

Honoring the Past, Supporting the Present, Encouraging the Future

Scholarship provides support to local students

Preserving the memory of a loved one honors the past, fuels the present and, most importantly, influences the future. More than 10 years ago, when Dr. Ben & Mrs. Pat McAdams lost their daughter, Kelly, they transformed the tragedy into an opportunity to keep the memory of her alive through a gift that would provide support to graduating high school students. In seeking a community partner to assist with this vision, they found The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County. Through this collaboration, [The Kelly A. McAdams Memorial Scholarship Fund](#) was born, and today has offered almost \$90,000 in financial support to graduating high school seniors across San Luis Obispo County.

The collaboration grew as the family learned more about the impact of The Community Foundation during the In Our Backyard series. “As we look to the future of the fund, we are actively seeking methods to make education more accessible,” said Dr. McAdams. “We hope to support students at all levels of their academic journey, including academic rigor, financial need, extracurricular achievements or commitment to their community.” Through the unique fund management resources of the Foundation, the family began to see their vision for this scholarship take shape in a manner that allows it to continue impacting student lives far into the future.



Benefiting students of all backgrounds, talents and abilities, the Kelly A. McAdams Memorial Scholarship Fund has touched a variety of students from local schools. From Civil Engineers at Cal Poly, Cognitive Studies at UC Davis, and Biomedical Engineers at Johns Hopkins University, more than 11 students have benefited from this generous gift of support.

“One student who received our scholarship attended Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore,” relates Dr. McAdams, as he chuckles at the warmth of a fond memory of this small world. “My oldest son lives in Baltimore and was laying sod in his

yard one day. He saw this college student running by with a San Luis Obispo shirt, so he stopped her and found out she had received our scholarship fund. What a coincidence! These connections and experiences warm our hearts, and we are so thankful we can make a small difference in a student’s life in Kelly’s honor.”

Since the inception of the scholarship fund, the McAdams have become champions of donor education events, specifically the In Our Backyard series, which offers donors the connection to the knowledge and resources that bring their philanthropic goals to fruition. The series is an interactive forum for Foundation donors to engage in a dialogue with local nonprofits regarding the vital work taking place across our region. Dr. McAdams considers the benefits of educating donors, “The events build the bridge between donors and opportunities to serve the community. It educates us about the functions of the Foundation and provides the opportunity to learn from one another.”



As he reflected on their own experience, Dr. McAdams added, “As a resource for local charitable giving, the Foundation is a vehicle to execute the distribution of donated assets, while considering the changing needs and interests of the region. We are so thankful we came to learn about this organization through our involvement with Kelly’s scholarship.”

The Community Foundation currently offers 37 scholarship funds for local students. To learn more about scholarship funds and how you can give life to a loved one’s memory through funds or scholarships, visit www.cfsloco.org/scholarships. The Foundation celebrates donors like the McAdams, who look to better the future of today’s youth through their generosity and kindness.