

IN THIS

ISSUE:

- 2024 Program Review
- 2025 Class Preview
- Organizational Background

We are 100% a volunteer based organization. \$1 out of every \$1 raised goes directly towards our mission!

You can help too by giving through our website: www.dhfundforkids.com or on our Facebook page.

Dannheiser Shoes News

NEWSLETTER OF THE DANNHEISER FUND FOR KIDS

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How we Started

There are several old cliches and sayings involving shoes or boots: Pull yourself up by your bootstraps," or "Walk a mile in their shoes." However, what if a person or child doesn't have boots or you couldn't walk a mile in their shoes because they do not even have a pair? This is what happened several years ago when I encountered a young child in Owensboro that looked up to me with sadness in his eyes and said words that still break my heart today. He stated, "I don't have any shoes."

Shortly after this moment, our family began to develop our organization, the Dannheiser Fund for Kids, in honor of my grandparents, Don and Marge Dannheiser. See, years ago, when I was a young child, my family faced some of the same financial issues many do today. Back-to-school time was not always filled with excitement and joy, but stress and heartache on how a family living on a budget would provide all the needs for four children. The Dannheisers would chip in every year to make sure we would

each at least have a new pair of shoes to start school, so when we discovered this need in our area, we knew exactly how we could help!



Our goal is for each child to start their school year on the "right foot"

Since our foundation we have helped almost 300 children with a pair of back-to-school shoes, however it's not just the shoes that these kids receive. In order to qualify for our program, each child must complete a class that we offer that helps educate them in one of our three core areas: physical fitness, educational awareness or emotional stability. Our overall goal is to empower these children through these classes to understand they are important, they are special and they can create a successful future for themselves.

That young boy I encountered several years ago, well that day me and my friend, which was his older sister, went with him and he picked out his own pair of shoes. The smile on his face still stays with me today, just as that original heartbreaking comment does. Each year we work as hard as we can to bring that smile to local children's faces!

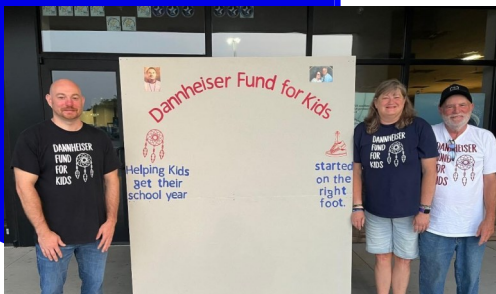
Who we are:

The Dannheiser Fund for Kids is a 501 (c) (3) organization that was founded in 2019 and is currently working in our 6th fiscal year of making an impact in our community with kids and families in need.



Above: We volunteered this fall for a cooking program hosted by our partner, The Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club

Below: You can see our board before the children signed it as we prepared for the reward day!



What does 100% Volunteer mean?

Other than the impact we have on the families and children we serve the one thing we want our supporters and anyone who learns about us to understand is we are a 100% volunteer organization. We have a Board of Directors, we have an Executive Director and we also have others that help teach the program in the summer. Each of these people donate their time and expertise to our mission because they so passionately care about what we are trying to accomplish and want to be a part of it.

For each program we run, we spend many hours, weeks and meetings on getting just right. Our volunteers spend countless hours working on our website, posting on our social media, working on other outlets such as this newsletter, writing grants and everything else associated with operating a successful non-profit.

We understand that most non-profits cannot run this way. Of course, many of the great charities in our area, such as our great partner, The Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club have paid staff, building expenses, utilities, and many other necessary items that come with serving the several thousand children they help every year. However, for us and our goals our needs are much less. It is in fact our partnership with the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club that does help us function in this way.

In order for us to reach children and families we work with the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club, they allow us to use their facilities, work with their kids and even allow us to use their national, research-based programs at times as well. This allows us to use our funds strictly for costs associated with our mission. We supply the children with a healthy snack for each session, we purchase supplies and needed equipment for our classes and of course the biggest expense is the main reward for our programs, the shoes! We do have some costs that come up, such as insurance and some associated with website domain usage, but those of course are necessary. Everything else you see is donated, even this newsletter you are reading, we have someone that purchases them on their own for them to be distributed.

2024 Program Review

What a year! 172 kids! In the summer of 2024, we were able to provide a whopping 172 children with a pair of back-to-school shoes as well as an educational program.

