



The Foundation Focus

Fall 2020
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The Newsletter of the Catalina High School Foundation

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New Principal Takes the Helm at Catalina

by Stephen B Gin '83

The coronavirus forcing online learning, and a delay in re-opening the campus has amplified some of the challenges that Catalina High School faces. Still, new Principal Geoff Parks remains upbeat.

Parks wanted to be part of a school that's high in diversity and picked up on some of Catalina's other strong points right away. "I'm just really excited about being a Trojan," he says. "I've already met a lot of great people, and I can tell that it's a good fit for me."

While below average results on mandated state testing looms large, Parks notes that the growth data for the school is encouraging. "We have talented people here who can really make a difference, who have already made huge strides in the past three years that I've noticed just looking at the data," he explains.

Parks has a strong background in education and grew up attending small rural schools in Washington State. He's taught a variety of sciences at Willapa Valley High in Washington and here at Vail's Cienega High. Parks has also been a middle school teacher and coach, a student achievement adviser, an assistant principal, a principal; and most recently the superintendent of the Napavine School District before returning to Tucson.

As a superintendent, he says he missed interacting with students, and was hopeful when he learned that the Catalina post was available after being vacated by Antasio Holley, who recently moved to the East Coast.

"Granted, it's going to be kind of funky this (school) year, with the whole pandemic, but the climate and the culture at Catalina is good. It's caring—people really care about the kids. They have a lot of great systems in place already at Catalina that I've been looking at, and a lot of resources that will help," Parks notes. "And I think that's why you're seeing the graduation numbers increase. I think they're on the right path. Just keep persevering!"



New CHS Principal Geoff Parks

Parks is concerned that starting off with students not on campus could affect enrollment, be an additional struggle for families who lack internet access or a suitable computer or tablet, and could keep students from accessing on-campus resources.

He looks forward to helping the school become more successful academically, and in its extracurricular activities. He also hopes to reduce Catalina's high teacher turnover. "Just start building that success a little bit at a time—once you get on the escalator of success, you're going to get rid of those failing or D labels."

CHS FOUNDATION NOTE

Even though classes on campus were suspended before the end of the school year, learning continued to take place online. Our CHSF spring social had to be cancelled; and the fall meeting as well. The Foundation will announce the new inductees into the Hall of Fame, and the Alum of the Year in the spring, hopefully at our Spring Event.

Beginning in a few weeks, we look forward to a good on-campus and online classroom experience for our CHS students. It will be exciting with a new Principal and outstanding faculty.

Presidents' Message

by Jennifer Bond '66 and Stephen B Gin '83



05/20 The Foundation joined CHS Administrators at the Teachers' Appreciation Drive-Thru

Despite the sudden shutdown of the Catalina campus due to the coronavirus, the Foundation attended and assisted with several end-of-year events to help the students and teachers celebrate their accomplishments in a socially responsible way.

Co-Presidents Jennifer Bond and Stephen Gin represented CHSF at a drive-thru "Thank You, Teachers" event where teachers drove through the CHS parking lot greeted by cheering administrators and staff holding "Thank You, Teachers" signs. Each CHS teacher received a goody bag and a personal thanks from the principal and assistant principals.

The Foundation also took part in the filming of the annual Awards Ceremony, which took place in Catalina's beautiful auditorium, sans students. It was later aired for the students and families on the school's Facebook page. We announced the following CHSF scholarships, valued at \$1,000 each, to three seniors:

Marina Mendivil, who provided consistent, dedicated and humble



05/20 Graduate poses in front of billboard built by Construction Instructor Mishari Otaibi

service to CHS as the president, editor-in-chief and head of digital design and photography for the yearbook over three years; and as the production and stage manager for four years for the Drama Department. She made herself available to help students, teachers and administrators. She was admitted to the University of Arizona Fine Arts Department.

Brian Lopez was the captain of the soccer team and was unanimously voted all-region first team goalie. He also was awarded "CHS Athlete of the Year." He is an A student and has encouraged his team and the whole school to set goals and support the school. He plans to attend the University of Arizona and hopes to be an architect one day.

