



*Notes from the*  
Washington Elementary School District  
**Business Advisory Team**  
January 28, 2015 Meeting

Pastor Dan Steffen, Senior Pastor at Pure Heart Christina Fellowship, welcomed Business Advisory Team (BAT) members and community partners to the meeting and introduced Washington Elementary School District Superintendent Dr. Susie Cook. She thanked Dan Steffen and Tracey Beal from Pure Heart for the use of the facility and for being amazing partners with the WESD. Governing Board Vice President Bill Adams and members Larry Herrera and Clorinda Graziano also attended. Phoenix City Council members Bill Gates and Thelda Williams also attended the meeting. Dr. Cook congratulated the community spirit of those assembled and the significant impact they have made on the community!

Jill Hicks, WESD community outreach specialist, thanked Rob Kelly and Donna Zwarych from Nothing Bundt Cakes for the delicious buntinis they have donated to so many BAT meetings and Liesl Harder Kielp of Aguasac for the donation of water. Jill invited Lorraine Tallman, from Comfy Cozy's for Chemo, and Robin Nebrich Duda of TGen to say a few words about the day's keynote speaker, Charles Keller of the Colten Cowell Foundation. Each shared stories of how Keller opened his Batcave (and his heart) to help terminally ill children several times a week. "He gives our children dreams," according to Lorraine.

Charles Keller spoke about his foundation and his goal of brightening the lives of families with terminally ill children as well as assisting those families. The Colton Cowell Foundation was founded "to make giving fun and accessible." In addition to providing the child with a memorable day of visiting the Batcave and riding in the Batmobile, Mr. Keller gives each family a monetary gift that they can give to a charity they support. He is planning to build a 20,000 square foot Batcave to make the experience even better for ill children. Mr. Keller wants people to know how fun and how fulfilling it is to give to others and invited the audience to, "Dream Big, Start Today and Change the World."

Jill thanked Stacy Anderson from Let It Roll Bowl for their school supply drive and Pam Giannonatti from Frys and Tyler Hincy and Ivan Armendariz from Discoverbooks for their recent donation of 5000 books that we were able to give out at our Parent University. Jill also thanked North Phoenix Kiwanis and Sunnyslope Kiwanis for their donation and service of handing out hot dogs at Parent University. Pastor Ted Elsenheimer of Ktizo Church, then spoke about the volunteer work he has done over the years, and the involvement of others, in volunteering at schools. He is now helping with creating and maintaining community gardens at several WESD schools.

Luanne Herman, principal of Sweetwater School and LeAnna, a fifth grader at Sweetwater, shared The Leader in Me program information with BAT attendees. The school's mission statement is Creating Leaders of Today and Tomorrow. Each student has a personal mission statement as does each class. Grade levels create leadership pledges and there are school-wide VFFs – volunteers for friendship who hold weekly activities with special needs students. Mrs. Herman invited BAT attendees to take part in Leadership Day on March 13 at which students will showcase their leadership skills.

Jill shared information on the upcoming WESD Community Food Drive to benefit St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance. A variety of organizations, Credit Union West, Nothing Bundt Cakes, the Renaissance Phoenix Downtown, ASU West Changemakers, Pure Heart Christian Fellowship and Palmcroft Church have already gotten involved, as have Phoenix City Council members (Councilman Gates D-3, Councilman Valenzuela D-5 and Councilwoman Williams D-1). The goal is for all schools in WESD and local businesses to join together to collect 75,000 pounds of food for St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance! #75000

Sarah Speer, president of the Madison Elementary School District and Madison Education Foundation, invited attendees to take part in receiving a complimentary Support Education license plate (complimentary the first year, regular charges apply to renew in future years). Of the \$25 cost, \$17 goes to support teacher minigrants. George Bolis of Pete Kelley's Automotive Service in Sunnyslope gave away two tickets to the Phoenix Open to Dave Grossman of Epic Thrift.

The next WESD Business Advisory Team meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 22, 2015.**