



# News & Events

Spring 2020



## Spring 2020

This spring, we find ourselves in an unprecedented situation. The COVID-19 crisis has caused our schools to close their buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. We understand that our students, staff, teachers and administrators are all under tremendous stress during this time, and we hope to lend our support wherever we can. We're all in this together.

The focus of the Grand Haven Schools Foundation hasn't changed, and our desired impact is more critical than ever! Our goals remain the same, and we want to make sure we can continue our mission to assist area schools with program funding. We will continue to provide preschool scholarships for students, and the topics of literacy and social-emotional health also remain at the top of our list. We believe these programs will be absolutely crucial in the upcoming months.



A global event like the one we are experiencing is bound to shake up our previously well-established support systems. We will continue to support the Grand Haven Area Public Schools preschool through fourth grade students in all of their academic and personal endeavors. Things are

changing—sometimes by the minute—and we want all of you to know we're doing our part by continuing to lift up the GHAPS community in the best way we can.

## Community Voices

"In my current role as the Executive Director of Instructional Services, I am delighted with the challenge of collaborating the educators to provide an exceptional educational experience and growth for students. As a long time educator for Grand Haven Area Public Schools, education seems to be the golden ticket for young people to achieve their goals. It creates more choices and opportunities. The schools, however, cannot do it alone. The Grand Haven Schools Foundation is an important partner to help us provide funding and awareness for portions of public education considered to be high leverage or impactful. Preschool and literacy are critical parts of education because they provide a solid foundation for ongoing education. I am honored to serve with Grand Haven Area Public Schools and the Grand Haven Schools Foundation Board to focus our efforts on Success For All."

– *Mary Jane Evink,*  
*Executive Director of*  
*Instructional Services*

## Kids Read Now Outcomes

The Kids Read Now program kicked off in May 2019 at each elementary school building in the Grand Haven Area Public Schools (GHAPS) district. The purpose of the kickoff event was to distribute the first three books to each student in kindergarten through third grade. Parents were also invited to attend to learn more about the program and learn how they would be involved. School administrators organized the books, and GHAPS's Executive Director, Hannah Olechnowicz, helped hand out the packets at Robinson Elementary, where she recalls "all the smiling faces on the kids as they pulled the books out of their packets."



"I was always excited to get a package in the mail!"  
–Eli Harrison, 3rd Grade

The program was very successful and we wanted to share the data with you so you can see how your donations helped so many kids:

- GHAPS outperformed other first-year schools in every component of the program.
- GHAPS exceeded the average participation rate (57%) with a 69% participation rate.
- GHAPS exceeded the average number of books students read in the first year (between 5 and 6 books); GHAPS had an average of 7 books read per active student.
- A total of 7,301 books were read.
- Nearly 65% of students grew or maintained their reading level.

"I really liked being able to get new books all summer! It kept me reading and I was excited when my new book came in the mail." – Audrey Rivet, 3rd Grade

Mary Jane Evink, Director of Instructional Services, Grand Haven Area Public Schools, noted, "We are excited not only for the high number of students who grew or maintained, but



also because the average loss—or slide— was a fraction of what is expected over the summer.”

Thank you for sending these amazing books to us! Please do this again next year! - Gavin DuVall, 4th Grade

This year the Michigan Department of Education did not offer a subsidized rate, making it too costly for us to fund every kindergarten through third grade student. The GHSF board decided to identify students who are the most at-risk in reading, and we'll be funding 397 students across our seven different elementary buildings for Kids Read Now 2020!

"Thank you for sending these great books. You did a good job!" - Sheldon Patterson, 4th Grade



## Hall of Fame Recap

The 2019 GHHS Hall of Fame event took place this past November at the Spring Lake Country Club. During the evening, we celebrated the success achieved by our Hall of Fame inductees and focused on creating the next generation of achievers, beginning with quality early childhood education. The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to honor Grand Haven High School graduates and others who have served our school district and/or our community.

Congratulations to our 2019 GHHS Hall of Fame inductees:

Cultural/Performing Arts:

Michael Bont '94 and Dave Palmer '77

Athletic Achievement:

Bob Constant '79, John Cox '02, Samantha Iyoha '07, Alison Miller '96, and Gene VanDongen '55

Career/Academic Accomplishments:

John Angus, PhD '51 and Richard Baldwin, PhD '59

Service to GHAPS/Society:

Dave Klaassen '59 and Jack Van Schelven '53

Honorary Award for Service to GHAPS:

Don Anderson and Sandy Huber

Be sure to save the date for the next Hall of Fame event, which will be held in November 2022. To nominate an individual, please visit [www.ghsf.org/nominations](http://www.ghsf.org/nominations). We accept nominations at any time.



GRAND HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL  
HALL OF FAME



# Memorial Gifts

Gifts were made to GHSF in memory of  
the following persons:

Jaleane Heathfield  
Delores VanDongen  
E. Paul Babcock  
Earl H. Babcock  
Jack & Deanne Billups  
Jim Hardy  
Lewis Secory  
Mary Jo Correll  
Phyllis VanDyken

Robert Erskin  
Robert Swart  
Roger Smart  
Sam Cogle  
Vonda "Mike" Walma  
Walter & Margaret Bright

Gifts were made in honor of the following:

Class of 1980  
Mary C. Jacobson  
Ron & Linda Lukasik

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## Alumni Giving Program

We understand that class reunions will likely not take place this summer due to COVID-19. However, your class can commemorate their years in school by making a class gift or individual gift in honor of your class to help pave the way for future Buccaneers.

If you'd like your graduating class to get involved, please [contact us](#) to find out how to set up a class-specific gift for future Buccaneers.

### Donate Now

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## Three Easy Ways to Give:



**Online:** To contribute to the Grand Haven Schools Foundation Immediate Needs Fund, go to [ghsf.org](http://ghsf.org) and click Donate, or simply [click here](#).



**Mail:** Grand Haven Schools Foundation  
P.O. box 272, Grand Haven, MI 49417



**Phone:** (616) 850-5066

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## Leadership Team

Officers:

## Contact

**(616) 850-5066**

Matt Dirkse – President  
Todd Anthes – Vice President  
Barbara Rickard – Secretary  
Brandon Reame – Treasurer  
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**Directors:**

Christine Baker  
Mary Jane Evink  
Melinda Linebaugh

**Executive Director:**

Hannah Olechnowicz

**[www.ghsf.org](http://www.ghsf.org)**

GHSF is a 501©3 nonprofit organization. Its endowment fund is held at the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.



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