



GRANTS ABLE TO HELP COUNTLESS STUDENTS

The Alumni Foundation was pleased to fund a wide variety of grants during the 2014-15 school year, and proud to be able to help so many diverse and worthy programs. Here's a brief summary:

AfterSchool Advantage – Funds were again donated (for snacks and supplies) to help support this very popular and highly effective 6-12 after-school academic enrichment program run by teachers and other volunteers.

Door Monitor Shirts – For the fifth year, money was donated to buy t-shirts for almost 30 fifth-grade student leaders who help kindergartners get organized and ready to face another challenging day at school.

Eighth-grade Drag Race Shirts – Once again last year, funds were granted for t-shirts for the student and faculty pit crew members of this eighth-grade technology program, which concludes with a CO2 Drag Race.

Eighth-grade Washington, D.C. Trip – Money was provided for the students' visit to the Newseum – a museum dedicated to the First Amendment, especially Freedom of the Press.

ER Positive Peers – Funding was given to underwrite recognition luncheons for students meeting the goals of this junior-high program, which helps reinforce the value of positive attitudes as they relate to personal and work situations.

Fifth-grade Kickball Tournament Shirts – Money was given for t-shirts for the fifth-graders' kickball tournament, which emphasized collaboration, sportsmanship, and community spirit.

FITS (Fun in the Sun) Scholarships – Funding was provided for students in grades 1-7 to attend this summer enrichment program.

Girls with Goals – Funds were given for t-shirts, books, and meeting snacks for participants in this recently formed group, which helps empower girls in grades 6-8 to make important decisions with confidence.

High School Science Olympiad Team – For the sixth year, money was granted to help with the cost of materials used in competition by this award-winning team. Our students have placed very highly at both the local and state levels!

Middle-Level Alumni Connection Day Shirts – Funds were provided for t-shirts for this special day in June, when Junior High students meet with alumni, compete in fun grade-level contests, and enjoy a picnic.

Percussion Drum Practice Pads – Funds were given to buy practice pads for the 7-12 Percussion Ensemble/Drumline.

Quarterly Recognition of Honor Roll Students – Funds were donated for lunch-time ice cream sundaes for 6-12 students who earned a spot on the honor and credit rolls.

Senior Bash – Funds were again granted to help students who couldn't otherwise afford to attend this year-end celebration, which encourages them to have safe, responsible, substance-free fun.

SOLE: Summer Opportunities and Learning Experiences – This new initiative for students in grades 6-8 provided for online learning in Math and English Language Arts during summer break. Money was given for the end-of-program celebration of ice cream sundaes and swimming at the Kate Gleason Memorial Pool.

Special Olympics Shirts – Money was again donated for t-shirts worn by Bomber athletes participating in last year's aquatic Special Olympics – along with parents and program volunteers, so they could show their support for the athletes representing ER.

Student of the Month Backpacks – Funding was again granted for backpacks given to more than 60 students in grades 6-12 who were recognized for making positive contributions to the ER school community. The backpacks were presented during Student of the Month breakfast celebrations.

'Welcome to ER' Urban-Suburban Picnic – Funds were given to pay for an August picnic welcoming our new Urban-Suburban students and their families to our District, at which they had a chance to tour the school and meet with members of our student body and staff.

– Anita M. Mance, Grants Chairperson

ALUMNI CONNECTION SPANS FROM ER TO ALASKA



At left are Bob Hill (second from left) and Bobby Hill (second from right) at the 2014 Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic; above, the Hills' new driveway at their Alaska home.

I met Bob Hill (ERHS Class of '64 and an Air Force veteran) and his Special Olympian son, Bobby, through our Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic. They travel from Eagle River, Alaska, every year to participate. Unfortunately, in the summer of '14 after returning home, they had a devastating house fire in which they lost everything.

I work at Home Depot in Penfield. Not only do we as a company frequently help with projects for veterans, but we also have a Facebook-style site for associates, called Warehouse. I asked if anyone on there was from Alaska and could check on a veteran friend of mine and his son, who are rebuilding after a house fire.

