



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 10, 2021

**Ridgewood High School Awarded Largest, Single Donation
in the District's History for Duffield STEAM Initiative**
Tech Entrepreneur Gives Back to High School Alma Mater

RIDGEWOOD, NJ – Tech entrepreneur Dave Duffield (RHS '58), a pioneer who helped shape the software industry and founder of innovative companies including Workday, PeopleSoft and Ridgeline, is giving back to his high school alma mater in support of a substantial STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) Initiative. The Ridgewood High School Alumni Association (RHSAA) presented the Board of Education with a \$635,000 gift from the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation at the regular public meeting on May 10, 2021. This grant, which is the result of the development efforts of the RHSAA, is the largest, single donation awarded to Ridgewood High School in the district's history.

The Duffield STEAM Initiative encompasses three state-of-the-art renovations and enhancements to Ridgewood High School (RHS) to support the growing needs of its robust curricular program. The Innovation and Makerspace Lab will be upgraded and expanded with the latest technology and equipment to support this increasingly important area of study. The RHS Media Lab will now have a new Digital TV Studio with leading-edge audio and visual equipment, giving students access to high-tech systems used by the industry. And finally, the Culinary Arts Lab will undergo modernization with new cooking stations, commercial grade work tables, appliances and equipment.

“We are extremely grateful for the generous gift from the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation. Dave Duffield is a leader in his field and a renowned philanthropist, who possesses and demonstrates the many qualities that we nurture in our students for future success. We are thrilled that the Duffield STEAM Initiative will be a part of his legacy,” said Tom Gorman, Ridgewood's Superintendent of Schools. “The improvements to some of our most widely-used STEAM spaces will contribute significantly to the real-world application of the curriculum.”

The interdisciplinary nature of the STEAM learning approach, combined with the soft skills that are developed and fostered, provides students with practical experience that is integral to success in life. The Ridgewood Public Schools are proud to offer a variety of STEAM experiences beginning at the elementary level. In addition to the curricular STEAM programs, the school offers related co-curricular clubs such as the RHS-TV Club, the Applied Engineering Club, STEM Club and First Tech Challenge Robotics.

“We are proud to be able to give back to my alma mater, Ridgewood High School,” said Dave Duffield. “We hope that the Duffield STEAM Initiative helps to inspire students to become the next generation of leaders in the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.”

Before Duffield would forever change the software business, he left his mark at Ridgewood High School in the late 1950's. He demonstrated an early aptitude for academics when he won the school's highest honor in math and achieved a perfect score on his math SAT. Duffield also was co-captain of the baseball team where he earned All-State honors and threw the first no-hitter in school history. But none of this would have been possible without the support and guidance of his parents, Albert and Mary. Albert was

an aeronautical engineer while Mary was an elementary school teacher. Together, they were terrific role models and are the inspiration behind this generous gift.

This new relationship between Dave Duffield and Ridgewood High School is a result of the active and dynamic RHSAA who look to promote connections between RHS alumni and the greater RHS community. Aligned with its mission, one of the strategic priorities for the RHSAA is to enhance the overall experience of existing students. With this goal in mind, the RHSAA Board connected with the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation and submitted the RHS grant proposal for the STEAM Initiative.

“The Ridgewood High School Alumni Association is thrilled to facilitate the largest, single donation to Ridgewood High School in support of the Duffield STEAM Initiative,” said Bill McCabe, President of the RHSAA. “None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity of our esteemed alumnus, Dave Duffield. We are extremely grateful for this opportunity to work with Dave and his foundation on such an important and relevant STEAM initiative. It’s incredible projects like these that make Ridgewood High School one of the country’s leading public school institutions.”

Founded in 2014, the Ridgewood High School Alumni Association celebrates and promotes the collective experiences unique to the Ridgewood High School community and strengthens *A Tradition of Excellence*. Each year, the RHSAA honors alumni who exemplify this tradition of excellence by their personal accomplishments, professional achievements or humanitarian service. Additionally, they host fundraisers, events and career networking opportunities including Reunion Weekend, the Distinguished Alumni Award Induction, the RHS Alumni Career Speaker Series and the new RHS Alumni Externship Program.

“Ridgewood High School is fortunate to have such an active and supportive alumni association promoting the district’s mission and vision. The RHSAA is an incredible group, who have made a significant impact on the school community in a short period,” said Tom Gorman. “I look forward to the many ways they will contribute their expertise and experience in the future.”

###

About the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation

The Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation is a private charitable foundation based in Incline Village, Nevada. While the Duffields are long-time benefactors of companion animal causes, the Foundation also allows them to focus their philanthropic efforts in other areas they are passionate about, including supporting military veterans and giving back to their local community.

About the Ridgewood High School Alumni Association

The RHSAA's mission is to celebrate and promote the collective experiences unique to the Ridgewood High School community and strengthen the tradition of excellence. To achieve this mission, the RHSAA facilitates an active and dynamic alumni network, strengthens communication and connections between alumni and the RHS community as well as enhances the overall experience of existing students. To learn more about the RHSAA, or to register as an alumni, please visit our website or follow us online.

Website: <https://www.rhsalumniassociation.org/>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/48656/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rhsalumniassociationnj/>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/rhsalumniassociation/>

About Ridgewood Public Schools

The Ridgewood Public Schools, committed to a tradition of excellence and innovation, deliver a high-quality education focusing on maximizing the potential of every learner. As one of the largest school systems in Bergen County, the district comprises 10 schools and serves over 5,600 students. The Ridgewood Public Schools are continually recognized on state and national levels for school and individual achievements. All students are taught in a technologically advanced setting and are provided with numerous opportunities to excel in the classroom and extracurricular activities, including academic competitions, the arts and athletics.

Website: www.ridgewood.k12.nj.us/
Twitter: twitter.com/RwdPubSchools
Facebook: www.facebook.com/RidgewoodPublicSchools
Instagram: www.instagram.com/ridgewoodpublicschools/

###



DAVID DUFFIELD

"The mind's the standard of the man."

