Carlsbad Educational Foundation

2023 - 2024 IMPACT REPORT

About Us

Carlsbad Educational Foundation (CEF) was founded in 1983 to raise private support for public education and contribute to the enrichment of nearly 11,000 students in the **Carlsbad Unified School District**. Since its inception, the foundation has awarded more than $16 million to Carlsbad public schools, primarily for music, STEAM, and innovation – programs that would not be possible in California's current school funding environment.

100% of donations go directly to support the Carlsbad Unified School District because CEF's operating expenses are covered by student enrichment programs and Kids Care, a comprehensive before and after-school K-5 childcare program.

Our vision is every student in the Carlsbad Unified School District will realize their potential and pursue their dreams.

Cover students are Alana O. and Isabelle D. at an enrichment camp

Calavera Hills Elementary student Brooke M. at Science Day

Our mission is to invest in our children's future success by developing and funding impactful educational programs for all students in the Carlsbad Unified School District.

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Student Leadership Councilmembers.

FIRST LEGO® League Robotics students Anvi K. and Rachel S.

Summer Enrichment Camp student Marlin B.

Letter from Our CEO & Board Chair

Dear Friends of the Foundation,

As we reflect on the 2023-2024 school year, we are filled with immense gratitude for the support and dedication of our community. This year, your generosity made a remarkable impact on **Carlsbad Unified School District** (CUSD) students, helping us fund innovative programs and opportunities that prepare them for a lifetime of success.

For the first time in over 20 years, we helped fund **full-time music teachers** at every elementary school in the district, ensuring every student has access to the transformative power of music education. In addition, we awarded $65,500 in **scholarships** to graduating seniors, supporting their next steps toward higher education and career aspirations.

These milestones are just a few examples of how CEF funding touches every corner of our district. Collaborative partners like **Judith Campbell Education and Community Foundation**, **Thermo Fisher Scientific**, **Nordson**, **Viasat**, and many more ensure the commitment to foster curiosity, creativity, and achievement in every student.

We invite you to read through this report to discover the inspiring stories and impactful initiatives made possible by your support.

Thank you for being a part of our mission to provide exceptional educational opportunities. Together, we are empowering the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and change-makers.

With gratitude,

Laura Pitts
Chief Executive Officer

Ian McDaniel
Board Chair

Highlights

School Year Achievements

In partnership with the **Carlsbad Unified School District**, the Carlsbad Educational Foundation (CEF) delivered a year full of impactful programs, innovative tools, and memorable experiences for students in every grade. These numbers and achievements show how the Foundation's funding and our collaboration with the district equip students with a variety of tools and **opportunities for success**.

Kids Care Summer Adventure students enjoing a field trip.

Hope Elementary School Student Grayson H.

Our district has:

11,349 Students

1,126 Teachers

14 Schools

2 Title 1 Schools
Calavera Hills & Jefferson Elementaries

17 High School Career Pathways

This school year:

900
The number of graduates in the class of 2024 who are pursuing universities, colleges, trade programs, military service, and careers.

17
The number of high school seniors who received a CEF scholarship to begin higher education.

#1
CUSD was ranked one of the Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM).

To support students:

$430,000
CEF's award to fund full-time, salaried music teachers at each elementary school, a milestone not reached in over 20 years.

