



RIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

SUPPORTING MILWAUKEE'S OLDEST PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

EST. 1868

150 years of Academic Excellence!

December 2019

It's So Hard to Say Goodbye



JIM GIBSON, our secretary-treasurer, passed away on September 4, 2019. The success and growth of the RUHS Foundation are largely due to Jim's incredible hard work and ethical

stewardship. After retiring from his career as an MPS science teacher, an MTEA staff member, and from 1971 until 1998 a Wisconsin Education Association Council staff member, he devoted his energy to building our foundation alongside his wife, Foundation President and legendary Riverside teacher and coach, Jan Gibson.

Over the years, Jim has written every newsletter, corresponded with every donor and scholarship recipient, maintained all the data bases, and set the agenda and recorded minutes for every meeting. As treasurer, Jim kept track of every dollar donated and expended and published regular updates for board members. The Riverside Wall of Fame outside the main office and the display case of Riverside memorabilia were also his work.

In 2018, Jim published his second edition of Riverside University High School, Milwaukee's Oldest Public High School, 1868, chronicling the 150 year old story of Riverside from its initial location near downtown to its current building, through war times, the Great Depression, the Civil

Rights movement, the rise of technology...to its incarnation as a city-wide high school focusing on preparing students for college with a solid AP program.

Jim worked hard to put together last year's Gala Celebration of the school's 150 year anniversary on August 10, 2018 at the Potawatomi Casino Banquet Hall. The gala was a huge success and brought together many alumni and current and retired staff members from several generations.

Jim brought out the best in others; he was so good at enabling others to serve on the board and he appreciated any effort board members made to help Riverside. . The best way we can honor all of Jim's service on behalf of Riverside is by keeping the RUHS Foundation solvent and growing into the future. We miss you, Jim. We loved you.

JAN GIBSON, our President, has retired from the Board. For over 50 years, Jan has been part of the Riverside Family, teaching physical education and health and coaching a plethora of sports team. Her girls' basketball teams were known statewide. So many Riverside students and families have been helped through Jan's work as an educator for 30 plus years and Foundation Board President for 20 years. It was Jan who was responsible each year for setting up and conducting interviews for our college scholarship applicants, which is still the main focus of our foundation. It was Jan who chaired each meeting professionally and efficiently. Suzanne Cornell and Thomas Wild will co-chair the Foundation going forward, and the Board will try hard to live up to the legacy you and Jim created. We all love you, Jan, and will miss your presence on the Board.

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Meet the New Principal

Mr. Jeff Lasky joins Riverside after having worked as an Assistant Principal at South Division High School for the past six years. Mr. Lasky earned his Bachelor of Arts in History and Secondary Education from Carroll University in 2008. He subsequently earned a Master's in Education with Principal and Director of Instruction licenses from Alverno College in 2014. Mr. Lasky served as a Social Studies teacher at Genesis School of Business, Technology/Trade, Health and Human Service, an MPS Charter School, from 2008 through 2011. He then became a Social Studies teacher and Department Chairperson at South Division beginning in 2011 prior to his service as Assistant Principal.

With almost one semester at Riverside under his belt, Principal Lasky has set his sights on maintaining and improving Riverside's reputation as a college preparatory school. He is guided by advice from his father who encouraged continuous improvement. Understanding perfection to be an elusive goal, his motto was "Be better". This is always achievable no matter what your starting point.

Mr. Lasky's skill set focuses on staff development, educational leadership and curriculum development. His greatest challenge in his new role was getting to know the 70 plus dedicated



teachers at Riverside and assessing their educational philosophy. In addition to the day to day demands of his position his short term goals include revising course offerings, ACT preparation, a writing initiative and advising freshman to senior year progression.

The future success of today's students contributes to the success of our entire community. We salute Mr. Jeff Lasky and the faculty for their commitment to their students.

New Foundation Members

The RUHS Foundation is very fortunate to have 3 new board members who are retired Riverside teachers.

LINDA EISENZIMMER -Ms. Eisenzimmer taught math and computer technology for over 30 years at Riverside, retiring this past June. Her dedication to Riverside is well known. In addition to her teaching duties, she also served as the yearbook advisor, webmaster, and Instructional Technology Leader. Ms. Eisenzimmer is familiar with the scope and goals of the foundation. She worked with the Foundation helping with website development and bringing us into the modern tech era. Her publishing and computer skills will allow the foundation to communicate with our donors and supporters.

