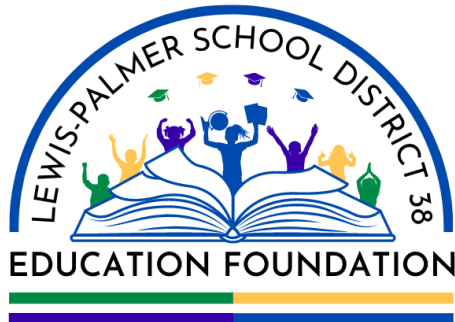


Quarterly Newsletter

LPSD 38 EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

8 October 2024



Welcome

Dear Donors, Community, and Patrons of the
LPSD 38 Education Foundation -

Welcome to our very first newsletter! The D38 Foundation is grateful for your support and hopes to establish a more involved calendar in the coming months. In this quarterly newsletter, you will find a list of our upcoming events, spotlights on our donors and grant recipients, and website/donation information.

The D38 Foundation's main goal is to elevate education through community connection. Our two main projects are the **Advance** program, an effort to support continuing education, and the **Inspire** program, which strives to foster creativity and innovation in the classroom through providing supporting resources. You can learn more about each on our website, d38foundation.org.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Community
Updates

Stories of Impact

Grant Spotlights

Staff Profile
Highlights

Upcoming
Events

Website
Information



PHOTO CREDIT:
TRILAKESLIONSCLUB.ORG



PHOTO CREDIT:
STEPHANIE PALZKILL

Tri-Lakes Lions Club Supports Local Education

The local chapter of the International Lions Club organization continues to support our school district through a new partnership with the D38 Foundation.

The D38 Foundation is excited to highlight one of its most recent partnerships with the Tri-Lakes Lions Club. The Club has been established in Monument, Palmer Lake, and other surrounding areas for more than a decade and has a rich history of serving the Tri-Lakes area. The Tri-Lakes Lions Club will be partnering with the D38 Foundation on their ADVANCE grant program, providing grants to D38 staff for continuing education and professional development needs. The Tri-Lakes Lions Club became a Champion sponsor at the academic-level supporting this program. We are so excited to partner with our local community in support of our educational staff in District 38 to help them 'advance' their career opportunities through training and continuing education. Thank you Tri-Lakes Lions Club!



PHOTO CREDIT: DAVID MERRITT

Board Spotlight - David Merritt

We'd like to introduce you to one of our board members, David Merritt, who is the a trustee at large.

Prior to moving to the Monument area and joining the D38 Foundation, Merritt received a PhD in computer science from the engineering school at the University of Michigan. He then worked in the cyber- and computer science field for the US Air Force.

Merritt came to Colorado to teach computer science at the Air Force Academy in 2019. He joined the District 38 Education Foundation Board of Trustees in the summer of 2023 to encourage better support and compensation for educators in the area. "It's obvious that they are doing tremendous work...because it's a passion," Merritt said of many K-12 educators. "They're just not paid well for their passion." One of the things he appreciates about District 38 is the investment of local teachers in their work.

Merritt lives in Monument with his wife and three daughters, who attend D38 schools. A fun fact about him is that he has a twin brother.



PHOTO CREDIT: ELLE EDWARDS

INSPIRE Grant Recipient Spotlight - Leslie Lantz

One of the D38 Foundation's most recent grant recipients is Palmer Ridge teacher Leslie Lantz, who teaches honors biology and AP environmental science at the high school.

Lantz's INSPIRE grant came in the form of supplies for continuing construction of the Outdoor Learning Lab or OLL. The OLL has been under construction for several years and is the product of multiple grants from various organizations. The OLL has been in use over the past school year for PRHS students. The D38 Education Foundation's contribution included mulch and hardscaping materials for the garden section of the OLL.