I still remember the days of preparations of our organization. Before we had an official 501 (c) (3) status, before we had a board of directors, before we found so many generous donors to help us fulfill our mission. In those days I had a little green composite notebook, full of ideas and estimations and a dream of being able to help some children in our area.

We spent several months sitting on my cousin's couch discussing what the time frame would be and imagined of how we could grow over the years. Our main goal was to help a few kids out in the beginning, grow slightly each year and eventually reach the point where we could help every kid at the non-profit, we partnered with that was willing to participate. Well in 2024 thanks to our supporters we are proud to say that happened! Each child that attended The Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club this summer was offered the opportunity to come to our classes and that is why we were able to increase our number to 172 last year.



Each child signed our board to commemorate finishing the program when they picked out their shoes!

The core of our attendees were in the ages 6-11 year old range and they learned about a program titled: KidSmartz. This class taught and re-enforced four rules to personal safety:

- 1: Check First
- 2: Bring a Friend
- 3: Say "NO"
- 4: Tell a trusted adult

Each of these rules work to help prevent children from putting themselves in unsafe situations and also learn what to do if they ever are in a situation where they feel threatened. It was amazing to see the kids have fun while learning and each week when asked most of the kids could recite the rules to you as they learned them.

Our teen program took more of a generalized education path in which they learned about health, life and future opportunities. Our main goal in this teaching was to help the kids realize that their decisions today impact their future. Positive choices today can improve their health, life and opportunities, while negative decisions can really set them back!

We are very happy with the way 2024 turned out and cannot wait to see what the future holds. When we were discussing possibilities during our foundation the goal was to first reach all the children at one organization then branch out and discover the need for others. So just maybe 2025 is the year we will grow even more. Stay tuned!

Check us out on Facebook or our website: www.dhfundforkids.com



Each day in this program will have an activity as well as a lesson for the children.



2025 Programs

This coming summer we are hosting three classes that will give the younger children a choice of what class they would like and continues to group the teens into one class

Healthy Habits

This class is all about encouraging children to discover bad habits they may currently have and SWAP them out for better ones. In fact, the acronym S.W.A.P. is going to be our theme for this class:

- S. – Strategy (we will have a strategy for each lesson)
- W. - Work out Consistently (the W will be different for each lesson)
- A. - Achieve our goal, one at a time
- P. - Positive: keep a positive outlook on your future

Our Healthy Habits initiative will be four classes and will focus on what we do with our bodies, what we put into our bodies, how we rest our bodies and how we feel about ourselves. Each lesson will follow the theme, SWAP, to help the learning be simple and fun in a manner in which they can remember it and have it with them in the future.

When the kids complete the class they qualify for back-to-school shoes.



Art Program

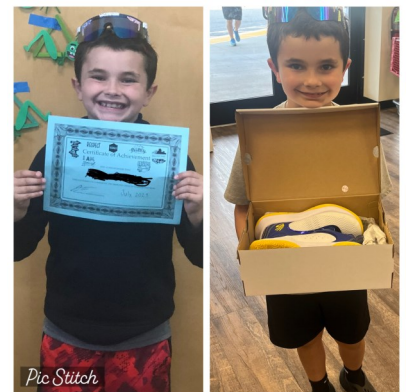
One of our volunteers informed us of a conversation they had with a child last summer. He said that the kid participated in the class and activities but requested we do something else like coloring or art oriented because that is what interested this kid. We took this conversation to heart and realized that there may be a portion of kids we miss out on every year because maybe they just do not want to play a game or be in a gym setting. We emphasize in each of our classes that our differences are what make us special so we wanted to make sure we added a different element to our education this summer with an Art Program.

This class will also have four sessions in which students can show off their creativity and talent while also learning something about themselves and how to stay positive. Each day we are going to have a lesson and have the children fill out a portion of a page titled, "What I Like about me." We have used this page since the beginning of our program and in our other classes as well. This page has a line for each day and has the children really think about themselves and write down at least one thing they like about themselves.

We all can have bad days and get down on ourselves, children are no different. We want to make sure the kids that participate in our program know that they have great things about themselves, they deserve to be happy, be in a positive environment and see the good attributes they possess. This page lets the children take something with them at the end of the summer that they can reference if they are having a bad day and maybe, just maybe it can pick them up and put a smile back on their face!

The four sessions for the Art Program are:

- 1: All about me page (self-portrait)
- 2: Rock Painting day
- 3: Create your own T-shirt
- 4: Magnet creation day



Each class will have the students complete a page like this one that can boost their self-esteem:

Things I Like About Me!

