

THE LEF LEADER

FALL 2005

A Publication for Local Education Foundation Supporters

OFE Marks 20th Anniversary with Special Fall Forum Lineup

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, in conjunction with its 20th anniversary, is hosting its largest and most comprehensive Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations yet, with nationally recognized speakers, a presidents' breakfast, new exhibitor booths and a brand new track on mentoring.

This year's Fall Forum will be held Tuesday, Oct. 25, on the University of Oklahoma Norman campus. Events take place from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in OU's Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave. Registration fees are \$50 per person if received by Oct. 10. Late registration is \$60 per person. Cost includes all sessions, materials, luncheon and refreshments. Luncheon-only reservations are \$20 per person.

Paul G. Risser, chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, will give the Fall Forum's keynote luncheon address at 12:30 p.m. in the Union Ballroom.

The Fall Forum is the centerpiece of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence 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 fundraising, board development, spotlight issues, teacher enrichment and a new track on mentoring.

Board Development

The event kicks off at 8 a.m. with a "Leadership Breakfast" for LEF presidents, presidents-elect and executive directors featuring Sandra R. Hughes, a nationally known governance consultant for nonprofit boards and senior management. Hughes, who is president and CEO

of Hughes Consulting Group of Sarasota, Fla., will also lead board development sessions on "The Collective Performance of the Board," "Establishing and Using Effective Governance," and "The Board-Building Cycle." Hughes' appearance at the Fall Forum is made possible through a grant from the Sarkeys Foundation.

Fundraising

Heading up this year's fundraising track will be Kayla K. Acebo, associate vice president for University Advancement at the University of Tulsa. Acebo brings more than 17 years' experience in educational advancement to her presentations on "How to Develop Positive Relationships with Your Donors: Acknowledgement, Recognition and Stewardship," and "Making the Ask: Five Simple Steps to Fundraising Success." Rounding out the fundraising track will be roundtable Q&A sessions on fundraising fundamentals, planned giving, Senate Bill 326 and principal-for-a-day programs. Representatives from the Communities Foundation of Oklahoma and community foundations of Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Enid will lead roundtables to discuss resources and services available to LEFs.

Mentoring

Recognizing the impact that mentoring programs can have in helping at-risk students grow and succeed, the Foundation for Excellence is providing mentoring information and resources at the Fall Forum.

Frank A. McPherson, retired chairman and CEO of Kerr-McGee Corp., will share how his company helped transform a public school through its commitment to mentoring. Paige L. Johnson, former

(Continued on next page)

Featured Speakers for the 2005 Fall Forum Include:



Board Development Track

Sandra R. Hughes
National consultant for nonprofit boards and senior management



Fundraising Track

Kayla K. Acebo
Associate Vice President for University Advancement, The University of Tulsa



Keynote Speaker

Paul G. Risser
Chancellor, State Regents for Higher Education



The Foundation wishes to thank the following members of the Fall Forum Steering Committee for their hard work and dedication, which make this event possible.

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State of Oklahoma and OFE Prepare to ‘Salute Oklahoma’s LEFs’

Oklahoma’s 192 local education foundations will be recognized in October with a proclamation from Gov. Brad Henry and a statewide publicity campaign spearheaded by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

The governor’s office will sign a proclamation establishing Local Education Foundation Week in Oklahoma Oct. 23 through 29. The week coincides with the Oct. 25 Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations. The governor’s proclamation “honors the important work of local education foundations on behalf of our children and our future.”

In conjunction with its 20th anniversary, the Foundation for Excellence is planning a statewide media campaign to salute Oklahoma’s local education foundations and promote Local Education Foundation Week. Publicity materials with the theme “Saluting Oklahoma’s Local Education Foundations” will be sent the week of Oct. 10 to Oklahoma’s state and weekly newspapers, as well as select TV and radio stations.

“Our hope is to raise public awareness throughout

Oklahoma of what public education foundations do and why they are important for our children, our schools, our communities and for the future of our state,” said OFE Communications Director Brenda Wheelock.

The Foundation for Excellence is seeking LEF success stories, photos and other information that might help in promoting LEF Week.

If you have questions or information for the publicity campaign, contact Brenda at bwheelock@ofe.org; phone (405) 236-0006; or write to the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420-W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.



