

**Greg Hood, Principal at James Madison High School, pictured with some of the program's mentors and Nathan and Gail Hibler, members of The Warhawk Foundation Board.**



PHOTOS BY  
LISA FAY/  
THE CONNECTION

## Making Freshman Feel at Home at Madison High

*The mentor program allows incoming freshmen to be mentored by an upperclassman.*

By LISA FAY  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n Sept. 13th, Nathan and Gail Hibler were the stars in James Madison High School's Career Center. On behalf of the Members of The Warhawk Foundation Board, they were to present a check of \$10,000 to fund the 2018-2019 Mentor Program at James Madison High School.

The mentor program allows any incoming freshmen to be mentored by an upperclassman. Upperclassmen students offer friendship, support, and guidance for their younger classmates as they begin their journey in High School. The program also offers leadership skills for the upperclassmen and teaches them how to develop positive relationships. Gail Hibler, who has been part of the JMHS family for 13 years, saw a shift as she worked in the attendance office.

"I started to recognize that not every student had the same support as others and it's something that you would not imagine in Vienna. There are a lot of grandparents raising students, single parents, families that have come from war-torn areas, which we forget in this environment. You don't see many [minorities], but there are quite a lot in this building, they're just for the most part invisible," said Gail Hibler. "My husband and I, he was a foreign diplomat, so for 15 years we lived overseas, so it's a cause that's close to our hearts and we want to try and ensure that everyone is treated equally and everyone has equal opportunities. We started the Warhawk Scholarship Fund last year and so far, we gave eight scholarships in 2017 and we gave 10 in 2018. If we can highlight to these young people that not everyone is as fortunate as them and just to open their eyes a little bit, I think once they start working with the underclassmen they'll see that," said Hibler.

The Warhawk Foundation is a federally approved 501(c)(3) charity that focuses on the educational development of all JMHS students and alumni. Since 2017, it has awarded more than \$100,000 in post-secondary education scholarships and grants. The



**Tim Buckley, Director of Student Services at James Madison High School; Greg Hood, Principal at James Madison High School; Nathan and Gail Hibler, members of The Warhawk Foundation Board.**



**Lori DiRocco, Mayor of Vienna; Gail and Nathan Hibler, members of The Warhawk Foundation Board; Dalia Patchik, school board member; and Greg Hood, Principal of James Madison High school; after the ceremony.**

Warhawk Foundation was created with the JMHS family in mind and is encouraged to be used by the entire JMHS community to benefit of the students and alumni of JMHS.