

2018 Grant Awards Reception Presentation
Nancy Mills
10/17/18

I'd like to welcome everyone to our 2018 Grant Awards Reception! I'm Nancy Mills, the Chairman of the Foundation, and I'm excited to let everyone know right off the bat that we will be giving out \$200,000 tonight, the largest amount of we have **ever** given!

We take our role of allocating these funds very seriously. We work hard to understand the needs in our community, and we get to know our grant recipients personally. We make sure that every grant we award helps to fulfill our mission of addressing the unmet needs in our community and expanding opportunities for all residents.

When the Foundation was established in 1992, the original board members wisely decided to create a permanent endowment fund. Due to the generous support of many individuals, foundations and businesses, our endowment has grown and our impact on the community is stronger than ever. Our Board is fully committed to continuing to grow the endowment and granting **more** dollars each year.

I'd now like to introduce our Board and several notable guests. Please stand when you're called.

First, we're honored to have Highland Park City Council members Dan Kaufman, Kim Stone, and Alyssa Knobel here tonight. We are so fortunate to have elected officials who care about the community as much as they do.

Also here with us tonight are Anne Bassi, Moraine Township Supervisor; Monica Schroeder, Deputy Superintendent of School District 112; and Debby Finn, Interim Principal of Highland Park High School.

Turning to our Board, I'd like to introduce past chairmen of the Foundation: Andy Livingston, Wally Nathan, and Peter Flanzer.

And our current Board members, including our newest members Robyn Schuster, Jon Levey, Jamie Strait, and Craig Leva.

Our Advisory Board members – many of them have been involved with the Foundation almost since the beginning.

There are several people who deserve big thanks for making tonight so special:

Deborah Cogan, one of our board members and our amazing event chair, who took care of every detail tonight.

Deborah Brill, our administrative assistant, who helps us in so many ways, especially tonight since our Executive Director Terri Olian is in New York with her new grandson.

Gayle Mandel, who helps us with our PR, and our musicians, from Midwest Young Artists: Grace Mockus on cello, Jane Mockus on violins, and Bella Kim on the viola.

Thank you to the Highland Park Community House and Wendy Horwitch. We love having our event here!

Last, thank you to all of our corporate sponsors, especially Sunset Foods who provided all of tonight's food, beverages and décor free of charge, and thanks to Sunset's event coordinator Jennifer McKinney.

Each one of us plays a part in enhancing the quality of life for the residents of Highland Park and Highwood. When we work together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish. Thank you all for being here and supporting our wonderful community!

I'd like to turn the program over now to Sara Sher, who oversees the selection committee for the HPCF Golden Apple Award. Sara does an outstanding job, and I'd like her to tell you a little about the award and our 2018 recipient.

This year we established a second award for our schools, the Personal Achievement Award, which honors a high school student who demonstrates perseverance toward personal goals even when faced with obstacles or difficulties. For the 2018 award, we were proud to honor Jason Estrada, who was selected for his outstanding character, creativity, and commitment to his peers.

Turning now to our grant recipients, I'd like to introduce Ali Barnett, the Director of Development for the Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center. I asked Ali to speak tonight because understanding and preventing sexual abuse is such an important and timely topic; also, Ali is my niece and she's fantastic!

One of the most rewarding parts of being on the board of the Foundation is seeing the direct impact we have on people's lives. Tonight, we are going to hear from Maria Bautista, an outstanding HPHS senior who has participated in a wonderful program supported by the Foundation. She is very involved at the high school and a leader among her peers.

Recently, the Foundation held our very first fundraising event. We were overwhelmed by the support of the community. With more than 300 people attending, we brought in over \$100,000, including in-kind donations.

Part of the appeal of the event was our honoree, Alyssa Knobel, who received the Jack Blane Community Service Award. The award was launched in 2014 to honor Jack Blane, a past chairman and founder of the Foundation, whose lifelong commitment to serving others extended to all aspects of his life.

Although some of you were at our Gather for Good event, I'd like to take a minute to make sure everyone here knows a little bit about Alyssa. As a two-term Highland Park City Councilman, City Council liaison to various groups and commissions, a volunteer for many organizations, **and** a professional marketing consultant, Alyssa's selfless desire to do good inspires the rest of us. She is extremely generous, passionate and capable. As the city's liaison to the Community Foundation, Alyssa has shared her energy and ideas to make us a better, more impactful Foundation. And she does this with every group she's involved in. Her fellow City Councilman Tony Blumberg describes her as level-headed and always well-informed on all sides. Thank you, Alyssa, for all you do, and congratulations! Can you please come up and say a few words?

And now the moment many of you have been waiting for... David Reich will be presenting the grant awards for 2018! David is a long-time board member of the Foundation, Chair of the Grants Committee, and now Vice-Chairman of the Foundation. We're lucky to have him in a leadership role on the board and I'm so grateful to get to work closely with him in our quest to enrich the lives of all local residents.