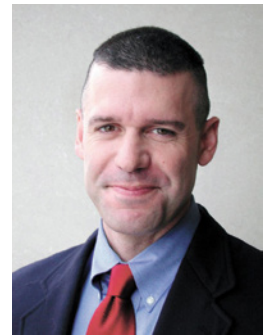
THE BILL CAHIR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR JOURNALISM

This fund was created to honor Bill Cahir, a renowned journalist, U.S. Marine Reservist, and Democratic candidate for U.S. Congress in Pennsylvania's 5th District, who tragically lost his life in 2009 while serving our country. The Bill Cahir Memorial Scholarship Fund for Journalism provides State High Journalism Program students with the opportunity to attend national conferences, participate in journalism competitions, and gain hands-on experience in writing, photography,

broadcasting, and design.

Your donation helps these students hone their craft, while honoring the legacy of a man who committed his life to service and storytelling.

By donating to the Bill Cahir Memorial Scholarship Fund, you're not just supporting the education of young journalists, you're also preserving the spirit of excellence, bravery, and integrity that Bill Cahir exemplified.



THE FUND FOR ATHLETICS

This fund was created to support athletic endeavors from youth through high school, providing resources for programming, equipment, small facilities upgrades and more.

By donating to Fund for Athletics, you are helping to give student-athletes the tools, equipment, facilities and experiences they need to grow their talent, learn dedication and teamwork and make lifelong memories of their school days.



PASS-THROUGH FUNDS

The Education Foundation supports many other district-wide efforts by providing a platform for contribution to specific efforts. Examples include the Senior Class All-Night Party and a special fund for musical instruments. These funds can be accessed on the giving page of scasdfoundation.org.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

According to district administrators, in reviewing the data before, during and after the pandemic, mental health concerns among students are de-escalating. This progress is thanks in large part to donors who have supported the Mental Health Matters Fund. Most specifically, the Education Foundation has funded the Herr Clinic Supervisor an essential role that supports Herr Clinic Counseling Interns to work directly with students.

Continuing this important partnership and sustaining the programs, professional development and other initiatives aimed at addressing student mental health will keep the positive progress and momentum going.

The Mental Health Matters Fund also provides other services and support to students—an initiative that developed during the pandemic and continues today. With Education Foundation support, the district provides support for students and families in the form of food bank referrals, the Helping Hands Food Pantry, holiday meals and referrals and support for other critical issues.

NEW DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES LEADING THE WAY

Stephanie Beaver joined SCASD as Director of Student Services earlier this year, following the retirement of Jeanne Knouse who served the district for 17 years. Jeanne's work on behalf of students was the catalyst that helped to establish the Mental Health Matters fund and propel it forward in such a short time.

Stephanie brings 20 years of leadership experience in education, with expertise in areas that include special education, counseling, and student support services. A Mifflinburg native, Stephanie previously held various leadership roles at Lewisburg Area School District. At SCASD, she oversees school counseling, mental health support, and family engagement initiatives.

"I look forward to collaborating with the district's talented educators to foster programs that empower students and lead to lifelong achievement," she said.



GENEROUS EITC DONATION HELPS FUND EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

Article and photos by Nabil Mark

In March 2024, Steven and Gwen Bodner generously donated \$12,000 to the SCASD Educational Foundation through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC). This donation, combined with funding from a supplemental equipment grant, allowed the district to purchase the Intellilink BenchMill 6100 CNC Milling Center at a cost of \$19,825.

This state-of-the-art equipment will be instrumental in teaching students advanced manufacturing techniques and providing hands-on experience with CNC (Computer Numerical Control) milling. By working with this industrial-grade machine, students will gain valuable skills in machining, design, coding, operation, assembly, and validation. The BenchMill 6100 enables students to produce a wide range of projects from diverse materials such as metal, wood, acrylic, and plastic.

The acquisition of this milling center offers our students an opportunity to work with industrial-level engineering tools, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications. They will be able to apply their knowledge of engineering principles and problem-solving techniques to create complex parts and gain practical experience in a variety of machining operations.

In a recent visit to our Engineering classroom, Steven and Gwen Bodner, along with Duane Bullock and Mary Kay Montovino from the SCASD Educational Foundation, saw the new technology in action. Engineering teacher Vaughn Donmoyer and Physics teacher Wendy Watts, along with students



Jacob Marshall, Bryan Wang, and Nate Whetzel from our Advanced Engineering Systems class, gave a live demonstration of the BenchMill 6100, showcasing its capabilities and how it will be used for student projects.

Thank you, Steven and Gwen Bodner, for your generous donation to enhance the educational opportunities for our students.

● MAKING A DIFFERENCE

MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN EARNS AWARD FROM YALE



Elisabeth James

Earlier this year, SCASD Mental Health Clinician Elisabeth James received the 2024 Yale Educator Award from the Yale Office of Undergraduate Admissions, an honor that recognizes educators who support and inspire their students. James was nominated by student Prithvi Narayanan for her efforts in counseling and supporting

mental health initiatives. Students entering the Class of 2028 were asked to nominate outstanding educators who had made an impact on their lives. Out of 320 nominees, 75 teachers and 20 counselors received the award, representing 39 states and 24 countries.

James joined the district in 2021 as its first mental health clinician.

“My role continues to develop and expand in ways that allow me to be a mental health advocate in all realms,” James said. “I built a connection with the student who nominated me through my active involvement in the high school community — we worked on planning events, the Mental Health Summits, supporting equity initiatives, and much more. I will always treasure this award because of what it stands for. All I ever want in this role is for students to know I am here for them and committed to their success. This award exemplifies how showing up, supporting, and advocating for students truly makes an impact!”

Congratulations!



Thank You

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WHO MADE GIFTS TO THESE FUNDS IN 2023-2024 (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024)

If you made a gift in 2023-24 and your name is missing from the Honor Roll of Donors,
please contact Paul Olivett at paul@scasdfoundation.org.

MARDI LOWRY MCDONOUGH '87 STUDENT OPPORTUNITY FUND & GRANT PROGRAM

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- Save the Date -
**2025 Maroon & Gray Society
Celebration**

**May 2,
2025**





State College Area School District
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

240 Villa Crest Drive
State College, PA 16801

www.scasdfoundation.org

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HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT
SCASD STUDENTS

If you enjoy seeing how students and teachers are benefiting from your support for the Education Foundation, add your name and email to our mailing list!

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Visit www.scasdfoundation.org and find the form on the homepage.

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