



FOCRLS Treasurer and volunteer Jamie Sabino sells MayFair raffle tickets to help fund scholarships, faculty grants, and other FOCRLS programs.

Friends of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School Celebrates Eight Years and Welcomes New Volunteers

Friends of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (FOCRLS) celebrated their 8th anniversary at their School Year Kick-off on September 23, 2014, with a cake and the welcoming of parents, city leaders, volunteers, and donors. FOCRLS, founded in September 2006, is a non-profit, tax-exempt association of parents, alumni, and community volunteers bringing opportunities to the faculty, students, and graduates of Cambridge Rindge and Latin School (CRLS), the city's public high school with an enrollment of 1,854 students. FOCRLS has another reason to celebrate: recently passing \$400,000 in total donations.

At the gathering, volunteers spoke to parents new to CRLS about the benefits of involvement and the extent of the non-profit's impact, with thousands of students reached through FOCRLS programs.

Craig Kelley, who is active with FOCRLS in addition to being a Cambridge City Council member, described FOCRLS as "one of the jewels in the CRLS crown" and said their opportunities "take a good educational experience and, for many CRLS students, make it great."

Larry Aaronson, a former CRLS history teacher, spoke about FOCRLS as the one organization that has succeeded, where others have failed, in harnessing the support of the CRLS and Cambridge communities over the course of the school's long history.

Elisa Pepe, webmaster for FOCRLS.org, added, "FOCRLS fills important gaps in student and teacher support that the district does not have time or money to address. FOCRLS listened to my time and interest parameters and found a volunteer activity that fits perfectly. I have been especially impressed at how organized and dynamic FOCRLS is."

FOCRLS is continually growing in scope, having already awarded \$39,000 in college scholarships and launching an Alumni and Community Mentor Program in July through their "It Takes a Village" College Success Program. Along with their future-focused programs, FOCRLS provides Faculty Innovation Grants to help teachers enliven curriculum with creative experiences for students and Student Travel Fellowships to enable academically and financially qualified students to participate in school trips such as the upcoming journeys to England for math and science and the Galapagos Islands for marine biology. Faculty Distinction Awards, honoring staff members chosen by seniors, and Unsung Heroes Awards, recognizing students chosen by staff, round out their offerings.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer or mentor, starting a scholarship, or making a contribution is urged to visit FOCRLS.org, email info@FOCRLS.org, or call 857-235-9290.