MARY FOWLKES - Ms. Fowlkes is a 1971 graduate of Riverside. The originator of the phrase, "It's a great day to be a Tiger," Ms. Fowlkes joined the Riverside staff in 1991, retiring in 2013. Ms. Fowlkes enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserves in 1984 and in 1990, while on the staff of Jackie Robinson, she was the only MPS educator to be deployed in Operation Desert Storm. Already a Foundation donor, in retirement, Ms. Fowlkes has

volunteered at a local food pantry and helped out with Foundation events. Ms. Fowlkes has community, military, and educational connections which will be of great help to the Foundation.

THOMAS WILD - Mr. Wild spent his entire MPS teaching career at Riverside in the Social Studies Department and is well known for his AP Psychology class and his crosscurricular African American history/literature course. He served for many years as the advisor to the National Honor Society and Student Council/Student Government. Under his leadership, his students have been active in many social causes including the annual Box City which has raised enough funds to build two homes through Habitat for Humanity. He started a Voter Education and Registration program for seniors which went on to be implemented in all MPS high schools. In 2018, the RUHS Foundation honored him with the Distinguished Educator Award at our 150th Anniversary Gala. Mr. Wild was also recognized in June of 2019 by the Milwaukee Common Council for making sure his students knew they could be agents of change. Mr. Wild's people building skills will be helpful as he serves the board as co-chair.

Teacher Grants Distributed

Every fall Riverside teachers can apply for financial assistance to fund special classroom projects. This year the foundation awarded monies to the following teachers:

Jakub Cychowski: Books for classroom library

Kimberly Davis: Honor cords for PLTW Biomedical students to wear at graduation

Nicholas Dlapa: Three year license for Casio calculator simulator software to be used by ten math teachers

Whitney Gulbranson: Color coded pocket folders to teach organization skills to freshmen

Melody Mehn: Water games equipment for swim classes

Cathy Paprocki: Cones and balls for Adaptive PE classes

Cara Slingerland: Books for classroom library

Marjorie Struck: Supplies and technology for journalism class

Milena Walker: Costumes for Praise Dancers in multicultural program

Kelli Wiest: Boards to be used in school beautification



Save the Date!

Riverside Foundation Fundraiser

**Sponsored by owners Mark & Nancy
Buesing, both Riverside alums!**

**Happy Hour
February 24th
4—7 pm**

**Come support Riverside and meet up
with other alumni and friends. 10% of
proceeds will be donated to the
foundation.**

New Scholarships for 2019

The RUHS Foundation has awarded many scholarships through the years. Some are funded and named after individuals, families, or companies, and others are from our general scholarship fund made up from all the general donations we receive.

In 2019, three new scholarship funds were initiated: the **STEINHAFEL SCHOLARSHIP**, the **THOMAS WILD SCHOLARSHIP**, and the **JIM GIBSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**.

The first in the amount of \$25,000 comes from the Steinhafel Company, a locally and widely known furniture and mattress store in the Milwaukee area. This

scholarship was awarded to Yareli Suarez, an outstanding 2019 graduate, and is the largest single scholarship in our Foundation's history. The second scholarship was endowed by Thomas Wild; in lieu of gifts to celebrate his retirement from Riverside this past June, he asked that donations be made to his scholarship fund.

The third scholarship was set up in memory of Jim Gibson, our beloved Secretary-Treasurer. As a foundation, we can not stress enough how important he was to our work and to the whole Riverside community.

Foundation Honor Roll of Donors

\$1000 or more

Bill and Alison Washabaugh
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Mark Dubrin Scholarship
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\$101—\$999

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Donate Today!

In 2018, the RUHS Foundation celebrated the school's 150th year anniversary. Please be a part of continuing Riverside's proud history by remembering our foundation in your end of the year giving. We rely on your generosity to provide scholarships to our graduating seniors and support our staff.

Please send donations to: RUHS Foundation
c/o Tri-City National Bank
4295 Bradley Road
Brown Deer, WI 53209-1773
Attention: Audrey Sellers