



# RUSD FOUNDATION

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



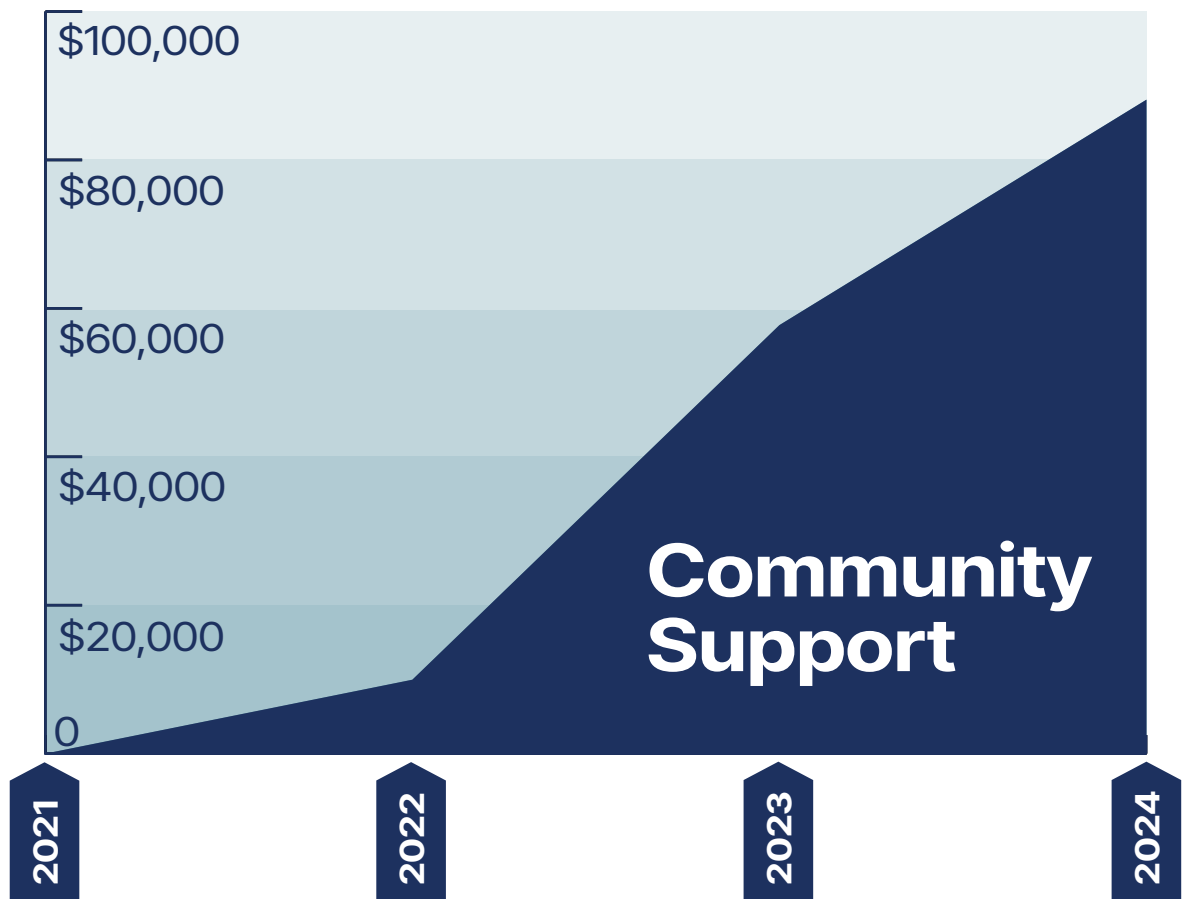
# 2024 Annual Report

# Celebrating Success and Building Futures at the RUSD Foundation

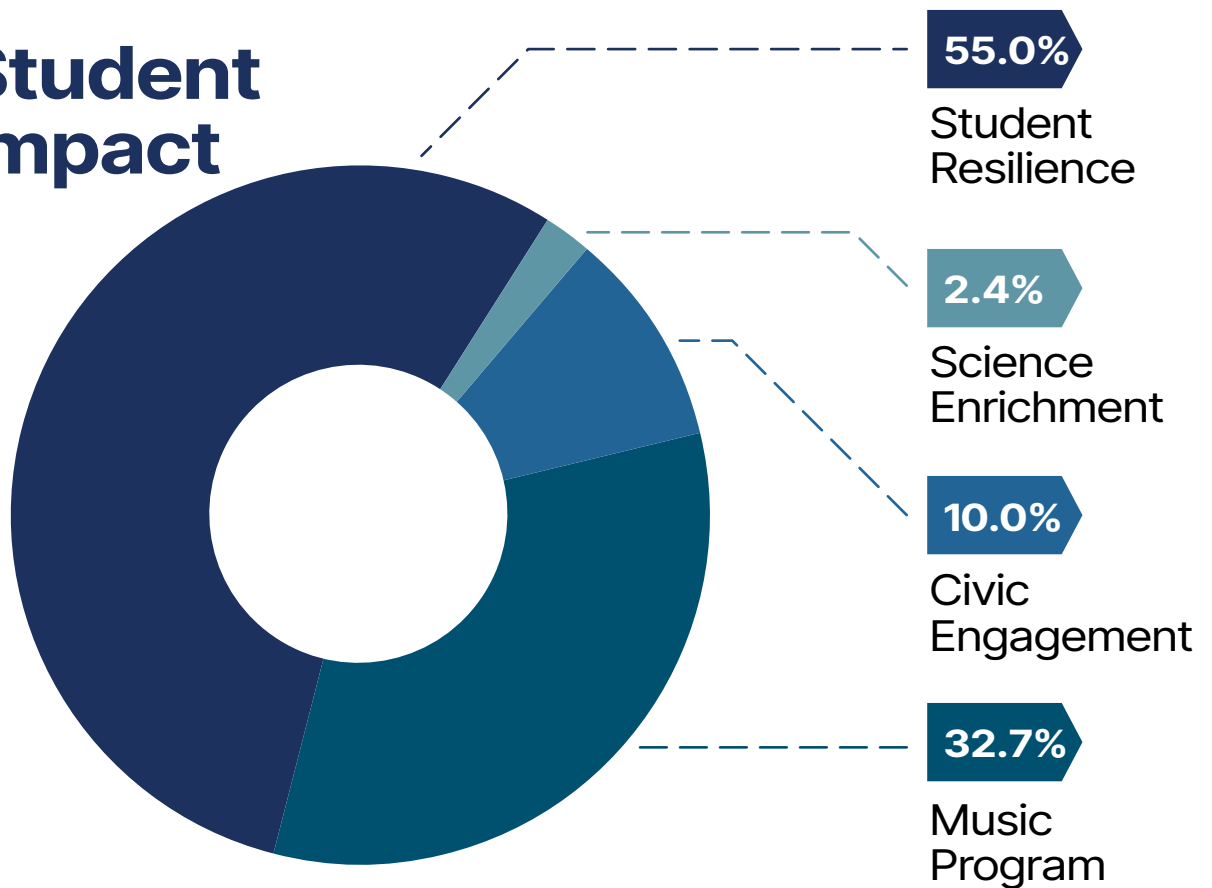
Community collaborative efforts are crucial in supporting the RUSD Foundation's mission to foster student success and empower young minds to achieve their fullest potential. Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the Foundation led a series of transformative initiatives aimed at enriching student lives across our community. These efforts range from recognizing academic excellence and supporting neurodiverse students in music to celebrating athletic triumphs and facilitating seamless transitions to higher education. By providing these invaluable opportunities, together, we are shaping the future leaders of tomorrow. Through unwavering commitment and the strong support of our community, the RUSD Foundation is able to pave pathways for student achievement and resilience, which would not be possible without the steadfast support of our community.



*Lab Coats for Arlington H.S. Biomedical Program Courtesy of My Dentist and Orthodontist.*



## Student Impact



## Innovative Learning

*Providing additional experiential learning opportunities for students.*

Every student deserves access to transformative educational programs in STEM, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Civic Engagement, and Visual and Performing Arts. The RUSD Foundation champions equity by funding and supporting initiatives that ensure all students have the opportunity to explore and excel in these vital areas. Our goal is to create a more equitable educational landscape to inspire and prepare the next generation of leaders, innovators, and creative thinkers across all disciplines. Providing resources, scholarships, and hands-on experiences empowers students to discover their passions and develop the skills needed for future success.

