



THE  
SOULARD \* SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT  
2014-2015





## The Soulard School Stars Burning Bright

Dear Friends,

At our school, we refer to ourselves as The Soulard Stars. Stars are visible in our neighborhood as part of the structure and foundation of the beautiful historic brick buildings that surround us. On an even larger scale, Astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson captures it best when he talks of looking up at stars in the night sky, "This present moment, is made of a whole lot of pasts. All those different past moments converge on you to create what you are seeing now, what you are experiencing now." The 2014-15 was a significant convergence that marked 10 years of radiance. Visualizing our community and its members as parts of our foundation that shine at different points in time perfectly describes the layers and depth to which our school has built a strong community and students who have an impact.

The moments in which we shined bright are highlighted in this year's annual report. As stars, we move around the school and community shifting into different roles (student, friend or mentor) each with a complimentary purpose. As we do, each collection of stars transforms into a new constellation that symbolizes that moment. Our annual Feast of Thanks became our 10 year celebration. Hosted by our neighbor, Gene Slay's Boys' Club, it was our largest yet with over 300 family and community members in attendance to share a meal and honor our journey. A graduating family began a new tradition of giving by establishing The Founding Family Fund. Founding Families formed the constellations that first established the school, built its community and ensured its success. This fund is a reminder to all those joining the school of the value of their presence and participation.

In the spring The Soulard School's universe expanded. We took our innovative spirit out into the community and co-organized the first Start-up Weekend: Education. This event brought together people interested in developing education related solutions for our city. Our partnership with Webster University expanded to include hosting and co-facilitating a Master's Level Course, Teaching in a Diverse Society. With these additions The Soulard School model began to reach further and we are ready to do more. We provide an environment that is valuable and unique here in St. Louis. People are responding to us, demonstrating their confidence and their belief in us and joining our efforts.

We look forward to the new constellations that will be formed in the future because the possibilities are infinite.

Thank you,  
Sarah Christman  
Executive Director,  
Co-Founder

### SAVE THE DATE

**November 2, 2015**  
*Annual Fund Kick-Off*

**November 7, 2015**  
*Clovers & Stars: An Irish Music and Dance Festival*

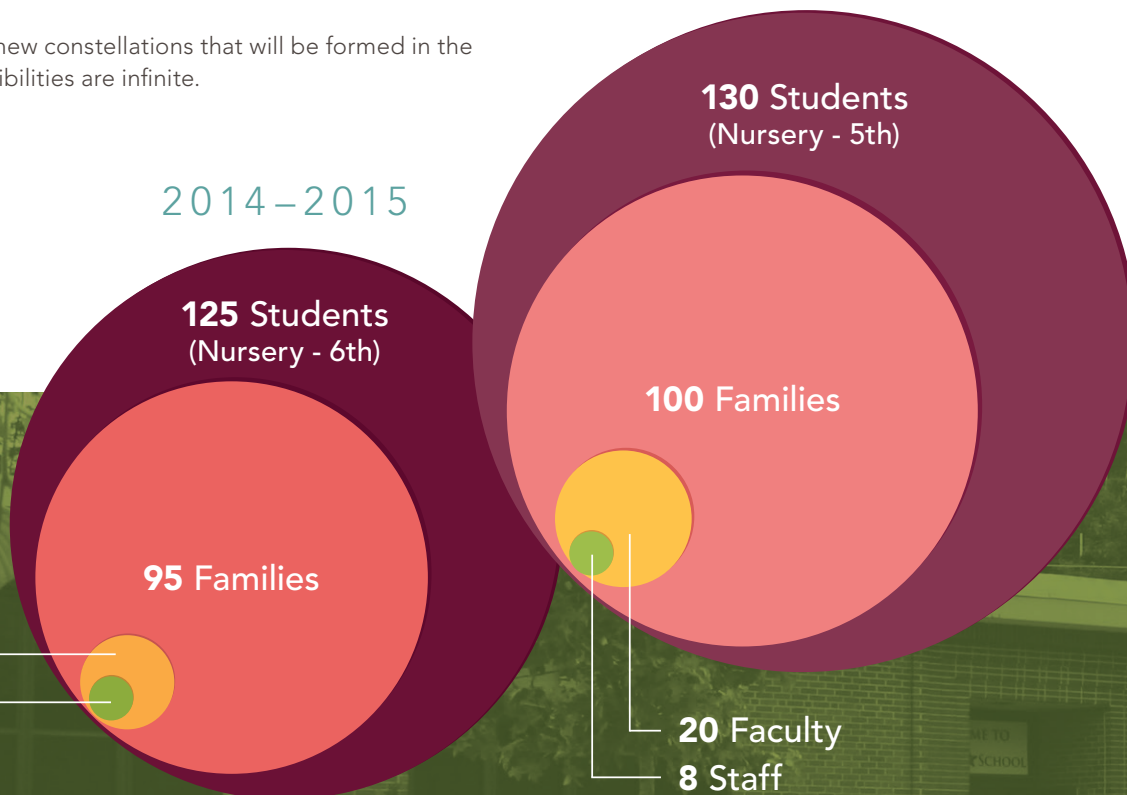
**November 21-22, 2015**  
*Annual Book Fair at Left Bank Books*

