



Davis School District

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# NEWS RELEASE

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## DAVIS EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDED OVERALL BEST OF STATE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SALT LAKE CITY — Davis Education Foundation received the Best of State Statue Award for the category of Community Development Thursday evening. The Foundation first won a medal for Community Communications in the division of Community Development. It was then selected as the overall winner for Community Development out of 38 other medal winners who had received awards in the same category.

The nomination was submitted for the Foundation's efforts in raising awareness of students experiencing homelessness in Davis County. With more than 1,300 children who experience homelessness in Davis School District, Davis Education Foundation is working with the community to remove barriers to learning for those students. Most prevalent is its building of teen resource centers in eight of the district's high schools and the Renaissance Academy. Teen centers provide students in need with a place to shower, do laundry, study, access basic essentials, and work with counselors to get connected to critical resources. The first center opened at Clearfield High in 2021, five more will soon be completed, and three additional centers will start construction in the upcoming fall.

In order to increase community involvement, the Foundation launched a communications campaign to spread awareness of this quiet, but pervasive challenge faced by at-risk students. The most notable piece of the campaign was a video created for this purpose, titled "Give Hope." The video takes the viewer through a day in the life of a teenager experiencing homelessness and addresses how the community can help. It was based on the real stories and experiences of homeless students the Foundation previously worked with.

"Give Hope" has proven to be a pivotal asset in spreading awareness in not only Davis County, but statewide. It has generated more than 41,000 views across social media platforms and has been shown at more than 100 community-driven service projects. It has also been used as a talking point when meeting with community partners, business owners and state government officials interested in helping with this cause. That list includes individuals such as Gail Miller, Senator Stuart Adams, State Superintendent Sydnee Dickson, and David and Kristina Huntsman.

The Foundation's communication efforts surrounding this issue have directly contributed to the more than \$2.8 million raised by the community and partners for teen centers and supplies. That number does not include the hundreds of thousands of hygiene items and basic essentials donated in-kind as well. Representative Steve

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Eliason also introduced House Bill 162, which was passed during the legislative session, to allocate \$3.5 million for the construction of more teen centers in the state. This came after he and other state government officials became aware of the teen center projects and eventually met with Davis Education Foundation.

The Foundation expresses its most sincere gratitude to the community for stepping up in such a monumental way to not only raise awareness, but to then take action to assist the most vulnerable youth in Davis County. They are honored to have been selected as the winner of the Best of State Statue Award amongst so many other incredible people and organizations.

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