*Students demonstrate their projects at the 2023-2024 Civic Engagement Showcase*



## Student Resilience

*Ensuring students have the tools they need to attend school and be successful every day.*

Every child deserves a quality education, and with the right support, we can help families overcome financial challenges to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed. The RUSD Foundation is committed to providing equal opportunities for all students. The Foundation provides essential resources, scholarships, and support to students whose families are facing financial challenges, ensuring they have the tools and opportunities to succeed academically and beyond. By investing in all students, we invest in a brighter future for Riverside.

We want to make education accessible for all and transform lives to build a stronger, more inclusive tomorrow.

*Community's Generosity Shines as RUSD Foundation Supports CIF-SS and State Championship Rings for Ramona High School's Football Team.*



## Extraordinary Futures

*Providing scholarships for post-high school dreams.*

Imagine a future where every RUSD student, regardless of their circumstances, has the opportunity to pursue their dreams and achieve academic excellence. The RUSD Foundation is dedicated to making this vision a reality. By providing scholarships to deserving students, we empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, and change-makers. The Foundation bridges the gap between potential and opportunity, ensuring that financial barriers do not stand in the way of education.

Join us in our mission to unlock the potential within every student. Together, we can build a brighter future for all.

*Ready for Launch provides support for students as they transition to post high school opportunities.*







Central Middle School students participate in the Owl Pellet Dissection experiment to learn about food chains, predator-prey relationships and ecosystems.

# RUSD Foundation Student Impact 2023-2024

## Innovative Learning

*Providing additional experiential learning opportunities for students:*

### ► Civic Engagement Scholarships:

Twenty-three RUSD students were honored for their dedicated commitment to civic engagement, each awarded scholarships in recognition of their achievements. These students identified community issues, including mental health awareness and environmental education. They conducted research, posed questions, and took proactive steps to effect change. This celebration acknowledges their accomplishments and underscores their perseverance and limitless potential to contribute positively to our community and beyond.

### ► Music Program Support at Mountain View Elementary School:

Thanks to generous support from Target Riverside Flow Center, every student in the music program had access to their own instruments for practices and performances. This initiative was a heartfelt commitment to nurturing their love for music from an early age, igniting their creativity, building their confidence, and inspiring a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

### ► Support for Neurodiverse Learners:

With generous support from Music Movement, specialized materials were provided such as Note Knacks for easier composition, Noise Canceling Headphones for improved focus, and Wobble Cushions to help restless students. These efforts are deeply rooted in our commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that every student, regardless of their challenges, can flourish and find their voice through the transformative power of music.

### ► Experiential Learning for Middle School Students:

More than 400 students engaged in hands-on paleontology learning by dissecting owl pellets. This immersive journey fostered a profound engagement with the practices and principles of paleontology, honing students' observational skills and understanding of body structures.

## Student Resilience

*Ensuring students have the tools they need to attend school and be successful every day:*

### ► Ramona High School's Historic Victory:

When Ramona High School Football secured their third CIF-SS Title and first-ever State Championship in Division 5AA, the community came together in support. Every student-athlete on the varsity team received a championship ring, thanks to contributions from individuals, businesses, and Ramona Football's Booster Club. The RUSD Foundation ensured that financial constraints did not prevent any student-athlete from celebrating this historic achievement.

### ► Ready for Launch Fund:

This dedicated fund supports students graduating from RUSD and transitioning to further education or vocational training. Deserving students, recommended by school district administrators and counselors, receive this award to empower them in pursuing their dreams and achieving their full potential. This year, two exceptional students were honored with awards to assist their transition to university life. Our heartfelt thanks to B.P.O.E Lodge No. 643 for their generous support of the Ready for Launch Fund.

### ► Attendance Program Support:

Altura Credit Union supported the RUSD attendance program, rewarding students for consistent attendance with recognition and tangible incentives. This program emphasizes that regular attendance is essential for academic success, social-emotional learning, and overall well-being, addressing and reducing chronic absenteeism.

### ► Support for the Family Resource Center:

By providing assistance, the Foundation offered a lifeline to families facing financial hardship, ensuring every student has the essential support they need to attend school daily. We extend our sincere thanks to the Albert B. Cutter Fund Foundation for their generous contribution. Your support has made a significant difference in the lives of these families and their ability to ensure their children can attend school with the necessary resources.



