



Wellsprings Friends School

"THE LITTLE SCHOOL WITH THE BIG HEART"

Autumn, 2018

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3590 W. 18th Ave, Eugene, Oregon 97402

541-686-1223

www.wellspringsfriends.org

Wellsprings Friends School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. EIN 93-1123932

BURRITO MISSIONARIES COMMUNITY SERVICE **12 years and 5,000+ burritos!**

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Wellsprings teacher Helena Marcus took six students to volunteer for a week in southeast Louisiana. The group returned to Wellsprings determined to help others in their own community by cooking and giving out burritos to people who were hungry. The program began in the Spring of 2006 and has continued non-stop to the present. Four times a year, during the Friday cooking class led by Chanci Herer, students make 100-125 burritos and wrap them in aluminum foil to distribute.



Last month, Bob Schlichting and six students were one of the Burrito Missionary groups. Encountering two street vendors downtown, the group offered them a burrito and asked where they might find others in need of a meal that day. The vendors suggested Kesey Square or the Library. After handing out the rest of the burritos, with many smiles and thank yous exchanged, they passed by the vendors on the way back to the school van. The vendors warmly greeted the group, praised the tasty burritos and offered the students thanks for their commitment to feeding those in need with the gift of a metal sculpture of a motorcycle. The students felt uplifted by not only helping others but by having their efforts recognized and valued. They returned to school excited to share their experience. One student commented, *"It makes me feel warm and fuzzy and I go to bed knowing I've done something good."*

LET'S CELEBRATE!

This year's Toast 'N' Roast was also an event to start the celebration of our 25th school year! Prominently displayed on the podium was a special logo honoring this milestone.



Over the summer, Roger Durant and the Fundraising Committee came up with an idea to hold a contest. Announcements went out online and a cash prize of \$500—funded by a generous donor—was offered. Five people who know Wellsprings well were on the logo selection committee: James Cloutier (local artist and our Toast 'N' Roast caricaturist), Storm Kennedy (actor and marketing professional), Bob Schlichting (teacher), Lisette Ewing (Trustee), and Dennis Hoerner (Head of School).

Nine entries were submitted by six graphic artists from our local community, the Midwest, and the Philippines. The winner? Jevon Florendo, from the Philippines! Congratulations and thanks to Jevon for helping us celebrate our 25th anniversary with a uniquely expressive logo.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Wellsprings 25th Anniversary
Celebration**

Saturday, May 4th

Graduation

Saturday, June 15th, 10 am

Chanci's Writing 101-Experiencing Familiar Places Through A Different Lens

By Kari Welch

Chanci Herer's fall writing class took a field trip downtown. The goal was to see a familiar place through a different lens and write about their observations. Chanci gave the students prompts to think about as they observed people in front of the downtown library or on Broadway Street, "What problem would you like to see fixed? What social justice issues stand out to you? How does homelessness impact downtown Eugene? Should teenagers be downtown during school hours? What would it be like to trade places with someone you observe downtown? As a journalist, convince people to either visit downtown Eugene or stay away."

Some students really took the opportunity to step outside their own boxes and open themselves to experiencing something new. When checking up on a group of three, Chanci discovered the interview of a police officer in progress. The young men engaged the officer with smiles and eye contact and had many questions. "What is the most challenging part of your job?" "Are people respectful to you?" "Do you like your job?"



They learned that she has to work everyday with people she has arrested. Because she shows respect for them, they show respect back and with a relationship based on mutual respect she can enjoy interacting and engaging with all members of the community.

The police officer was asked about homeless youth downtown and she told them to look around; the homeless downtown were not youth. This challenged the students' perception of the downtown homeless population. Officer Smith pointed out that many are struggling with



mental illness or drug addiction. The students had held the perspective that the police and other adults in the downtown area target teens as the main problem, but the problem is larger. They learned that it encompasses more than what they were seeing through their own lens.

Each nine-week term focuses on an over-arching theme taken from the Quaker acronym, "SPICES": Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, Sustainability. The focus for the fall term was Community. The observation and writing exercise helped our students explore their voice in the community and whether their voice feels valued. Chanci observed that it gives them practice in having a voice "because I think a lot of times they feel like the world is for adults and they're not going to count yet."

When asked about what she felt the students took away from the experience, Chanci said that those who engaged with the activity got a little more plugged into their community and saw it with new perspective. Because they looked at downtown through a different filter, they had a completely different experience than they ever would have had. "That is kind of what I'm always hoping when we go on little trips...you can have different experiences based on who you're with and the energy around you and what the expectation is like. Those always change the experience."

