



September/October 2019

Focus

MAKING AN IMPACT... Mentors making a positive connection



Pictured, Lunch Buddy
Samuel and his Buddy at
Harney Elementary School

"I am incredibly grateful for the VPS Lunch Buddy program," said Samuel, a Lunch Buddy at Harney Elementary School. "I cannot express the magnitude and impact that one hour a week makes for both the child AND adult."

"Over the past two years, I've watched this young man grow and succeed. I was beyond honored to be invited by my Buddy's mom to attend his promotion ceremony and see him off to middle school."

The program, supported by funding from the Foundation, matches caring adults with elementary students who would benefit from having a consistent, positive role model. They meet weekly, first eating lunch together in the cafeteria, then enjoying time together doing things like playing games, reading, doing crafts or building with Legos.

When the Rotary Club of Greater Clark County adopted Hazel Dell Elementary as their Lunch Buddy school, Chereé, a Rotarian and former Board member for the Foundation for VPS, said "Yes!" What followed was a six year match with one special student— through her 5th grade graduation.

"The best part of seeing my Lunch Buddy every week was developing a heartfelt relationship with her," Chereé shared. "When I asked my buddy what she liked the best, she said she felt special."

During their match, Chereé's Lunch Buddy experienced homelessness. "The impact of having lunch every week is not always apparent. They may not talk a lot on a particular day. However, when you hear from the staff and teachers how much of a difference you are making in their lives, it is all worth it!" said Chereé.

More Lunch Buddy mentors are needed for this school year - 80 students are waiting to be matched with a positive adult mentor. Contact Carla Feltz at 360-313-4718 or carla.feltz@vansd.org for additional information and to join other caring adults working to make a positive difference in the lives of young people.



2019
ANNUAL
CAMPAIGN

INSPIRING OTHERS... VPS Staff Campaign and Student Chest Drives "lift up" students

The Annual Campaign supporting the Foundation for VPS has a huge impact on student success, funding basic needs support in every school, early learning and mentoring programs, support for Family-Community Resource Center family engagement programs, and enrichment grants for innovative school projects. Last school year over 50% of VPS staff made a contribution to the Foundation for VPS, giving over \$210,000. Following a tradition dating back to the 1940's, Student Chest Drives will take place at all schools November 12-22. Parents and other community members will be asked to help support student-led fundraising efforts by giving during a school-hosted event or online at www.foundationforvps.org. Thank you to all VPS staff, parents and community members who make gifts to the Annual Campaign. Your contributions help build a brighter future for the students of Vancouver Public Schools and their families.

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NATIONAL
PRINCIPALS
MONTH



Each October, National Principals Month puts a spotlight on school leaders for their endless commitment to the success and well-being of our nation's students. We would like to recognize the principals and associate principal serving on our Board of Directors as ex-officio representatives. Jennifer Blechschmidt, Anita Chase, and Darci Fronk represent the district's elementary, middle and high schools helping our board connect to the everyday issues affecting our students.

Alki Middle School Principal Darci Fronk joined the board in September familiar with the work of the Foundation. "The first thing I do is turn to the Foundation for help when we learn about a family in need," said Fronk. "We work so hard to create a positive learning environment but we have to remember that if basic needs aren't met students can't access their education. The Foundation helps us set students up for success. They help us provide food, clothing, school supplies, medical care and, in some cases, shelter, so families can get back on their feet."

Each school representative brings many strengths to our board along with their expertise as school leaders and compassion for youth. In addition to serving as principal of Eisenhower Elementary, Blechschmidt was the past director of the district's Family-Community Resource Centers. Anita Chase offers a unique perspective in her service as associate principal of Lieser Campus which offers alternative programs for student in K-12 including virtual learning and credit recovery.

Principals set the academic tone for their schools, and it is their vision, dedication, and determination that provide the mobilizing force for achieving student success. We would like to thank all VPS principals for the essential role they play in making our schools great!

"Write from the Start" sends students back to school ready to learn

Thank you to the many individuals and businesses who participated in the Write from the Start School Supply Drive this summer. Together, we collected 10,200 lbs of new school supplies for VPS students to start the school year ready to learn! An initiative of Vancouver Public Schools, Write from the Start is supported by the Foundation for VPS and corporate partners. 50 businesses and organizations held in-house collections, KOIN 6 and Alpha Media provided media coverage, Dutch Bros Coffee and Papa Murphys offered donors promotional incentives, and volunteers from iQ Credit Union and Umpqua Bank helped sort supplies. For the third year, Foundation for VPS "Community Champion" Dick Hannah Dealerships donated \$10,000 in matching funds. With an additional \$5,437 in individual cash donations, Family-Community Resource Center staff were able to purchase all the essential supplies from school "wish lists". Thanks to a generous community, students at every school in the district were able to start the year with the tools they need to be successful.



Donors Making a Difference: iQ Credit Union

iQ Credit Union started much like the Foundation for VPS, with a schoolteacher's shoebox and a handwritten ledger. Since 1940 they have grown to over 80,000 members at 16 branches. From the Foundation's beginning, iQ has been a dedicated partner promoting student advancement by investing in our mission of getting kids to school happy, healthy and ready to learn. In addition to donations to the Foundation, iQ raises money for other nonprofits that improve children's lives and works directly in schools to promote literacy and financial education. For the third year in a row, iQ Credit Union is sponsoring the Foundation for VPS Staff Campaign and donating \$20,000 in matching funds.



"Giving back is part of everything we do at iQ Credit Union—it's who we are," shares Danette LaChapelle, Senior Vice President, Marketing for iQ. "Founded by Vancouver teachers, we are proud to continue supporting educators through the Foundation for Vancouver Public Schools. Together with our high school Campus Branches, Read With Me Literacy program, classroom presentations and more, we are always here for our educators. These efforts shape the entire organization by attracting employees and members who share in our values of connecting with the community and making the Pacific Northwest a better place to live, work, and bank."

The impact of iQ's investment in youth through the Foundation for VPS is truly immeasurable, touching thousands of lives over the past 30 years.

Ways to Engage: Student Chest Drive benefiting Foundation for VPS is November 12-22.

Save the date: Annual Luncheon is March 19, 2020.

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