

Santa Monica LOOKOUT

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Greenberg to Retire as Head of Ed Foundation

April 5, 2022 -- Linda Greenberg -- who helped turn the Santa Monica Education Foundation into a local fundraising powerhouse -- will retire from the top post she has held for 28 years.

Greenberg will remain in her role until a search firm chosen next month finds a new executive director, Foundation officials said Tuesday.

During Greenberg's watch, the Foundation grew from a fledgling group that raised less than \$100,000 a year to a non-profit with an annual operating budget of more than \$3.2 million.

"Linda Greenberg's legacy cannot be easily measured," said District Superintendent Ben Drati.

Her efforts, he said "helped make possible the world-renowned visual and performing arts program we are witnessing today in Santa Monica and Malibu.

"There are literally thousands of students she has touched through her advocacy and work in providing all students access to instruments, art materials, and best exposure to visual and performing arts instruction.

"I know I speak for many when I say we will miss her in her role and I will personally continue to engage with her in the form of ongoing friendship, and occasional counsel if she will provide it," Drati said.

Through its annual fundraising campaigns and endowment earnings, the Foundation has long provided funding for arts programs, classroom aides and STEM and wellness programs at all Santa Monica public schools.

Under Greenberg's watch, the Foundation -- which at the time also included Malibu -- raised \$1 million in 1998 for the Academic Endowment.

In the early 2000s, it raised \$2 million for the For The Arts campaign and during a State budget crisis in 2009-10 raised \$1.6 million in 60 days to avert layoffs.

After the School Board created a new centralized fundraising model in 2011, the Foundation became the the District's new fundraising arm for Santa Monica.

The following year, it received a \$4.8 million bequest from the Peggy Bergmann Estate, its largest gift ever.

The Foundation continued fundraising during the coronavirus shutdown, raising more than \$550,000 during its back-to-school campaign last September, more than doubling the amount raised the previous year.

"Under Greenberg's leadership, the Ed Foundation has substantially grown and diversified its donor base in support of the centralized fundraising model," Foundation officials said in a statement.

"Today, funds are raised community-wide, from parents, non-parent community members, businesses, property owners, and civic organizations/foundations."

The group's Board has formed a search committee with the goal of retaining an executive search firm by mid-May, said Foundation Board Board President Alison Havel.

"We will ensure a process by which the community, including parent and district leaders, has an opportunity to participate and have their voices heard as we launch this very important search," Havel said.