

BARTLETT

Bartlett students shine at ‘friend-raiser’

By [Michael Waddell](#), Special to the Daily Memphian

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Kenneth Hayes, left, and his wife, Maureen Hayes, right, look at student artwork during the Bartlett Education Foundation’s event that spotlights work from Bartlett High School students Friday, April 14, 2023. (Brad Vest/Special to The Daily Memphian)

The Bartlett Education Foundation wants to highlight the suburb’s many talented students.

On Friday, April 14, the foundation held its first fundraiser focused on student achievements, with an art show, musical performances and a live cooking demonstration at Bartlett High School.

[Idlewild Elementary students will have chance to learn in fresh air](#)

“This is more of a friend-raiser,” said Nell Blair, the foundation’s executive director. “One of the most important things I think of my job is to get the stories out about the kids. Once people can

actually meet our students and they see what they're doing, then they can spread the word.”

The proceeds from the event went towards classroom grants for teachers, as well as to help all of the student organizations that participated in the event.

The night served as a sneak preview of the school's annual student art show, which continues to Saturday, April 15.



Kenneth Hayes, center, takes a look at student artwork during the Bartlett Education Foundation's fundraiser Friday, April 14. The event featured an artshow of student work. (Brad Vest/Special to The Daily Memphian)

Blair took over as executive director in September. Prior to her arrival, the foundation's activities were organized by volunteers.

“We're able to start looking at partnering with other foundations and community partners and seeing what we can do to help grow and build those relationships,” Blair said.

Collierville principal surprised with national honor

Shelby County Commissioner Mick Wright led the effort to bring on a permanent executive director, setting up a grant to pay the necessary salary.

“For me, schools are the best thing we have going in Bartlett, so supporting them is just vitally important to our community,” Wright said. “We’ve needed a person full-time focused on that, and finally we have that in place.”

Bartlett High’s Spice Girls competitive cooking team demonstrated the preparation of their award-winning burrito bowl. Last month the team competed in the fifth annual Junior Chef Competition in Nashville and won second place overall for the state.

“It was definitely a big thing because they only chose five schools from all the schools in Tennessee,” senior Alyssa Vellora said.



The Spice Girls — Ana Granado, left, Savannah Spration, center, and Alyssa Vellora — do a cooking demonstration for their award-winning burrito bowl during the Bartlett Education Foundation’s fundraising event at Bartlett High School Friday, April 14, 2023. The team placed second in the Junior Chef Competition in Nashville. (Brad Vest/Special to The Daily Memphian)

Her teammates Ana Granado and Savannah Spration plan to pursue culinary careers after high school, while Vellora hopes to become a marine biologist, with her culinary aspirations as a backup.

Because its culinary programs are growing so rapidly, Bartlett High has established a dual enrollment partnership with the University of Memphis and the Kemmons Wilson Culinary Institute, where students can earn credit at the university while still in high school.

Arlington breaks ground on fine arts wing at high school

Bartlett High Vice Principal Chris Maley appreciates the foundation's support of teachers and students.

"It's really awesome to showcase the students and their abilities," he said. "The foundation does a lot of great things for the schools in Bartlett. Our teachers can apply each year and get money that can be used for instructional supplies for students. They're able to really think outside the box for things that are aligned to the instruction in the classroom."

Side Porch Steak House was one of the sponsors of the event, attended by most of Bartlett's elected aldermen, including Side Porch co-owner David Reaves.

"Even from my time when I was Shelby County commissioner, I used to be an ex officio member of the education foundation," said Reaves, who attended the event with his wife, Stephanie, also a Side Porch co-owner. "We support the foundation because we know the money goes right back to the teachers, particularly for special projects."



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