LEFs Invited to Photo Session With Governor Henry

Local Education Foundation leaders are invited to join Gov. Brad Henry for a photo as he signs the proclamation establishing LEF Week in Oklahoma. The photo will be taken at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 13, in the Blue Room of the State Capitol. Up to 30 LEF representatives can be included in the photo. If you would like to participate, please contact Brenda Wheelock at (405) 236-0006 or e-mail bwheelock@ofe.org.

Fall Forum *(continued)*

coordinator of the Foundation’s Schusterman Mentoring Program, and Stan Browlee, an Enid community mentor, will join McPherson in a session on “The Mentoring Challenge.” Representatives from Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Oklahoma and Going to Bat for Tulsa Kids will lead the second track session on “Mentoring Partnerships.” Rounding out the track will be presentations on successful mentoring initiatives in Claremore, Clinton and Oklahoma City.

Spotlight Sessions

Headlining the spotlight sessions track will be presentations by this year’s Medal for Excellence-winning LEF, Bixby, and finalist, Deer Creek. Representatives from several new small foundations will share their stories and offer helpful pointers in the second spotlight session titled “Successful Startups.” The track concludes

with a look at promotional videos produced by foundations in Norman and Okmulgee.

Teacher Track

Elementary and secondary educators attending the Fall Forum can participate in presentations led by Medal for Excellence-winning educators and attend roundtable discussions on writing successful grant proposals. “These sessions really helped encourage me to start writing for more grants,” wrote one teacher after attending the Fall Forum roundtables. “It’s so refreshing to get encouragement from people who have been where you are!”

Fall Forum brochures and registration information will be mailed in early September. For more information, contact the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence at (405) 236-0006 or visit the foundation web site at www.ofe.org.

OFE Recognizes Outstanding Foundations

You can learn more about this year's medal-winning local education foundation, Bixby, and finalist Deer Creek at a special 9 a.m. spotlight session at the Oct. 25 Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations.

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence presented its Oklahoma Medal for Excellence for Local Education Foundations to the Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation during its gala Academic Awards Banquet in May in Oklahoma City.

Bixby's president, Kathleen Phillips, accepted her foundation's \$7,500 cash prize at the OFE event, which was attended by nearly 1,000 people and televised statewide. Finalists for this year's LEF award were the Deer Creek Community Education Foundation and the Edmond Public Schools Foundation.

The Bixby Educational Endowment Fund was created in 1969, making it the oldest local education fund in the state. In August 2000, the fund, which had operated under the Board of Education, began operating as a separate 501 (c)(3) charitable foundation. Since then, the foundation has awarded more than \$320,000 to benefit the 4,000 students of Bixby Public Schools and has grown its endowment to more than \$1.4 million.

Among its major initiatives, the foundation presents endowed or underwritten scholarships to graduating seniors each spring. To help its scholarship recipients prepare for the demands of college, the foundation has launched a summer mentoring program that provides information and resources to ensure academic success.

"We also have a new program in which board members volunteer weekly at the high school to help students search for scholarship opportunities," Phillips said.

Since 2001, the Bixby Foundation has awarded 46 classroom teacher grants totaling \$213,589. Past grants have created a new art department, provided an Oklahoma history resource room and developed a lifetime sports class. Through its Century Club Campaign, the foundation annually encourages donors to give \$100 each. Contributions totaling up to \$15,000 are matched by Citizens Security Bank of Bixby.

Founded in 1980, the Deer Creek Community Enrichment Foundation has awarded more than \$1.5 million for programs and projects that "promote and recognize ongoing academic and artistic enrichment of Deer Creek school district students and teachers."

In 2004-05, Deer Creek awarded more than \$70,000 in grants to teachers, which provided such enrichment opportunities as a new



Kathleen Phillips (right), president of the Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation, visits with teacher grant recipients during a walk down "Grant Avenue." New grant recipients and their award-winning projects are recognized on Grant Avenue, a display area set up in conjunction with the foundation's annual academic awards event.

greenhouse for an outdoor classroom and equipment for an in-school radio station. The foundation also provides funding for scholarships, teacher development, standardized testing and an annual Academic Awards Reception. Deer Creek recognizes excellence among educators through its \$250 Teacher of the Year Award, \$500 cash prizes for up to three teachers completing National Certification and a \$500 Project of Excellence Award for the best teacher grant proposal.

