

## The **Awesome Awards**

are our opportunity to celebrate human spirit, community, generosity and all things made possible because of you.

The Awesome Awards have been created to appreciate and celebrate the unsung heroes who quietly go about their work and make sure every child, every day has the opportunity to be awesome.

Recognition is important. It's a powerful way of celebrating people and letting them know they are valued.

Think of it as a BIG HUG from your community. We can build a better world by celebrating the people and qualities that we know to be awesome.

### PRESENTER



Tom Hewitt

## In This Issue:

- Bookmobile
- School Supply Drive
- SKEF's New Home
- Save the Dates

# 2017 AWESOME AWARDS

SKEF's Back to School Lunch and Awesome Awards make for one of Salem's happiest annual celebrations, and this year was no exception.

Celebrated on Tuesday, Sept. 12 at the Salem Convention Center, the awards luncheon honored five individuals -- and one notable financial services and credit institution -- for exemplary contributions to Salem-Keizer kids, via SKEF-sponsored programs.

SKEF's year-round efforts include the before and after-school Enrichment Academy, the School Supply Depot, Bazillion Books for Kids, Spelling Bee, Innovation Grants, Crystal Apple Awards, Learning Gardens, Lemonade Day and, of course, the springtime fitness festival known as Awesome 3000.

Read on about this year's big-hearted recipients, key volunteers who unlocked a treasure chest of opportunities for deserving students in all grades.

## AWESOME AWARD RECIPIENTS:

### HILARY BRIK-MORRIS

SKEF may have no greater role model than Hilary Brik-Morris.

"She's been an advocate for children for as long as I can remember," said Krina Lee. "Her advocacy for special needs children is extraordinary."

Brik-Morris has been the driving force behind the special needs event at Awesome 3000, always one of the most emotionally satisfying races during the early May festival of fitness.

There is an additional reason to celebrate her awesomeness this year. "Hilary was in a horrific car accident that nearly killed her," Lee said.

Many months later, Brik-Morris continues to regain strength and mobility through a regimen of physical rehabilitation.



*Continued on page 2*

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## Mission Statement

*The Salem Keizer Education Foundation is a catalyst for the enhancement of the education and development of all Salem-Keizer youth by providing resources for creative and innovative programs and materials, educating and mobilizing the community, and sustaining collaborative partnerships that support its goals.*

## Privacy Statement

*Salem-Keizer Education Foundation never sells, loans or exchanges the names, addresses or other information about our donors or others who receive our mailings.*

# AWESOME AWARD RECIPIENTS:

*Continued from page 1*

Her rehab appointments have coincided with those of a young boy who was using a walker. Joey and Brik-Morris became friends.

Sensing an opportunity, Brik-Morris convinced the child to participate at the 2017 Awesome 3000. That he did made for a magical moment.

A throng of spectators cheered Joey on as he approached the finish line, the final competitor of 50 to do so.

With an unexpected and dramatic flourish, Joey cast aside his walker with yards to go and finished the race without it. A joyous and tearful celebration ensued.

When Brik-Morris saw Joey at rehab two weeks later, he was still walking on his own. "I ran in Awesome 3000," he said. "I don't need a walker."

"Hilary empowered that boy," Lee said.

Now, that's awesome.



*A mixture of cheers and tears greeted Joey at his big moment in the sun.*



## MICHELLE DEAN

Kindness and encouragement are the driving forces behind Michelle Dean's coaching for Awesome Youth Sports.

"I've never heard her raise her voice at a child," says Juanita Heimrich, whose son, Chace, has been on basketball and soccer teams coached by this ever-willing parent volunteer.

"She makes participation a positive experience," Heimrich says. "The kids learn how to pay attention and follow directions, and never by fear or embarrassment.

"And every child on the bench is given a chance to play regardless," she says. "The kids know they'll participate no matter what,

and that is a really big thing for them. When Chace hears that Michelle will be coaching a team, he wants to be on it."