381
The number of first-time donors to the Carlsbad Educational Foundation.

556
The number of supporters who attended CEF's annual Gala to Benefit Students.

Program Highlights

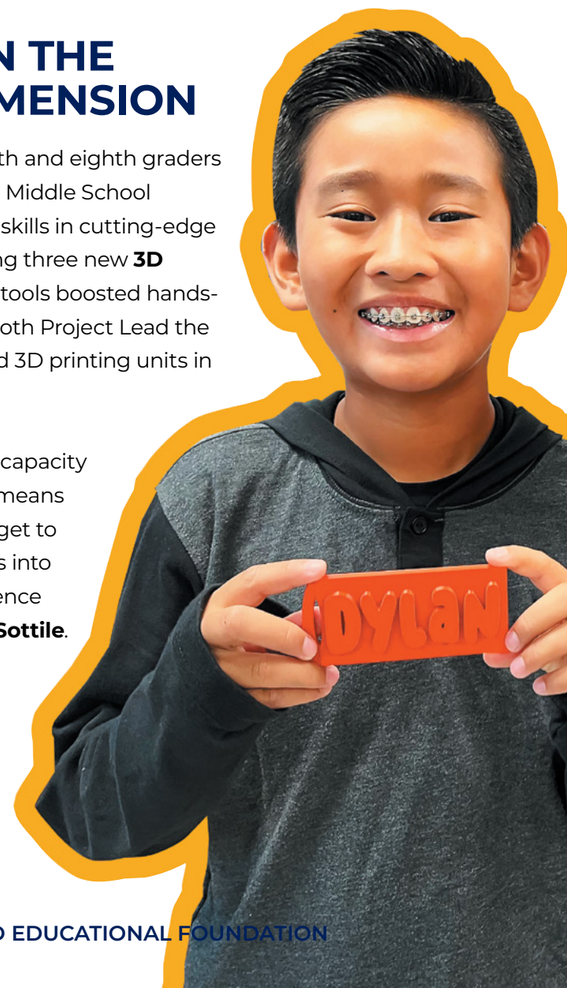
Generous individuals and community partners helped us fund 40+ grants awarded to **Carlsbad Unified School District** for the 2023-24 school year.

The following pages describe every program that received funding from the Foundation.

STEM IN THE 3RD DIMENSION

This year, seventh and eighth graders at Calavera Hills Middle School expanded their skills in cutting-edge technology using three new **3D printers**. These tools boosted hands-on learning in both Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and 3D printing units in science classes.

"The enhanced capacity for 3D printing means more students get to bring their ideas into reality," said science teacher **Aaron Sottile**. "Students can literally hold an idea they had in their head in their hands within a few class periods!"



Calavera Hills Middle School students Dylan I. and Camden K.

ALL GRANTS AWARDED

3D Printers
Grade 7 and 8 at Calavera Hills Middle
3D printers enhance the Project Lead the Way Design and Modeling course and the 3D printing units in science class.

Art Studio Supercharge
Grades 9 – 12
Provides art supplies for art and ceramic classes, enabling teachers to introduce new techniques and projects. Students explore diverse mediums and expand their creative expression.

Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation
Grades 3 and 7
Through field trips to the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation, students develop a deeper understanding about the local environment, conservation, and impact of human activity.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Ambassador Shirts
Grades 9 – 12
Promotional t-shirts for CTE Pathway ambassadors and teachers were purchased to increase awareness for CUSD CTE pathways at school and public events.

Coastal Roots Farm
Grades TK, K, and 4
A multi-week unit that concludes with a field trip to Coastal Roots Farm, helping students apply NGS Standard STEAM lessons in a hands-on and immersive, outdoor experience.

FIRST® LEGO® League Robotics
Grades 4 – 8
An after-school competitive robotics program that challenges students to design, build, and program LEGO®-based robots to solve realistic problems. Participants develop critical teamwork, innovation, and communication skills while embracing core values like discovery, inclusion, and fun.

FIRST LEGO® League Explore Robotics
Grade 2
A 12-week, in-class robotics introduction that inspires creativity and teamwork as students explore realistic challenges. Using LEGO® Education robots, students build a model and create a poster to share their innovative ideas.

FIRST ® Tech Challenge Robotics
Grades 9 – 12
An after-school competitive robotics program where students design, build, and program robots to compete in dynamic, team-based challenges. FTC emphasizes innovation, collaboration, and problem-solving and encourages students to apply STEM skills to real life.

SOLAR ECLIPSE GLASSES FOR STUDENTS

The total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, was an unforgettable educational opportunity. Parent **Heather MacFrier** partnered with the Foundation to ensure students could safely view the event with solar eclipse glasses. With help from CUSD TK-12 Science Specialist **Ashley Crawford** and community support, 2,600 glasses were distributed, sparking curiosity and excitement for science.

"I really appreciated getting to look at the eclipse. Thanks to the school district and CEF for putting this together."

– Rylan Hoffius, Carlsbad High School Senior

Kelly Elementary students Kai M., Eric M., and parent Heather MacFreier.

Genius Project Symposium
Grades 11 and 12 at Sage Creek High
Students undertake a passion project that pursues a challenge or area of impact and reflect on the experience in a TED-style talk for peers and the community.