Within 24 hours I heard from Marcia Eveleigh of the Southeast Anchorage store, who asked for more information and a contact number for Bob. I responded to Marcia on a Friday, and they got together the following Monday. Before long, Home Depot had teamed up with Volunteers of America to provide one of the Hills' most urgent needs – a retaining wall for their driveway. All this was done for an alumni 4,213 miles away from 'The Greatest Little Town in the World.'

– Linda Forbes, '75

Distinguished Alumni Award Nominations due April 1; Sam Urzetta Classic set for Aug. 5

Mark your calendar! This year's Sam Urzetta Alumni Classic Golf Tournament is set for Friday, Aug. 5, at Lima Country Club (for the ninth straight year). Details and registration forms will be available on or around Friday, April 1.

One of the highlights of the Classic every year is the presentation of the Distinguished Alumni Award. If you'd like to nominate an ER alumni to receive this prestigious honor, please visit our Website – www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm. A printable nomination form can be found by choosing the 'Distinguished Alumni Award' tab on the left side of the homepage; nominations are due Friday, April 1. DAA recipients from 2009 to 2015, respectively, have been **Nick Verzella '44**, co-honorees **Brig. Gen. Richard McPhee '74** and **Rear Adm. Don Quinn '75**, **Sam Urzetta '44**, **Larry Weise '54**, the **Hon. Vicki Argento '80**, **Tom Connors '44**, and **Mary Steigerwald Whittier ('83)**.

In addition, we'd like to encourage **classes who are planning a reunion this year** to think about holding it the weekend of Aug. 5-7 so you can include the SUAC on your schedule of reunion events. Also, if you or someone you know would like to volunteer to help with the tournament, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact me at 526-6120 or ctobin@frontiernet.net for more information.

Please visit the Alumni Foundation's Website, at www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm!

more ERAF information on next page...

~ Alumni Spotlight: From the Greatest Little Town in the World to the World at Large ~

When Michael Burlingame graduated from East Rochester High School in 1993, little did he know his career path would take him to more than 50 countries worldwide, with offices in New York City's Empire State Building, London, Tokyo, and Berlin. Below Mike shares his story – and it's quite a journey.

Upon graduation from high school, I earned a bachelor's degree in International Studies from SUNY Brockport. During my studies, I did a semester abroad at Capital Normal University in Beijing, China. Because I hadn't really traveled internationally before, my experience was shocking to me, while forcing me into adulthood independence. It was sink or swim, and somehow I persevered to finish my semester. It was in China where I first witnessed real poverty and what most of the world beyond my hometown looks like. This realization shaped the direction of my career and led me to focus on international development work.

After graduating from Brockport, I moved to New York City to pursue a career in international development. Because of my need for employment and to be self-sufficient with health insurance, I accepted a job with a French investment bank – Paribas. Unfortunately this turned out to be a wrong career choice, and not something I enjoyed. To put myself back into the international development field, I joined the U.S. Peace Corps in 2001. After a delayed start because of the events of Sept. 11, I briefly served in the Ukraine, but had to be evacuated due to medical complications from dysentery. While healing, I came to the difficult realization that development work abroad would not be possible because of my health. I then decided that instead of doing the work, I would raise awareness of and money for it. Therefore, I headed back to New York City.

Luckily, on the first day of my return, I was able to find a position with the U.S. fund for UNICEF. During my five-year tenure, I was employed in the celebrity relations and special events division, working to gain media attention for UNICEF's work through celebrities. I also served as an Emergency Communication Officer in Sri Lanka after the 2004 South Asia tsunami, showing government officials and press members what UNICEF was doing in the devastated area.

Looking to grow my career, and with my strong success in event planning, I took a position as Special Events Manager at ORT America – the world's largest Jewish education nonprofit. During my time there a fundraising crisis broke out in the form of Bernie Madoff (who sold many of our top donors' money), as well as the Great Recession. The organization rapidly downsized (as many organizations did) but I was given a rare opportunity to expand my work, incrementally taking over public relations, direct marketing, and branding responsibilities; I ended my tenure there as the National Communications and Marketing Director.