CONGRATULATIONS! CLASS OF 2018



Adi McKenna

"Adi has a brilliant mind. He is creative and very caring and compassionate. But his best character trait is his courage." - Paul



Tech Dawson

"If you combine Tech's abilities, outside-the-box thinking, and serious organizational skills, you have a recipe for success." -Brad



Zak Pace

"It was great to see him work in his classes almost as much he works on his car." - Bob



Jordan Gall

"Before Wellsprings, Jordan felt like dropping out of high school but at Wellsprings, he learned to self reflect. By the time he earned his diploma, he had all A's and B's and a stellar work ethic." -Chanci



Ty Ross

"If Ty was a dice roll, he would be a critical hit." -Bob



Elliott Hall

"In discussing Elliot's favorite thing about Wellsprings, he said it was the way the people here pushed him to be better, to strive for the best, to work even harder." -Gen



Bryn Rush

"I asked Bryn what was their proudest moment in high school, and they said this one, right now: graduation. They said they were proud of all it took to get to this point- all the normal people stuff." -Gen



DJ Kay

"DJ is a great friend, student, teacher, and joker, and we know he will be successful. - Brad



Sequoya Tromba

"One of Sequoya's many contributions was his live, satirical, improv shows. For a school that specializes in community building, Sequoya single-handedly created a community feature that united all of us daily in a pleasant, awkward joy." -Chanci



Trevor Laurent

"Trevor's path to graduation has been a little windier than most students. He has gained a great deal of perspective and wisdom along the way and has not let his struggles define him." -Paul

OUR MISSION

Wellsprings Friends School provides alternative learning approaches, supportive community, and a culture of individual affirmation, in which teenagers are mentored and assisted towards meeting the challenges of adolescence and adulthood.

SEVENTH ANNUAL TOAST 'N' ROAST

By Dennis Hoerner

On October 4th, we honored community leaders **Terry McDonald** (Executive Director, St. Vincent DePaul) and **Mandy Jones** (retired CEO, Oregon Community Credit Union), and also celebrated the beginning of our 25th school year! Over 150 people attended, and a record \$48,000 was raised by individual donations and corporate sponsorships.

Throughout the evening the theme of "community" reigned, not only spoken about but felt by everyone in the room who all seemed of one mind. Our creative 'roasters'—**Gerry Gaydos, Susan Palmer, Dave Schiffer, and Jim Torrey**—teased our 'roastees' in a loving way and also praised Terry and Mandy for their amazingly many and very impactful contributions to the Eugene/Springfield community.

"Community" is one of the defining characteristics of the holistic education that Wellsprings offers. The evening started with acknowledgements of founding Head of School, **Helen Park**, and also of all staff and Trustees, past or current, who were present. As background to our delicious dinner prepared by Guest **Chef Ib Hamide**, Chef **Tim Hill** and the culinary students of LCC, **Taylor Irving** (class of 2013) provided beautiful solo guitar music.



Also during dinner, **Alex and Mike Dann** briefly introduced themselves. Dad Mike was a student at Wellsprings for his high school freshman year two decades ago, and he knew that Wellsprings would be the educational home that best fit son Alex's needs. So Alex is the first of what we expect will be many "second generation" students!

Anna Lankutis also spoke briefly. Her daughter, Sara, came by herself to Wellsprings from



Montana, and graduated in 2003. Anna says Wellsprings "saved Sara's life." When the opportunity presented itself a few years ago, Anna became our (much-loved) Kitchen Coordinator, in part as a way to give back to this wonderful school.

This year's guest alumni speaker was **Daniel Mason** (class of 2016). Daniel spoke about what an unusually welcoming, friendly school environment Wellsprings was from his first day here. He especially appreciated how the teachers helped him work through his learning difficulties and graduate from high school. Daniel often had the audience in tears—sometime from their being deeply touched by a part of his story and sometimes from laughing at one of his humbly humorous anecdotes.



Emcee **Storm Kennedy** entertainingly and effectively kept the whole evening flowing smoothly. Closing remarks by Trustee **Lisette Ewing** and Head of School **Dennis Hoerner** emphasized once again our quarter-century of service to young people and their families from almost every corner of Lane County. We thank all the staff and volunteers and supporters who helped community come alive in this special event.