Hands-on Learning Furniture
Grades 6 – 8 at Calavera Hills Middle
Funding provides three science and STEM classrooms with appropriate, flexible furniture for hands-on science labs and activities.

Junior Achievement BizTown
Grade 5
Students engage in a 6-week curriculum culminating in a trip to a simulated town, getting a glimpse into the workforce and career opportunities by selecting a profession, working shifts, writing and cashing checks, and voting for mayor.

Middle School Music Recruitment
Grades 5
Band and orchestra students in grades 6 – 8 visit 5th grade classes to showcase music electives available at the middle school level and to promote these rewarding class options.

Music Teachers & Instruments
Grades TK – 5
In partnership with Carlsbad Unified School District, full-time, credentialed music teachers and classroom instruments are funded at every elementary school. Weekly classes explore the fundamentals of music, instruments, cultures, and dances.

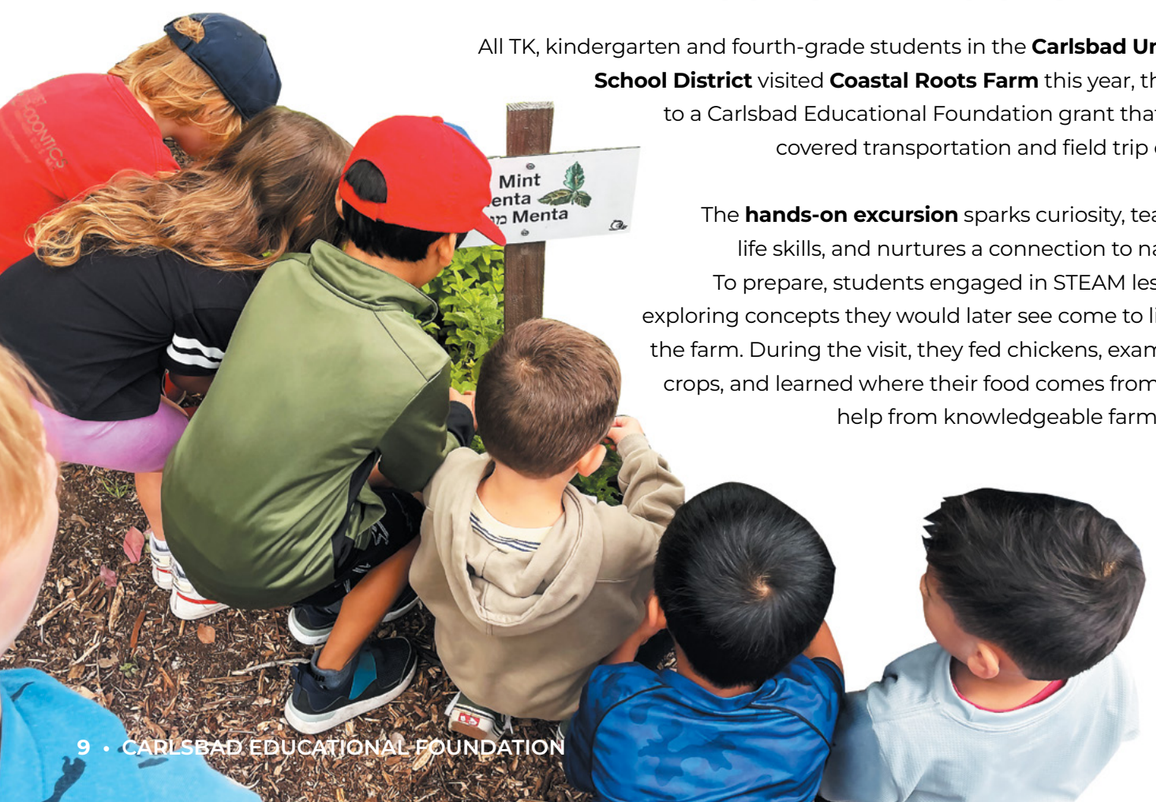
Musicals & Show Choir
Grades 6 – 12
Funding elevates opportunities for students to participate in their school's annual musical or choir performances through singing, acting, set design, and theater tech.

Music Coaches, Instruments, and Repairs
Grades 6 – 12
Provides new instruments and repairs to the current inventory as well as small group instrument-specific coaching for students to receive meaningful and timely feedback.

