



**Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence**  
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# HIGH MARKS

SUMMER 2006

Recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools.

*The Foundation wishes to thank INTEGRIS Health, Inc. for its generosity in printing this publication.*

## Youth Mentoring Programs Sought For Online Directory

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is seeking youth mentoring and tutoring programs across the state to be added to an online directory of Oklahoma mentoring programs. The directory is a component of the new David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative, designed to encourage the growth and development of school-based mentoring programs in Oklahoma.



School, community and faith-based mentoring and tutoring programs serving youth are encouraged to register their programs online at [www.ofe.org/mentoring](http://www.ofe.org/mentoring) or by contacting the foundation office at (405) 236-0006. Registrants will be added to a web-based directory of Oklahoma mentoring programs and will receive information about mentor program training and networking opportunities. In addition, registrants will have the opportunity to promote their services and recruit prospective volunteers through the online directory.

**Thank you** to all supporters who make it possible to carry out our programs. We are especially grateful to the following Patrons and Special Friends for their exceptional commitment this year to recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools.

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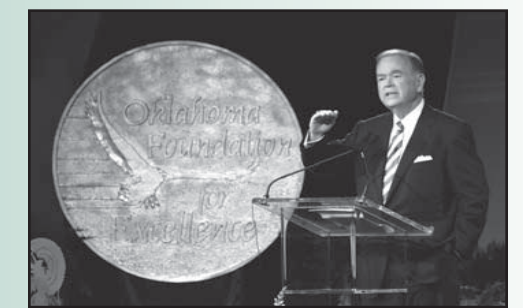
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## Boren Delivers Anniversary Address

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence capped off a year of activities celebrating its 20th anniversary with a special Academic Awards Banquet in May featuring a keynote address by OFE founder and chairman David L. Boren.

The gala celebration paid tribute to 100 of Oklahoma's top public high school seniors and outstanding educators. Co-chaired by Sharon Bartlett and Lucy Barker of Tulsa, this year's banquet carried the theme "On the Wings of Eagles," celebrating the students, teachers and educational leaders who have soared to great heights in their pursuit of academic excellence.

Receiving Medals for Excellence in Teaching were Janet Jolly McKenzie, Kendall-Whittier Elementary School (elementary level), Tulsa; Jan McClaren, Claremore High School (secondary), Claremore; and J. Rufus Fears, University of Oklahoma, (college/university), Norman. Ronald M. Maxfield, principal of



*David Boren, OFE founder and chairman, delivers his keynote address titled "The Challenges Facing the Academic All-Staters."*

the Classen School of Advanced Studies in Oklahoma City, received the Medal for Excellence in Administration, while the Putnam City Academy in Warr Acres was recognized as Oklahoma's outstanding alternative education program.

In his keynote address, Boren described the challenges and opportunities that today's Academic All-Staters will face as future world citizens. He said that

*(Continued on page 2)*

## OFE Announces New LEF Outreach, Mentoring Directors

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has announced the appointments of two new part-time staff members, Dr. Karen Rose, who will serve as director of Local Education Foundation Outreach, and Jennifer Geren, who will serve in a newly created position as director of the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative.

Rose, who retired in June 2005 as assistant superintendent of Sand Springs Public Schools, will head up the foundation's LEF Outreach Program, which provides technical assistance and training to local education foundations and to groups seeking to establish foundations in their communities. Rose fills the post vacated by Charlotte Jones, who resigned recently to accept a research position with the University of Oklahoma's K20 Center.

"We are delighted to announce the addition of Karen Rose to our foundation staff," said Emily Stratton, OFE executive director. "As a nonprofit leader, former school administrator and educator, Karen brings a wealth of valuable experience to this position. In ad-

*(Continued on page 2)*



*Karen Rose*



*Jennifer Geren*

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STAFF

Emily Stratton  
Executive Director

Rachel Webber  
Executive Assistant

Karen Rose  
Director of Local Education  
Foundation Outreach

Jennifer Geren  
Director of the Boren  
Mentoring Initiative

Brenda Wheelock  
Director of Development  
and Communications

Dayna Rowe  
Communications Specialist

# OFE Announces New Directors *(continued)*

dition, she has demonstrated her commitment to the work of our foundation as a past member of our Board of Trustees and member of our Local Education Foundation Outreach Committee.”

Prior to joining the foundation, Rose served six years as assistant superintendent for Sand Springs Public Schools. She has also held positions as director of personnel for Norman Public Schools and as a coordinator and consultant for the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. In addition, she served as a principal for 13 years in Stillwater Public Schools and has held teaching positions in Stillwater and Morrison. A graduate of Oklahoma State University, Rose earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in elementary education and her doctoral degree in educational administration and higher education.

