



Sebastian (Grade 5, top left), Bryan (Grade 7, top right), & Nicholas (Grade 6, bottom right) compete in Around the World – Multiplication Facts.



## COVID-19 Updates & The 2020 Knockabout

### Impacts of COVID-19

Some have said that it is as if we are experiencing 1918, 1932, and 1968 simultaneously. Let's begin in 1918 - we are in the midst of a global pandemic and as a result have transitioned from in-person programming to remote programming to ensure the safety of students, staff, and volunteers. As you know, WESA completed the academic year by providing daily online academic lessons and fitness sessions with live instruction. Despite the distance, we also held our annual four weeks of

Below, the second delivery of academic+ supplies we brought to our students. This bag included: fabric masks, a whiteboard, dry erase marker & eraser, construction paper, independent academic packets, Quarantine Bingo, fun at-home activities and a deck of cards!



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summer programming, and had a blast with each other (virtually) every day!

### 2020 Knockabout

Yes, it is back! The one, the only, The Knockabout. However, as large gatherings are not feasible and squash courts remain a COVID safety challenge for groups, we have pivoted from our typical format.

Fear not, we are eager for competition too and have found the perfect way to get our dose of competition without compromising safety – rather than competing in the physical aspects of squash, we will be using the strategic and intellectual mind that playing squash requires and put it to the test during TEAM TRIVIA. That's right, this year's Knockabout will now be in the form of a trivia competition. The



Above, Hamilton (Grade 6) holds the Knockabout Champions Cup, 2019.

winner of trivia will take home the trophy given only to the **Knockabout Champions**, while the team who raises the most funds to ensure future WESA programming will take home the **Knockabout Sustainers Cup**.

While we're on the topic, let's take a look at where our teams stand in their initial fundraising efforts:

In 4<sup>th</sup> place is **the Titans** who must be spending so much time studying for trivia that they forget to start fundraising; they have a whopping **\$0** raised.

Next up, in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, we have **the Jungle Cats** with **\$2,849** raised! Not too shabby.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> place, working hard to jump into 1<sup>st</sup> to defend their position as the only team to have ever won the Sustainers Cup are **the Raiders** with **\$4,001** raised.

And leading the pack, looking to take home both the Champions Cup *and* the Sustainers Cup this year is the **A-Team**, with an astounding **\$5,702** raised!

While some of these numbers may have you thinking otherwise, teams are still being formed, so don't be shy! Assemble your trivia squad or come alone and [JOIN THE KNOCKABOUT TODAY](#).



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# WESANews

WASHINGTON EDUCATION & SQUASH ACADEMY  
NEWS & UPDATES

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## Front Page News

### Summer @ WESA

Our four-week summer program focuses on a different theme each summer, giving us the time to deep dive into an extracurricular focus. This year students gave their input into what four sub topics they would like to explore during Summer @ WESA. The top categories were: video games, squash, filmmaking, and activism & sustainability. And thus our summer theme was born: Storytelling. We spent this summer looking at how to tell stories and how our own story impacts our experience and what kind of stories we tell.

While there are an immeasurable number of challenges resulting from COVID-19, we have been lucky enough to experience some of the silver linings as well. Taking advantage of the challenge of

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### Donor Spotlight

This month's Donor Spotlight is particularly special because this couple's son was foundational in helping to build a squash and education program in Seattle. And while this spotlight is not about Steve Severson, former WESA Executive Director, it likely would not be here without him!

Meredith Lehr and Bill Severson, Steve's parents, SAC members, and longtime WESA supporters have been integral in the WESA community. Meredith and Bill have been supporting WESA, both financially and through volunteering since its early days.

In discussing their continued support of WESA, Meredith and Bill explained that they become aware of the concept of urban squash (programs across the country which combine academic support, squash instruction, and community service to create opportunities for economically disadvantaged students) through Steve. Steve, a squash player in college, "was so impressed with the players he met through

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### Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

1968. Systemic racism – understanding the impacts of it and the importance of acknowledging it, has always been at WESA's core as we work to dismantle it one piece at a time.

At WESA, our work has always revolved around the inequities caused by a racist and unjust system. More recently, we have focused our discussions at looking at our role within this system and what we need to do to ensure that we are an Anti-Racist multicultural organization. There is no neutral, and we know which side we are on, that of anti-racism and fighting the injustices that we see in the world. However, we also realize that it is vital that we take a close look at our policies, practices, and structures to ensure that they are all aligned with our

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In Partnership with



# Rising to the Challenge

## SUMMER @ WESA CONT'D

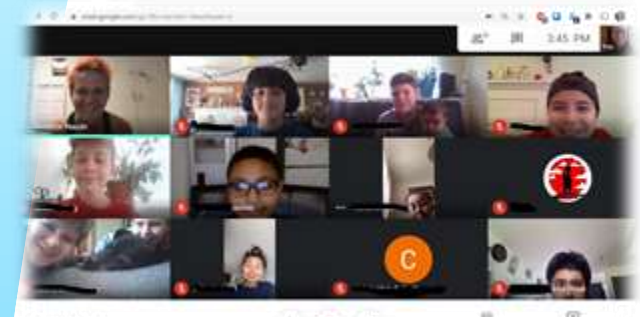
distance, we were joined this summer by field experts from across the country!