Nobody Knows: Voices (Un)Muted Pilot
Grades 9 – 12
A student-driven, collaborative project within the English and VAPA departments addresses the trials and tribulations of marginalized individuals and gives voice to those communities.

Project Lead the Way
Grades K – 12 at Calavera Hills Elementary, Middle, and Sage Creek High
The program elevates STEM Pathways by offering innovative learning opportunities in biomedical sciences, computer science, and engineering.

Calavera Hills Elementary kindergarten students at Coastal Roots Farm.



GROWING MINDS AT COASTAL ROOTS FARM

All TK, kindergarten and fourth-grade students in the **Carlsbad Unified School District** visited **Coastal Roots Farm** this year, thanks to a Carlsbad Educational Foundation grant that fully covered transportation and field trip costs.

The **hands-on excursion** sparks curiosity, teaches life skills, and nurtures a connection to nature. To prepare, students engaged in STEAM lessons, exploring concepts they would later see come to life on the farm. During the visit, they fed chickens, examined crops, and learned where their food comes from with help from knowledgeable farm staff.

Robotics Cart Pilot
Grades K – 5 at Magnolia Elementary
A mobile cart equipped with a variety of robots and materials for grade level teachers, bringing computer science learning into any classroom.

San Diego Children's Discovery Museum Mobile Lab
Grade 1
This guided, hands-on workshop with the San Diego Children's Discovery Museum Mobile Lab engages first-grade students in NGSS-aligned challenges, specifically targeting engineering practices.

Science Days
Grades TK – 8
Students participate in a series of activities throughout the day, led by staff, parent volunteers, community members, and industry partners to engage in hands-on science and career exploration.

Science Lab Supercharge
Grades 6 – 8
This program equips classrooms with high-quality science lab materials, enabling students to engage in hands-on activities and projects. This grant provides students an immersive and interactive science education.

Science Olympiad
Grades 6 – 12
An after-school, competitive STEM program in which students explore a variety of scientific topics in a mentor-led, collaborative forum. This program fosters teamwork, problem solving, and hands-on learning.

Science Lab Teaching Assistants
Grades 9 – 12
Teaching assistants support high school science teachers with lab preparations and in-class science experiments to ensure students are provided exceptional and frequent hands-on labs.

Senior Scholarships
Grade 12
Senior Scholarships award students pursuing university, college, or technical/vocational school who have achieved academic milestones and are passionate about learning.

STEAM Teachers & Supplies
Grades TK – 5
Provides elementary students with a specials rotation for hands-on learning experiences in science, art, technology, design thinking, problem solving, and collaboration.

STEAM Lab Start Up Supplies
Grades TK – 5 at Calavera Hills Elementary
Equipment, storage, and supplies for new STEAM Labs on elementary campuses.

Student Leadership Council
Grades 9 – 12
This program empowers high school students with lifelong leadership skills through monthly meetings, philanthropy, and ambassador roles.

KIDS CARE

The Foundation operates **Kids Care**, the licensed before-and-after-school care for families at all nine Carlsbad elementary schools. Staff plan engaging activities like STEAM projects, creative arts, and outdoor play for students to have fun in a supportive environment while developing valuable social and academic skills.

This year, **Cal State University San Marcos** selected **Jefferson and Buena Vista Elementary** Kids Care students to be included in CSUSM's Angel Tree program. This an example of the many activities Kids Care students participate in during their yearlong experience.

Jefferson Elementary Kids Care.

Full-Time Music Teachers Bringing Community Together

When Kaylena, a second-grade student at **Calavera Hills Elementary** (CHE), first arrived at school, she spoke no English.

"Coming to a new school in America and having to get to know students and learn English, everything was foreign to her," described Kaylena's 2nd Grade Teacher **Bob Burns**.

Yet, through the power of music, she found her voice.

"Kaylena, despite language barriers, immediately connected with the rhythm and energy of our music program. Over time, her confidence grew and, as a result, she's blossomed into a confident young girl who now speaks English and actively participates in class," said CHE Music Teacher **Kelly Lack**.

Before this year, CUSD hadn't had full-time music teachers at every elementary school for over two decades. With combined support from a $430,000 grant from the Foundation and state funding through Proposition 28, every elementary school in the district now has a full-time music teacher, offering weekly classes to students in grades TK-5.