**February 27, 2016**  
*Trivia Night at Mad Art Gallery*

**April 22, 2016**  
*Teaching Peace Parade*

**May 22, 2016**  
*Annual Soulard Soiree at McGurk's*

### 2015-2016



## Who We Are

18 Faculty  
8 Staff

## A (Tenth!) Year in Review

### TEN YEARS OLD

The Soulard School celebrated its 10th year of Redefining Education Together (2005 - 2015).

### GRADUATES

Soulard School Alumna Ella Moomey won the Monsanto Fund award and 1st place at the 2015 St. Louis Science Fair.

### MODEL OF BEST PRACTICE

In partnership with Boeing and Webster University, The Soulard School teaching environment was utilized as the learning setting for the "Teachers Matter" project.

### COLLABORATIONS

The Soulard School partnered with local education innovators to establish and lead St. Louis's first Start-Up Weekend: Education

### PROGRAM GROWTH

Outdoor Classroom created and developed, offering more opportunities for students to connect with nature in an urban setting.

### STEAM LAB

The STEAM Lab Program completed its pilot year with resounding success and excitement from teachers and students

## Where We Come From

The Soulard School reflects the rich diversity of its neighborhood and surrounding communities. In the 2014-2015 school year:

- 68% Families qualified for our Equitable Tuition Program
- 36% Students qualified for free or reduced lunch
- 93% Students lived in underperforming districts
- 25% Families lived in the Soulard neighborhood zip code
- Soulard School families came from 21 different zip codes



## There Is Something Special About Each Year

At The Soulard School, we value new ideas, improved ways of teaching, and the freedom to provide unique experiences for our students. At the same time, we also recognize past achievements, important contributions from change-maker teachers and other people in our community. Our 2014-15 school year incorporated all of that – the new and the old.

Our new STEAM Lab and Outdoor Classroom provided a fresh space for new project development. At the same time, we continued to be inspired by and embrace Soulard School historical pieces and places such as our mosaic wall, our pond area, and our growing hallway library (to name a few).

We celebrated the success of our current students, whose math proficiency of 84% and literacy proficiency of 90% continue to demonstrate how effective and meaningful integrated learning can be. We also celebrated the success of our alumni, who have gone on to shine in their new school settings, with one even winning first place in the St. Louis Science Fair!

While we are very proud of these successes, our goal is always to individualize and focus on each child as a whole. To do so, we need to know who they are and how they think. This is not an easy task. I often think we are like anthropologists; keen observers drawing and building upon knowledge of students in social, independent, and unique settings. We go even further, though, because we do not just observe. Our teachers create and customize educational experiences that are unique and address each of their students' needs. And they do so by braving the new and valuing the old.

Each year we celebrate traditions, and look forward to new opportunities yet to come. This year's annual report highlights several experiences where the new and the old came together for a very special 10th year.