"Michelle is the very definition of a perfect volunteer," says SKEF's Mark Lowery. "She coaches for all the right reasons, and she will take on the assignment no one else wants. She'll even coach a team that doesn't include her own children."

"She brings big enthusiasm," says SKEF's Joe Perez. "You can hear it when you walk into the gym."

## LEILANI TUCKER



Leilani Tucker's middle name might as well be Yes.

As an ever-ready volunteer, she has raised her hand to assist with Awesome 3000, Urban AgFest, holiday break lunches, LEGO Robotics tournaments and more.

"Sometimes we have these little 911 moments and need extra hands," says Valerie Steele, SKEF's volunteer coordinator. "She's the first person I call at the last minute, which I hate to do, but such is the reality of working at a foundation."

In 2013, Tucker retired after 31 years at the Oregon Health Authority. A year later "Leilani fell in love with SKEF," said Executive Director Krina Lee. "She took the assignment to help establish the school supplies depot at Walker Middle School and just ran with it."

A long list of volunteer efforts followed as Tucker followed her bliss, sometimes behind the scenes, other times directly connecting with children.

"I found what was most important to me was kids and education," Tucker said.

"She's so invested in SKEF," said Steele. "She has made us a part of her life."

## Recipients continued...



### STEPHANIE ARONSON

Not all heroes wear capes.

Some, like Willamette University's Stephanie Aronson, wear ASPIRE badges.

Stephanie's super heroic mentorship abilities led to one of the signature success stories of the 2016-17 school year.

Working one-on-one with Sirena, a legally blind and homeless senior at North Salem High, Stephanie provided the guidance needed to tackle the daunting process of applying for college admission and financial aid.

"Having one person there who talks you through it makes things a lot better," Sirena said. "One person can make the difference in someone going to college and being able to afford it."

That mentorship paid off in a most extraordinary fashion. Not only was Sirena accepted to Willamette's Class of 2021, she was chosen to be a Ford Scholar, meaning both her undergraduate and graduate school tuition will be paid for by the Ford Family Foundation.

The freshman passed along a message to her mentor.

"Thank you so much for helping me discover the path to college, and helping me see that everything is OK...that I'll make it through this."

### ADAM KOHLER

ASPIRE mentor Adam Kohler came to the rescue at a crucial moment, volunteering to develop a needed program for middle school students.

Here's how SKEF's volunteer coordinator, Valerie Steele, remembers it:

"The principal at Stephens Middle School called me and said, "Our boys are struggling. Their fathers are gone. Absent. No leadership. Could we do something for them?"

"We asked ourselves, 'Who would be willing to do this?'"

When asked, Steele remembers Kohler saying, "That's right in my wheelhouse. I love working with McKay High School kids, but that would be something I'd really like to be part of."

Engaging the students in a series of lunchtime gatherings called Boys Lunch Club, "Adam has been a real father figure," Steele said.

Stephens Principal Jenny Madland echoes the sentiment. "From every indication, Adam has made a difference with boys who were getting into trouble at school. It's noticeable."



Kohler, who works for CenturyLink, has been a reliably eager SKEF supporter.

He and his children annually assist in SKEF's Martin Luther King Day of Community Service.

Clearly, he's one who answers when his name is called.

## NORTHWEST FARM CREDIT SERVICES



"People with a passion" is the way SKEF leadership describes the volunteers of Northwest Farm Credit Services.

The institution's strenuous efforts made a critical difference in the striking rebirth of McKay High School's dormant agriculture program.

After a long lull, funding to restore an Ag teacher at McKay was made available. But that offered only a partial solution. An influx of money was also needed to rehabilitate crumbling facilities. Northwest Farm Credit Services provided it – and then some.

The rehab effort began a year ago when Northwest came forward with a grant and a commitment to match the money with sweat equity.

In mid-summer this year, members of the organization continued work in the greenhouse by adding new floors, tables, irrigation and finished the outdoor classroom. "The classroom looked like a prison cell," said SKEF Executive Director Krina Lee. "The barn had been taken over by nutria. There were cobwebs and spiders everywhere. Everything had fallen into disrepair."