The impact has been immediate. CHE Principal **Kimberly Fuentes** has seen firsthand how the addition of a full-time music teacher has transformed her school. "Now our music teachers are part of the team, fully invested in the goals we've set for the school. They also have time to create after-school clubs, like choir or music ensembles, which bring the entire community together."

This year's success is just the beginning. CUSD and CEF plan to continue this funding to foster a lifelong love for the arts.

"We are deeply grateful for the Carlsbad Educational Foundation's ongoing support," said **Ben Churchill**, Superintendent of CUSD. "This funding is helping us provide our students with the rich, well-rounded education they deserve."

> "This funding is helping us provide our students with the rich, well-rounded education they deserve."
>
> *– Ben Churchill, Superintendent of CUSD*

Aviara Oaks Elementary School music teacher Jennifer Sommer leading a class.

Art Studio Supercharge Brushes Up with Technology

This year, the Foundation developed **Art Studio Supercharge**, a program that has transformed secondary art classes by providing additional resources for teachers to introduce new techniques and projects.

Kelly Foulk, a Carlsbad High School art teacher, shared how the program has enhanced her students' creativity: "With the added supplies, we've been able to incorporate technology into our curriculum in a way that supports all types of learners. For instance, using digital drawing tools allows students to experiment and take creative risks they might not have explored because traditional mediums are permanent."

One of the standout resources this year was the image projector used to trace designs. This tool streamlined the sketching process, enabling students to try **mural art and advanced painting techniques** with more ease and creativity.

Art teachers spend the majority of the district's annual supply budget on expendables - paper, pencil, sharpeners, colored pencils, paint — supplies that are used and are gone every single year. "Having extra funding from CEF to purchase something a little bigger is a huge benefit to our students," said Foulk.

Art Studio Supercharge gives students the opportunity to explore, experiment, and express themselves in ways that were once beyond reach.

This year, students in Carlsbad High School's art classes had the opportunity to explore diverse mediums, from traditional oils and charcoal to digital tools like iPads for digital drawing and design.

"With the added supplies, we've been able to incorporate technology into our curriculum in a way that supports all types of learners."

– Kelly Foulk, Art Teacher

The Art Studio Supercharge grant funded a projector that helps students, like Adeline D., sketch images onto canvas, allowing more time to focus on the oil painting techniques they're learning in class.

Experts Lead a Full Day of Science

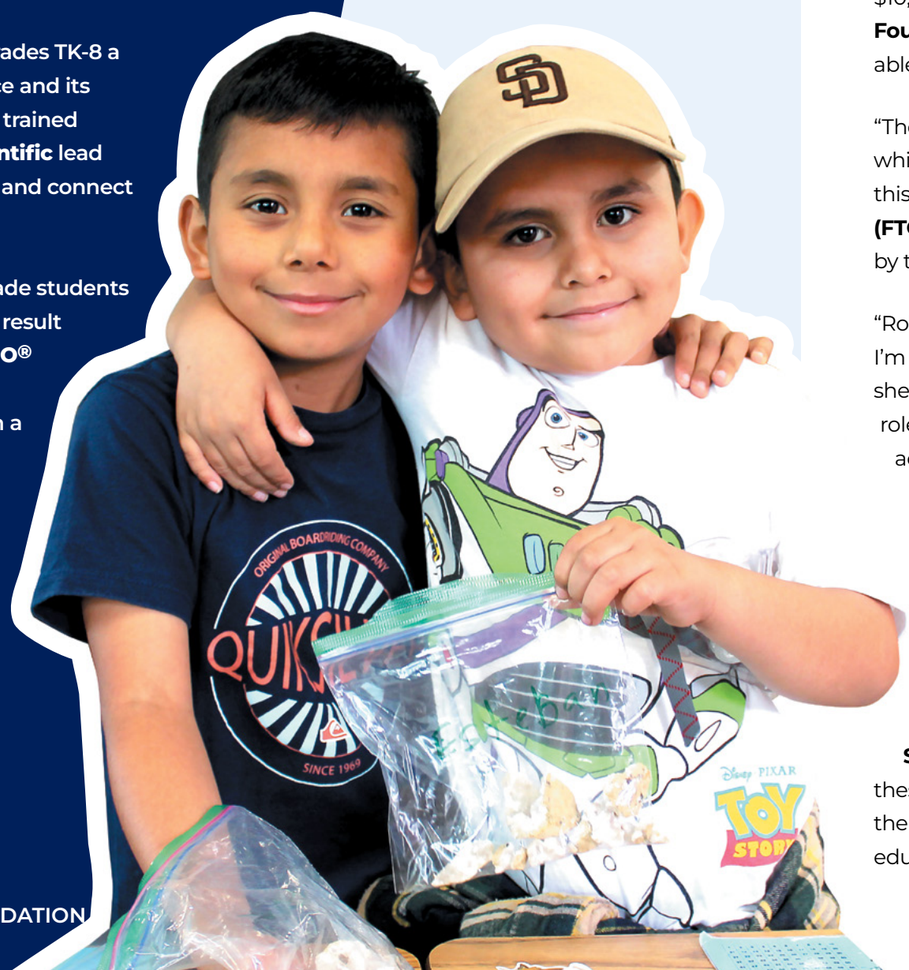
It's a day that both students and adult volunteers call the best day ever.