Thank you,  
Kerri Fair  
Principal



## THE IMPACT OF INTEGRATED LEARNING

### Outdoor Classroom

#### Connecting to Nature in an Urban Setting

You've heard the expression, "If you build it, they will come." The Soulard School's outdoor classroom is a bit like that. Many outdoor learning partnerships have encouraged Soulard School students to explore nature, including Litzinger Road Ecology Center, Forest Park Education Center, and Missouri Botanical Garden. But connecting with nature doesn't always mean taking a field trip, and Soulard School teachers continually look for ways for students to experience nature on a daily basis. So when the opportunity arose to use a vacant lot two blocks away, they were beyond excited and jumped at the chance. Over the course of several months, students, parents, and school staff helped design raised beds for each classroom. In addition, the lot owners tilled a large section to plant sunflowers and zinnias, and three watermelon vines grew in one of the raised beds. By fall there were many watermelons, and teachers integrated these "volunteers" into many classroom studies, from Culinary Arts to Math



- not to mention the delicious addition to school lunches! Classes continued to use the space regularly throughout the school year, connecting to their studies, exploring, or simply as a different environment in which to learn. From nature journaling to monarch butterfly metamorphosis, this new space encourages a broader range of learning opportunities for Soulard School students.

### A dinnertime battle over veggies led Soulard School alumna Ella Moomey to win a \$200 college scholarship at the 2015 St. Louis Science Fair.

"It was amazing how many cool projects were there," said Ella. "I was really exciting to be part of that. I don't know how the judges were able to make their decisions. I would have been, 'Wow, this is really cool!'"

Ella currently is a student at McKinley Classical Junior Academy, a St. Louis magnet school that serves gifted

## SOULARD SCHOOL ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

"My little sister wouldn't eat her vegetables because she didn't like that they were green," said Ella. "So, I asked her if she would eat them if they were purple and she said, 'Yes.'"

students. Ella said The Soulard School gave her the foundation to excel at McKinley.

That sparked Ella's curiosity. Could it be that our sense of sight impacts our sense of taste? To test her hypothesis, she showed subjects two photos of salmon -- an artificially colored pink fillet and a grey fillet, which is the fish's natural color.

"At the Soulard School, we go to do science, not just read about it," said Ella, who is considering a career in food science. "It was a lot more exciting that way. We would research something and then we would do an experiment to prove it. It sticks in your head more when you see it and do it."

"I asked people on a scale from one to five which one looked more appetizing and which one would they buy," said Ella. "Most people picked the pink one because that is how they are used to seeing it in grocery stores."

Ella submitted her research the St. Louis Science Fair, which showcases experiments from 55,000 students across the region. The Monsanto Fund awarded her project a special award.





# STEAM LAB PROGRAM LAUNCHES

When it came time to clean up the old boiler room at The Soulard School and turn it into something useful, the students teamed up and got to work. In 2012, with help from families and the neighborhood, they kicked off a campaign to build a STEAM Lab. Learn more about their efforts at: <https://vimeo.com/47325131>.

Each year, The Soulard School hosts STEAMfest, an event that presents a different STEAM-related theme to the St. Louis community. Generating excitement and support for their STEAM Lab campaign, 2013 STEAMfest activities reminded students of the possibilities to tinker, experiment and build that were to come with the opening of the STEAM Lab. And after two years in the making, the lab got up and running for the 2014-2015 school year!

The new makerspace is equipped with state-of-the-art technology where learners of all ages

and abilities use multiple disciplines to develop a love of learning and inquire about their world. Students question, wonder, observe and explore; they create things, both analogue and digital. The goal: to prime children's brains to think like inventors, designers, scientists and engineers to prepare them for the complex 21st century challenges they will encounter.

Led by STEAM instructor Courtney Keefe, STEAM Lab experiences are designed to be hands-on and project-based. They are the product of close collaboration between her and the classroom teachers, balanced by creativity, imagination, inspiration and fun. From moon crater simulation and buoyancy experiments to design challenges and world travel via Google Earth, students were just beginning to scratch the surface of STEAM possibilities.

Following seed funding that supported lab renovations, the STEAM Lab Program pilot year was graciously funded by Emerson Charitable Trust and Ameren. Looking ahead, the school is thrilled to announce the following new STEAM projects for the 2015-2016 academic year:

## Total Wellness

Funded by Innovative Technology Education Fund and in partnership with SLU, "Total Wellness" is a K-5 project that focuses on the study of health and wellness. In addition to Polar Active fitness monitors for PE, this project allows for updated and fully-integrated technology to enhance classroom learning. Students are using technology (Polar Active monitors, PolarGoFit web services, iPads, etc) to help understand how to take care of themselves. They will be monitoring their activity levels, their nutrition and how much sleep they are getting.

