

Education Foundation exceeds expectations

By [Marina Andalon](#) on February 14, 2017 in [News](#)

The Santa Monica Malibu Education Foundation received \$161,801 from 588 different donors during a five-day drive to meet a \$25,000 matching gift from Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows/ MSD Capital.

“Under the ownership of MSD Capital, the Fairmont Miramar Hotel and Bungalows continues to be an integral part of the Santa Monica community. Giving back is an important part of who we are and how we do business,” said Ellis O’Connor, of MSD Hospitality, the hotel asset manager for MSD Capital, the Miramar’s parent company.

The drive ended on Tuesday, Jan. 31, the same day the Ed Foundation’s annual parent pledge campaign.

The community contributed over \$100,000 on the last day of the match alone. Officials said the surge was the most money ever raised from donations on a single day in the Ed Foundation’s history.

“Supporting our local schools is vital for the future of Santa Monica and we hope that our efforts will inspire other local businesses to make a difference in our city,” said O’Connor.

The Education Foundation was established in 1982 by a dedicated group of parents, community leaders and local businesses owners. The organization raises funds to enhance and supplement the curriculum for SMMUSD.

Bonnie Thoreson, English teacher at Malibu High School, said “As a teacher, I see the direct effects of strong schools every day. The Ed Foundation provides funding for outstanding programs that support all students. Donations to the Ed Foundation are a clear statement that our community values quality public education.”

The funds raised from donations to the ED Foundation each year support various programs, such as comprehensive arts education for all elementary students, highly trained elementary instructional assistants who provide small group and individualized instruction, along with enrichment grants.

Each school receives grants, and the money is used for a variety of programs decided on by each school’s site council. Many schools use these programs for science and technology, additional arts or student wellness programs, meaning additional health office staff time and mindfulness programs.

“Our community is dedicated to making sure that students receive the best education possible,” said Executive Director of Education Foundation, Linda Greenberg.

“I donated to the Ed Foundation because I truly believe that it has enabled us to take the next step in improving our ability to promote achievement for all students,” said English Language Development Coach at Edison Language Academy, Elizabeth Ipina. “By investigating in instructional assistants, the arts, and enrichment programs, we have grown as educators, and in our capacity to serve students.”

The Foundation raises funds through its annual campaign, endowment earnings, and special events. On March 11, the Greg Coote Concert for the Arts will be featuring Michael McDonald of the Doobie Brothers, with special guest Amy Holland, “Weird Al” Yankovic, Richard Page, Venice and student musicians.

For more information on upcoming events, or about Education Foundation visit www.smmef.org .