*Altura Credit Union supports Attendance Matters – Showing Up Together.*

## Extraordinary Futures

**Providing scholarships for post-high school dreams:** Community members have established scholarship funds that will empower students for generations to come, investing in their dreams and potential.

**Memorial Scholarship Funds:** The Foundation administers three memorial funds dedicated to honoring the legacies of remarkable individuals.



### **Tom Hunt Memorial Scholarship Fund**

In the heart of Riverside, Tom Hunt was more than a figure; he was a pillar of strength and compassion. His dedication to community service and unwavering advocacy for education left an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of knowing him. Elected to the Riverside Unified School District Board of Education in 2007, Tom's leadership shone brightly until his recent passing, guiding our district through challenges with wisdom and grace.

*"Tom made this world a better place, and me a better leader. Thanks to Tom's decades of service and leadership, tens of thousands of students live in a better community and have an extraordinary educational experience. Tom reminded us of our history as a community, advocated for our students, and shared innovative ideas and solutions to make Riverside and our schools even better."*

**Brent Lee, RUSD Board Trustee**



### **Glenn Allen King Memorial Fund**

Mr. King was passionate about education and had a positive impact on many people through his various roles at Riverside Unified School District. He was a teacher, principal, coach, and mentor, however his greatest impact was through his position as Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources. He was a dedicated educator, committed to helping students fulfill their personal educational goals.

*"Glenn meant so much to so many in Riverside. Mr. King's 'kids' were everywhere. He was always there to offer wise and tender words of encouragement, or a swift kick in the butt to keep us on track. He loved all of 'his kids' and I'm here to say we loved him, too. Because of that his spirit, his presence, will live on forever. I just hope we can all make him proud."*

**Family Friend, Source "Atcheson and Graham Garden of Prayer Mortuary."**



### **Maria "Pia" Zarate Memorial Fund**

Pia's dedication to her students was unparalleled. She believed passionately in the power of education, particularly in fostering a love for science among middle school students. Pia envisioned classrooms filled with engaging science activities that sparked curiosity and inspired young minds to explore the wonders of the world around them.

*"Pia was a ray of sunshine and a source of inspiration for her students, colleagues, and all who knew her. Her exuberance, joy and humor were infectious. She was the best example of what teaching is. Her premature passing denied future students the experience of having Pia being their favorite and most memorable teacher. In establishing the Pia Fund it is the hope of her colleagues and family that her memory will live on and future students will benefit from her legacy."*

**Ken Noller, Educator**



# Adopt-A-School Program

The Adopt-A-School Program is a Riverside Unified School District collaborative partnership among businesses, service organizations and community members to provide essential resources to schools.

## Partners making a difference:

### ► Renaming of Highland Elementary to Harada Elementary:

The Riverside Unified School District Board of Education unanimously approved the renaming of Highland Elementary School to Harada Elementary School on June 29, 2023. This is the first school named after an Asian American family in Riverside. The Riverside community celebrated the renaming in honor of the Harada family's contributions to civil rights. Tilden-Coil provided a commemorative plaque for the official renaming ceremony.

### ► Support from My Dentist and Orthodontist:

Provided lab coats and scholarships for Arlington High School's Biomedical program, benefiting students like Grace Williams and Lauryn Singh through a three-year job shadowing program.

### ► Support from Visionaire Optometry Spa:

Provided free eye screenings for Martin Luther King High School students, helping them perform well in academics, sports, and extracurricular activities.

### ► School Supply Drives:

Thank you to our adopters who conducted school supply drives, ensuring all students have access to necessary tools for their education. A special thanks to those community partners:

- Riverside Community Hospital
- Nordstrom Distribution Center
- Altura Credit Union

*Tilden-Coil shows their support for the renaming of Highland Elementary to Harada Elementary.*





## Ready for Launch Fund

*Ready for Launch Fund supports graduating RUSD students as they transition to higher education or vocational training. Students receive awards to empower them in pursuing their dreams. Two exceptional students received awards to aid their transition to university life.*

### Maritza Zaragoza-Castellanos

*Maritza graduated from Arlington High School and is attending California State University San Bernardino*



#### How has RUSD influenced your growth and development?

*Growing up, I attended RUSD schools from kindergarten through fifth grade. After attending another school for a while, I returned during my sophomore year. RUSD has significantly helped me make friends and discover myself. My personal growth faced challenges, especially during COVID-19 when the world seemed to collapse. However, these challenges pushed me to become who I am today. Transitioning to a different school with new expectations during my sophomore year was tough, but joining theater helped me rediscover my love for this district.*

#### How do you feel the assistance you received from the RUSD Foundation will contribute to your success and accomplishments?