## Making Makers

Monsanto Fund's support for "Making Makers" is helping to bring design thinking into the classroom, allowing for novel learning experiences for students while also developing educators able to facilitate those experiences in a meaningful way. This collaborative project between The Disruption Department and The Soulard School is a school-wide maker ed learning experience that incorporates design thinking and technology integration into current STEAM curriculum and classroom projects.

THANK YOU





## Letter from Jim Holloran, Board Chair

This annual report marks the 10-year anniversary of The Soulard School, and is a good time to pause and take stock of our accomplishments.

A lot can happen in a decade. Throughout history, decades have come to represent eras and fashion trends, have been witness to dramatic changes in social norms and attitudes. In this last decade, we have seen technological transformation at an unprecedented rate – a transforming world in which Soulard School students are growing up.

This is why the work of The Soulard School's incredible faculty and staff is so important. In our small decade, The Soulard School has grown from 14 to 125 students. We have developed a model of teaching that integrates academics, health, art, and citizenship – a model now enhanced for our 21st century learners with the addition of the new STEAM Lab. We are successfully educating kids from widely diverse backgrounds, and we are doing so efficiently.

We have been able to grow over this past decade because of the support of our donors and families. One half of our budget comes from fundraising so that together we can ensure quality education to a community that reflects the diversity of our neighborhood and our city. We could not have made these great strides alone. We count on you for your support and partnership.

I could not be more proud of The Soulard School. With your continued support, we look forward to many more decades of success.

### 2014-2015 Board Members

*Jim Holloran, Board Chair*

*Sarah Christman,  
Executive Director*

*Anne Coggan Johnston*

*James (Jay) DeLong*

*Jennifer Harpring, MSW, MAPS*

*Dr. Ed Johnson*

*Dr. Theresa Mayberry-Pruitt*

*Dr. Basiyr Rodney, Ed.D.*

## Donor Highlight: SAIGH FOUNDATION

The Saigh Foundation mission is to enhance the quality of life in the St. Louis metropolitan region through support for charitable projects and initiatives which primarily benefit children and youth through education and health care. These objectives will continue to support the community interests shown by Fred M. Saigh during his lifetime.

As a Founding Donor, The Saigh Foundation was one of the first supporters of The Soulard School. They believed in our vision early on and have supported our work for five years. Their generosity continues to have a tremendous impact on the lives of our students, furthering our work in delivering quality education to all students regardless of family income.

"We love The Soulard School," says Mary Kemp, Associate Executive Director. "They have a very unique model. They are inclusive, and we are particularly drawn to the individualized nature of their education program."

The Foundation continues the important work begun by Mr. Saigh, by assisting St. Louis-area organizations that benefit children and youth, primarily in the areas of education and health care. The Foundation is particularly interested in stimulating the development of new ventures, as well as in supporting organizations that feature innovative approaches or programs.

To them, innovation is about positive change for children, especially those with the most need. "The Soulard School's support for social-emotional learning is so important," says Executive Director JoAnn Hejna. "We have been very impressed with the programs that they have developed around this – especially their use of Engine Checks, and their wonderful Buddy Circles."

We at The Soulard School are honored to count Saigh Foundation as a Founding Donor, and are so grateful for their grant support for our students.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US REACH 10 YEARS!

## Revenue

### HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Built on a philosophy of inclusion, The Soulard School maintains a commitment to socioeconomic diversity. The Equitable Tuition Program is a sliding-scale model\* that enables all Soulard School families to educate their children as equal members of an economically, racially and culturally diverse community.

Because tuition covers only half of the school's operating expenses, meeting the budget each year depends on a combination of funding streams. These include gifts to the Annual Fund, income from fundraising events, corporate and foundation contributions, and generous benefactors who support The Soulard School's vision of socioeconomic diversity.

