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# Alum returns to connect with community

Thomas Friedman ('71)  
speaks on global themes

By Sophie Yarosh

As high school senior Ethan Brown reflects on the Tom Friedman event last May 21, he said he felt engaged by Friedman's talk on globalization and values he learned at St. Louis Park.

"(Friedman) spoke on...a lot of the values that he learned in St. Louis Park and how those reflect on his daily work (and) how those really show what type of person he is these days," Brown said.

St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation (SLPPSF) president Peter Levy said he thought the event proved to be a success by the great feedback he received.

"I really thought he did an outstanding job. He related the craziness that's going on in the world and gave his opinion on what's going on in a way that was simple and easy to understand," Levy said.

Event co-chair Joan Brinkman said she was gratified to see so many Park supporters attend the event and financially support the SLPPSF granting program.

"The audience was very dynamic. Every person there had experienced the community of St. Louis Park," Brinkman said. "We wanted to offer a special event that would reaffirm Park's positive impact by reaching out to people and bringing them back to the high school for a personalized visit."

Brinkman said the event intended to reconnect people to the Park community and to Park community members.

"One of our goals was to provide a venue where participants could reconnect with friends, classmates and colleagues to spend time remembering how much Park



Photo Adam Johnson

**Bringing it home:** *New York Times* columnist and St. Louis Park alumnus, Thomas Friedman, spoke at a fundraiser for the SLPPSF on May 21, 2016.

influenced their hearts, minds and futures," Brinkman said.

Event co-chair Mim Kagol said she felt happy with how the event turned out and believes that it accomplished the SLPPSF's goals.

"I think it was very successful. We had a three-way goal: to bring awareness to our wonderful schools and community, to bring awareness to the good things the foundation does for our schools, our teachers and students, and to celebrate a renowned alumnus," Kagol said.

Brinkman said tickets sold out for the VIP breakfast hosted before Friedman spoke. Overall, the SLPPSF earned \$20,067 from the event. She said Friedman's experience gave people hope and reassured them of Park's success.

"Friedman pointed out that we live in an uncertain and constantly changing world," Brinkman said. "The importance for all of us to have a safe place to retreat to is vital to our sense of well-being and stability. All people need an 'eye of the storm' environment. Our school communities are crucial in fulfilling that most important need."

Brown said his favorite part of the event was asking Friedman a question about the realities of being a journalist in a fast-changing industry.

"It was nice to get advice not only from a journalist, but from a *New York Times* columnist who is a Pulitzer Prize-winner," Brown said. "It was really good insight, and it gave me a lot of hope."

Friedman's new book, *Thank You For Being Late* was released in November.



**St. Louis Park**  
public schools foundation  
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*Thanks to donations from its supporters, the SLPPFS has given out almost a half-million dollars in grants to serve teachers and their students.*

## Grants of 2016-2017 total \$48,533

Title	School	Amount De-tails	Amount	Objective
Reading Our Way through the Many Levels of First Grade!	Susan Lindgren	Student Reading Book sets, Teacher Manual	\$4,600	Leveled-guided books for small group instruction
Leveled Literacy Instruction for Struggling Readers	High School	Fontas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy kits.	\$4,950	Engaging, efficient, and effective curriculum for struggling readers who do not qualify for Special Education
Literary Engagement through Technology	Peter Hobart	12 mini iPads and mini iPad cases	\$3,066	Student engagement through reading intervention with students using the technology of iPad mini's
Leveled Guided Reading Books for Small Group Instruction	Susan Lindgren	Four classroom kits of Being a Reader and teacher manuals	\$5,700	Providing high quality fiction and nonfiction texts at the students' small group instructional level
Multicultural Literature for Gifted Education	Susan Lindgren and Middle School	Various books from different cultural backgrounds	\$1,439	Classroom library of multicultural literature books to bring more diversity and understanding into the Gifted and Talented classrooms
Chromebooks for the Math Department	High School	35 Chromebooks	\$10,000	More access to technology that will increase student engagement, promote equity, and enable teachers to more efficiently track student progress
IB Sports, Exercise and Health Science Human Performance	High School	Varied exercise technology equipment	\$10,000	Technology to enable creating a designated human performance lab
Document Cameras for Classrooms	Susan Lindgren	Ladibug Document Camera for 22 teachers	\$8,778	Enables teachers to model activity accurately for better student comprehension

*The Foundation expresses its deep gratitude to Patti Soskin of Yum! Kitchen and Bakery for generously underwriting the VIP breakfast at the Friedman event May 21.*



## Eighth grade student artists enjoy new grant offering

By Mimi Fhima

When Eighth grader Sadie Yarosh heard her art class was going to begin a new painting unit, she said she felt ecstatic to have the opportunity.

The middle school art department received a \$1900 Acrylic Painting grant to provide high-quality materials for students to use in class.