Jack hammers demolished concrete. Wheelbarrows took it away. Tractors pulled up to a 20-foot Dumpster with demo debris that filled "the biggest box that Cherry City Scrap metals could bring," Lee said.

"Northwest Farm Credit Services and SKEF made for a beautiful fit," she said.

The result?

"The Agriculture program is back at McKay, revitalized and restored," she said. "In a way, it's better than new because of the massive human effort."



# NINTH SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE DONATIONS RESTOCK THE SCHOOL SUPPLY DEPOT

When Shannon Priem peers into a donation bin during SKEF's annual School Supply Drive, she sees the future.

Her vision unfolds with the gift of a single binder, one that a student needs to sort science notes and assignments. The student recipient gets turned on to science that year,



Northwest Natural Gas employees sort thousands of supplies.

thanks to an inspirational teacher and the notes in that binder. Riding a wave of science excitement, the child graduates from high school with honors and is offered a full ride at a distinguished university. Four years later, the new scientist lands a job at a research lab doing pioneering work in cancer prevention and treatment, possibly leading to cures.

Shannon believes that donation of a single binder could lead to such an outcome. And who is to say she is dreamer?

In its ninth year, the late-summer campaign to get needed supplies into the hands of students in September involved over 90 participating sites in the Mid-Valley, including Salem Health, where Shannon oversees internal communications.

Donors provided the basics, like markers, water color paints and glue sticks. But they also filled bins with more advanced items including scientific calculators, math graph paper and alarm clocks.

"We realize that lots of kids live in homes where parents have already left for work by the time the student awakes," Shannon said. "In so many cases, donating a new alarm clock can fill a critical need."

In the 2016-17 school year, homelessness was a daily reality for 1,200 students of all ages in the Salem-Keizer School District "Some 61 percent of the 42,000 students lived in poverty last year," Shannon said. "That's up from 58 percent the year before."

"For many kids, school is their home," Shannon said.

Thanks to the community's generosity, students can now obtain supplies year-round at SKEF's depot at Walker Middle School.

It makes a tangible difference to donate, as this year's drive once again proved.



Key Bank's Elaine Harvey, center, made certain school supply deposits dropped in the bins.

## ELAINE HARVEY CARES ABOUT KIDS, YOU CAN TAKE THAT TO THE BANK

SKEF board member Elaine Harvey kept a watchful eye on the school supply drive as the donation deadline neared.

"Every year it always seems to get busiest toward the end," she said, from her desk at the Key Bank branch on Edgewater Road in West Salem.

The grandmother of two students enrolled in Salem-Keizer schools has led the bank's efforts to fill the bins. "To be a part of making sure that every kid has what they need every day is very important to me as an individual," she said. "And Key Bank leadership and its employees want to be part of that."

This year, she said, Key Bank will be the presenting sponsor of the Crystal Apple Awards, an event she has supported through her volunteerism. "Just reading the applications alone gives me goosebumps," she said.

# SKEF'S NEW BOOKMOBILE IS A GIFT THAT WILL KEEP ON GIVING

Joe Egli's two-day marathon ride aboard a renovated ambulance -- from San Diego to Salem -- was one for the books. Egli's mission was to drive the vehicle to Oregon -- stat! -- so the one-time emergency vehicle could become SKEF's new rolling library of give-away books.

The ambulance-turned-Bookmobile had performed a similar role in Southern California. An out-of-nowhere opportunity to acquire makes for one of the happiest stories in recent SKEF history.

*It's a beautiful thing!*



The Bookmobile's introduction to Oregon took place over Father's Day Weekend in June, just hours after Egli, a SKEF board member, heroically pulled into the parking lot behind Where the Sidewalk Begins, ending his epic journey.

That was Saturday night.

On Sunday morning, the Hagedorn family -- dad John, mom Tyke and 20-year-old daughter Jordan -- went to work stripping off the fanciful, pirate-themed wrap that had adorned the "Good Ship Literacy"

"There wasn't a lot of time," Tyke said. "The Bookmobile had to be ready Monday morning for a new look."