Geren, whose appointment begins Sept. 5, will oversee the foundation’s new mentoring initiative, designed to encourage the growth and development of school-based mentoring. Geren most recently coordinated a statewide student civic engagement initiative on over 20 college campuses through her work as assistant director of Campus Compact and student relations liaison for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. She also coordinated the Student Advisory Board to the Regents and planned many state and regional student conferences and events, including Student Day at the Statehouse and an annual student leadership retreat.

An electronic media graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Geren served two years as an admissions counselor and recruiter for her alma mater before

joining the State Regents’ office in 2002.

“We are excited to have Jennifer Geren join us as our first director of the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative,” Statton said. “Jennifer’s experience in coordinating and promoting statewide initiatives for the State Regents, as well as her commitment to serving Oklahoma students, will be valuable assets in our work to strengthen youth mentoring efforts across Oklahoma.”



OFE President Teresa Adwan (right) presents outgoing LEF Outreach director Charlotte Jones with a crystal award in appreciation for her service to the foundation. Jones resigned in July to accept a research post with the University of Oklahoma’s K20 Center, an interdisciplinary university-wide center with a focus on educational and community renewal in the United States and abroad.

## Boren Delivers Keynote Address *(continued)*

America’s role as a world superpower is being challenged by the growing economic strength of other countries.

“We are only 6 percent of the world’s population trying to lead 94 percent,” Boren said. “When you think of China and India alone, at the current rate of economic growth, both will equal the United States in terms of the size of their economy in this century and perhaps before the midpoint of this century.”

U.S. leaders would be wise to build lasting, peaceful partnerships with those countries whose vast populations and growing economies could one day make them military giants, Boren said. He also described other challenges facing America, including a shrinking middle class and divisive national partisanship.

One of the key factors that will help America retain its influence in the world is its tradition of volunteerism, Boren said. “We still lead the world today, five times ahead of the country in second place, in the number of hours of volunteer activity given by the American people and in the amount of money voluntarily given by American people” he said.

To remain a great nation, America must also invest in education and put great teachers in the classroom, he said “We’re all diminished when the great potential locked in every child is not fully realized.”

Boren’s complete speech is available online at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org). DVDs of the banquet can be purchased for \$12 each by contacting the foundation at (405) 236-0006.

# OFE NEWS BRIEFS

## Teachers Encouraged to Apply For Free Electronic Field Trips

Applications are available for fifth- and eighth-grade teachers interested in receiving free Colonial Williamsburg Electronic Field Trips subscriptions from the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Applications, which will be accepted through Sept. 11, are available on the foundation’s Web site at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org).

The Emmy Award-winning Electronic Field Trips, produced by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, bring early American history to life through a series of live television broadcasts and interactive online activities. Students also have the opportunity to call toll-free and speak to historians and character interpreters during the live television programs. The broadcasts are presented monthly from October through April on OETA.

## All-State, Medal for Excellence Nominations Open in September

Nomination forms for 2007 Academic All-State and Medal for Excellence Awards will be available on the foundation Web site at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org) beginning Sept. 25. Winners will be honored at the foundation’s Academic Awards Banquet on May 19 in Oklahoma City.

School administrators have till Dec. 1 to

submit nominations for Academic All-State, which honors 100 outstanding public high school seniors with a \$1,500 scholarship and medallion.

Medal for Excellence Awards, which include a \$7,500 cash prize, are presented to an exceptional elementary, secondary and college teacher; an outstanding elementary/secondary administrator and an alternative education program. Nominations can be submitted by anyone and must be postmarked by Nov. 27. For selection criteria, visit the foundation’s Web site at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org).

## Local Independent Charities Offers New Ways to Support OFE

Many state and federal employees now have the option to give to OFE through the State Charitable Contribution Program and the Combined Federal Campaign.

Through a new membership with Local Independent Charities of America, OFE is one of many nonprofit organizations that state and federal employees can support through workplace fund drives. As an added benefit of Local Independent Charities membership, the foundation has a new online giving service on its Web site at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org). Donors can make secure credit card donations online, with 100 percent of their VISA and MasterCard contributions going to OFE.

## You Can Make a Difference!

*NEW: Donate online at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org)*

Please help us build a brighter future for Oklahoma students by becoming a member of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Each gift enhances academic opportunities in Oklahoma public education!

