

# Breakfast Fundraiser Celebrates BeBe, Community

The Ballard High School Foundation teamed again with the Athletic Booster Club this fall to present the inspiring **Breakfast of Champions** community fundraiser. More than 200 supporters gathered in the Ballard HS Commons on October 4 to eat pancakes, dive deep on student wellness, and celebrate sports, teamwork, and trailblazing PE teacher and coach **BeBe Burns**, recipient of the 2025 BHS Woman of Impact Award.

A PE teacher from 1966-96, and coach from 1974-96, BeBe's career spanned the changes brought on by Title IX and female inclusion in athletics, though she always prioritized health and fitness for all Beavers. Her former students, **Teresa Allen '70** and **Sue Stimac Verduin '78**, presented the award, part of a group of alumni, tennis protege and gym friends, who showed up in force to celebrate BeBe. Her powerlifting coach, **Todd Christensen**, was particularly poignant. He shared that even with some significant health challenges following BeBe's retirement, she determinedly put in the work to become the most decorated power lifter in Washington state.

In addition to celebrating BeBe, the breakfast event raised funds for Student Wellness Resources. Thanks to BHS parent alum and Seattle Reign/University of Washington/Seahawks Team Physician **Dr. Jonathan Drezner** for raising awareness on student wellness. The breakfast event also launched a 48-hour giving campaign,



Briane Henak/Rowland Studio

*Emcee Erin Mayovsky interviewed Baseball Coach Doug Montgomery '03, Softball Coach Dale Griffith, and Gymnastics Coach Stephanie Gundel. Sue Stimac Verduin '78, BeBe Burns, and Powerlifting Coach Todd Christensen with BeBe's "Woman of Impact" Award and commemorative Wheaties cover. Seniors Tess Keenan and Ellie Pake performed the National Anthem.*

with the Foundation matching all related donations up to \$2,500 — and we hit the mark.

BHS students brought energy and

talent — from the Pep Band's lively entrance to the crisp Cheer and Dance Team routines, and a moving anthem duet by **Tess Keenan '26** and **Ellie Pake '26**. Coaches and athletes were seated at each table to share their perspectives on high school sports.

As with other Foundation fundraisers, 100% of ticket proceeds were shared with the BHS team or program chosen by each attendee. (See the breakdown of giving on page 9.) We look forward to supporting Beaver students — and to another great community event next fall.

## Woman of Impact Award

*Named after **Sue Stimac Verduin '78**, the award honors the BHS and Seattle University basketball alum's sense of community, teamwork and personal drive. The award is presented, as merited, for outstanding efforts in the classroom, on the performance stage, through volunteer service, and/or school community leadership.*



## Many Hands Helped Make Breakfast Special

Thanks to everyone who helped the Breakfast of Champions a resounding success: Emcee **Erin Mayovsky**, our Coaches Panel (**Dale Griffith**, **Stephanie Gundel**, **Doug Montgomery '03**), student speaker **Alessa Iliakis '27**, featured speaker **Dr. Jonathan Drezner**, and Athletic Booster Club President **Suzanne Dale Estey**.

Thanks to the BHS Pep Band (Band Director **Jay Gillespie**), Cheer Team (Coach **Alicia Edgerly**), Dance Team (Coach **Bethany Nielcen**), and Choir Members **Tess Keenan '26** and **Ellie Pake '26** (Choir Director **Courtney Rowley**) for performing. We also appreciate the student-athletes and coaches who joined each table, **LINK Crew** volunteers (coordinated by Assistant Principal **David Fort**), and the **Cheer** and **Dance Team** representatives who pitched in throughout the event. Shout out to our kitchen and custodial staff for their behind-the-scenes support, and the delicious breakfast spread. We enjoyed BHS Athletic Trainer **Loka Murphy's** hearty oatmeal, in addition to pancakes, fruit and pastries.

Thanks to our generous donors — **Smith Brothers Farms**, **Rough & Tumble**, **Duke's Seafood**, **Seattle Storm**, **Ballard FC/Salmon Bay FC** — and the **Athletic Booster Club** for sharing prizes.

Thanks to event leads, BHS Foundation Executive Director **Dick Lee '61**, **Suzanne Dale Estey**, **Sue Stimac Verduin '78**, and **Gloria Kruzner**. We're grateful to Principal **Abby Hunt**, Athletic Director **Eric Ensign '91**, and all who backed the event.



Briane Henak/Rowland Studio

*Suzanne Dale Estey, Dr. Jonathan Drezner, Erin Mayovsky, Sue Stimac Verduin '78 and Dick Lee '61 gathered on stage after the program; BHS Cheer and Dance Team members performed.*



## Donor Impact by the Numbers

Thanks to the generosity of breakfast donors, BHS programs received a total of \$14,175 (through stipends and direct donations). This included \$5,070 for Student Wellness Resources, boosted by the Foundation's \$2,500 match.



Baseball	\$235	Gymnastics	\$500
Boys Basketball	\$285	Link Crew	\$200
Boys Lacrosse	\$200	Performing Arts	\$400
Cheer	\$1,295	Softball	\$270
Cross Country	\$300	Strength & Conditioning	\$600
Dance Team	\$2,920	Student Wellness	\$5,070
Football	\$550	Tennis	\$1,000
Girls Basketball	\$65	Track & Field	\$50
Girls Soccer	\$420		
Girls Swim & Dive	\$85		