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Sizeable donation from local business supports LPIE

Submitted by Angie Zener

The Lafayette Partners in Education, a not-for-profit education based foundation supporting the six Lafayette public schools, last week received \$25,000 by Leila Douglass of Luxe Home by Douglass Designs - the largest donation ever from a single business entity since LPIE's establishment in 1980.

"Our philosophy at Douglass Designs has always been that while we establish a world-class interior design and remodeling company to one of the most beautiful communities in the Bay Area, we must also do our part to ensure the quality of the schools and our environment," said Douglass, who was also named the East Bay Leadership Council's Outstanding Corporate Philanthropist in 2013.

The donation could not have come at a more ideal time. LPIE has a big task ahead. This year alone, LPIE must raise \$3.2 million dollars to maintain current educational instruction. With a \$1.8 million fiscal shortfall going into this academic year for K-8 schools, the Lafayette School District was forced to eliminate critical programs. Unfortunately, the funding for schools remains inconsistent and inadequate, and further reductions could be necessary in both the Lafayette School District and for Acalanes High School. To this end LPIE continues its efforts to gather business and community support through donations.

The past four years LPIE has hosted an annual "power party" gala auction event - the biggest and highest grossing fundraiser in its calendar year. This year, LPIE will be hosting the "LPIE Derby" auction in May at Wilder Fields in Orinda. Attendees will stroll through silent and live auctions tents, sip mint juleps, and enjoy southern fare. Over 450 attendees are expected to come enjoy the live bluegrass band, derby games and the special acoustic performance of Nashville recording artist Jake Ousley.

"Given sorely inadequate and inconsistent funding from both the state and federal government, community support for our schools is absolutely critical and deeply appreciated," said LAFSD Superintendent Rachel Zinn. "We sincerely thank Luxe Home by Douglass Designs for their generous contribution to the Lafayette Partners in Education. It shows that our community and businesses together truly care about building a strong foundation for today's generation and those to come."

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