Since its inception in 1984, the Edmond Public Schools Foundation has returned over \$933,000 to its public schools in grants, scholarships and awards. One of its most unique programs is the Eloise Rees Writing Mentorship Award, said Executive Director Karen Filley. The \$6,000 cash award is disbursed as a \$2,000 stipend each year for three years.

"The mentorship is designed to reward and encourage retention of outstanding teachers," Filley said. "Patterned after the endowed chair programs of prominent institutions of higher education, future installments of the cash award will be conditioned upon the recipient's remaining in classroom teaching in Edmond and being willing to help other teachers enhance their skills in teaching writing."

Other programs sponsored by Edmond include Rowley Training Grants to support teacher professional development and Principal-for-a-Day, which gives Edmond residents an inside look at the school system.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

Got a great brochure, newsletter, board handbook, fundraising letter or other resource that you would like to share? Bring it to the Fall Forum to display on our LEF Resources table. You may bring multiple copies or mark one for display only.

REMINDER:

All 501 (c)(3) charitable organizations in Oklahoma are required to register annually with the Oklahoma Secretary of State. To register, contact the Secretary of State's office at (405) 521-3912 or download forms online at www.sos.state.ok.us/forms/fm0101.pdf. There is an annual registration fee of \$15.

New Senate Bill Authored by Susan Paddock To Impact LEF Fundraising, Deposit of Public Funds

Oklahoma Sen. Susan Paddock, former director of LEF Outreach for the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, authored a bill during her first term as senator designed to give local education foundations the opportunity to compete for state and federal grants and to forge new partnerships with their public schools. The bill was signed into law June 6 and becomes effective Sept. 1.

Paddock and the Hon. Kenneth L. Buettner, a member of the LEF Outreach Committee, will host a roundtable session at the Fall Forum on Oct. 25 to discuss Senate Bill 326.

Under previous Oklahoma law, local education foundations were prohibited from depositing public funds into their treasury, Paddock said. "The new legislation allows more flexibility to LEFs to compete for state and federal grants," Paddock said. "Other foundations in other states are already doing that."

The new law also allows school districts to contract with local education foundations for reimbursing fundraising expenses of the foundations under specific conditions.

According to the new law, "A public school

district shall not directly or indirectly transfer any funds to any local foundation or render services or provide anything of value to any local foundation without receiving documented adequate payment or reimbursement therefore according to written contract; provided, nothing herein shall be construed as prohibiting payment by the district of claims for expenses of fundraising for the benefit of the district if such fundraising activities are approved in advance by the district board of education and made a part of the minutes of the meeting of the board."

Paddock said the new language is intended to give local education foundations the same flexibility as college and university foundations. "Now, LEFs can enter into contractual agreements with their school boards, if they so choose, and be reimbursed for some of their fundraising expenses."

A link to Senate Bill 326 is posted on the LEF section of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence web site at www.ofe.org. LEFs are strongly encouraged to consult with their attorneys for advice on how the statutes will affect their organizations.



Susan Paddock

Legislation Requires Nonprofits to Establish Whistleblower, Document Retention Policies



Nonprofit consultant Sandra Hughes will discuss the implications of Sarbanes-Oxley, among other topics, during her 8 a.m. "Leadership Breakfast" at the Fall Forum.

A congressional act designed to promote accountability and responsibility among America's corporations is also impacting some nonprofit practices. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, also known as the American Competitiveness and Corporate Accountability Act, has two provisions that apply to nonprofits.

1. Whistleblower Protection – All organizations are required to have a written whistleblower policy, which prohibits an organization from retaliating against an individual who reports suspected illegal activity. Nonprofits should develop policies and procedures that provide a confidential avenue for reporting and investigating suspected waste, fraud or abuse. Employees and volunteers should be informed of the policy.

2. Document Retention Policy – Sarbanes-Oxley makes it a crime to alter, hide, destroy or falsify documents to prevent their use in litigation or official proceedings. Organizations are advised to create written policies for document retention and destruction. Applicable documents include, but are not limited to, financial documents, donor records and correspondence, employee records, legal contracts and requests for proposals.

