

# Abbingtion

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# LIFE



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BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS SINCE 2014

community focus

# apex

public school  
foundation



This month in our Community Focus series, we interviewed Barb Conroy, head of the Apex Public School Foundation!

### Organization info:

Apex Public School Foundation  
220 N. Salem St, Apex, NC 27502  
[www.helpapexschools.org](http://www.helpapexschools.org)  
@ApexPSF social media handle  
[apexpsf@gmail.com](mailto:apexpsf@gmail.com)

There is an 8 member Board of Directors and 5 committees of dedicated volunteers driving the APSF. They work closely with an advisory committee of Apex-area principals and WCPSS Area Superintendents.

### Abbingtion Life: How did APSF come to be?

**Barb Conroy:** The APSF was formed in 2018 by two parents who saw a need for funding beyond traditional sources to promote creativity, innovation, and collaboration in Apex classrooms

One of the co-founders is a former public school teacher who had worked at a school served by a community based education foundation. She directly experienced the benefits of an education foundation in terms of boosting teacher morale, increasing community engagement in our schools and enhancing learning experiences for students.

### AL: What is the mission of this group?

**BC:** The mission of the APSF is to maintain a fund to enhance the educational experience for students at Apex-area schools within the Wake County school district. We currently serve over 19,000 students at 18 schools.

The APSF promotes creativity, innovation and collaboration within Apex-area WCPSS schools by:

- Funding and sponsoring programs and events not included in the WCPSS district budget or other traditional resources
- Awarding grants to educators for programs, resources, and professional development through a formal grant application process
- Sponsoring events and programs
- Supporting the WCPSS Strategic Plan
- Increasing awareness and support of public schools
- Supporting evidenced-based practices in education and instructional design in areas including but not limited to, academics, the arts, technology, and professional enrichment

**AL:** How does APSF sustain it's operations?

**BC:** The APSF is a fully volunteer-driven, non-profit organization. We do not have any paid staff members. Additionally, all APSF programs are made possible by the generosity of our sponsors, donors and community partners. In a non-covid year, the APSF partners with local businesses in fundraising efforts. Past successful events include collaboration with Southern Peak Brewery and Fresh Local Ice Cream for an Ice Cream Eating Contest and Oh What Fun! at Beaver Creek Crossings. A scavenger hunt fundraiser with Whole Brain Escape and the Apex Downtown Business Association was in development just as our area was hit by Covid.

**AL:** How can others get involved with this organization?

**BC:** So many opportunities to get involved

- spread the word! Tell your friends neighbors and favorite local businesses about the APSF
- volunteer your time—serve on a committee, help at an event
- attend and support APSF events
- donate to the APSF

All these opportunities are outlined on our website

[www.helpapexschools.org](http://www.helpapexschools.org)

**AL:** Why did you choose this particular mission?

**BC:** Our community's commitment to public education positively impacts the quality of life for both residents and businesses in the area. Our schools produce the next generation of citizens and employees. It is a win-win for the economic growth and development of our community to support our students and public schools.

**AL:** Any other information you would like to include?

**BC:** In February 2020, the APSF announced the recipients of their first-ever teacher grants. Over \$7,500 was awarded across 5 schools to provide for new technology, software, and supplies to support programs in areas including STEAM, ELA, Agriculture & Culinary Arts, and Career & Technical Education. A special grant, made possible by Crossroads Ford of Apex, was awarded to Apex Friendship High School for enhancements to the Media Center Makerspace. Other exciting highlights include augmented/virtual reality and a farm-to-table courtyard garden. The full list of recipients is available at [www.helpapexschools.org/2020-recipients](http://www.helpapexschools.org/2020-recipients).

“This is an exciting time for our foundation because we get to see a tangible and positive impact on our local schools,” said Jacques Gilbert, Mayor of Apex and APSF Board Director. “Members of our board and our team of volunteers have worked hard raising funds over the past year in order to award as many applicants as possible. And while we could not fund everything, we were encouraged by the dedication, collaboration, and innovation that was represented in each and every application that crossed our path.”

Due to Covid-19 and these unprecedented times, we have made the difficult decision to temporarily suspend the Teacher Grant Program. We are hopeful to reinstate this program for the 2021-22 school year. APSF Programs for this school year will focus on the health and wellness of Apex-area students, educators and school communities.