



Students and Stories and Success - OH MY!

The Leander Educational Excellence Foundation (LEEF) raised a record-breaking amount at its 9th Annual Gala “*An Evening in Emerald City*” held at The Crossover on January 27, 2024. LEEF raised nearly \$220,000 — the most money the Foundation has ever raised at its annual gala: \$50,000 more than last year and almost \$20,000 over its 2024 goal. Proceeds raised will continue to fund programs and initiatives that make a difference in education for Leander ISD (LISD) students and staff.

"Thank you to our community and business partners who showed up ready to give and give BIG for our Leander ISD students and teachers," said Devin Williamson, Leander Educational Excellence Foundation Board President. "Raising the most LEEF has ever raised at our Gala illustrates that our supporters believe in the work we are doing." Business partners, elected officials, educational leaders and community members were greeted as they entered The Crossover by Running Brushy Middle School's Honors Band and Henry Middle School's Advanced Theater students.

The evening's focus was centered around LISD students sharing how the LEEF-funded programs are impacting their education across all grade levels. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) students brought their creativity and style through their design of the event program, welcome

signs, desserts, and more! The program was kicked off by our partners, [Impact Arts](#), as they performed a medley from their recent Wizard of Oz production.

The evening's highlight was hearing directly from LISD Alumni how two of LEEF's funded initiatives have impacted their education and plans for the future. Justin Orlando, 2021 Vandegrift High School graduate participated in the LEEF funded INCubator program. Thulani Naurunna, 2019 Vista Ridge High School graduate, was part of the LEEF funded College and Career Coaching. They are just two of thousands of students being given opportunities and experiences they would not have had without the fundraising raised at the Gala from our generous Annual Partners, event sponsors, community donors, volunteers, and district leaders.

The Gala is LEEF's largest fundraising event of the year and proceeds are used to enhance public education for all Leander ISD students and educators by funding literacy initiatives, college and career readiness initiatives, educator grants for classroom projects and district-wide impactful programs at every campus. LEEF Executive Director Coleen Brighton shared, "We are grateful to live in a community that supports Leander ISD students and their education at such a high level. Since joining staff in 2017 I've watched LEEF increase its fundraising revenue, even during the pandemic, which is testament to the invested community."

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR STUDENT GROUPS:

Guest Welcoming Team: Running Brushy Middle School Honors Band and Henry Middle School Advanced Theater

Student Presentation: Thulani Naurunna and Justin Orlando

Desserts: Glenn High School and Cedar Park High School Culinary

Program Video: Finley Darby and Ashley Marthol (LISD Senior Audio/Visual Students)

Event Marketing: Leander ISD Graphic Design Students

Centerpieces: Leander ISD Floral Design Students





[Click to View the 2024 LEEF Gala Photos](#)

Our Contact Information

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