Halianna Piller is a student with intellectual curiosity, drive, leadership and top academic skills. She was always willing to help her fellow students and has spent 250 hours volunteering at Banner University Medical Center. She also volunteered 60 hours at the Ronald McDonald House. She plans to go to Pima Community College and hopes to have a career in health care as a way of giving back to the people of Tucson.

We also announced the **2020 Centurion Awards**. The faculty awardee for 2020 is **Jennifer Miranda**, a terrific college and career counselor who is an expert at college applications and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and is a wizard at helping students find the grants and scholarships that make a college career possible.



The student Centurion awardee is **Timber Bedorehfar**. He is a youth on his own and someone who always encourages other students to meet their goals and overcome obstacles. He is on



the football team and completed his lifeguard certification at Catalina, so can lifeguard at city pools in Tucson during the summers.

And to wrap up this school year like no other, we took part in another CHS first—an unforgettable drive-thru graduation ceremony! The graduating seniors arrived in decorated cars and trucks with their family members ranging from parents to grandmothers to toddlers. Grads first stopped at a photo booth to get pictures with a Trojan warrior dressed in full regalia, then stopped to pick up a goody bag and their yearbook. Next was another photo opportunity with a huge 2020 sign on the grassy hill by the flag pole, and finally they had their name announced and walked onto the stage to receive their diploma from outgoing **Principal Antasio Holley**, all to the tune of "Pomp and Circumstance." It was an incredibly festive occasion that may have eclipsed previous "normal" CHS graduations! The diploma presentations were also televised on Channel 13 (CBS) It was such a privilege to represent the Foundation at all these important CHS events in support of this impressive class of Trojan seniors and their talented and dedicated teachers.

Catalina Success Center Supplies Needed

With school just underway and an uncertain future of in-person classes, there is one constant: Catalina needs school supplies, hygiene products, and individual food portions, among other things. School is opening with remote learning and we are not sure when students will return to campus en masse. Amy Schull, our Drop-Out Retention Specialist is in charge of helping students and families get what they need for a successful school year. Even if students are working from home, they will come to school to get needed supplies. Amy's shelves need replenishing! If you like to shop, here are the lists. If you dread going into a store, send along a check to the Foundation and Amy will shop—she gets extra discounts as a teacher. Anything you do will be appreciated! Please send the donation/membership blank on p. 7 with your cash donation or leave it with your in-kind donation at the school.



05/20 CHS Graduate in the Drive through Celebration



05/20 Banner at Teachers' Appreciation Drive Thru Event



05/20 CHS Graduates celebrate with friends and families

School Supplies:

- Spiral Notebooks (college ruled)
- Composition books (college ruled)
- Mechanical Pencils
- Highlighters
- Notecards-ruled
- Scientific Calculators
- 1" or 1 1/2" binders

- Backpacks
- Colored pencils

Hygiene Pantry Items: (Full Size)

- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Feminine Pads and Tampons ("regular" size preferred)
- Lotion
- Chapstick

Food Pantry Items:

- Toilet Paper
- Peanut Butter
- Dry Pasta
- Pasta Sauce (cans preferably)
- Canned fruit/fruit cups
- Canned vegetables
- Canned pasta – ravioli, spaghetti
- Easy-Mac
- Canned Soup
- Canned Chicken
- Tuna Packets
- Ramen
- Cup of Soup

- Boxed Rice
- Boxed Potatoes
- Cereal
- Small water bottles
- Other Things Amy Collects:**
- \$25 Gift Cards to Walmart or Target (used for clothing and personal needs)
- \$10 Gift Cards to Fry's or Walmart (used for food items)

Grants Were Provided Despite the Early Closure

by Jennifer Bond '66, Grants Chairman

Even though campus classes were suspended, the CHS Foundation was able to provide mini-grants to several CHS teachers, in addition to those reported in the previous Focus.

Danayra del Castillo \$500 - The new librarian was awarded \$500 to refurbish and decorate the library to make it a more comfortable and welcoming place to read, study and gather. She has developed different areas of the library to attract students for various projects. For instance, she has offered students to sign up to come to a soundproof karaoke room in the library to listen, sign and read the words of various songs during their lunchtime. She also has areas set

up to read the instructions on how to do crafts, such as knitting, also during their lunch hour.

