

THE SIERRA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION TURNS 10 YEARS AND AWARDS LEGACY GRANTS!

Established in July 2011



10-YEAR CELEBRATION OF THE SIERRA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION: LEGACY AWARDS GIVEN TO RECOGNIZE ROOTS AND BOOTS GRANTS THAT INSPIRED CHANGE

by Megan Meschery

Founded in July of 2011, The Sierra Schools Foundation is marking its 10th anniversary by celebrating its huge success in funding over \$400,000 to support excellent educational programs of the public schools of Sierra-Plumas Joint Unified School District.

For its anniversary this summer, it is recognizing three of its most long standing and impactful grants and the educational leaders who envisioned them and kept the grants strong over the years. Through this award, we honor site and teacher Roots & Boots Initiative grants that have had an enduring educational impact on the students of Sierra-Plumas Joint Unified School District. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of the programs and projects initiated and sustained by dedicated educators in partnership with The Sierra Schools Foundation and its generous donors. (For more information, please visit our website: www.sierraschoolsfoundation.org)

CONGRATULATION TO THE GRANTS THAT HAVE LEFT A LEGACY:

- LES LEARNING GARDEN
- DOWNIEVILLE'S SPRING MUSICAL
- LHS' GRAPHIC ARTS PROGRAM

THE LOYALTON LEARNING GARDEN GRANT - 7 YEARS (LOYALTON ELEMENTARY AND SIERRA PASS SCHOOLS)

The initial 2014 Farm-to-School grant was the brainchild of LES's very own school secretary Amy Filippini, who at the time was the career technician at Loyalton High School, and LES teacher Joanna Haug. The initial grant application provided funding for the basic infrastructure of the long-standing program to improve the greenhouse, build all of the outdoor beds, and install much-needed fencing. The greenhouse and all of the improvements would not have happened if it weren't for the amazing work of the elementary school's maintenance coordinator Richard Jaquez. He and Amy envisioned the overall project and worked many long hours ensuring everything was perfect for not just a robust garden, but also an amazing outdoor classroom.

Additional improvements were made in 2015 with the support of another grant to build a water system and purchase educational equipment and supplies. For every dollar we granted, SPJUSD added their own funding to bring hands-on garden, outdoor, and environmental education to our students. At that time, the school district committed to hiring Amy as the garden coordinator who planned and taught lessons in the Learning Garden's outdoor classroom and today, our now coordinator Sherril Rahe, brings new ideas and vision as this program continues to grow and create learning experiences for



our students day after day. The Loyalton Learning Garden is a model of what a school garden can be. Thank you, Amy Filippini for your vision and thank you, Richard Jaquez, Sherril Rahe, Brian Devlin, and Andrea Ceresola for sustaining and growing such an impactful program!

To view the Loyalton Learning Garden Gratitude Video, Please visit:
<https://www.sierraschoolsfoundation.org/gratitude-series>



"The Loyalton Learning Garden is a model of what a school garden can be!"



THE DOWNIEVILLE SPRING MUSICAL GRANT - 7 YEARS (DOWNIEVILLE SCHOOL)

Since 2014, Lynn Fillo--DHS' English & Drama teacher for 47 years--has consistently applied for Roots & Boots funding each winter cycle to bring Downieville and its community members phenomenal musical theatre performance each spring as a part of a larger team of local artists and performers: Tina Floyd, Bette Jo Lang, Peggy Daigle, Kathy Fischer, Kathy Stewart, Amber Baca-Sainsbury, and Caroline "Cracker" Eshelman--along with Sierra County Arts Council Executive Director, BJ Jordan.



Downieville School and its students are incredibly fortunate that Mrs. Fillo had this vision to connect The Sierra Schools Foundation with the Sierra County Arts Council and Yuba Theater to partner in making the annual spring musical a huge success that impacts not only Sierra County's youth, but its residents across the county. The sustainability and impact of this grant is tremendous, as Mrs. Fillo trains young actors in middle school and high school in theatre arts and brings in skilled instructors to specialize in vocals, dance, and set & costume design instruction every year until they graduate. This type of sustained yearly experience for our students builds confidence and a love of theatre & the arts that

lasts a lifetime and maintains a strong connection to our community partners. Thank you, Mrs. Fillo and our wonderful instructors, for your life-long support of theatre in Downieville and for all the ways you enrich and enhance rural education in Sierra County!

"The annual spring musical a huge success that impacts not only Sierra County's youth, but its residents across the county."

To view the Downieville Spring Musical Gratitude Video, Please visit:
<https://www.sierraschoolsfoundation.org/gratitude-series>



THE GRAPHIC ARTS PROGRAM GRANT - 8 YEARS (LOYALTON HIGH SCHOOL)

In 2013, the then art teacher at LHS, Laura Calabrese, and past principal, Marla Stock, decided it was time to strengthen our students digital design skills by purchasing professional grade software, cameras, and equipment to ensure that our students were learning with the tools they needed to step into the world of graphic design after graduation. As the strength of the programs grew with students gaining a truly professional skill set and agency in the digital world, Ms. Calabrese brought in highly qualified, professional graphic designers, Elisabeth Henson and Katherine Genasci, now the art teacher at LHS, as instructors to refine and build on the existing program.

These two powerhouse designers were contracted through the fantastic Sierra County Arts Council's Artists-in-the-Schools program (Thank you, SCAC!) and The Sierra Schools Foundation was fortunately able to fund their contract during gap years. Since 2013, the Graphic Arts Program has sustained and cultivated professional-level skills with our students, who upon graduation are able to enter the world of graphic design with the foundational knowledge to move their learning forward and pursue their long-term career goals as they enter their postsecondary educational tracks. Thank you to Laura Calabrese for igniting the vision and to Elisabeth Henson and Katherine Genasci for providing amazing instruction for our students and sustaining and enhancing the Graphic Arts Program over the years! We look forward to seeing this program continue to develop and grow as the need for digital competency and creation becomes increasingly important.



We are incredibly grateful to our donors and supporters for making our 10-year anniversary one of great celebration! Learn more about all of the grants that The Sierra Schools Foundation has funded over the years and see how you can support more of these amazing opportunities in our schools at: www.sierraschoolsfoundation.org/grants



"The Graphic Arts Program has ...cultivated professional-level skills with our students, who upon graduation are able to enter the world of graphic design"