Choose your donor level:

- Mentor: \$25 - \$99
- Scholar: \$100 - \$249
- Salutatorian: \$250 - \$499
- Valedictorian: \$500 - \$999
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Mail form to: Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420 W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

## In Memory

Retired Duncan Public Schools teachers **Kenneth R. Woodward** and his wife, **Juliette H. Woodard**, died Aug. 11, 2005, and Jan. 5, 2006, respectively. The Woodwards were dedicated supporters of public education and generous donors to OFE’s Academic Awards and Teacher Scholarships programs.

Former trustee **John W. Rex**, Oklahoma City civic leader and president of American Fidelity Co., died April 26 in Oklahoma City.

Anadarko community volunteer and civic leader **Marilyn Buzbee**, a longtime member of the foundation, died Jan. 19 in Anadarko.

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## All-State Updates

Stephanie Boade Silas (AAS '88) is an assistant professor of medicine at the University of Utah School of Medicine, where she specializes in rheumatology. She and her husband, Pete Silas, originally of Bartlesville, have two sons, Thomas, 6, and Michael, 2.

Kathryn Rogers Parker (AAS '88) is a freelance writer and editor living in Eau Claire, Wis. She recently published a young adult novel, *Just the Way You Are*. Parker has a Web site at [www.katieparker.net](http://www.katieparker.net).

Paul Jones (AAS '89) is a professor of chemistry at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Jennifer Turner (AAS '91) is manager of product control for Tronox Pigments International in Zurich, Switzerland, where she has been on expatriate assignment since December 2000.

Lauren Richey Lively (AAS '95) earned her bachelor's degree from Baylor University and married her college sweetheart in 1999. She taught second grade in Galveston, Texas, for three years before moving to her current home in York, Penn. She is now a stay-at-home mom and has two boys, ages 2 and 9 months.

Celia Sheffield Lightsey (AAS '00) completed her undergraduate degree on a National Merit scholarship and studied a semester in Vienna, Austria. She successfully completed her CPA exams (first attempt!) and is now an accountant for Ernst and Young. She lives in Edmond.

# Fall Forum Oct. 24 to Offer Networking, Educational Opportunities

Local education foundation volunteers, educators and mentoring leaders will find a variety of training and networking opportunities at this year's Fall Forum designed to strengthen foundations and motivate volunteers.

The 18th annual Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 24 on the University of Oklahoma's Norman campus. Registration is \$50 per person, if received by Oct. 9. Late registration is \$60 per person. Cost includes all sessions, materials, luncheon and refreshments.

Sponsored by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, the Fall Forum is the centerpiece of the foundation's LEF Outreach Program and provides a one-of-a-kind networking and training opportunity for LEF volunteers, school administrators and educators from throughout Oklahoma. This year's Forum features five concurrent tracks on board development, fundraising, spotlight issues, teacher enrichment and mentoring.

To support the foundation's launch of the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative, this year's Forum will feature keynote speaker and mentoring track presenter Dr. Susan Weinberger. An author and internationally recognized consultant on school-based mentoring, Weinberger has been recognized for her expertise in establishing, maintaining and evaluating school, corporate and community-based mentoring programs and

## Oklahoma Teachers Travel the Globe

In April, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence joined with the national Fund for Teachers and Tulsa Community Foundation to award 82 grants that allowed teachers throughout the state to pursue summer professional development opportunities of their own design.

"The goal of FFT is to enrich the lives of our grantees so they will continue to have a zest for learning and teaching," said Karen Kovach-Webb, executive director of FFT. "The most powerful and effective way to change the life of a child is to change the life of a teacher."

During the summer months, 165 teachers traveled, attended seminars, workshops, and acquired hands-on materials and information to enrich their students' learning experience in the classroom.

school-to-work initiatives.

During the Fall Forum, four public school foundation programs will also be honored as recipients of the inaugural Outstanding Program Awards for Local Education Foundations sponsored by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

The programs include the Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation's scholarship/mentoring program, Jenks Public Schools Foundation's professional development program in classroom differentiation, Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation's Partners in Education Program, and Putnam City Public Schools Foundation's Author Visits Program.

Forum information is online available at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org).

## Teacher Professional Development Applications Available This Fall

Beginning in September, Oklahoma teachers can apply for professional development scholarships administered by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. **Teacher Scholarships for Professional Development** are designed to enhance educational opportunities for students by enabling teachers to attend top-quality regional, national and international workshops and institutes in their chosen fields. The scholarships help cover the costs of tuition, transportation and lodging. The deadline to apply is Oct. 31, and scholarships will be awarded in December for teacher conferences and institutes scheduled in 2007.