At the end of each session please write one positive thing about yourself, something you like about yourself or something that makes you special as a reference for yourself as why you are a special person.

Teen College Exploration Class

One of the hardest and most important decisions we face in life is what to do upon high-school graduation. That choice goes a long way in shaping our future and with this in mind we developed our program for the older kids this summer in which they will get to explore and learn about their options. We spoke with local high-school and college administrators to discover what they believe the most valuable information is for students to have and put that together.

Each child will choose a possible career and be given one at random to research. What levels of education are required? Where can I study for this profession? What are the positives and negatives associated with this career?

In addition to this, we have agreements with four local colleges and universities to allow the students to learn what their particular schools offer. Western Kentucky University and Owensboro Community and Technical College have agreed to come to the campus of the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club to speak with these kids. Kentucky Wesleyan College and Brescia University will provide guided campus tours for our program as well.

Each child will gain important insights as to the steps necessary for them to take today and in their future to reach their goals. We aim to show the children what each of these paths look like and how their decisions today can impact their scholarship and funding opportunities. In fact, as a part of this class we aim for each participant to complete a career plan/guide that they can keep with them to prepare them for a successful future!



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OWENSBORO
COMMUNITY
& TECHNICAL COLLEGE



Organization Information

How do we fund our organization?

Our fiscal year begins September 1st and ends August 31st. As you know, our program comes in the summer each year so as does most of our expenses as well. This means throughout the year we raise money. We have a few events each year, this year we added a few more that you can see on our website, a sports and Pokémon show and a trivia night. Our organization also writes grants, does personal solicitations, receives gifts each year from various donors and most importantly we have a 100% Board of Directors contribution participation. We understand times can be tough and we are all competing for funds to support great causes so it is important to know that not only does our Board give their time, but we also financially contribute as we know just how important it is for us to reach our goals.

Each year a couple months before summer begins, we will meet with the organizations we partner with, so far it has been The Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club, and determine how many kids they will have that year as well as how many children we can help. Our number of course depends on how successful we are at raising money! For the first several years we came up with a certain number and as you have read in this newsletter, last summer we were able to say at this meeting we could help all of the kids and it ended up being 172. This year we anticipate being able to do the same thing with them and are very hopeful that we may actually be able to find another partner to serve even more children.

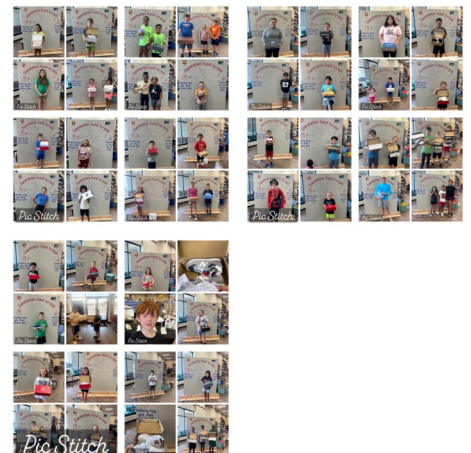
How do you select the children to be served?

The selection process is left up to the organizations we partner with. When we first started out the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club would select the families based which families or children that they believed would benefit the most from our programs. Starting last year, and hopefully each year moving forward, a decision will not need to be made on this as we aim to facilitate every child that attends their summer program. This doesn't mean that every child that comes to their summer program will receive a pair of shoes, this means they have the opportunity to participate in the classes with us and then they will. Not every child will choose to participate, but we want to make sure we can help everyone that chooses to do so.

Our executive director spent 6 years working at the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club several years ago and, in that time, learned of the great work this organization does and the needs that a lot of these families may have. This is the main reason when we started our organization, we knew they were the first ones we wanted to partner with. As we grow, we certainly will be looking to find other non-profits that work with children and also have the same dedication, heart and love for our community that our first partner has.



These are most of the children who were served last year. Even though it is hard to make out we wanted to include this so you could see most of the kids!



Dannheiser Fund for Kids

www.dhfundforkids.com

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Each child receives
a life-enhancing
class and a free pair
of back-to-school
shoes!

Almost 300 helped
so far!



Confidence

Responsibility

Education

Art

Talents

Exercise

Change

3 classes in 2025:

-Healthy Habits

-Teen College

Exploration

-Creative Art



Our 2025 Initiative C.R.E.A.T.E. Change is sponsored by:



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