

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



## CERNOVICH FIELDHOUSE DEDICATED SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

Dr. Rick Cernovich, Kim Cernovich and members of their family were on hand at the Kewanee High School Stadium on September 1 for the dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the newly constructed Cernovich Fieldhouse. Rick and Kim Cernovich were granted permanent naming rights in exchange for donations received by the Kewanee Schools Foundation totaling \$250,000. Their wish is to honor and memorialize their fathers, George and Mike Cernovich, respectively.

During the dedication, Dr. Jeff Johnson, president of the Kewanee School Board, thanked the Cernovich family for their generosity. Dr. Rick Cernovich followed by reminding students to take advantage of the tremendous opportunities available at Kewanee High School, stating the recent upgrades and changes have made it comparable to a small college campus.

"A plaque will be installed on the exterior of the building with the following inscription: Brothers Mike and George Cernovich, born to Serbian immigrant parents, were lifelong residents of Kewanee. Both educated in the Kewanee School District, Mike was an Illinois State Trooper, and George managed the Clark Oil Gas Station. Ardent supporters of childhood education and athletics, they believed in honesty, hard work, loyalty and service to others. With honor, the Cernovich families dedicate this Fieldhouse to the memory of Mike and George and their commitment to the youth of Kewanee. May it serve as a place where teammates learn to care for one another and their community, both on and off the field", noted Dr. Cernovich.

The 2,800-square-foot facility is located at the south end of the football field, adjacent to the old fieldhouse. It houses two

locker rooms with a total of 80 individual lockers, restrooms and showers for the football and track programs at KHS. The old fieldhouse has been repurposed to accommodate storage, laundry facilities, and a space for physical therapy services.

"Countless students will benefit from the new facility," stated Dr. Chris Sullens, superintendent of the Kewanee School District. "The old fieldhouse was built in 1938, and although it served its purpose since that time, a new facility was much needed."

An alum of Kewanee High School (Class of 1972), Dr. Cernovich has been in family practice for 36 years. Owner of the Sheffield Family Medical Center, he has served on the KCUSD #229 Board of Education and was on the original Board of the Foundation. Both he and his father, George (Class of 1952), are also KHS Athletic Hall of Fame inductees, with Rick also named Honorary Boilermaker in 2019.

Also an alum (Class of 1977), Kim is the owner of Cernovich Auto & Truck Wreck, Inc. His father Mike (Class of 1945) founded M & K, which later became Cernovich Auto & Truck Wreck, Inc.

"The Cernovich's generosity and financial commitment to the Foundation and District are to be highly commended" stated Liz Breedlove, Executive Director of the Kewanee Schools Foundation. "The Cernovich Fieldhouse is a welcome addition to Kewanee High School. Their support is greatly appreciated."

Also included in the dedication and ribbon-cutting were Dr. Chris Sullens, superintendent; Rebecca Baney, Kewanee High School principal; Lori Christiansen, president of the Kewanee Schools Foundation Board and vice-president of the School Board; and Executive Director of the Kewanee Schools Foundation, Liz Breedlove.



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*"Enhancing Education through Giving"*

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Jeffrey Johnson, *Interim Executive Director*

Mindi Goard, *Foundation Assistant*

#### **MISSION**

*The mission of the Kewanee Schools Foundation is to strengthen the educational opportunities for students of the Kewanee School District and promote community engagement in the Kewanee School District.*

## FROM THE *President*

Dear Alumni & Friends,

With the end of 2023 rapidly approaching, I'd like to take this opportunity to pause and reflect on the many accomplishments of our Kewanee Schools Foundation and look forward to all that is to come. While we will greatly miss the leadership of Liz Breedlove, we wish her all the best in her retirement and look forward to working with our Interim Executive Director, Dr. Jeff Johnson. The Foundation was formed in 1990 with the Mission "to strengthen the educational opportunities for students of the Kewanee School District and promote community engagement within the District." As we continue to work to transform the lives of our students, it takes more resources than ever before and each of you are vital to our success. As we know, student achievement and success are highest when there are strong partnerships between families, schools, alumni and the community.

Over the past year, your contributions have once again helped the Foundation provide grants and funding to enhance, enrich, and extend academic opportunities, technology, and facilities within our district. This year, significant support of the dual-credit program helped many of our students complete coursework for college credit and we were excited to announce that over \$128,000 in scholarships was awarded to the Class of 2023 to help them go on to follow their dreams and live happy, successful lives.

Our "Escape to Margaritaville" fundraiser was as much fun as it was successful, raising thousands of dollars for our Performing Arts program. In addition, we celebrated 100 years of our school song, "On Ever On," in February with the band, choir and fans making "note" of it to begin the next 100 years. In May, the band and choir also presented "A Salute to Service" which helped us honor our military...past, present, and future.