Students wrote their own scripts following a screen writing workshop with Los Angeles filmmakers Erin Wesley (cinematographer), David Mahmoudieh (writer, director, producer), Jeanine Frost (writer, director, producer), and Josh Bachove (producer).



WESA scholars working on their Beat Sheet with David Mahmoudieh (above).

During Week 3, students explored their personal squash stories. Annelize Naude, local squash pro, joined us to share her story and answers questions from our scholars.



Ms. Annelize sharing her squash story with excited WESA scholars (above).



Alexander (grade 11) with his depiction of a moment from his squash story (left). This is Alexander's 8<sup>th</sup> year at WESA and his moment was reflecting back on when he first joined.

"My diorama is my dad getting a call from squash that I'm off the waitlist because a kid got kicked out in the first week. We were at the HT Market. I also added some first squash memories- the first Squash van which was green and my first racquet which was orange. Also added some goggles and a ball."

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION CONT'D

commitment to be an anti-racist organization.

Understanding that this journey is one of personal growth as well as organizational culture and commitment, we will continue this incredibly important work at each level. We plan to begin by recruiting additional Directors to our Board of Directors that will help to add a broader diversity of perspective and better represent our student body. We would love to include more voices and ideas from our community as we continue to engage in this work and invite all of those interested to reach out about joining a committee or volunteering in other capacities at WESA (see more on page 4).

## 1932

The aforementioned WESA Sustainers Cup is aptly named as it is due to the commitment of these and like-minded individuals that we are able to continue to offer, build, and adapt our programming year after year. That is where 1932 comes in. As unemployment rates rise and the US economy becomes more unstable, individuals from BIPOC communities will be disproportionately negatively affected by job losses and financial insecurity. Additionally, many non-profits who are working to close the opportunity gap, through service to disadvantaged communities, are struggling to meet their budget needs as a result of COVID-19. The difficulties arising from the pandemic compound to create severe challenges for BIPOC communities. With the support of our community, we have been able to provide continuous service to our scholars during these turbulent times, a time when it is needed more than ever.

Last year, we received over 400 gifts to the Knockabout and it is those gifts that have helped us to weather the storm of 2020. The Knockabout is WESA's only fundraising event and we are counting on those of you who find yourself able to give during these challenging times to make a meaningful gift, whatever that means to you. Thank you in advance!



Opportunity Through Squash.



## Join a Committee Today

Over the past year, WESA has formed a number of committees to help continue to strengthen all aspects of our programming and operations. We are always seeking new ideas and perspectives at WESA and would love to add your voice to one of our committees. Are you interested in fundraising, equity, or event planning or do you know someone who is? These are some of the topics addressed in our committees and we would love to have you join us! Please reach out to Kate at [kate.frost@WESAcademy.org](mailto:kate.frost@WESAcademy.org) to learn more.

### Donor Spotlight Cont'd

[urban squash] programs that he wanted to help establish one in Seattle. They further explained that "The idea of using squash to attract kids into a program that then assists them onto a college bound academic track seems a powerful way to help guide them on a positive life path. We love squash and the dedication of those involved in WESA."

We at WESA feel incredibly lucky to have the amazing support of the Severson family. From Steve's continued one-one-one coaching with our scholars to Meredith's enthusiastic volunteer efforts at the annual Knockabout, to the financial contributions that help sustain WESA, we would not be the same without them. Thank you!

## Volunteering at WESA!

Luke Chen, a high school junior, has been a part of the WESA community for many years. As the pandemic has shifted all of our schedules, Luke has taken the opportunity to lead his own remote fitness class weekly for WESA scholars throughout the summer and heading into this fall. Luke, a strong squash player himself, uses his knowledge of the sport to give advice and talk strategy with our scholars while building their strength and endurance. We are thrilled to have Luke be part of our volunteer family at WESA! Thank you, Luke, for your service to WESA.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Our current volunteer opportunities have shifted. Please reach out to Kate at [kate.frost@WESAcademy.org](mailto:kate.frost@WESAcademy.org) if you are interested in helping with **virtual tutoring or fitness sessions**.

Days for in-person programming remain TBD. If any of these general volunteering times/locations work for you and you are interested in person opportunities, let us know and we will be in touch once in-person programming beings again!

Academic Tutoring	Squash Coaching
@ Ingraham High School Late afternoon, Evening	@ SAC Northgate Late afternoon, Evening
@ Northgate Elementary Late afternoon, Evening	@ SAC Downtown Late afternoon, Evening
@ Harbor Square AC Late afternoon, Evening	@ Harbor Square AC Late afternoon, Evening

One-on-One Coaching Opportunities available!

Visit <http://www.wesacademy.org/volunteer/> to sign up!



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Washington Education & Squash Academy



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As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or comments at [info@seattlesquash.org](mailto:info@seattlesquash.org). We love hearing from you!