Melisa Hall \$325 - to provide goodie bags of appreciation to hand out to the teachers during the CHS teachers' drive-thru appreciation day. CHSF participated in thanking the teachers along with the administration after school was closed due to the COVID 19 virus and all the teachers had to move to teaching their student online.

Cody Downing \$500 - to provide emergency funds to purchase baseball equipment that had been stolen so that the men's baseball team would be able to start their season.

Donate Now to Help Catalina Students Succeed

By Sandy Tanner Elers '58

This year has been a difficult one for many non-profits, Catalina High School Foundation included. While the winter semester turned out to be a quiet one for us, we expect to have many requests from teachers, administrators, and activities when school resumes for the fall semester.

It appears that TUSD will be teaching remotely for everyone, but opening schools for those students whose parents want to send them. The in-school students will work under teachers' direction remotely with others in their classes and be monitored in classrooms observing distancing of small groups. They will probably stay in the same room the entire day. Should the schools have to close again (Arizona's numbers are horrible!), the students and teachers will continue with remote learning easily. We feel certain that there will be many requests for mini-grants with this plan since

teachers will be using a different format for classes.

If you are not in a position to donate, we certainly understand. If you are able, we would really appreciate any donation you can make. We need to fill our coffers for mini-grants and set aside some dollars for scholarships to be awarded next spring. Our students are among the most-needy in an overwhelmingly needy district. They are also bright, capable, interesting and polite, with goals to continue their educations beyond high school. They work hard to fulfill their requirements and graduate from Catalina. CHSF wants to help as much as we can and we depend on you to be able to do that. There is a donation/membership blank on page 7 of this newsletter. Please send it along with your donation so we can keep our records up to date. Thank you for all you have done in the past and for

Tim Bridges \$500 - for the beginning boys and girls golf team to purchase equipment. The Athletic Director is initiating a beginners' golf team and welcomes donations as well

Denis Viger \$500 - for the beginning tennis team to purchase tennis equipment. Denis is a new coach and would appreciate donations and/or input from previous CHS tennis players.

The Foundation also agreed to become the financial agent to manage grants given to the CHS baseball and softball programs as well as the College Knowing and Going grant, which helped improve the FASFA applications for college, and also funded some of the graduation ceremony expenses.

The CHS Foundation is pleased to be able to help all the students, faculty, and administration of Catalina. We hope you will continue to contribute to the CHS Foundation, so that we can continue this work.

what you can do to support Catalina students now.

Send donations to:

Catalina High School Foundation
6740 N Calle Lomita
Tucson, AZ 85704

Tax Credits

If you are an Arizona resident paying income tax to the state, you can direct \$200 per person or \$400 per couple to Catalina. Send your check to CHS, 3645 E Pima, Tucson AZ 85716. Put Public school tax credit on the 'for' line. You can direct your tax credit to various areas at CHS (sports, music, general). You will get a receipt.

This receipt will be needed at the time you do next year's taxes when the credit will be applied to your state income tax. Other tax credits may be available.

See <https://azdor.gov/tax-credits>.

Catalina Adapts with a Festive Graduation Like No Other

by Stephen B Gin '83

Keeping your eye on the prize and graduating is hard enough. But when your campus suddenly closes your senior year, crossing that finish line is made even more difficult. Amazingly, Trojan seniors continued Catalina's trend of increasing its numbers of graduates.

Catalina High students and staff were set to go on Spring Break when Gov. Doug Ducey and Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman announced that all public schools would be shut down due to the coronavirus outbreak.

But Trojans, especially its seniors, are remarkably resilient. Most adapted well to the technology aspect of remote learning, although many of the best social aspects of being a senior—the icing on the cake that helps unite classmates before they head off in different directions—were lost.

Fortunately, CHS administrators, teachers and staff were proactive, ensuring that seniors could continue to work toward their diplomas, receive their scholarships and awards, and that well-deserved ceremonies and celebrations would be held.