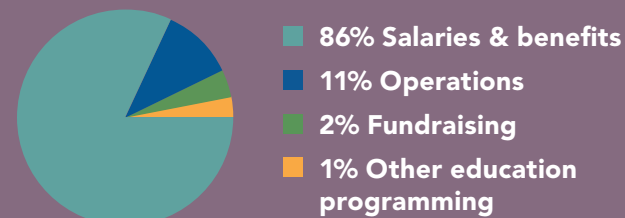
The Soulard School would not be here today without the continued generosity and support of dedicated parents, grandparents, alumni families, and friends in the community. Thank you to all of those who made a gift, and/or attended, contributed, or volunteered at a fundraising event during the 2014-2015 school year. Your support allows The Soulard School to continue to offer unique educational experiences that encourage students to be inspired learners and good, productive citizens in the community. **Thank you.**

### Total Contribution Income\*

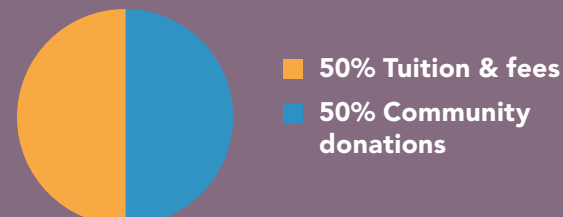
Individual Donors	\$205,621
Corporate & Foundation Donors	\$187,524
Fundraising Events	\$88,206
Government Grants	\$1,700
<b>Total Raised</b>	<b>\$483,051</b>

\*for school year ending July 31, 2015

### Expenses

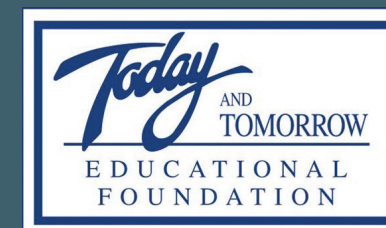


### Income



### FOUNDING DONORS

Anonymous  
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James P. Holloran  
Innovative Technology Education Fund  
Orville Middendorf  
Andrew O'Brien  
The Saigh Foundation  
Today and Tomorrow Education Foundation  
The Joan and John Vatterott Family Foundation



### MAJOR DONORS

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Jay Shields, Anne & Tom Herrmann, Peter Miller  
Webster University, supported with funding from Boeing



## 2014-2015 Contributors

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\$1,000 - \$4,999  
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### BENEFACTOR DONOR

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Dizdar Brothers Inc.  
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Greater St. Louis Community  
Foundation, giveSTLday  
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John Quick  
Terry & Nile Ramsbottom  
Patricia & Nicholas Reding  
Loretta & Ray Smith

### GRANDPARENT DONOR

UP TO \$499  
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Theresa Mayberry-Pruitt  
& Walter Pruitt  
Dana & Ken Moomey  
Lois & Robert Mueller  
Jimi Quick  
Nancy Rutherford  
Susan & Bob Snipes  
Rose Snyder  
Maureen & Carl Thenhaus  
Carolyn White

## VOLUNTEERISM AND IN-KIND GIVING

One of the most important ways that families and friends help to support The Soulard School is through volunteer hours and in-kind giving. To those of you who served on committees, prepared food for an event, worked in the kitchen, library or classrooms, or contributed an item, service or time, we thank you. The generosity, creativity, passion and community spirit you bring is profoundly appreciated, and our success is directly attributable to wonderful friends like you.

### GIFTS-IN-KIND

4 Hands Brewery  
Ann Luciani  
B-3 Studio  
Barbara Spelman  
Big Bend Yoga Center  
Big Muddy  
Dance Company  
Bill & Diane Keaggy  
Bill Christman  
Blues City Deli  
Bogart's  
Brendan Kirby  
Camp Soulard  
Cantina Laredo  
Celia  
Cheryl's Herbs  
Circus Flora  
Circus Harmony  
City Sprouts  
Civil Life  
Climb So. Ill.  
Concordia Turners  
Courtney Keefe  
Crone Craft Studio

Crown Candy Kitchen  
Dahlia Days Design,  
Mary Ringis  
Dan Zettwoch  
Danie & Sean Scott  
David Seymour  
Dressell's  
Edyth Seymour  
Edle & Mertz  
Eleanor White  
Ellen Brady Jewelry  
Endangered Wolf Center  
Epic Pizza  
Erin Quick & Heath Harris  
Finn & Mack Off the Rack,  
JoAnna Daniels  
Firecracker Press  
FK Studio  
Flowers to the People  
Focal Point  
Fortune Teller Bar  
Gateway Riverboats  
Good Luck Bar & Grill  
Grand Petite Market  
Gringo