The Kewanee High School Agricultural Science Complex opened in February and the Cernovich Fieldhouse was dedicated at our first home football game this year. Both of these excellent additions to our facilities were made possible through the generous donations of our alumni and friends.

Many of you were able to visit this year, attending class reunions and other events that showcased the many exceptional things happening in our schools. We're so proud of our District and extremely grateful for your continued support. We're planning for another tremendous year ahead filled with opportunities and endless possibilities for our students.

On behalf of the Kewanee Schools Foundation, I would like to extend warm wishes for the upcoming holiday season. Stay safe, stay well, and enjoy the holidays with your loved ones!

Best Regards,

*Lori Christiansen*

Lori Christiansen, President  
Foundation Board of Directors



## **HURRY! NAMED LOCKERS NEARLY SOLD OUT**

As part of the new locker room space in the Cernovich Fieldhouse, the Foundation has been selling the right to name a locker (i.e. name and class year inscribed on a plate above each locker) to KHS athletes for \$1,000 per locker. So far, 64 of the 80 available have been sold.

If interested in purchasing a locker, please contact Mindi Goard, Kewanee Schools Foundation Assistant for further information at (309) 856-8702 or mgoard@ksf229.org. All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.





# FY23 FINANCIAL REPORT AND USE OF FUNDS

Audited July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

## NET ASSETS

*Without Donor Restrictions	\$4,020,920
With Donor Restrictions	\$782,372
With Board Restrictions	\$174,077
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,977,369</b>

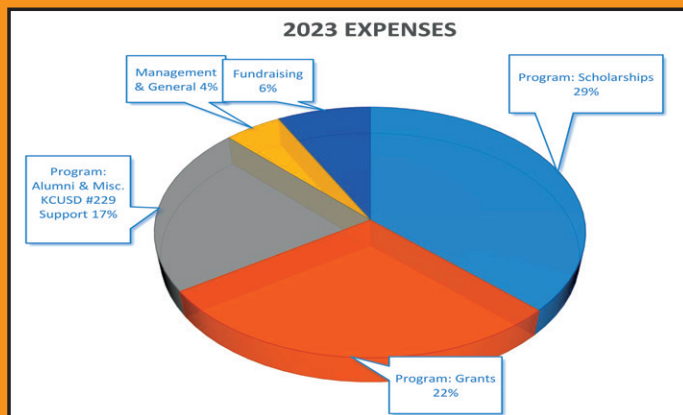
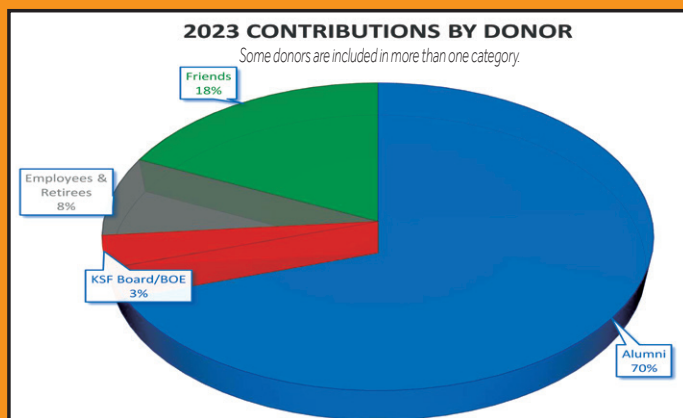
## REVENUE

Individual & Business Contributions	\$670,493
Special Events	\$20,640
In-Kind Income	\$68,552
Investment Income	\$94,851
Unrealized Gain (Loss)	\$209,291
Other Income	\$1,627
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,065,454</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Services:	
Scholarships	\$88,741
Grants \$69,543	
Alumni & Misc. KCUSD #229 Support	\$52,291
Management & General	\$11,417
Fundraising	\$18,537
In-Kind Expense	\$68,552
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$309,081</b>

\* Contributions that are restricted by the donor are reported as increases in unrestricted net assets if the restrictions expire in the fiscal year in which the contributions are recognized.



## Enhancing Education THROUGH GIVING (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)



### KHS Students Receive Over \$128,000 in Scholarships

The Kewanee Schools Foundation and the Kewanee School District awarded over \$128,000 to the Class of 2023 this year. Awards and scholarships were presented to Kewanee High School seniors at the Senior Assembly and Commencement ceremonies. The assembly and commencement were held in the Petersen

Auditorium and HF Brockman Gym at Kewanee High School in May. These scholarships have been made possible through the tremendous generosity of many loyal donors to the Foundation and Kewanee School District.