In 2011 I accepted an opportunity at Human Rights Watch, as Global Senior Director of Marketing and Operations. I am charged with raising more than \$5 million a year on behalf of the organization, while overseeing direct marketing, planned giving, special events, branding/creative services, and development operation teams (which are located in NYC, London, Berlin, and Tokyo). Through my employment responsibilities and vacations, I have visited more than 50 countries. I'm very satisfied with my work, knowing that everything I do is for the benefit of society. It's extremely rewarding.

Personally, my husband, Chris, and I reside in Brooklyn, where we're raising our daughter, Rose. I'm still close to many high school friends and try to fit in as much world travel as possible.

Looking back at my time at ERHS, I was definitely influenced by my global studies and history teachers – Mr. Bill Stevens, Ms. Christine Smith, and Mr. Art Lagendyk – and by my parents, who supported my goals and decisions (from studying in China to moving to NYC) no matter how crazy they appeared to be.

Space Shuttle Challenger crew member Christa McAuliffe said, "I touch the future. I teach." Often teachers don't realize their positive influence until many years later. It's been said it takes a village to raise a child. With the support of family, friends, and faculty in our small community, Michael has truly found a rewarding career.

As an aside, Mike's father, Jim Burlingame (ER Class of '54), is our Town/Village Historian – a love of history certainly seems to run in the family.





On Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2015, the Greater Rochester community came together to ROC the Day. It was the second year the ER Alumni Foundation was part of this great event, and we're pleased to report our generous donors contributed \$250 to support our mission.

ROC the Day was a 24-hour giving opportunity to benefit eligible not-for-profits in the nine-county Rochester area. Community members visited *ROCtheDay.org*, a secure online giving platform, to contribute to any participating non-profit organization. All money raised during ROC the Day stays local. The Alumni Foundation would like to sincerely thank its friends and donors for their generosity, which is greatly appreciated. We're hoping to inspire even more contributors for next year!

~ MEMORIALS and OBITUARIES ~

Within the Alumni Foundation's Website is a page entitled 'Memorials and Obituaries.' This page serves several purposes. It contains class member lists from 1910 to the present, identifies East Rochester alumni and friends who have passed away, and provides an opportunity for us to acknowledge individuals who have made donations to the Foundation in memory of one or more of the listed decedents.

While we receive notice of the deaths of alumni and other friends of ER via published obituaries, some do not appear in local papers and some do not appear in a timely fashion. If you become aware that an ER alum has passed away, please make us aware of that fact by notifying Jim Burlingame at jimburlingame@rochester.rr.com or 385-1762. In the 'Memorials and Obituaries' section, Jim provides the names of all graduates (by year of graduation) and, when known, indicates which of the individuals have passed away. Because lists of this type are nearly impossible to maintain without external input, we always encourage and appreciate receiving any and all updates about deceased alumni. If you are able to help, please let Jim know the name (and, if possible, year of graduation) of anyone who should be included.

Finally, if a circumstance arises where you're searching for a charity to whom you can make, or request, a memorial donation, please keep us in mind. Memorial donations are an important source of revenue for the Foundation and a meaningful way to honor and remember a family member or former classmate. Memorial donations should be directed to the ER Alumni Foundation Inc. at 222 Woodbine Ave., East Rochester 14445. We will confirm your donation and advise the family of your memorial gift; donations will also be reflected indefinitely at the top of the 'Memorials and Obituaries' page.

To view this section, please go to www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm and click on 'Memorials and Obituaries.'

Forgot what you and your classmates looked like as seniors?

New on the Alumni Foundation's Website: an 'E.R. Connections' page, where you'll find several useful links – including one to the ER Local History Office's searchable database of ERHS graduates going back to 1910, and the senior portraits of almost all classes since '31. Just go to www.erschools.org/alumni.cfm and click on 'E.R. Connections.'

Photos from the fifth-annual East Rochester Christmas Festival, of which the Foundation was a proud sponsor, are at www.tinyurl.com/j964xpm.

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