H. J. Jewelers  
Haley Biehl  
Herbaria  
Ices Plain & Fancy  
Indigo Massage  
Ingrid Weise Photography  
iTap  
Jackson Pianos  
Janet Noe  
John D. McGurk's  
Julie Radin  
Just Landscape Lighting  
Kangaroo Kids  
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Laura Shuhwerk  
Left Bank Books  
Lisa Berman  
Loretta Smith  
Magic House  
Mango  
Mardi Gras Inc.  
Martin Casas  
Matt King  
Metro Lighting  
Metro Theater Company  
Michelle Steele  
Midwest Pasta  
Mike Duffy's (Kirkwood)

4,000+  
volunteer hours contributed by  
families, friends and businesses

Mission Taco Joint  
Missouri Botanical Garden  
Modesto  
Mokabe's  
Monica Watson  
Moolah Lanes  
Mud House  
Nestle Purina  
Off Broadway  
Paisley Boutique  
Paper Source Ladue  
Peacemaker  
Peg Fetter  
Penzey's Spices  
PestShield  
Pevely Farm Golf Club  
Pi Pizzeria  
Plowsharing Crafts  
Rachel Kryah  
& David Burmeister  
Retro 101  
Cherry Bomb Vintage  
RIO Syrup Company  
Riverbend  
Robert's Music Together  
Robbler Vineyard  
Sarah Christman  
& Paul Nordmann  
Sarah Kate Buckles  
Schlafly  
Sephora  
Shaved Duck  
Sheri Mancuso  
& Larry Harris  
Silver Ballroom  
Soulard School  
Parent Association

Soulard Restoration Group  
Southwest Diner  
St. Louis Art Museum  
St. Louis Bread Company  
St. Louis  
Cardinals Baseball  
St. Louis Football Club  
St. Louis Harley Davidson  
St. Louis Symphony  
Stacked Burger Bar  
Stages St. Louis  
Stanley Cigar Bar  
Strange Donuts  
Subterranean Books  
The Cakery Bakery  
The Carbon Crusader  
The Lemp Mansion  
The Moneta Group  
The Muny  
The Royale  
The Sweet Divine  
Theresa Mayberry-Pruitt  
& Walter Pruitt  
Tiny Little Monster  
Tonya Renee Anderson  
Tower Grove Creamery  
Tucker's  
Urban Chestnut  
Urban Studio  
V. Vegaz Salon  
Vicki & Jay Morris  
Vin de Set / Eleven Eleven  
Vincent's Market  
White Box  
YMCA, Carondelet Park  
Rec. Complex

\$60,000+

Creative Resources – in-kind  
contributions by families,  
friends and businesses\*



## Community Partnerships

BOEING COMPANY  
BWORKS  
COCA / INTERCHANGE  
THE DISRUPTION DEPARTMENT  
ED COLABITAT  
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Special Thanks to Paul Nordmann for the photography.

## Tributes

### In memory of Ted Christman

Lynne Christman  
Jeffrey Hochman  
Nancy Grove  
& Joseph Tiernan

### In honor of James P. Holloran's birthday

Mary Sue Albanese  
Patricia & Joe Holloran

### In honor of Anne Coggan Johnston

Gail Fisher  
Mildred Paden  
Grace Rockafellow

### In honor of Henry Lewis

Rosemary & Billy Charles

### In honor of Will Reding

Patricia & Nicholas Reding



# Thank You for Helping Me Grow



The last week of school was spent celebrating our students' accomplishments and experiences at our annual STEAMfest and graduation ceremony. During the final assembly of the school year, graduate Parker Hyser presented The Soulard School with a young maple tree. In Parker's first year with us in 2005, his teacher sent home seedlings as a Mother's Day gift. The Hyser family kept the tree growing ever since and Parker gave it back to the school as thanks for helping him grow! It was a very emotional and proud moment. We will now plant it in the school yard and call it "The Graduate."

Thank you Hyser Family for helping us grow too! Congratulations to Parker and all of this year's graduates. We know you will go on to many wonderful new adventures.

## *2014-2015 Soulard School Graduates*

Holly Berman-Carter  
Lydia Corey  
Noah Hartzler  
Parker Hyser  
Max Johnson  
Alexander Mahfood  
Leilah Miller  
Enzo Nemens  
Isaac Pendergast  
Audrey Quick  
Rhiannon Steele  
Addison Thornton

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