“When (our teacher) told us in the beginning of the year we were going to paint, I got really excited because I love painting and I have

never painted on a canvas in class,” Yarosh said.

According to Middle School art teacher Sara Sonnabend, the department received a variety of materials that will help students.

“A few items to highlight would be the canvas smocks to protect student’s clothes, a wide range of high quality brushes; tiny detail brushes for foreground to large background sizes and individual paint pallets for mixing,” Sonnabend said.

Yarosh said students



Photo Sophie Yarosh

**Acrylics art:** Eighth-grader Sadie Yarosh displays a painting she made last year in her art class.

were able to produce their own projects they could take home using high-quality material.

“Some of (my peers) probably have never gotten to use (such) nice materials,” Yarosh said.

## Engineering grant provides new experiences for teacher, students

\$10,000 grant offers new avenues to success

By Genesis Buckhalton & Sydney Hall

High school engineering teacher Mark Miller said the grant his classroom received last year has provided new ways to achieve.

“The money provided us with a true engineering set-up as far as the computers go,” Miller said. “The computer set-up allows us to have multiple windows open on different monitors and run multiple programs at the same time.”

Miller said he has gained experience in working with new tools and instruments

in the classroom.

“I have gained a great deal of skill working with the students through the challenges of this course. I have taken additional engineering courses since the creation of this course to fine-tune my skills and gain new knowledge in the field of engineering,” Miller said. “I have also gained a great deal of knowledge working with Inventor, a CAD software package. It has been a great deal of fun.”

Junior Khyla Bonine said being in that class



**Hard at work:** Engineering students use equipment provided by a foundation grant.

helped her become a better student.

“It helped me with my math skills and science also, because I got more practice

## Retiree recognizes SLPPSF with bequest



Sharon Warner, a longtime employee of District 283 who passed away in March 2015, has remembered the St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation in her will with a generous bequest,

the largest that has been received to date.

Warner served the district for many years, primarily as a high school English teacher and yearbook adviser. She also served at various times as student activities director, dean of students, English department chairperson, faculty senate representative and member of many high school and district committees. She was passionate about her work and dedicated to student achievement, and was remembered fondly by many former students and colleagues at her passing.

This was one of two sizable gifts Warner made to benefit SLP students, the other being to Dollars for Scholars. In both cases, the gifts are being used to establish the Sharon K. Warner and Dean V. Berry Fund—Berry was her husband and also a longtime Park High teacher — that will support SLP schools into the future.

The Foundation is profoundly grateful for her generosity.

## Introducing new board member Chris Culp



**What was your background before joining the Board here at Park?**

I grew up in Eden Prairie. I went to EP public schools from K-6. I went to Benilde-St. Margaret’s from 7-12. I graduated from Villanova University in suburban Philadelphia. Upon graduation from VU, I worked at US Bank. After three years at USB, I went to work at Shelard Group, a real estate investment and management company.

**Continued on page 4.**



# St. Louis Park public schools foundation

investing in our children ... just makes sense

*The mission of the St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation is to enhance learning for the students of SLP schools.*

## SLPPSF Newsletter

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Special thanks to Lori  
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members contacted  
for information.

### Continued from page 3:

After two years at Shelard, I co-founded The Excelsior Group, a real estate investment, management, development, brokerage and finance company. We are headquartered in St. Louis Park. My wife and I moved to SLP in 2004. Our first child started at Susan Lindgren as a kindergartner in 2013. Our twin daughters joined their big brother as kindergartners in 2015. We are thrilled to have our kids in St. Louis Park schools. We are committed to SLP schools and committed to doing what we can to make the entire school system the best it can be.

### What drives you in your work as a board member?

My wife and I are committed to supporting outstanding education. We are committed to supporting outstanding education from both a time and financial investment. As a member of the SLPPSF Board, I can achieve both of those commitments in the community where I live.

### What is something you want people to know about you as a board member?

I'm committed to making SLP the most innovative, inclusive, and preparatory public school district in Minnesota.

## How to donate:

1. Go online to the website at <http://www.slpps.org> and click on "Donate Now."
2. Send your check to St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation, PO Box 16367, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.
3. Donations of time and talent are welcome, too. If you are interested volunteering, visit the SLPPSF website and contact president Peter Levy.

## Gratitude Greetings

**What is Gratitude Greetings?** A year-round opportunity for district parents and students to thank teachers

**How do I send a greeting?** Go to [slpps.org](http://slpps.org) and click on Gratitude Greetings

**Where does my greeting go?** Greetings are given to the designated staff member as well as the school principal

**Who delivers my greetings?** Board member Mary Bloomgren creates the Gratitude Greetings and delivers them

**How much do I donate?** Donations can be any amount and there is no limit to how many greetings that can be sent per donation

**Where does my donation go?** Donation goes directly to SLPPSF grants to help teachers supplement classroom learning

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