Armed with heat guns, the family went at it, peeling off the graphics with their fingernails. It took nine hours to "get down to the original ambulance," she said. "And we only took one 20-minute break for nourishment."

When the job was complete, "My daughter and I both needed manicures afterward," said Tyke, a SKEF staff member.

Husband John and daughter Jordan pitch in regularly for SKEF. "They pretty much help with "anything and everything, whenever and however," Tyke said.

On Monday, a crew at FastSigns on Commercial Street in Salem applied an eye-popping new graphic treatment, designed by the pros at In House Graphics. The "Good Ship Literacy" moniker was retained.

The re-paneling was completed by the Thursday deadline, allowing for a crew to take the Bookmobile over to the former Oregon State Police grounds, where books to be donated are stored. The Bookmobile was stocked and readied for its June 26 debut at Summer Madness. It also made early appearances at the Marion County Fair and Movie Night at the Park.

Morris Pike, who orchestrated the donation of the van to SKEF, was guest speaker at the Aug. 15 Kiwanis gathering at Denny's in South Salem. Known to many Southern Californians as "Captain Book," Pike and the members of the Encinitas chapter of Kiwanis had for years distributed free books using the converted ambulance, decorated as a pirate ship. Among the many recipients were children of Marines deployed from Camp Pendleton.

This year, when the cost of retrofitting the vehicle to meet California's strict emission standards became prohibitive, the California Kiwanians started searching for an out-of-state home for the Bookmobile. Salem stepped up, with substantial assistance from local Kiwanians.

In June, Egli, of Brown Insurance Group, accepted the challenge of driving the Bookmobile to Salem in 48 hours or less.



*From left, donor Morris Pike inspired Willamette Queen costumed captain Richard Chesbrough and delighted Joe Egli and Krina Lee.*

He told the Kiwanis audience that he battled LA traffic, waited out a massive accident backup on an interstate and had to pull off the road for diesel refueling every two hours. The Bookmobile only gets eight miles to the gallon.

SKEF Executive Director Krina Lee shared a story about twin brothers who spotted the Bookmobile at Movie Night at the Park and were excited to learn that there was no charge to acquire a book.

After slowly walking around the spiffed-up vehicle, one of the brothers said, "Lady, this is a beautiful thing."

# SKEF'S NEW HOME TO OPEN THIS FALL

After months of construction and much anticipation, the home to ASPIRE, the Mike McLaran Center, and a Training Center is on schedule to be completed in early fall.

The college and career readiness center, located at 223 Commercial Street in Salem, should be buzzing with activity in the final months of 2017, capping a years-long effort.

Through the heat of summer, workers framed the interior of the historic building, installed drywall and installed the HVAC system. And as the school year began, the project really came to life once the floors, hardware and windows were in place.

The McLaran Center, housed in what was once a 19th Century mercantile, will open new vistas of opportunity for students, said SKEF Executive Director Krina Lee.

The Center will be an official ASPIRE site, providing mentoring and resources to students and parents facing the daunting task of applying to colleges and filing for financial aid.




Recent research results indicate that students who have been assisted by ASPIRE mentors have an 18 percent greater chance of graduating from high school.

The Center will be home to the Oregon College Savings Plan and will provide space for visiting representatives from the area's colleges, universities and community colleges.


The Center's namesake, Mike McLaran, was a beloved community leader-by-example who died in 2013.




**Shout out and THANK YOU** to our friends at KeyBank for this tremendous gift for the McLaran Center for Student Success and our Pathway to Post Graduation Success Program




## gift shop & smoothie bar







Unique Gifts & Jewelry  
Inspirational Books  
Home Decor  
Local Artisans  
Great Kid Items



Where the Sidewalk Begins helps support the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation and the 42,000 students throughout the district.

233 Commercial St. NE Salem, OR 97301  
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# Help us reach every child, every day



## Why become a monthly giver?

Becoming a monthly giver means SKEF will have a foreseeable source of income we can rely on to support our programs and the kids who flourish from them.

