Creating experiences beyond the classroom and expanding the horizons for Merced County students.

- Outdoor Science Education at Camp Green Meadows
- STEM Education
- College & Career Education
- Visual & Performing Arts

Together We Make Change Happen

Thanks to our many supporters during the past few years, we are closer than ever to reaching our funding goal for the new nurse's station and other improvements at Camp Green Meadows. Along with planning for upcoming renovations, Camp Green Meadows is thriving this year with the return of students from Merced City School District since the great recession. During the summer of 2019, work will start on relocating the old multipurpose room, sewer line improvements, and construction of a nurse's station.

The Foundation has four areas of focus: Outdoor Education at Camp Green Meadows, Visual and Performing Arts, College and Career Readiness, and STEM Education. This year, the fundraiser will focus on support for continued improvements at Camp Green Meadows and broadening support for Arts Education. As an MCE Foundation supporter, you get to choose where your financial support goes, please let us know which area you would like to focus on. No matter what your focus is, your contribution will be used to support educational experiences outside the classroom.

Thank you for your continued support!

Please send your donation to:
MCE Foundation, PO Box 1, Merced CA 95344

Or give online at: https://secure.qgiv.com/for/mcef
In the 2017-2018 school year, the Foundation took a new direction, and instead of focusing on one summer performing arts program decided to use funds to support schools to participate in Playhouse Merced’s Play Anywhere Program.

Play Anywhere is a two-week program where Playhouse Merced visits the participating schools with all necessary materials to put on a production with up to 80 students. The use of this program made it more accessible to students in other areas of the county who may not be able to travel to Merced for rehearsals and shows. The MCE Foundation offered grant opportunities for schools to provide them with funding to bring this program to campus. Dos Palos’ Marks Elementary and Snelling Merced Falls were awarded the grant to assist in paying those fees.

Arts Education opportunities were also given to individual students in the form of a scholarship to the Summer Conservatory Program at Playhouse Merced. Foster Students were nominated by their CASA advocate, foster parent or social worker for this program. Students ages 5-12 worked with staff and other students during June to perform in Junie B. Jones. Older students spent July in the program working on Shrek Jr. Both groups ended their summer program by performing their shows for the community, family and friends.

Our goal in 2018-2019 is to continue to offer these and many other arts programs to Merced County students. Foster students were once again given scholarships to a fall program and we have expanded to include services from the Merced Arts Council along with the offerings from Playhouse Merced. Grants are also available to schools and districts for a wide variety of visual and performing arts opportunities. Schools can go on field trips to the symphony, opera or Playhouse Merced or they can bring artists to the classroom with ArTree, Play Anyhwere, or Phoenix Creative. Teachers can also ask for a grant to assist with supplies for their classrooms.

The Little Lending Library program aims to provide students localized access to reading materials in regions where children aren’t able to easily access books. The first of many libraries was installed at the Felix Torres Farm Worker Housing Center in Planada and others have since been installed in Los Banos and other communities. These little libraries will give students and adults the opportunity to check out a book from one of three age-appropriate library “houses” with reading levels ranging from preschool to adult. When they are finished with one book, they can exchange it for another book.

These houses are constructed and installed by Valley Community School students as a part of their construction trades class. This class is meant to expand students’ use of modern construction technology equipment, while also providing them with hands-on working experience. While helping literacy efforts in Merced County, these students are also learning real-world skills.

One of the most significant factors influencing a child’s early education success is an introduction to books and the ability to read at home prior to a formal education in a school setting. We hope that the Little Lending Libraries will do just that and empower students and adults alike with the magic of a good story. By providing families access to books, we can change the culture of our county.

MCOE is looking for support to install nearly 100 of these Little Lending Libraries throughout the county. Each library costs $100 to construct and our goal is to install about 100 of them countywide. The Merced County Education Foundation is planning outreach efforts aimed at the entire community to get this project off and running. By special request, plaques can be added to designate a library in memory or honor of another.
Rob Baptie is a longtime Merced County resident, veteran and teacher at Ballico-Cressey Elementary School. His wife, Andrea works as the Assistant Vice President Regional Manager at Travis Credit Union. Rob and Andrea have supported many charities over the years after the start of The Hate Dust Project and using their earnings to support many local and national charities, Camp Green Meadows included. Read more about the first donors we recognize in our donor spotlight.

**• How did you come up with such a successful fundraising mechanism?**

I fundraise by selling goods via Facebook, and supplementally advertise with the use of Instagram. Facebook has allowed me to build my own community of giving by allowing me to host auctions, live net feeds, and sales, as well as frequent dialog about the agencies we have supported. The use of social media has let me build an audience of approximately 8700 buyers from 15+ countries.

**• What are some of the activities you are involved with to give back to the community?**

So I’m a one person 501c3 funded by selling goods I’ve created, and subsequently sold. Activities we have funded or supported over the last 4 years locally: Merced County Make A Wish, Ronald McDonald House Central Valley, SWAG, Merced Co. Food Bank, Boys and Girls Club, and many of the high school. My wife and I have donated to over 225 events over the last 4.5 years both locally and nationally.

**• Why are arts and outdoor education important to you?**

It's a dying avenue in education. We are lucky to have some fantastic opportunities locally, that if unattended, will wither and die. Your kids (I don't have children) deserve better than that.

**• How would you like your contribution to help students who attend Camp Green Meadows?**

I donate to Camp Green Meadows in hopes of preserving outdoor education for future generations. When President Roosevelt set about expanding the National Parks system at the turn of the last century, he did so after spending time in the West, near Yellowstone, grieving the loss of his wife and mother. The outdoors connects all ages to a part of our being, that is often lost or neglected. If kids don't have that chance to connect, we sell short their future well being.

**• What is one of your biggest goals in giving back to the community?**

This fundraising “project “ has consumed a huge part of my life and I’m not sure how much energy I have left, so one goal is to motivate others to act. I made a 4 year push to donate a million dollars, hoping that perhaps folks would be inspired along the way to try their hand at it themselves. So, we shall see what effect my efforts truly have if someone picks up the and runs with it.

**• Why is it important to you to give back to the community?**

Mahatma Gandhi said, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others” and so for me, I found myself NOT connected to my community because I didn't take the time to support. I was fortunate to be part of the Leadership Merced (Class 20) program and it really opened my eyes to the power of community support.
Thank You for Your Continued Support!
We Can’t Wait to See You in 2019!

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