That's how CUSD TK-12 Science Specialist **Ashley Crawford** describes **Science Days**. "It's a chance to connect, inspire, and ignite a lifelong love for science," she said.

Science Days offers every student in grades TK-8 a hands-on opportunity to explore science and its real-world applications. Volunteers and trained professionals from **Thermo Fisher Scientific** lead engaging activities that spark curiosity and connect students to potential career paths.

This year, Thermo Fisher taught 4th-grade students about engineering challenges that can result from mass manufacturing. Using a **LEGO®** assembly line, students competed to create the most airplane replicas within a limited amount of time.

"Working with a Thermo Fisher scientist on an experiment gives students not just knowledge, but inspiration from seeing what's possible in a science-related career," Crawford said.



Top Photo: Thermo Fisher Scientific employees Owais M., Nick W., and Suzanne A.
Bottom Photo: Calavera Hills Elementary School students Josiah L. and Esteban H.

Scholarships Open Doors for Graduates

The Carlsbad Educational Foundation awarded a total of $65,500 in **scholarships** to 17 exceptional Carlsbad seniors, providing them with an opportunity to pursue their dreams and achieve success in higher education and their future careers.

Among the standout recipients is **Sofia Tamayo**, a first-generation college student from Carlsbad High School, who received the prestigious $10,000 **Judith Campbell Educational and Community (JCEC) Foundation Scholarship**. With this life-changing award, Sofia is now able to pursue her passion for engineering at **Harvey Mudd College**.

"There is less stress about the financial burden of going to college, which has always been a concern for me," Sofia shared. Her journey to this point was shaped by her participation in the **FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC) Robotics** program, an after-school robotics program funded by the Foundation.

"Robotics gave me the confidence to say I'm capable of succeeding in STEM," she added, highlighting the pivotal role of CEF-funded programs in her academic and personal growth.

Thanks to the generosity of partners like the Judith Campbell Educational and Community Foundation, Viasat, the **Tom Laurence Music Scholarship**, and the **James Brown Memorial Scholarship**, CEF was able to support these talented students, empowering them to take the next step in their educational journey.

Student Sofia T., center, with JCEC Foundation employees Kimberly L., Jeffrey C., Linda C., and CEF CEO Laura Pitts.

ALL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED:

Sofia Tamayo, Carlsbad High School
$10,000 Judith Campbell Educational and Community Foundation Scholarship

Suchir Sambavaram, Sage Creek High School
$7,500 Judith Campbell Educational and Community Foundation Scholarship

Matthew Mullaney, Carlsbad High School
$7,500 Judith Campbell Educational and Community Foundation Scholarship

Chloe Norton, Carlsbad High School
$5,000 CEF Scholarship

Luke NeSmith, Sage Creek High School
$3,500 Tom Laurence Music Scholarship

Colin Rajabi, Sage Creek High School
$3,500 Tom Laurence Music Scholarship

Samuel Vanetsky, Carlsbad High School
$3,500 Tom Laurence Music Scholarship

Varun Venkatesh, Carlsbad High School
$2,500 Viasat Scholarship for Science Olympiad

Rohan Soni, Sage Creek High School
$2,500 Viasat Scholarship for Science Olympiad

Alden Brion, Sage Creek High School
$2,500 James Brown Memorial Scholarship

Ella Clancy, Sage Creek High School
$2,500 James Brown Memorial Scholarship

$2,500 CEF Scholarship recipients:
Lucas Smith, Leila Morrow, Aundreya Gonzalez, Abigail Gehris, James Rogers, Ryan Geraci

Gala to Benefit Students Raises Over $300,000

Our annual **Gala to Benefit Students** was a beautiful evening of celebrating and giving.

Nearly **600 attendees** dressed in their finest to support Carlsbad schools, beginning with a silent auction on the Luna Ballroom lawn at the Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, featuring exclusive packages generously donated by local businesses.

Guests then gathered inside the ballroom for a delicious dinner and exciting live auction that featured competitive bids to win luxury items, trips, and experiences. All proceeds earned from the silent and live auctions are donated directly to Carlsbad Unified School District.

"It was incredibly moving to see everyone come together for our students," said **Laura Pitts**, CEO of the Foundation.

The evening's celebration didn't end there. The crowd was treated to a live performance by **Yachtley Crew**, the nation's top yacht rock band. The lively musicians had guests filling the dance floor, and the party atmosphere lasted well into the night.

"The gala was so much fun and inspiring," Pitts recalled. "It was clear that the excitement for our schools and our students was contagious."

Yachtley Crew lead singer Philly Ocean and band members

Carlsbad Educational Foundation staff

CEF Board members A.J. van de Ven and Elliot Springer, guests Leah David and Colleen Gallagher, and Board Chair Ian McDaniel

Stacy Gardner, Sandra Tyson, and Linda Callahan

Auctioneer Keith McLane

CUSD Principals Ashley Rossiter, Emma Cobb, Aaron Nelson, Kimberly Fuentes, Nicole Johnston, and Andrew Gergurich

Carlsbad Mayor Keith Blackburn (center) with Dennis and Sara Donnelly and the rescue puppy named Abe

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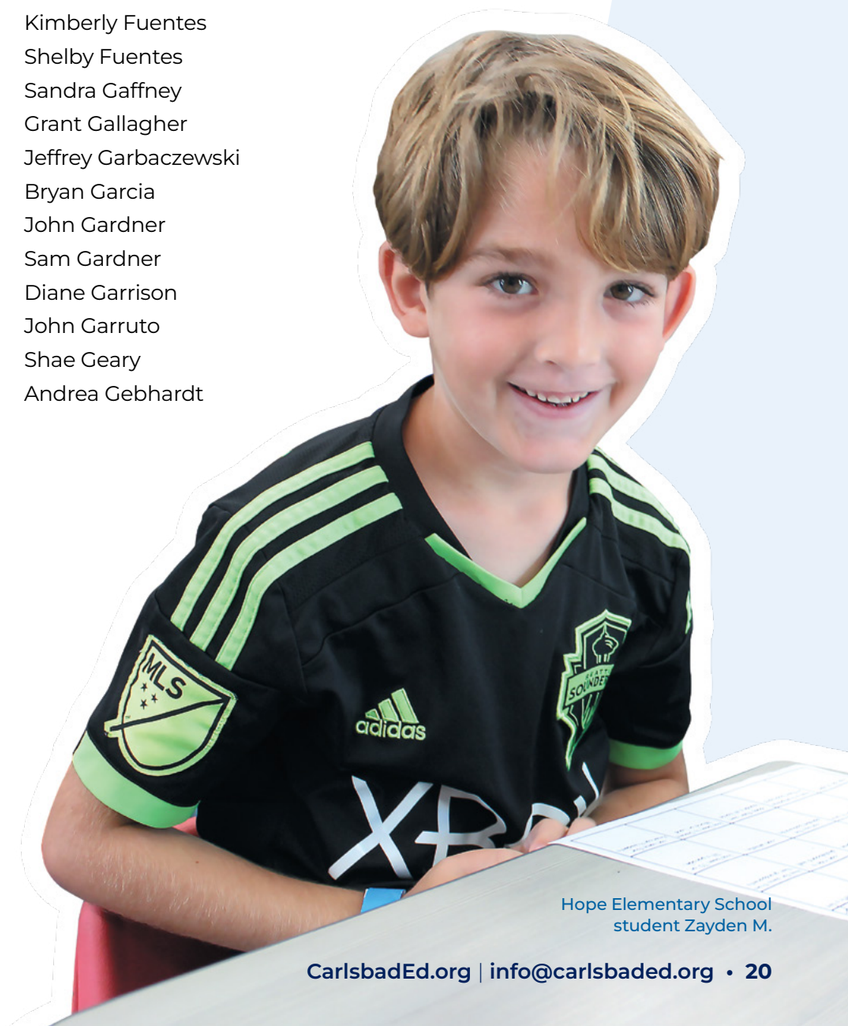

Hope Elementary School student Zayden M.

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Sage Creek High School student Ryan L. at the Genius Project Symposium.

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Jennifer Morgan-Byrne
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Rachel Mueller
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Students at Kids Care
Spring Break Adventure

Corporate Contributions

The **MilliporeSigma** SPARK team visited each CUSD middle school to share the Curiousity Cube, a mobile science lab that offers hands-on learning.

MilliporeSigma volunteer
SPARK team at Aviara Oaks
Middle School

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– Terra Teat, Board Member

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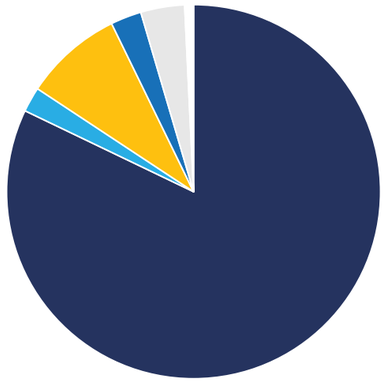
Financial Report

Total Impact: $1,515,184

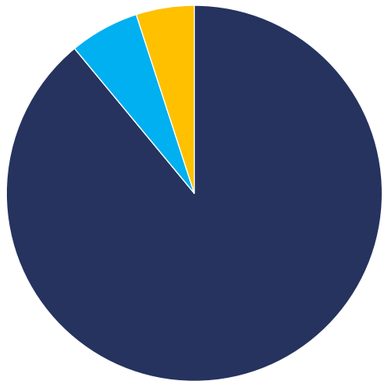
Music **$453,923**	Elementary Music Teachers & Instruments	$383,549
	Musicals & Show Choir	$32,378
	Secondary Music Coaches, Instruments & Repairs	$31,651
	Middle School Music Recruitment	$5,960
	Nobody Knows: Voices (Un)Muted Pilot	$385
STEAM **$780,575**	STEAM Teachers	$190,501
	FIRST LEGO® League Robotics	$85,770
	FIRST Tech Challenge Robotics	$68,254
	Agua Hedionda Lagoon Foundation	$64,215
	Hands-On Learning Furniture	$61,552
	Science Olympiad	$43,253
	Science Days	$42,062
	FIRST LEGO® League Explore Robotics	$40,188
	Coastal Roots Farm	$40,141
	Science Lab Supercharge	$35,243
	Science Lab Teaching Assistants	$29,215
	STEAM Lab Supplies & Startup	$26,184
	Project Lead the Way	$17,437
	San Diego Children's Discovery Museum Mobile Lab	$12,700
	Art Studio Supercharge	$10,677
	Robotics Cart Pilot	$7,404
	3D Printers	$5,779
Educational Innovation **$56,270**	Junior Achievement BizTown	$43,279
	Student Leadership Council	$7,632
	Genius Project Symposium	$4,169
	CTE Ambassador T-Shirts	$1,190
Other Programs & Restricted Grants **$224,416**	Facility Fees to CUSD	$119,425
	Senior Scholarships	$70,895
	Coyote Cavern Productions at Calavera Hills	$28,064
	Kids Care Scholarships	$6,032

Audited Financial Profile

Revenue & Support	$6,316,261	
Tuition & Fees	$5,310,279	84%
Special Events Revenue	$317,294	
Special Events Expenses	($214,622)	
Special Events Net	$102,672	2%
Grants	$488,300	8%
Contributions	$153,367	2%
Investments & Interest	$217,764	3%
Other Revenue	$43,879	1%



Expenses	$5,814,880	
Program Services	$5,177,343	89%
Management & General	$323,042	6%
Fundraising	$314,495	5%



Change in Net Assets	$501,381
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	$3,975,085
Net Assets at End of Year	$4,476,466

Carlsbad Educational Foundation

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