### Robert L. Petersen Excellence in Education Grants Awarded

A total of \$3,750 in grants was awarded in 2023 to fund Magna Tiles for grade K-1; and a book study "The Rooted Classroom" for 6th grade staff. To date, over \$21,000 has been awarded from the Robert L. Petersen Excellence in Education grant program.

### Harry J. Anderson Memorial Trust Grants Awarded

Over \$175,000 has been donated since 2015 to the Kewanee Schools Foundation by the Harry J. Anderson Memorial Trust to create and support programs for the

children in the Kewanee School District who need training and guidance in order to get a good start in life and become useful and desirable citizens. The 2023 Harry Anderson Memorial Trust grants funded \$20,616 for supplies for a Vehicle Career Day for grades K-3; SEL curriculum for grades 4-8; PBIS supplies for grades 4-8; DIY supplies for Science curriculum for grade 6; SEL magazine subscriptions for grades 7-8; supplies for cultural studies for grades 9-12; as well as funding for Dual Credit Scholarships, Junior Achievement and ABCD.



# FROM THE *Interim Executive Director*

Dear Alumni and Friends,

As we near the end of the calendar year, we are reminded that this is the season to give thanks and to celebrate. First, I want to give heartfelt thanks to Liz Breedlove for her dedication and expertise in guiding the Kewanee Schools Foundation for the past four years. Because of Liz and assistant Mindi Goard's hard work, we celebrate many new relationships and new achievements.

The Kewanee Schools Foundation has evolved to become a highly respected 501(c)3 and has grown under Liz's guidance. As she retires to spend more time with her husband Dan, we wish them the best in the days ahead. The Foundation leadership feels that the ongoing work is too important to sit idle during the search for her replacement. With that in mind, I am honored to assume a position as Interim Executive Director.

We are thankful for our supporters and celebrate the impact of every donation. Large or small, every gift has a positive impact on our students. From classroom enhancements, scholarships, new facilities, to dual credit courses and cultural experiences for our students, the Kewanee Schools Foundation remains true to its mission.

With almost 2,000 students, the Kewanee School District serves a diverse student population with 76% living at or below poverty level. With your continued support, there is more we can do together to enhance and strengthen the education of the students of the Kewanee School District.

Please consider responding to this Year-End Appeal with a gift of \$50, \$100, \$500 or more. Estate and planned giving, small automatic

monthly contributions, and other options are also available. Any level of support would be greatly appreciated.

We thank you for your consideration and hope we can count on you to join us in supporting the Kewanee School District by giving to the Kewanee Schools Foundation.

Best wishes to you all for a wonderful holiday season.



Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Johnson'.

Jeffrey W. Johnson, D.C.  
Interim Executive Director

P.S. Don't delay! In order to receive a tax-deduction for 2023, your gift must be postmarked by December 31. A convenient remittance envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Donations are also accepted online at [www.kewaneeschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.kewaneeschoolsfoundation.org). All gifts are tax-deductible as allowable by law.



## *Liz Breedlove* RETIRES AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jeff Johnson, D.C. assumed the position of interim executive director for the Kewanee Schools Foundation on October 1, replacing Liz Breedlove who retired on September 30, 2023.

Due to personal circumstances,

Breedlove felt it necessary to retire earlier than originally planned, announcing her retirement at the Foundation's Board of Directors meeting on June 12.

Breedlove first joined Kewanee Schools Foundation in September, 2019. She stated "I have thoroughly enjoyed and feel privileged to have served the Foundation as executive director over the last four years. I have been blessed to have the support of the Foundation Board, Board of Education, Superintendent

Dr. Chris Sullens, and an excellent foundation assistant, Mindi Goard, to fulfill the mission of the Foundation of strengthening educational opportunities for the students in the District, and promoting community engagement within the District."

"I would like to thank our loyal alumni and donors in the community; as well as the administrators, teachers, staff and board volunteers who understand the value of the Foundation and are committed to providing a high quality education for our students. I will miss them all," said Breedlove. "I am so pleased that Dr. Johnson will ensure the Foundation's programs will continue as planned until my replacement has been hired."

Efforts are underway to hire a permanent executive director to continue the important work of the Foundation. Any interested candidates may contact the Foundation office for more information.