The Presidents' Message on the front cover of this Foundation Focus shares the Drive-thru Teachers



Appreciation Day that Catalina held on May 5, which gave teachers love and a chance to reconnect.

A week later, Catalina held its big annual awards in its beautiful auditorium. But unlike previous awards ceremonies, cheering students and recipients weren't present—instead, the awards ceremony was taped and later aired on social media and put online.

On May 21, as the sun began to set in the Old Pueblo, seniors dressed in their caps and gowns of blue or white excitedly sat in their car with proud parents, siblings and a few with grandparents, for Catalina High's first ever drive-through graduation!

Several of the cars were all decked out to celebrate each graduating senior. Families proudly waved brightly decorated poster boards out windows or from convertibles.

Catalina personnel all wore masks and the ones handing out CHS graduation signs and other mementos wore gloves as well. The graduation stage was set up at the bottom of the famous front steps. The small stage allowed for social distancing after each grad came up to receive their diploma from outgoing Principal Antasio Holley (please see our story introducing

new CHS Principal Geoff Parks in this issue). Families got to take photos of their grad at this memorable moment, and there were lots of other photo ops as well.



05/20 Principal Antasio Holley Gave out Graduation Diplomas

In all, 135 senior Trojans graduated and two additional seniors finished up their last units during summer. This is an 11 percent increase in graduates over the previous year, which had been a 20 percent increase from the preceding year!

It was such a positively charged evening, dispensing with much of the formality of previous graduations. And the celebratory atmosphere was heightened with family being able to be right next to their graduates.

With Pomp and Circumstance playing on the loudspeakers, graduates had their name announced as they went on stage to receive their diplomas and to pose for pictures with the principal.

Coming off the stage, the new graduates were given snacks and a memento of their graduation. From there, they could view the Top 10 Graduates table and pose for family photos in front of the beautifully lit 2020 billboard created by Construction CTE instructor Mishari Otaibi. Congratulations to all Trojan graduates and their families—wishing you continued success in your pursuits!



Donations

\$10,000 and up

AZ Diamondbacks Foundation for baseball and softball

\$2000 - 4999

College Success Arizona

\$1000 - 1999

Pusch Ridge Academy for baseball and softball

Tucson Conquistadores for baseball

Billy Mordka for baseball

\$500 - 999

CHS Boosters Club for sports

Sandy Tanner Elers '57

\$250 - 499

Mike Codd '58

\$100 - 249

Samantha Alkola

Dave Berg '60

Brendan Daly for baseball

Bill Gaylord '57

Kathy Krucker '67

Dale Rees '58

Sabino Baseball Foundation for baseball

Mary Alice Wallace for CHS Resource Center

\$1 - 99

Amazon

Jenni Bond for CHS Resource Center

Constance McMillian Elson '60

Jo Hauschildt Riestler '66

Dawn (Yalen Moriarty) Steinberg '64

Julie Vieger IHO Dana Barnes

Lori Whittaker

In Kind

Jo Hauschildt Riestler '66

Membership

Founders' Club

Samantha Alkola

Brendan Daly

Kathy Krucker '67

Annual Membership

Dana Barnes

Constance McMillian Elson '60

Dawn (Yalen Moriarty) Steinberg '64

Overwhelmed by Gratitude

by Cody Downing, Head Baseball Coach Catalina High School



It was my second week after being officially hired as Catalina High School's head baseball coach. I woke up to a picture message of a broken lock laying on the ground and baseballs scattered about. After a little investigation I realized our little white baseball shed had been broken into and we were missing a ton of gear. I tried not to panic or get too frustrated, thinking to myself "well, of course the school has insurance." I met with a few people and learned that the district has a \$50,000 deductible, which meant we couldn't get a dime to replace our stolen items. I reviewed the accounts I had inherited and realized we were in big trouble. The amount in our accounts was less than the value of the stolen items. Not only was I worried about replacing over \$1,300 worth of stolen gear, but also my ability to afford even the most essential items such as uniforms and baseballs was in jeopardy. To make matters worse new policies required all catcher's gear, game balls, and helmets to have a specific safety stamp on them, which none of our current gear had. Many of my new players had their personal gear stolen, and everyone was looking

to me, as the new head coach, to somehow figure it out. It was late January and our first scrimmage was less than a month away. Needless to say, we were in a tight spot.