*The assistance from the RUSD Foundation will be incredibly beneficial in the long run. It will alleviate some of the financial pressures, allowing me to focus more on my studies and cultural involvement, which is a major part of my life. Balancing academics and cultural activities will be easier with this support.*

#### How is the aid you received from the foundation helping to alleviate financial burdens and allowing you to focus more on your studies and career?

*The aid is helping me concentrate more on my studies by covering essential expenses like books, tuition, and housing fees. Additionally, it will help me purchase a laptop, providing a needed resource for my education.*

#### Do you have plans to give back to your community as a result of the assistance you received?

*Oh, yes, of course. I am going to college for a degree in public administration, and I plan to give back to my community, particularly my tribe. My goal is to help stabilize and support my tribe, using my degree to help the most.*

#### What message would you like to convey to donors and supporters of the RUSD Foundation?

*I just want to say thank you so much for helping me, and I promise I won't let you down. With the award, my first purchase will be a laptop to get ahead in my studies. I also plan to apply for more scholarships, as it's much easier to do on a laptop than on a phone. The rest will go toward books and tuition. I am incredibly grateful to the RUSD Foundation and the donors for this amazing award. Thank you so much.*

## Estrella Salido

*Estrella graduated from Arlington High School and is attending University of California, Los Angeles.*

### **In what ways has RUSD influenced your growth and development?**

*RUSD has influenced my growth and development in many ways. Moving from elementary school to where I am now, I have noticed significant changes. One change was the encouragement to learn and grow, which was seen as something cool among peers. This environment motivated me to improve my life. Additionally, I learned that diversity was at the core of every lesson, which has helped me become a more well-rounded and open-minded person.*



### **Do you have plans to pay it forward for the award you received?**

*Yes, I have plans to pay it forward. I hope to give back to my community, particularly to other children in similar circumstances who haven't had the luxury of simply focusing on their education. I want to support those who have faced challenges in life, showing them that life does get better.*

### **What message would you like to convey to donors or supporters of the RUSD Foundation regarding the impact their contributions have had on your life?**

*The support from the RUSD Foundation has been invaluable. It reminds me of the quote, "It takes a village to raise a child." Because of their support, I have been able to succeed in high school and transition smoothly into college. Their contributions have helped me focus on my studies, which is crucial for my college education and future success.*

**Thank you to our  
Generous Donors**  
who made this student  
support possible for the  
2023-2024 school year

## Board of Directors / Trustees:

### **Dayne Brassard**

CEO, Tilden-Coil Inc.

### **Virginia Blumenthal**

CEO, Blumenthal Law Offices

### **Paulette Brown-Hinds**

Founder, Voice Media Ventures / Publisher, Black Voice News

### **Renee Hill**

Superintendent, Riverside Unified School District

### **Thomas Loza**

Investment Advisor, AIF®, RFC® Loza Beck Wealth Management

### **Tom Podgorski**

CEO, CATrs Teachers Retirement Services & Investment Advisor

### **Matthew Webb**

CEO, Albert A Webb Associates

**Staff:** Knea Hawley, Director  
[khawley@riversideunified.org](mailto:khawley@riversideunified.org)

## Ways you can help:

### **Donate today!**

[https://www.riversideunified.org/departments/rusd\\_foundation/make\\_a\\_foundation\\_donation](https://www.riversideunified.org/departments/rusd_foundation/make_a_foundation_donation)



### **Donate a vehicle**

<https://www.careasy.org/home#NP-donation-form>



### **Sign up for the Provident Bank Community Partnership at**

<https://www.my Provident.com/communitypartnership/>

### **Volunteer to be a Foundation Ambassador**

email [khawley@riversideunified.org](mailto:khawley@riversideunified.org).







**RUSD**FOUNDATION

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT