



WHAT'S NEWS

Our mission is to provide every OUSD student access to a quality school library.

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence." Martin Luther King, Jr.

Hello Dear Friends,

Friends of Oakland Public School Libraries (FOPSL) appreciates the generous donations of money, books and support from friends, family and our community. With these resources, in addition to the volunteers, parents, teachers and administrators working together to restore school libraries, Oakland Unified School District students are checking out books in record numbers.

FOPSL has provided support to twenty schools since the beginning of this school year. These efforts have assisted in opening the doors of 13 libraries and five more will open soon. FOPSL and the communities of Roots International, West Oakland Middle School, Melrose Leadership Academy, Brookfield, Rise and New Highland are working tirelessly to open these libraries by late spring or in time for the fall semester. Progress should be celebrated, however for every student in OUSD that has access to a school library full of literature and information resources, there are still as many that do not. Additionally, due to part-time staffing, the hours school libraries are open are often limited.



Future OUSD Library...watch for the "after shot" in our spring newsletter.

The Time is Now

The Common Core State Standards have arrived in OUSD, with full implementation scheduled for 2013/2014, escalating the need for quality school libraries. The rigorous English Language Arts (ELA) standards are designed to "ensure students read increasingly complex works of literature, actively seek wide, deep and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts," building knowledge, broadening experiences and world views. (CCSS) The demand for resources,

literature, informational texts across the curriculum, and information technology will be vast at every school.

Highly skilled professional library staff provides the expertise necessary to sustain this robust demand and the collaborative support required to teach these standards. As school libraries return to OUSD, FOPSL works closely with OUSD Library Services to seek the means to support staffing libraries with Professional Teacher Librarians. Learn more about the Common Core State Standards on the OUSD website or at <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>.

WOMS Awarded \$5000 for New Library/Media Center

Congratulations West Oakland Middle School! FOPSL and WOMS were successful in receiving the 2012 Toolbox for Education Grant from Lowes. This \$5000 grant will purchase the supplies (from Lowes) to build spaces for 18 computers in three distinct locations in the school library. This addition will provide optimal access to multiple educational resources for students and teachers.



Sigma Delta Theta volunteers at WOMS library

FOPSL volunteers will lead the library renovation efforts, in partnership with OUSD leadership. Volunteers from Lowes, WOMS parents, community volunteers and members of Sigma Delta Theta Sorority will provide their time and effort to create a state of the art library and media center.

Reports from the Field

After three years, the Global Family Elementary school library doors are open once again. Thanks to a couple of dedicated FOPSL volunteers (featured below), OUSD library services, parents and school staff, the collection is updated, automated and organized. Students returned from winter break to a fabulous library.



Before



After

A steady transformation is occurring at Rise/New Highland as a library “rises” from a pile of boxes. FOPSL volunteers have spent their Fridays creating a resource and literature rich environment that will serve over 600 students.



A library at Rise and New Highland Library



Work begins at Roots International Library.

Gina Hill, principal at Roots International, has asked FOPSL and OUSD services to help restore library services to her 6-8th grade students by updating the library. This library will eventually serve 6th-12th grade students at both Roots and Coliseum College Prep Academy (CCPA). The work began with a couple of community workdays

Recently restored Community United Elementary School and Futures Elementary School library is up and running, thanks to Rebecca Edwards, the senior library clerk. In a two week span, over 700 students TK-5th grade visit the library. As a reward for excellent library usage, Rebecca prepared a special “Literacy Celebration.” FOPSL volunteers joined the fun and helped students make book marks, mini books and pillows to cozy up the reading area.



Rebecca thanks her students!

Books! Books! And More Books!

Organizations and individuals around the bay are making an impact on OUSD libraries through book drives and book donations. Oakland Literacy Coalition has provided countless beautiful new books to OUSD libraries acquired from the Barnes and Noble Holiday Book Drive.



Books also come from across the bay. The Maas Clinic in San Francisco invited FOPSL to attend their annual event, “Beauty for Books” at Ruby Skye where the entry fee was new and gently used books. Many of these books will be donated to OUSD libraries.

As always, our friends at East Bay Children’s Book Project continue to provide OUSD libraries with quality literature.

FOPSL Salutes Connie and Jon Hartung

In each newsletter, we feature a community member dedicated to our mission to provide every OUSD student access to a quality school library. This winter, we have the honor of introducing two extraordinarily hard working volunteers. Connie and Jon made the library at Global Family their project last fall. Working long hours in the library and taking piles of books home to catalogue, clean, and repair, made it possible for the school to hire a senior library clerk and begin circulation after being closed for three years.



Connie at PLACE at Prescott Library

How did you become interested in restoring OUSD libraries?

Chip Rath, chairperson of FOPSL, first inspired me to become involved in the mission of restoring and reopening OUSD libraries. As a child, I spent endless hours with a library book in my hands, and my own children also had easy access to books. Once I heard about the great needs of many of the OUSD libraries, it felt gratifying to dive in and help.

What OUSD Libraries have you helped restore?

I’ve worked at Community United Elementary, PLACE at Prescott, Grass Valley (site of my first teaching assignment in 1961), Global Family and now Melrose Leadership Academy. I learned the ropes from many of the long-time, hard working FOPSL volunteers. But I come with experience; I’ve taught elementary school in Oakland and Hayward, including a number of years as a school librarian. Somehow that inspired Ann Gallagher to turn over the entire Global Family project to me and my husband, Jon. He is a lifetime “fix it/complete it” kind of guy, from a variety of professions, including his valuable work at the UC Botanic Garden. Jon has inspired some of his friends to join our work at Melrose Leadership Academy.

Jon was eager to procure extra shelving from the UC excess office furniture site, secure them to the library walls and then learn the process of cataloging books. We were taking home multiple boxes of books, entering them into the system, and then returning for more. I haven't seen the surface of my dining table for many months.....a small price to pay!

How has this experience affected you?

At Global Family, it was both inspiring and sad to see the kids lined up at our door at lunchtime, eager to help. Having been without a library there for 3 years, they continually asked how soon it would open.



Left to right, Raleigh Redus, Alan Harris, Bob Shuken, Wendy Harris, Connie Hartung, and Jon Hartung

What goals or dreams do you have for OUSD libraries?

As children absorb the many hours of excellent reading instruction from teachers, it is imperative that they also have good access to reading materials. Jon and I plan to continue working with the district, under Ann's inspiring guidance and leadership.

Thank you for sharing your story, Connie and Jon.

There are many people like Connie and Jon that commit time, energy and dedication to the school libraries, because they understand the critical need for this resource in the education of our students. FOPSL will share some of their inspirational stories in our newsletters and on our website. *Interview by Kari Hatch, February 2013.*

Citizens of Oakland

Thank you for your continued support of OUSD libraries through your Measure G Parcel Tax contributions.

OUSD Principals

We appreciate your role in keeping OUSD school libraries open and operating during these financially difficult times. FOPSL is dedicated to supporting your school library. Let us know how we can help you.

Please visit our website to learn more about Friends of the Oakland Public School Libraries, ways to get involved and how you can support quality school libraries.

www.fopsl.org

Note: Pictures of students are not included in our newsletter to honor the OUSD requirement of photo release forms.