I made the decision to reach out to my friend Amy Schull. Although she wears many hats at our school, my favorite way of summarizing her many job titles is "Our School's Super-Hero." Amy suggested that I ask the Catalina High School Foundation (CHSF) for help with replacing the gear that had been stolen, while she worked towards securing other donations to help our cause.

For years, the CHSF has been helping both students and teachers, providing the resources our community needs to be successful. In this case, not only did the Foundation assist in re-filling our ransacked baseball shed with essential equipment, but they also gave us an invaluable sense of hope and support in what was a rocky start for me as head coach.

With this first offering, other individuals and organizations began to contribute as well, with continued backing by the CHSF. They organized and processed each and every

donation, making it possible for me to continue my classroom lessons and hold daily practices. The following names and organizations generously donated to help us acquire some much-needed gear: Billy Mordka, the Tucson Conquistadors, the Sabino High School Foundation, Push Ridge Christian Academy, and the AZ Diamondbacks Foundation. We are truly grateful for everyone who stepped up to the plate and helped us out during a tough time.

With this outpouring of love, I was no longer overwhelmed by the situation, but I was overwhelmed with gratitude. The community rallied around our team during our time of need and showed its support. We were able to rebuild our pitching mound, purchase really sharp-looking new jerseys, buy catcher's gear, balls, and helmets, all with the required safety stamps. We

were even able to afford a few stylish items, such as cage jackets and hoodies.

Just two months later, after playing only a handful of games, the Coronavirus Pandemic struck. We had only just started our season, and it was suddenly over, before we had even got to spring break. My heart was broken for our seniors. Looking back on our extremely short season, one main memory stands out: "the break-in." While I am still heartbroken for my boys, there is a silver lining. Thanks to the community rallying around us, this season still holds value. We learned an important lesson about helping others in need. Despite our season being cut short, we are still grateful to have learned this great life lessons, and I am hopeful that my boys can look back at this year with fondness.



05/20 Baseball Coach Cody Downing posed as CHS Trojan with grads

Catalina High School Foundation Membership Form

Annual and Founder's Club dues run from November 1 to October 31

Name _____ Class Year _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Annual Dues	\$25.00 _____	I would like my donation to go to (check one)
Founders' Club Dues	\$57.00 _____	General Fund _____
Life Membership	\$250.00 _____	Mini-Grants _____
Donation	_____	Social Services _____
Total Enclosed	_____	Band Fund _____
		Scholarships _____
		Eva Royce Fund _____
		Construction Trades _____

Please return this form and your donation/dues to: _____ I can help by: _____

Catalina High School Foundation
6740 N Calle Lomita
Tucson AZ 85704

Please do not publish my name. Initial here: _____

Life Member Payment Plan: Pay \$100 per year for two years and a final payment of \$50 in the third year, and become a Life Member. Put "Payment for Life Membership" on the "For" line. Questions? Ask Sandy at greenenchalada@gmail.com or 520-260-9171.



CHS Reunions

Class of 1965

The Fall reunion has been rescheduled for:

APRIL 16-18, 2021

Contacts: Rick Holsclaw at rick@rickholsclaw.com and Sharon Grabe Ellsworth at sellsworth@resulsaz.net

All other reunions have been cancelled for the fall of 2020. If they are rescheduled, you will be notified. We hope all of our alums are safe and healthy!

Catalina High School Foundation
6740 N. Calle Lomita
Tucson, Arizona 85704

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Please notify your classmates that the ONLY authentic Alumni group AFFILIATED with Catalina is the CHS Foundation site (catalinahighschoolfoundation.org) and FaceBook link. People are registering with other FB pages that presume to be connected, and if money is sent it does NOT go to help Catalina but rather the commercial sites.

Website:

www.catalinahighschoolfoundation.org

Contact us at greenenchalada@gmail.com

CHS Foundation FOCUS newsletters:
www.catalinahighschoolfoundation.org/foundation-efforts/foundation-newsletters/



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