

Friends of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (FOCRLS) Newsletter May 2014

Scholarship Night a Class Act!

FOCRLS makes a strong presence at the 2014 CRLS Community Award and Scholarship Night with 13 scholarships and 4 awards totaling \$13,600! This total includes scholarships and awards provided by FOCRLS and scholarships through FOCRLS as fiscal sponsors. Five of the scholarships were new this year, and our three new sponsors, Dr. David Link, Coleen Kay Walker, and Neil Rosenberg, took the stage to present their scholarships. Immediately following the May 15 ceremony, FOCRLS hosted a reception to offer congratulations, refreshments, and roses to the recipients.



CRLS Community Award and Scholarship Night, May 15, 2014
(photo: Elaine Schear)

Dr. Christopher Saheed writes personal letters to Future Educators. Unable to attend the Award and Scholarship Night this year, CRLS Principal emeritus Chris Saheed composed beautiful personal letters to each of the two recipients of the Dr. Christopher Saheed Future Educators Scholarships. FOCRLS Treasurer Jamie Sabino presented the letters and scholarship certificates to the recipients on stage.

Charlene Holmes Memorial Awards presented by Mrs. Holmes. Mrs. Holmes told us that, although she felt shy, she would like to be on stage to present the Charlene Holmes Memorial Award to the four recipients in whom her daughter's spirit of kindness and aspiration lives on because, "This is what Charlene would want me to do." Students stepped up into an embrace from the mother of their missed and admired classmate, who would have graduated with the class of 2014.



CRLS Community Award and Scholarship Night, May 15, 2014
(photo: Larry Aaronson)

Other FOCRLS News

FOCRLS MayFair Raffle breaks previous record by raising over \$7,000! Elizabeth Vernon and her coordinating team, Karen Tsalah, Hae Kyung Chung, and Donna Erikson, along with many, many wonderful volunteers made "7" a very lucky number for FOCRLS by selling approximately 1,700 raffle tickets and gathering 70+ prizes from local businesses. Winners have been drawn and are being notified by email this week.

Three students traveling to Turkey in June 2014 with help from FOCRLS. The FOCRLS Student Travel Fellowship Committee awarded funds totaling \$4,400 to three exemplary students for a cultural and historical learning trip to Istanbul, Cappadocia, and Izmir. Ramazan Nigdelioglu, a CRLS physics teacher who has previously guided three highly successful and popular Turkey trips, will lead the journey.

Unsung Heroes get their turn to shine! The Unsung Heroes Awards Breakfast event of May 9 featured proud moments for 16 CRLS students and their families along with a delectable spread from the Rindge School of Technical Arts (RSTA) culinary program. A highly diverse group of students received certificates and CRLS Falcon wristwatches in recognition of their positive contributions to the school climate. The Unsung Heroes awards acknowledge character, citizenship, studentship, community service, academic improvement, leadership and other fine qualities that often go unrecognized and unrewarded in high school.



Unsung Heroes Breakfast May 9, 2014 (photo: Elaine Schear)

"It Takes a Village" population growing! FOCRLS welcomes Lizzy Buhl, who joins us for the summer as our Accuplacer Workshop Coordinator, and Rachel Deleveaux, our new part-time Alumni and Community Mentoring Coordinator. Lizzy's work will help graduating seniors do well on the exams that many colleges use to determine whether students may immediately begin college level courses rather than needing basic math and English courses that earn no credits yet cost tuition. Rachel is bringing ITAV into the second phase of the project, interviewing and orienting alumni and community mentors to guide students in career exploration, job readiness, and networking skills. Rachel's position has been made possible by grants, such as the extended generosity of the Cambridge/Agassiz/Harvard Community, College, and Recreation Fund. In addition to Accuplacer preparation and mentoring, ITAV's 4-pathway approach offers college counseling with Daniel Noel and scholarships. Current ITAV participants will celebrate the end of the school year and network with CRLS alumni at the FOCRLS Flatbread event on Tuesday, May 27 – and you're invited, too! – see Upcoming Events below for more info. If you are interested in ITAV mentoring opportunities, please come to the Flatbread event and/or email Rachel at mentor@focrls.org.

Central Square Business Association gives dollars and plans experiences! FOCRLS members and CRLS students pitched in at the Central Square clean-up on May 14, at which time CSBA presented FOCRLS with a check for \$500. The FOCRLS Business Engagement Team, under the chairpersonship of Victoria Harris and including CRLS Principal Damon Smith and FOCRLS President Elaine Schear, have worked with CSBA Executive Director Robin Lapidus and CSBA Board member Patrick Barrett to build a relationship, which has also inspired the CSBA to develop an internship program at several sites in Central Square for CRLS students.

More Highlights of the Year

Harvard Square Business Association leaders learn about new opportunities at CRLS. FOCRLS hosted the April 4 Board meeting of the Harvard Square Business Association (HSBA) at CRLS, welcoming approximately 50 owners and leaders in retail, restaurants, banking, business, hospitality, services, media, travel, realty, and education. With a FOCRLS presentation that featured words from Principal Damon Smith, some HSBA members were newly introduced to CRLS while others more familiar with the school learned details that enhanced their opinion, like HSBA Executive Director Denise Jillson's, "from fabulous to incredibly fabulous!"

CRLS Faculty Innovate with Grants from FOCRLS. With the twelve carefully chosen 2013-14 school year Faculty Innovation Grants recipients, FOCRLS has given awards to a total of 140 teachers and staff members for projects augmenting the already extensive CRLS and RSTA curriculum and services. A fund of \$9,000 was distributed in awards of \$500 – \$1,000 each to: Conrad Hauck, Engineering Instructor (Robotics); Greta Hardina, Family Liaison (Weekend Backpack Program); Barbara Weaver, History Teacher (African American cultural history); Kristin Knowlton, Special Education/Math Teacher (mindful mathematics); Leslie Davis, AVID Coordinator (StoriesLive); Kris Newton, Physics Teacher/Coach, and Desiree Phillips, Special Educator in Physics (animation and video); Brett Cramp, Drama Teacher (METG Drama Festival); Brenda Divilbliss and Lauren Simpson, Dance Teachers (space transformation); Edna Leith, English Language Learners Teacher (classroom reading library); and Jessica Young, Visual Art Teacher (object library). Contributing to our Faculty Innovation Grant program is a terrific way to honor a faculty member who has had a positive lasting influence on you or your child!



CRLS FIRST Team 97 with their instructor Conrad Hauck, FOCRLS Faculty Innovation Grant recipient (photo courtesy of Team 97)

FOCRLS goes to Google. No search was necessary for the perfect way for us to kick off the school year, thanks to the Google Community Affairs team's invitation to their Kendall Square headquarters. The event took place on September 12, 2013 as part of the internet giant's ongoing support of education. FOCRLS representatives, Faculty Innovation Grant recipients, students, and CRLS Principal Damon Smith participated in Google's fundraiser to present to and mingle with employees, whose donations Google matched.

Raising the roof to raise funds! When CRLS parents Janet Domenitz and Maureen Manning teamed up to host FOCRLS and 80 or so guests this past November, they created quite a dignified event yet a wildly successful House Party fundraiser! Our deepest gratitude goes to Janet, Maureen, and their team of volunteers, as well as the students and faculty, speakers, guests, and donors.



Two CRLS student volunteer holiday wrappers at Henry Bear's Park (photo: Elaine Schear)

Upcoming Events

FOCRLS Flatbread Fundraiser on Tuesday, May 27! Join us for the 2nd Annual FOCRLS Fundraiser at Flatbread in Davis Square, Somerville, on Tuesday, May 27 from 5:00 to 11:30 p.m. Board member Sandra Lima has planned this delicious (pizza!) and delightful (bowling!) event. All members of the CRLS community are welcome, and so is everyone else! Alumni from CRLS, Cambridge High and Latin, and Rindge Tech will mingle from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in a networking event. Great prizes will be raffled, bowling pins will fall, and FOCRLS will receive a "slice" of every pie sold!

FOCRLS Community Meeting Wednesday, May 28th. Our last Community Meeting of the school year, from 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. in CRLS's Pearl K. Wise Library, will feature CRLS Principal Damon Smith with an end-of-the-year wrap-up. All members of the CRLS community are welcome.

CRLS Graduation! Thursday, June 5, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the CRLS Field House. The FOCRLS Faculty Distinction Awards will be presented to teachers and staff selected by the graduating class, and our scholarship recipients will be listed in the program. Class of 2014 graduates include the son of FOCRLS Treasurer Jamie Sabino and the daughter of FOCRLS founders Donna Spiegelman and Elaine Schear, as well as the children of many of our parent-volunteers over the past four years. FOCRLS is running a full-page color ad in the yearbook congratulating the Class of 2014!

The FOCRLS 2014 Graduation Appeal Letter should have arrived in your mailbox by now! The letter gives an overview of what FOCRLS has accomplished, plans to continue, strives to expand, and intends to achieve -- all of which rely on donations. The 2013-14 school year has been our best ever, and, with your help, the 2014-15 school year will be even better. Thank you!

Friends of CRLS salutes you!

Because of you, FOCRLS has raised close to \$65,000 this year, and we are approaching \$400,000 in total donations since 2006! We couldn't have done it without the work of our large, diverse, and energetic community! Our donors represent every segment of the current, past, and future CRLS population, including alumni of Rindge Tech and Cambridge High and Latin School, as well as businesses both local and global, our Cambridge civic leadership, and Cambridge residents who want to play a part in the success of the city's students. Huge thanks to all of you, especially and our vigorous savvy parent and student volunteers!

To learn more about being involved with FOCRLS or donating, please visit focrls.org or email info@focrls.org.