The lab is an outdoor space on the Palmer Ridge High School campus that already includes two greenhouses, a collection of plant boxes, and the beginnings of a garden. Lantz is hopeful that it will eventually contain a physics playground, a solar array, and an outdoor art exhibit area, among various other features. In time, the OLL will serve thousands of students of all ages from schools around District 38. The intended purpose of the lab is to provide an additional, more interactive learning environment for students of various disciplines. Lantz describes it as "a space of authentic learning." For example, the garden and plant boxes yield obvious benefits for students of all kinds of science courses. Additionally, the OLL can supply building projects for shop and engineering pupils--the greenhouses and plant boxes were built by PRHS construction students.

The lab can also benefit the community as a whole, in the form of a location for various camps and educational programs. Lantz has already coordinated an event there with local Eagle Scouts and intends for the space to be used for wildfire safety education in the future. Also, the OLL is not limited to the use of students, as it will eventually be used for adult gardening classes. In terms of even more expansive benefits, Lantz has organized a partnership with UCCS to utilize the OLL to contribute to scientific research. The lab supplies volunteering opportunities, as the entirety of the work on the OLL since 2021 has been done by PR students, teachers, and alumni participating on a volunteer basis. "I love the involvement of the students," Lantz said.

Construction on the OLL has continued through the summer and will remain in progress. Lantz doesn't have a clear completion date in mind, expecting the OLL to be constantly adapting to include new programs and benefits. "The way it has evolved just in these two years since we've been planting, I foresee this never ending," she said. "I see it ever evolving, expanding...because education is always evolving and expanding."

Photos of the in-progress OLL below.



PHOTO CREDIT: ELLE EDWARDS



PHOTO CREDIT: NICOLE PRICHARD

D38 Staff Spotlight - Nicole Prichard

Nicole Prichard is the special education lead at Bear Creek Elementary School, and has been working with students in grades K-2 for the past five years. She supports special ed students in whatever areas they require, focusing on reading, writing, math, and occasionally behavioral needs. Students who need time outside of a traditional classroom setting can also work with her whenever necessary. "Every child that we work with in special education has different needs," she said. "It's our job to kind of figure out what those needs are and how to support them." Prichard works with three other special ed staff at Bear Creek, each overseeing a different group of grade levels.

Prichard served in the Air Force as a prosecutor prior to becoming a special ed teacher. She graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1995, and returned to school to study law in Iowa through the Academy five years later. After that, she did military justice for twenty years while she was in the reserves. However, Prichard always had a desire to be a teacher, if not a special ed teacher specifically. "I enjoy special education," she said. "I didn't know that that was a path I would head down, but I actually really like it." Though her previous career experience and special ed are very different fields, Prichard says she was able to pull a lot from law into her teaching.

A fun fact about Prichard is that she has five children, several of whom attended or currently attend D38 schools.

A Special Thank You To Our Most Recent Donors...

Adopt 38 Sponsors

We would like to thank everyone who donated under Adopt D38 this past school year. Spotlight data can be found at this [link](#).

Total donated through Adopt D38 for the 2023-2024 school year totaled close to \$20,000! Thank you to our generous sponsors!

Champion Sponsors



We would also like to express our gratitude to all who were our **NATIVE SUN** Champion sponsors, with a special thank you to Native Sun Construction for sponsoring our Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce membership. We are thrilled to have you as our community partner! Spotlight data can be found at this [link](#).

"Our Champion Sponsors drive our mission to 'Elevate Education through Community Connection.' These community partners make it possible to achieve our goals and share in our success. Thank you all! "

~ Stephanie Palzkill, Executive Director

Total donations for the 2023-2024 year topped \$60,000 across all our programs! Thank you to our generous donors!

Upcoming Events

COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS EXPO -

October 16th, 2024

The expo is being held by the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce from 4 to 7 PM at the YMCA at 17250 Jackson Creek Parkway, Monument. Admission is free, and attendees will include local businesses, personal services, and non-profits.

[Community & Business Expo](#)

ANNUAL NONPROFIT NIGHT -

November 19th, 2024

This event is also through the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce and is for local non-profits to connect with businesses from around the Tri-Lakes community. It will be held 5 to 7 PM at the YMCA (address listed above).

[Business After Hours - Nonprofit Night](#)

Thank you for reading!

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