Monthly giving is the easiest way to support SKEF. Here are some benefits:

- You are in control. You can start by mailing in the form on this page, change, increase, decrease or stop anytime by phone at 503-364-2933.
- You will have peace of mind knowing more of your gift will go directly to support kids.
- You will receive less mail because we don't need to send you reminders.
- You will never have to find another stamp or write another check.

Your donation will go directly to support every child every day to be able to participate in:

- AVID Field Trips
- K-12 Salem-Keizer Art Show
- Instruments for Kids
- Free Hot Suppers
- Enrichment Academy
- Lego Robotics
- Salem-Keizer Spelling Bee
- Awesome 3000
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)
- School Supplies
- Summer camps
- Awesome Youth Sports
- Bazillion Books for Kids
- Gardens
- Scholarships
- ...and much more!



**Please sign up today to be a Monthly Giver!**

## MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM DONATION FORM

**Yes!** I want to donate to the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation.

### MY INFORMATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

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### IT'S EASY TO GIVE

#### PLEASE ACCEPT MY:

##### MONTHLY DONATION OF:

\$5.00  \$10.00  \$20.00

OTHER \$ \_\_\_\_\_

##### Please deduct my checking account by using: *(signature required – sign below)*

A voided check or

A check with your first monthly gift

##### Please use my Debit/Credit Card:

VISA  MasterCard  Discover

American Express

\_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card# Exp. Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

*I/We authorize Salem-Keizer Education Foundation to deduct the above amount from my checking account or credit card on the 25th of each month.*

MY ONE TIME DONATION OF: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to Salem-Keizer Education Foundation*

**Thank you for your support!**



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## 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF INNOVATION GRANT AWARDS

Salem-Keizer Education Foundation will award over \$40,000 to local teaching professionals at its 2017 Innovation Grant Award Ceremony Thursday, September 21. The grants will fund innovative projects that enhance learning for students in elementary, middle and high school. One of the recipients is the **Parent/Teacher Home**

**Visit Project.** This project focuses on the increase of family engagement to build trust and cultural competency between school staff and families. The equal partnership between school and home allows the sharing of dreams, expectations and tools in a unique and personal setting.

### SKEF WISH LIST

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paper towel/wrapping paper tubes | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 oz/16 oz mason jars with lids        | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish translators              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colored construction paper       | <input type="checkbox"/> Balloons (regular size)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Pampered Chef “handy choppers”   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tarps (5 X 7)                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Small bowls                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Button maker                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult scissors                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Postage stamps                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Crafts supplies           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries – Lithium CR2025 3V    | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 rolling storage tubs (64 quart)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Samsung Tablets                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Cards                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries – AA                         | <input type="checkbox"/> iPads                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assorted hand tools              | <input type="checkbox"/> Chess Sets                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Lottery Tickets                  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Board Games                            | <input type="checkbox"/> 56 quart plastic totes with lids |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Ad space for Where the Sidewalk Begins | <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate                        |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre K – 2nd grade level books          |   |

## Save THE DATES • 2017

### FALL

#### OCTOBER

**URBAN AG FEST**  
McKay High School  
OCTOBER 19-20

**Witches Nite Out**  
OCTOBER 27

#### NOVEMBER

**CRYSTAL APPLE AWARDS**  
Historic Elsinore Theatre  
NOVEMBER 2

#### NOVEMBER

**AND DECEMBER**  
**HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE**  
Where The Sidewalk Begins  
Home for the Holidays

#### DECEMBER

**LEGO Robotics Tournament**

### WINTER

#### FEBRUARY

**WHY I LOVE OREGON**  
**ESSAY CONTEST**

#### MARCH

**ALL DISTRICT SPELLING CONTEST**  
TBD

#### MARCH

**LEMONADE DAY LAUNCH PARTY**

### SPRING

#### APRIL

**SHOOT FOR THE STARS**  
APRIL 21

#### MAY

**AWESOME 3000**  
SATURDAY, MAY 2

#### LEMONADE DAY

SATURDAY, MAY 19