Checkmate Newsletter
Celebrating 25 Years

Chess for Success celebrates a major anniversary milestone this year. The organization was founded by Dick Roy, Phil Margolin, and Frank Eiseman 25 years ago.

Dick formed and coached chess clubs in Southwest Portland in the 1970s. While coaching, Dick learned the benefits of teaching chess to vulnerable children. Dick recruited Phil Margolin to help coach the Hayhurst Elementary School chess club in the late 1980s. Phil is a defense lawyer and a *New York Times* best-selling author whose life has been profoundly impacted by chess.

In the early 1990s, Frank Eiseman, a retired accountant and president of OMSI, heard about Dick’s involvement with chess in Portland. Frank’s brother-in-law had founded a chess organization in Seattle to teach children the game, and Frank wanted to start one in Portland. Frank met with Dick and Phil and they began working together to make chess possible for local students.

In 1992, Dick was the board president of the Oregon Scholastic Chess Foundation (OSCF). The Portland Chess Project developed under the OSCF. The project was planned as a four-year chess education program to be tested in nine elementary schools with the most vulnerable students in the Portland School District. The program included 30 chess lessons, written by a committee of chess players, teachers, and counselors. The founders formed a board and applied for a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust. With the $110,000 awarded, the first nine elementary schools were Applegate, Beach, Boise-Eliot, Brooklyn, Clarendon, Humboldt, Peninsula, John Ball (now Rosa Parks), and Vernon.

In 1994, Frank wanted to add more schools to the Portland Chess Project. Hindered by grant requirements, Frank registered Chess for Success as a 501(c)(3) organization. Frank called former clients and friends for the money to fund the chess clubs, collecting over $20,000 to add an additional 12 schools.

When the four-year grant came to an end, the two initiatives merged into one. It was in 1996 that the Portland Chess Project and Chess for Success became Chess for Success.

Chess for Success managed 21 chess clubs in 1996. By 1998, the organization had taken the responsibility of presenting the Oregon State Chess Tournament and regionals. During the 2016-2017 school year, the program served over 3,500 students in chess clubs, almost 20 times more students than the amount projected by the Portland Chess Project in the original grant proposal. Chess for Success has grown tremendously and we look forward to what the next 25 years brings.

**Chess for Success Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Frank Eiseman formed Chess for Success, adding another 12 schools.</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Chess for Success presented the Oregon State Chess tournament, hired first employee.</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>First school year Chess for Success served more than 85 schools.</td>
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<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>US Congress commissioned a study of Chess for Success participants.</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>First Girls Play Chess tournament at Harold Oliver Primary School.</td>
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<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Chess for Success celebrates a major anniversary milestone this year.</td>
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A word from the Executive Director

This year we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of Chess for Success, and I am celebrating my 20th year as Executive Director. I fell in love with Chess for Success when I first found out about this powerful program after I applied to be the first part-time executive director. The idea of teaching at-risk children critical thinking skills through the game of chess made perfect sense to me. I was happily surprised when the board hired me, even though I did not play chess.

There were 21 Portland schools in the program when I started my new adventure, and just two months later Chess for Success accepted the responsibility for producing 24 regional tournaments and the state chess tournaments. It was a steep learning-curve, but I had lots of assistance from the program managers and volunteers from around the state who helped make it very successful.

Chess for Success did not have an office when I was hired, so I worked from my home office. I was the only full-time employee for seven years, and now we have four full-time employees and seven part-time program managers. Last year, Chess for Success provided after-school programs for 3,525 students in 82 schools in 20 school districts and 10 counties. We also are serving incarcerated youth throughout Oregon to teach the skills that will help them be successful in school and life.

We are thankful for the generous support we receive that allows us to provide the program to more students.

Please donate to Chess For Success Visit chessforsuccess.org/support/give to make a tax-deductible contribution.

Welcome Daniel!

Daniel is our 2017-2018 intern. He is a senior at De La Salle North High School, a former participant of Chess for Success at Chief Joseph Elementary, and a talented musician. "Chess for Success helped me understand patterns and strategy. As a musician, I recognize the patterns in music and the strategic approach required to produce songs in music software," Daniel said. He attended da Vinci Middle School where he was introduced to African drumming, and is now part of the drumming group Barakono. Look out for Daniel heading up some special projects at Chess for Success.
Vernon Chess Club: The longest-running Chess for Success club

Vernon Elementary in Northeast Portland was one of the original schools chosen to participate in the Portland Chess Project, and is the school with the longest-running Chess for Success club. Historically, Vernon is a school that has served some of the most vulnerable children in the Portland Public School District.

Vernon is now a K-8 school, and the chess club has about 50 participants. The club is co-coached by Carrie Nehring, a fourth grade teacher at Vernon, and Harry Lofton, a volunteer and chess aficionado.

Carrie was recruited to Chess for Success after she spent a year teaching a different chess program to her students, and admits she is not the strongest chess player. Harry, on the other hand, has been playing for 60 years. He picked up a chess instruction booklet as a teenager and taught himself. Now Harry tries to play a game with each student, often removing his queen from the board to make the game fair. Every student gets the opportunity to play Harry. He also creates puzzles from grandmaster games to give the middle school students an opportunity to improve their skills.

Carrie and Harry are able to co-teach effortlessly. Carrie starts the lesson, and then Harry jumps in. Co-teaching is also helping the students. There is a chatty student in chess club, whose chess game and behavior improved with patient instruction from both coaches. Carrie and Harry have a great balance for a successful chess club.

Become a Strategic Supporter today!

Strategic Supporters

Chess helps students become strategic thinkers. Students in Chess for Success gain self-esteem, exhibit better behavior and show improved academic performance – all while having fun and playing chess.

Help Chess for Success reach more students by becoming a strategic supporter with your monthly donation. Giving is easy and your ongoing support will provide a steady funding stream to support the children in our program. Every contribution is appreciated.

A special thank you to our community partners Mississippi Pizza and Portland Roasting Coffee!

Sign up online at www.chessforsuccess.org or contact Laurel Keppy at laurel@chessforsuccess.org or 503-295-1230 x100

Your gift makes a difference:
- $5/month provides six chess sets for students to keep
- $12.50/month supports one child for a year in the program
- $25/month pays for chess equipment and chess books for one school
- $83.33/month ($1000) provides 100 student-designed club t-shirts and entitles you to membership in the Chess for Success Round Table Society

Give $5/month or more, and get a gift certificate good for a free slice of Mississippi pizza!

Give $12.50/month or more, and get a bag of coffee from Portland Roasting Coffee

The Mississippi pizza pub
PORTLAND ROASTING COFFEE
Helping children succeed, one move at a time.

Save the date! 2018 Game Changer Luncheon

Thursday April 26, 2018
The Portland Hilton
Doors at 11:30, Program 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Tickets $100
To sponsor, contact Laurel Keppy
laurel@chessforsuccess.org