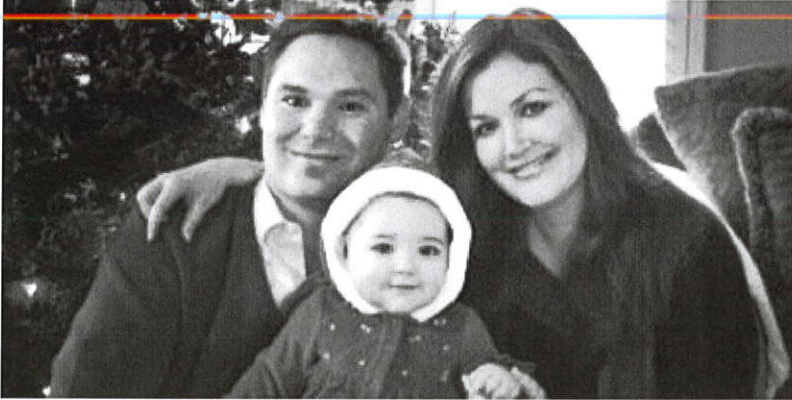


# SM grad leads foundation



Jimmy McAndrew, a St. Maries High School graduate, is the president-elect of the Excel Foundation, a non profit group that supports Coeur d'Alene School District 271. He lives in Coeur d'Alene with his wife, Julie, and daughter, Grace. - Submitted

**By Summer Crosby**

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As a student, Jimmy McAndrew, a 1997 graduate of St. Maries, never gave much thought to school budgets.

“When you’re a student, you have no idea what goes on behind the scenes,” he said. “Idaho, though, has had its share of budget cuts and funding restraints.”

Mr. McAndrew is the president-elect of the Excel Foundation, which supports teachers in the Coeur d'Alene School District 271 with grants to pay for innovative classroom projects. He will serve the organization as president starting next year.

“I’ve been with the organization for three years, but the Foundation itself has actually been around for 25 years,” Mr. McAndrew said.

The organization awarded \$70,000 to teachers last year.

“We actually just gave away our millionth dollar this year,” Mr. McAndrew said.

As president of Excel, Mr. McAndrew said it’s his goal to bring awareness to the Foundation and its goals. He wants to continue to look for creative avenues to fundraise.

Mr. McAndrew said his experiences at St. Maries had an impact on his life and what he wants to do.

“Growing up in St. Maries, everybody watched out for everybody and watched out for

me,” he said. “There were so many people, so many teachers, who pushed me personally ♦ I’m just a big supporter of education.”

Mr. McAndrew said he was excited to hear about Devon Barta’s local effort to support the St. Maries School District through the St. Maries Foundation for Education.

“When I read about Devon’s involvement and what she’s trying to do, I thought that was really cool,” Mr. McAndrew said. “I think their mission fits in great with the dynamics of the community. It’s been neat to read about their progress and effort.”

Today, Mr. McAndrew works as a home mortgage consultant with Wells Fargo Bank. He also is a member of The Coeur Group, a nonprofit which he helped establish in 2004. The Coeur Group is a group of young businessmen in the Coeur d’Alene area who contribute to the community by donating time and resources to various causes and charitable organizations in the area.

Mr. McAndrew resides in Coeur d’Alene with his wife, Julie, and their one-year-old daughter Grace. Mr. McAndrew hopes to eventually continue his schooling to obtain his MBA.

Mr. McAndrew is the son of the late Suzy McAndrew, and the grandson of Doris Hagan and the late Gordon Hagan.