Mark your calendar:
OFOA Fundraiser
August 15th 6:30pm @ the Tavernacle Social Club

Written By Chloe Murphy
Cottonwood High Student

Every year the Cottonwood High Student Government organizes a fundraiser for a charity of choice. This year we had many charities in mind, but after a lot of research and voting sessions we picked the Opportunity Foundation of America (OFOA) and the EagleEyes Project.

We decided to fundraise for EagleEyes because, unlike other charities, OFOA was not well known, and we wanted to change that.

I was introduced to the EagleEyes Project through my parents’ involvement. My Mom is a volunteer for OFOA and my Dad produced a documentary on EagleEyes for BYU TV called “Turning Point”. We were so excited about the EagleEyes Project, not just because we were able to meet and help EagleEyes students who are severely disabled but because we were finally given the opportunity to wear an eagle mascot costume. There were three main factors making this year’s fundraiser so successful. The first was our advertisement. We auctioned off the best parking spots, had our senior boys perform a dance, and gave the students a chance to dunk a teacher of their choice into a dunk tank. We had a blast planning and executing our EagleEyes fundraiser and we raised $24,000.00!

For the three week period that we conducted the fundraiser, we constantly had an Eagle and an Eyeball walking the halls of Cottonwood. The second was the competitions between the class periods. The class that raised the most money would earn a pizza party and the teacher would win a free day at the spa. We had penny wars between the three student classes, we had over 348 pounds of coins, totaling 1,200.00 just in change. The last main factor that helped raise money was our fundraiser assembly. We auctioned off the best parking spots, had our senior boys perform a dance, and gave the students a chance to dunk a teacher of their choice into a dunk tank. We had a blast planning and executing our EagleEyes fundraiser and we raised $24,000.00!
“Turning Point” Update

The response to the “Turning Point” documentary highlighting EagleEyes and Boston College Computer Science Professor Jim Gips has been spectacular. Professor Gips and the Opportunity Foundation of America have received numerous emails and phone calls requesting more information regarding the technology and how it can be acquired for use in a home or school. Through awareness created by the “Turning Point” documentary 30 new EagleEyes systems have been distributed to families and schools across the country.

“Turning Point” inspired school psychologist Bernice Maxell and software engineer Brian Maxwell from Oro Valley, Arizona, to call the Opportunity Foundation of America. The Maxwell’s were so intrigued by EagleEyes they made the decision to visit Jordan Valley School in Midvale, Utah, so they could witness the technology being used. The children they watched utilizing EagleEyes had severe Cerebral Palsy, Rett Syndrome and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Impressed by the possibilities of EagleEyes, Bernice and Brian contacted Pro Ed, the publisher of the Primary Test for Non-Verbal Intelligence (PTONI), and requested permission to digitize one license of the test. Brian has completed digitizing the test and has made it compatible with the EagleEyes technology. Bernice is now in the process of testing a control group of 100 children in the Tucson area on both the paper version and the digitized version of the PTONI. She will have this part of the project completed in May.

MedCare Pediatric Group, LP – Stafford, Texas

Special thank you to EagleEyes user Mady Bishop and her Mom, Vicki Bishop, from Hempstead, Texas (formerly from Morgan, Utah) for introducing the Opportunity Foundation of America to the MedCare Pediatric Group, LP in Stafford, Texas.

Since 1991, the MedCare Pediatric Group, LP, has been providing healthcare service to Houston-area families. MedCare provides Home Health Therapy, Home Health Nursing, Counseling Services, Outpatient Rehab, and Respite Services.

Tammy Cowley, Mady’s outstanding physical therapist, and Education Coordinator for MedCare, has witnessed her using EagleEyes for the past 5 months. After watching Mady learn ‘cause and effect’ and playing educational & recreational games, Tammy decided it was time to introduce her colleagues to the EagleEyes technology.

On March 28th and 29th, Mady and her Mom demonstrated EagleEyes to 50 physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech & language therapists from the MedCare Home Health Therapy Division. Debbie Inkley, Executive Director of the Opportunity Foundation of America, shared with the group the unique partnership between Boston College Computer Science Professor Jim Gips, creator of the EagleEyes technology, and the Foundation. Together they are working to create awareness and to make EagleEyes available to as many children and adults with severe special needs across the country as possible.

In June, Tammy Cowley and Vicki Bishop will attend EagleEyes facilitation training in Salt Lake City, at Jordan Valley School.

The Foundation looks forward to building a strong relationship with the MedCare Pediatric Group, LP, in the greater Houston-area.
EaglesEyes for Angel

Written by: Linda Eller, Jordan Valley School-Teacher

Eight year old Angel (Angelina) Danis attends Jordan Valley School in the Canyons School District. Angel has been diagnosed with Rett Syndrome and is non-verbal with very limited use of her hands. At the beginning of the school year, I suggested to Angel’s parents that she would be a good candidate for the EaglesEyes technology.

The first time Angel tried EaglesEyes she was able to intently focus and was very engaged. Each time her EaglesEyes volunteers come into the classroom she gets so excited because she knows it’s time to learn and play. After using the technology consistently for 5 months, Angel has improved her ability to respond to her surroundings, to positively participate in her daily activities, and be actively involved in her education.

EaglesEyes has also given Angel a voice and the ability to communicate with the world around her. Angel’s smile is worth a million dollars but to watch her succeed in a game or activity is priceless. The symbol for Rett is the butterfly and the color is purple. Angel is my inspiration and she fights everyday to let us know she is here and to let her fly. My goal as her teacher is to set her free, to open her world to education and a fun 8 year old life.

After watching Angel’s success at school, her parents decided it would be extremely helpful for Angel to also have the technology at home. And they were exactly right.

Tracy Danis, Angel’s Mom, shares, “EaglesEyes has been amazing for our daughter. It has allowed her to be more independent and not have to rely on ‘hand over hand’ to complete a task. It gives her the chance to make her own choices instead of always having them made for her. She can now play games like any other 8 year old child. She gets so excited to use EaglesEyes and it has awakened her. She knows she has control of the mouse and she loves it. The most amazing thing for me was when I watched my daughter count for the first time. I watched as she counted the spots on a ladybug and then select the correct number symbol. Not only does this show that she is ‘in there’, but that she understands and has the ability to learn and grow academically. I hope with EaglesEyes to someday teach Angel how to read and write.”

EaglesEyes has established a wonderful new connection between Angel’s parents and me, as her teacher at Jordan Valley School.

Abbie in Florida  Tabithia in Utah  Mya in Idaho
Board Members:
Blake Kirby, Board Chairman
Debbie Inkley, Founder & Executive Director
Scott Allen, Steve Aston, Steve Byans, Corey Catten, Mark Donnelly, Alex Fox, Sean Gnekow, Cheri Laughridge, Ken Margets, Howard Sharples and Ron Williams

Volunteers:
Boston College: Professor Jim Gips, Professor Bill Ames, Maureen Gates and Dr. Don Ricciaro
Brigham Young University: Dr. Tina Dyches
Jordan Valley School: Linda Eller, Kat Winch, Sue Sansome and Glenda Stroh
Opportunity Foundation of America: Mike Carmody, Chad Holmes, Kris Kuehnadel, Judy Johnson, Andrew Loeffler, Ruby Hall, Michelle Catten, Andrea Dean, Mori Catten, Matt Dimock, Tyler Dean, Vicki Bishop and Mady Bishop

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