## Bridgeport International Academy Student Scholarship Fund Telethon Fundraiser

Frank LaGrotteria April 23, 2021



Chili peppers, onions, and wasabi. Those were just a few of the unusual things involved in the recent virtual telethon fundraiser for Bridgeport International Academy (<u>BIA</u>), which raised more than \$5,000 for its student scholarship fund.

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you to all of our donors for your generosity" said BIA Headmaster Dr. Frank LaGrotteria. "It was exceeded by a wide margin from any previous attempt."



Fifty-three donors pledged \$5,060 on BIA's GoFundMe <u>page</u> during the virtual telethon. The private college preparatory school, founded in 1997 in Bridgeport, Connecticut, has an international student body which includes Unificationists. The school strives for every graduate to become "a global citizen who can make a profound and lasting difference in their college careers and beyond."

"This was BIA's first telethon," said fundraiser coordinator Daniel Kingsley. "It was a student-driven event and every penny that was raised in the telethon will go directly to BIA's scholarship fund to help current and future students at BIA meet the world for years to come."

Streaming live on Facebook April 23, the telethon, which ran from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. EDT, was a new approach to the school's annual benefit night. It was full of student talent, including music, skits, singing, dancing, poetry, cat videos, computer tricks, as well as some unappetizing food challenges.



"Can't wait to see what happens with these [chili] peppers," read one Facebook comment.

Students entertained the virtual audience while performing in various categories. And as donations poured in, two emcees -- Micas Wetherall and Joseph Lopez -- gulped down tomato juice and pickle juice while blindfolded, took whipped cream pies to the face, and ate raw onions and wasabi to help the fundraiser reach its \$5,000 goal. BIA faculty joined in on the action, too, chomping on whole chili peppers.

"The pickle juice was kind of good," said Wetherall.

Donors were recognized with a small or large engraved dove, depending on donation size, which are hung on the Dove Wall in the front of BIA. Four students were also honored, receiving small plaques for BIA's Four Pillars Awards that recognize academics, creativity, global citizenship, and character.

"I am very grateful that I could contribute greatly to this school," said Liam Meijer, a student photographer awarded for his creativity.

Meijer, Hien Phan, Keita Yamada, and Chau Giang "Alvia" Pham will have their names displayed next to past award recipients in BIA's Spurgin Hall.

"These students have such talent, such gifts," said Dr. LaGrotteria, "and I'm so moved by them. Here at BIA we honor these four pillars of excellence as the foundation of what we do. This is what it's all about... and that's what we've seen with this evening's telethon."

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## **Bridgeport International Academy**

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Greetings BIA family!

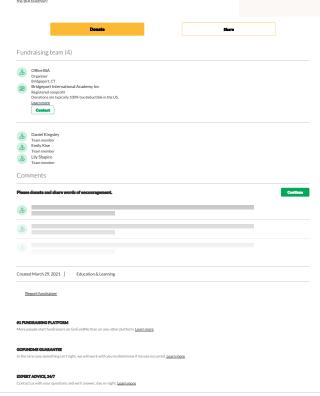
Bridgeport International Academy is thrilled to make a special announcement. This year, we will be hosting a virtual telethon broadcasted line on our Facebook pag In Friday April 22rd at 7 pm EST. Eash year, BIA holds an annual benefit night to help raise scholarship funds for current and future BIA students. We are a small chool with a bigmission WC exeta a harmous and empowering teaming min/rommet where students evel cashes. The sense develop the unique creative gifts. We strive for every student who graduates from BIA to become Global Citizens who can make a profound and lasting difference in their collever areas on theorem in the same of BIA to the torus to the out

We are inviting our entire BIA family to attend and support the BIA virtual telefont The telefonw will feature our very talented BIA student artists displaying a variety of incredity fun and unique talents. If you feel impired to contribute to our mission, we encourage you to make a donation on this Garmadhe gape, to be accepted over the phone. If you would be support fuer at risk that the third bradeaux, our can also provide a donation anytime on our Garmadhe gape. To D erected to the donation raised phone. If you would be support fuer at risk that the third bradeaux, our can also provide a donation anytime on our Garmadhe gape. To D precent of the donation raised from the telehon will directly go back to the BIA student by ture to be provide the teleform to the donation raised from the telehon will directly go back to the BIA student by ture to be provide the support of the teleform the telehon will directly go back to the BIA student by ture to be provide the support of the teleform the teleform the telehon will directly go back to the BIA student by the total to be provide the support total teleform. The support total teleform the teleform will directly go back to the BIA student by the donation and the support teleform the teleform will directly go back to the BIA student by the donation and the support teleform the teleform will directly go back to the BIA student by the donation and the BIA student by the donation and the donation and the support teleform the teleform will directly be appred to the donation and the support teleform teleform the teleform will directly be appred to the donation and the support teleform teleform the teleform will directly be appred to the donation and the support teleform teleform teleform the teleform will directly be appred to the donation and teleform t



Bronze level: 50-97 dollars-You will receive a small dove which will be placed on our dove wall located on the front of the school with your name on it. Silver level: 100-497 dollars-You will receive a large dove which will be placed on our dove wall located on the front of the school with your name on it. Gold level: 500 dollars and above-You will receive a large dove with flowers which will be placed on our dove wall located on the front of the school with your name on it.

We are a small school that is completely funded through private tuition payments. Despite the many challenges that the school has faced during the COVID 19 pandemic, the school has worked referetestly to create a safe, engaging, and inspiring educational experience for our students. Your doublenges a long way to help current and future students have an opportunity to attend BIA for many great years to come. Mark your calendars for April 274. We look forward to seeing you at the BIA telehood



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