



FALL GRANTS:

60 New Teacher Grants for
\$375 each = \$22,500

212 Fall Grants for up to \$750
each = \$152,515.00 total.



PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Since 1993, EPAK has been a community based, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to promote educational opportunities by awarding grants to teachers in the classrooms of East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park.

The 2021-22 school year has begun. Teachers and students are energized and ready to tackle opportunities and challenges that come with learning in person during a pandemic. There are new health and safety protocols to follow, learning to catch up on, and additional goals in place.

EPAK is listening and responding to new needs. We have expanded our grant eligibility guidelines to include adults with crucial campus roles such as reading intervention teachers and mental health support staff. We are approving grants to equip teachers with individual sets of books and supplies required when sharing is not possible. We are also approving requests to fund additional equipment, such as safety goggles in science labs that now require extra time to sanitize before reuse.

Teachers' grant applications confirm specific and timely needs. These items include additional workbooks and leveled readers, alternative calculus books, art supplies, manipulatives and more. Many grant proposals this year reflect the experience of coming to school after "a year of great loss." Teacher Isabel Mendiola, Kipp Esperanza High School, commented in her grant application that the notebooks for journaling will allow students to deal with these losses and "to be their authentic selves." "I am eager to give my current students the power of writing," she stated.

EPAK is actively partnering with other organizations who work in our community. This Fall, we welcome new financial support from Literacy Partners Menlo Park and organizational capacity building support from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. EPAK is committed to making the grant application and reporting process as seamless as possible. We are revising communications to focus more on digital media and online forums.

We know that our community will be facing the effects of the pandemic for many years to come. EPAK will be here to help. The impact of EPAK grants extends beyond the classroom. Teacher Kyle Tana, Cesar Chavez Middle School teacher, wrote, "My EPAK grant helps me build relationships with students, but even more so relationships with families during a pandemic." As we work towards equity in education, I am grateful to our skilled and hard working volunteers and our generous donors who support us in our mission.

Nisha Pillai, EPAK board president

HELP EPAK THRIVE!

Donate now!

Our teachers need your help with a year of major transitions.

Go digital!

Help EPAK be better stewards of your donations. Please provide your email address at www.epak.org or email info@epak.org



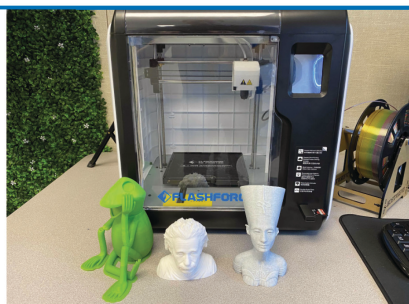
GRANT HIGHLIGHT

"This particular EPAK grant was a very special one. With the EPAK funds, I was able to purchase a 3D printer, various filaments, and other supplies for students to create projects. The 3D printer was an amazing way to create unique rewards for students as they completed their assignments and passed quizzes. Students were motivated to work hard and pick a unique prize to come to life using the 3D printer."

This device is a great way to get students to think about unique ways to solve problems in their own lives, to develop their understanding of capacity, scaling, and other math concepts. Students can create their own 3D nameplates, art pieces, and other creations. The 3D printer has become more than just a new cool piece of technology. It has given students the opportunity to ask questions about how they can work with 3D printing - career opportunities within the realm of 3D art, 3D printing, and other digital landscapes.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to provide this unique piece of technology for our students in East Palo Alto."

**Nathaniel Hoffman, 6th grade,
East Palo Alto Charter School,
Spring 2021**



BOARD MEMBER NEWS

We would like to thank Courtney Schmit and Harmony Hayes, as they leave the EPAK Board. Congratulations and best wishes to Courtney for new ventures beyond the Bay Area, and many thanks to both of them for their efforts.

EPAK Board of Directors

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