Applications for summer 2007 **Fund for Teachers** grants will be available Oct. 1. Teachers from all public, private, parochial and charter schools in Oklahoma who fulfill certain criteria are able to apply. Individual grants up to \$5,000 and team grants up to \$7,500 are available. Applicants must have three years teaching experience, be a full-time employee and spend at least 50 percent of their time in a classroom setting.

Applications for both grants will be posted online at [www.ofe.org](http://www.ofe.org).



The Foundation for Excellence has celebrated its 20th anniversary with a year-long festival highlighting its many wonderful programs. Executive Director Emily Stratton recaps all these events in her column. I want to focus on just one of them: the implementation of the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative.

The idea, like the idea for the Foundation itself, came from David Boren, in a speech he made at our Fall Forum four years ago, when he called on Oklahoma's local education foundations (LEFs) to help mobilize volunteers in their communities to serve as mentors. "Think what would happen if all the children in this state had mentors—someone to spend time with them, to tutor them, to love them," David said. "Think about how it would transform this state. It would be revolutionary!"

The Boren Mentoring Initiative is a cost-effective, five-part strategy for making that transformation happen. By creating and maintaining a new mentoring Web site and by utilizing OFE's great strengths already in place—its LEF network, All-State alumni and the statewide presence of its extraordinary trustee base—the mentoring initiative will promote the growth and development of school-based mentoring across Oklahoma. Mentoring leaders have enthusiastically embraced this initiative as a much-needed statewide-accessible resource for mentoring information (forms, checklists, directories), energy and inspiration.

As an active supporter of excellence in public education, you can be of great help in this important effort. You can support and encourage mentoring in your local community. You can become a mentor yourself. You can make a special one-time 20th anniversary gift—a gift apart from your Annual Giving contribution—to endow the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative. We are getting close to our \$500,000 goal, but we need your help!

Please visit our Web site, [www.ofe.org/mentoring](http://www.ofe.org/mentoring), to learn more. We think you will see that the Boren Mentoring Initiative is a great contribution to excellence in public education in Oklahoma. We hope you will be a part of it.

— Teresa B. Adwan

## From the Executive Director

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence had an exciting and busy 20th anniversary year. We showcased each of our five programs in some special way and expanded two of them.

We began in October with "A Salute to LEFs," a statewide public relations campaign promoting Oklahoma's 192 local education foundations. Our Fall Forum capped off "LEF Week" and featured Sandra Hughes, a national consultant for nonprofit organizations. The Fall Forum also introduced the new David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative with the addition of a new track devoted to mentoring.

In February, we collaborated with past Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute attendees, the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma Historical Society to highlight Colonial Williamsburg's most popular historical interpreter in a "Thomas Jefferson Weekend."

Expanding our Teacher Scholarship Program, we joined forces with the Tulsa Community Foundation and the national Fund for Teachers to offer an Oklahoma Fund for Teachers. Funded statewide this first year through the remarkable generosity of the national FFT, the program sent Oklahoma science teachers to study Leonardo and Galileo in northern Italy, music teachers to Mozart's 250th birthday celebration in Austria, and science teachers to New Zealand with the National Geological Society, to name a few of the teachers and destinations selected as winners.

Our founder, David Boren, served as the 2006 Academic Awards Banquet keynote speaker. He challenged the audience to understand the factors that made America great. "Tocqueville came to this country over 200 years ago and he said something that was so profound and yet so simple. He said America is great because America is good." Boren noted that America's tradition of volunteerism is not a tradition in other countries. He told the audience that for America to remain a great leader in the world, we must keep our "social capital" strong.

With David Boren closing our anniversary on a wonderful high, we concluded a spectacular year celebrating who we are as a foundation as well as our vision for the future. We thank our trustees, donors and special friends for their loyal support and look forward—with great enthusiasm—to our new year.

— Emily Stratton

## From the President

## KUDOS!

Congratulations to these Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence friends and supporters:

Trustees Kim Henry and Molly Shi Boren were recognized as Women of Distinction by Sooner Council Girl Scouts for serving as positive role models whose lives reflect the ideals of Girl Scouting. Boren also was recently named president of the Oklahoma Arts Institute.

Charlotte Jones, former director of LEF Outreach, received the OU College of Education's Career Achievement Award during the college's Celebration of Education Awards Banquet.

Trustee Lucy Smith, former superintendent of McAlester Public Schools, was inducted into the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame.

Longtime foundation supporter William W. Rodgers, an Oklahoma City banker and consultant, was inducted into the Blackwell School Foundation Hall of Fame in March. His wife, Linda, is a founding trustee and former OFE president.