# CONTRIBUTORS

*July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023*

**THANK YOU to the following contributors for your kind and generous support over the past fiscal year.  
Your gifts make a huge difference to the students of the Kewanee School District!**

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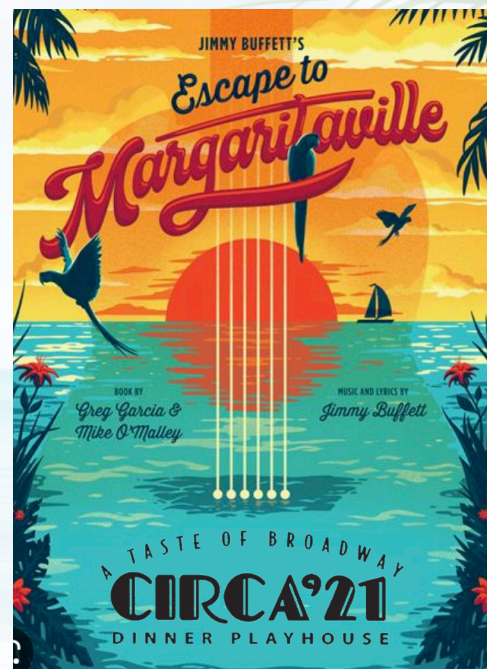


The "Escape to Margaritaville" fundraiser (and friend raiser) event was held Saturday, August 26, 2023 to generate funds for new technology for the Performing Arts Program that will benefit both students and the community at events held at Kewanee High School.

The evening was designed to be a fun change in "latitude" as guests boarded charter buses to attend the musical comedy "Escape to Margaritaville" at Circa '21 Dinner Playhouse featuring the music of Jimmy Buffett. The guests enjoyed a Pre-Show reception at The Speakeasy, Circa '21's secondary theater, with drinks and hors d'oeuvres and an opportunity to bid on Caribbean themed silent auction packages. The guests then enjoyed a delicious meal at Circa '21, followed by the Bootlegger pre-show and the exciting mainstage production.

**The event raised over \$16,000 in net proceeds for Performing Arts Technology for the Kewanee School District.**

Thank you to the sponsors and guests for helping to make this a great event and fundraising success! The Foundation is very grateful for their commitment to the students of the Kewanee School District. The Foundation also thanks the "Escape to Margaritaville" committee for all their hard work in planning the event. Members included Sue Blake, Chair, Liz Breedlove, Amron Buchanan, Casie Douglas, Mindi Goard, Kaleigh Good, and Jeff Johnson.



### Silver Sponsors

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Dave and Teresa Bryner  
Cerno's Bar and Grill  
Farm King  
Good's Furniture  
Chris and Christine Gustafson  
Craig and Margaret Gustafson  
Sharon Gustafson  
Jeff and Pam Johnson  
KHS Industrial Arts Department  
Martin Engineering  
Midland Golf Club  
Reiman's Harley Davidson  
Save-A-Lot

## Why We Support Kewanee Schools Foundation



Jeff and Pam Johnson come from families that value service and education. Jeff is semi-retired after almost 42 years in clinical chiropractic practice. Pam is a retired RN with 38 years in healthcare and is currently assisting Jeff in the clinic. They have three adult children and four grandchildren. Jeff and Pam stay busy with different volunteer activities in our community. Pam is currently assisting Mrs. Amy Miler and the Key Club at Kewanee High School.

"I joined the Kewanee Board of Education in 2001 and the Foundation board in 2003," states Jeff. "I currently serve as President of the Kewanee School Board and recently left the Foundation Board of Directors after 20 years to avoid any conflict of interest in my new role as Interim Director. Pam and I believe in the value of quality education, and the mission of the Kewanee Schools Foundation. Our history with the Foundation began when Pam and I began donating almost 25 years ago," added Jeff. With a visionary Board of Directors, in strong partnership with District Administration and the Board of Education, the Foundation continues to look to the future needs of our students.

The Johnson's are also inaugural members of the Foundation's Legacy Society after naming the Foundation in their estate plans. Their philanthropy is a result of their continued commitment to service and education for the benefit of current and future generations of students in the Kewanee School District. The Foundation is sincerely grateful for their continued support.



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Kewanee, IL 61443  
309.856.8702  
[www.kewaneeschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.kewaneeschoolsfoundation.org)



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## KEWANEE SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

# *Legacy Society*

Kewanee Schools Foundation recognizes those individuals who are thinking to the future through its Legacy Society. The Legacy Society is made up of individuals who have promised to leave a future gift to the Kewanee Schools Foundation after their passing. Common future gifts include bequests, life insurance, retirement plans, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, and others. Many donors find they can make a much greater impact on the Kewanee School District and Foundation by making a gift from their estates. As such, these generous donors will provide educational resources and a lasting legacy for future generations of children in the Kewanee Community Unit School District #229.



Please contact Jeff Johnson, Interim Executive Director at 309-856-8702 at the Foundation office or [jjohnson@ksf229.org](mailto:jjohnson@ksf229.org) for more information about the Legacy Society, or to let us know you have included the Foundation in your estate plans so we can say thank you and provide you with the recognition you deserve! All Legacy Society members receive a special KSF Legacy Society lapel pin and certificate, and are invited to Legacy Society events.