

Tigers launch massive fundraising effort to restore historic Ogden High School

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OGDEN — Tigers past and present proudly prowled the portico of historic Ogden High School for a special announcement Friday morning.

With television cameras rolling and several hundred people, including students, alumni, dignitaries and media, looking on, campaign co-chairman Alan Hall officially announced the launching of a massive fundraising effort to restore Ogden High.

A mighty cheer and applause went up when Hall, a 1963 graduate, announced that \$6.8 million has already been raised. At least \$2.2 million more is needed, Hall said, and more would be nice.

"Any way we can get money out of you we will do," Hall said, sparking some laughs.

Voters passed a bond in 2006 to fund about \$79 million in construction costs.

Now \$9 million in private money is needed for restoration work on the building that was constructed more than 70 years ago.

The school, which features art deco architecture and interior design, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

But the school needs restoration work, a seismic retrofit, upgrades to windows and other maintenance work along with new classroom space.

George B. Handy, OHS '39, has practiced law in Ogden for 60 years. There's no question in his mind that the school needs to be preserved.

"Why is this school worth saving? Because it's such a magnificent institution. There is nothing like it anywhere in the county," Handy said. "It must be maintained."

Larry

Leatham

graduated

in 1957, then walked the halls for several years as a teacher and administrator. Tearing down the school wasn't an option, he said.

"It (the school) is dear to my heart. I think it's the most magnificent building in the state, and I am so pleased we are taking the time to try to restore it," he said.

"If they were ever going to tear it down, I would be on the steps, chained to the door."

Other alumni spoke in support of the project and to solicit donations.

Dean Hurst, class of '44, spoke on behalf of the Stewart Education Foundation, which donated \$1 million.

He recalled playing the lead role in the school play "The Music Man" and hearing Helen Keller speak in the school's beautiful auditorium.

"A few have given a lot of money, and now we need a lot to give a little," Hurst said. "Please give a little."

Utah businessman and philanthropist Spencer P. Eccles, the newly appointed chairman to the governor's office of economic development, also spoke.

His family donated \$1 million to the campaign. He challenged students — raise \$5,000 and the George and Dolores Dore Eccles Foundation would add another \$1,000.

Student body president Kel Robbins accepted the challenge on behalf of the student body, but only after Ogden Principal Sondra Jolovich-Motes told him he should.

Junior Clayton Booth, a running back on the football team, offered his honest observation of the event.

"I don't think I fully appreciate being a student here yet," he said. "But when I think about the people who have been here over the years, it's pretty cool. When I compare it to other schools, it definitely has a more historic feeling to it."

Other famous alumni at Ogden High include Lt. Gov. Greg Bell, who spoke; Brent Scowcroft, a former national security adviser to several presidents; former Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson; Black & Decker CEO Nolan Anderson; and Zions Bank Vice President Fred Ball.

Ogden High was built in 1936 with economic recovery funds from the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. It was the nation's first million-dollar high school.

During tours, Gary Reid, director of support services for the Ogden School District, shared details about the restoration process.

Phase one of the project is done and included the addition of a new gymnasium on the east side of the school, a major upgrade to the cafeteria, reconfiguring the parking lots and a landscaped courtyard. Upgrades were also made to the heating and electrical systems.

Phase two is under way. It focuses on the south end of the main building, including converting the old gym into classrooms and restoring the auditorium.

Reid said the biggest frustration in the process has been removing asbestos.

"More than a half million (dollars) has gone into removing it," Reid said. "It has become a dirty word around me."

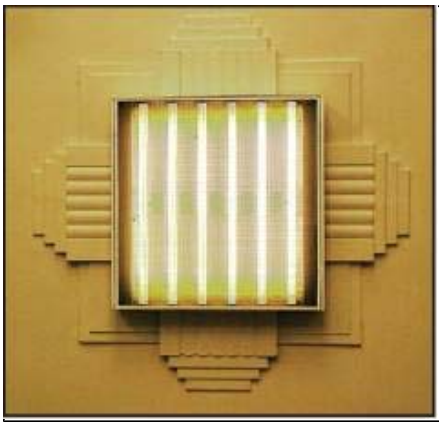
To donate to Ogden High's capital campaign, visit [www. restoreogdenhigh.org](http://www.restoreogdenhigh.org) or call the Ogden School Foundation at (801) 737-7305.



Members of the Ogden High A Cappella Choir cheer during the campaign kick-off at the school on Friday.



SHINING LIGHT ON HISTORY





BETH SCHLANKER/Standard-Examiner During the Ogden High School Capital Campaign Public Kick-off Event on the front lawn of the school Friday, capital campaign cochairman Alan Hall, class of '63, announces that \$6.8 million has been raised for restoration— but at least \$2.2 million more is needed.



Utah Lt. Gov. Greg Bell (top row, center), Ogden High class of '66, speaks to the crowd about his love of the school during the Ogden High School Capital Campaign Public Kick-off Event on the front lawn of the school on Friday. Many in the crowd say they are pleased the school's history and unique architecture, seen on this page and on 1A, will be saved and restored. BETH SCHLANKER/Standard-Examiner and historic courtesy photos