Several individuals with OFE connections were honored in April as Living Treasures by the Oklahoma Health Center Foundation. Honorees included OFE supporter Max Weitzenhoffer of Norman and trustee Donna Nigh of Oklahoma City, who was recognized along with her husband, former Gov. George Nigh.

Trustee C.J. "Pete" Silas and his wife, Theo, were honored by the community of Bartlesville, which named a city street "Silas Street" and roasted the couple at its annual jazz festival. Mr. Silas, former chairman and CEO of Phillips Petroleum Company, and Mrs. Silas were honored for their outstanding support of education and the arts in Bartlesville and throughout the state.

# Foundation Presents 20th Anniversary Banquet With the Theme “On the Wings of Eagles”



Rhoda Burnsed (center) of Fletcher meets her All-State scholarship sponsors Alex Adwan and OFE President Teresa Adwan of Tulsa. Burnsed plans to attend the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, where Teresa serves as a regent.



OFE Chairman David L. Boren (center) joins 2006 Medal for Excellence winners (from left) Classen School of Advanced Studies principal Ronald Maxfield, Claremore High School teacher Jan McClaren, Kendall-Whittier Elementary teacher Janet McKenzie, OU classics professor J. Rufus Fears and Putnam City Academy principal Janet Owen-Oden.



Banquet co-chairs Lucy Barker (left) and Sharon Bartlett (right) join decorations chair Betty McDaniel in putting finishing touches on table decorations for the gala event.



Federal Appellate Judge Robert Henry (right), master of ceremonies at this year's banquet, surprises David Boren with an original oil painting, "Golden Memories," by Oklahoma artist Bert Seabourn. The painting, which was featured on this year's banquet poster, was presented to Boren in honor of his founding of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence 20 years ago.



Ryan VanZant of the George Miksch Sutton Avian Research Center and Fiona, a southern bald eagle, make a special guest appearance preceding the banquet to help commemorate this year's event.



All-Stater Mike Ding of Edmond receives his Academic All-State medallion from his honored teacher guest Jack Gleason. For the first time, special teacher guests were invited to present the All-State medallions as part of the awards ceremony.



Members of the Oklahoma Arts Institute Orchestra perform at a pre-banquet reception. The orchestra, made up of students and alumni of the Summer Arts Institute, is a featured highlight of the annual banquet.

## Boren's Tough Questions Surprise, Challenge All-Stater

*(Editor's note: We invited 2006 All-Stater Kaitlin Butler of Tulsa to be a guest columnist for HighMarks. Here, she shares insights she gained from the All-Staters' "Bull Session" with OFE founder and chairman David L. Boren. Butler is attending the University of Texas at Dallas this fall as a McDermott Scholar.)*



As I sat down with my fellow All-Staters for the bull session with David Boren, I didn't really know what to expect. We had been assured that this was an excellent opportunity for us, that we'd be having an actual conversation with him, that he loved talking to us high-schoolers. I remained skeptical, though, sure that this would be just a long lecture that we had to sit through before the day was over.

How wrong I was.

From the moment that Boren walked into the room, I knew that this was going to be far more than I expected. With a twinkle in his eye, Boren had the attention of all 100 of us before he even opened his mouth. What he said, however, was even more captivating than his person.

After wowing us with his stories of starting the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and his time spent as a member of the Rhodes Scholars' selection committee, Boren opened the floor to us. He had some questions for us, he said, and he wanted to know what we, as future leaders, thought about the world today.

The question he asked was not a simple one. Boren went straight for the hard-hitting, the mind-boggling, the brutally frank: how long did we think the United States would remain a world superpower?

"A long time?"

"Not nearly as long as we think we will."

"Probably until all the other countries figure out that they can use nukes, too!"

As we blurted out answers (with varying degrees of confidence), I realized what makes Boren such a potent speaker. He asks the questions that others are afraid to ask, without worrying about what sort of answer he might get. He is genuinely interested in what others have to say, no matter how ridiculous or poorly thought out their ideas may be. As 100 teenagers sat together in a room on a Saturday afternoon pondering the state of world politics, David Boren made us all realize an important truth: we Americans aren't nearly as immortal or untouchable as we think we are. The United States may some day lose its place of eminence in the world, but this isn't an entirely hopeless situation. Boren encouraged us to see that with our help, that day didn't have to be in the immediate future. With our ideas, our innovation, our education, and our creativity, we, the minds of the new generation, could ensure a better future.

Talking with David Boren instilled in me a sense of my place on the planet. Sure, I'm a small and rather insignificant citizen of a nation facing tough challenges, but with the collected efforts of my peers, I can be the change I want to see in the world.