"There are many other provisions of Sarbanes-Oxley that foundations may want to consider and adopt as best practices," said LEF Outreach Director Charlotte Jones. "We recommend that foundation accountants and attorneys review the legislation and how it might apply to their organization."

More detailed information and resources on the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and its implications for nonprofits are available from Jones at (405) 236-0006.

Director's Thoughts:



Harnessing the goodness of Oklahoma! A Call to Action for Mentoring

At the 2003 Fall Forum, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence founder and chairman David Boren called upon us to revitalize our local education foundations in a different way. "There is a huge, untapped reservoir of goodness in the people of Oklahoma," he said. Boren encouraged LEFs to harness that goodness by mobilizing volunteers in their communities to serve as mentors for at-risk children.

Responding to Boren's challenge to LEF leaders, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has added a mentoring track to its Oct. 25 Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations. We are very excited to bring those who have been leaders in mentoring programs to share their expertise and success stories with you and to challenge all of us to become mentors. With the leadership opportunities that the local education foundations have within their communities, it is incredible to think of what can happen for at-risk students when communities throughout this state stand up and say, "We are committed to supporting our kids, and we will give the commitment of time and caring that can make the difference — one child at a time."

Research shows time and time again the impact that mentoring can have on children's self-esteem, on their relationships with others and on their academic performance. As a former public school administrator, I have seen first-hand how a child's life can be changed through a caring listener and a concerned friend. As the director of LEF Outreach, I challenge each of you to become a mentor and to help mobilize mentors for your school district. Together, we can help harness the goodness of Oklahoma for the sake of our children.

Charlotte Jones

Charlotte Jones
Director of LEF Outreach

INK CARTRIDGE RECYCLING BENEFITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public school foundations throughout Oklahoma have received more than \$81,000 through an ink cartridge and toner recycling program administered by Staples office-supply stores.

To sign up your foundation, visit <http://www.staplesrecycleford.com>. You do not have to have a Staples store in your community to participate.

Tips for a Successful Foundation

Kathleen Phillips, president of the Medal for Excellence-winning Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation, shares the following tips on how to build and maintain a successful local education foundation.

1. Keep your meetings on track and within the set time schedule.
2. Maintain a file of prospective board members.
3. Only fill board positions with qualified people in the area of need.
4. Promptly express a "Thank You" for completed tasks.
5. Have an attorney on your board.
6. If a grant request is greater than you can afford, and it is worthwhile—seek outside funding.
7. Inform prospective board members of expectations.
8. Have each board member sign a "Board Member Agreement."
9. Provide each board member with a handbook complete with by-laws, etc.
10. Presidents, know the strength of each board member in order to connect them to the right position.
11. Keep communication open, easily accomplished through e-mail.
12. Attend the OFE Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations; insist all new board members attend.
13. Celebrate accomplishments.
14. Know your foundation's history.

FREE ONLINE NETWORK AVAILABLE TO LEF LEADERS

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has created an online forum, or listserve, for local education foundation leaders to ask questions and share ideas about fundraising, programming, board development and other foundation issues.

To join the free, online forum, go to www.ofe.org and click on the icon, "Yahoo Groups, Join Now." You can also join by going directly to the LEF group web site at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Oklahoma_LEFS.

LEF NEWS ROUNDUP

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thank you to all the education foundations that submitted information for our "Saluting Oklahoma's LEFs" publicity campaign. Inspired by the many stories you have shared, we are offering this LEF News Roundup as a new feature of our newsletter and web site to recognize LEF achievements and share ideas with others. To submit information for the LEF News Roundup, write to Brenda Wheelock, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420-W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102 or e-mail bwheelock@ofe.org.

The **Blanchard Public Schools Foundation**, which elected its first board in January, is off to a great start, raising more than \$170,000 in donations and pledges. The foundation provided four scholarships to high school seniors this year and is gearing up to award its first teacher grants. The foundation plans to hold its first Hall of Fame Banquet and annual fundraiser in November.

Booker T. Washington High School students are learning from field-trip experiences while acting as mentors for younger students, thanks to a Spanish language grant from the **Booker T. Washington Foundation**. Among the activities funded by the foundation, students in Spanish levels III and above have been able to visit and mentor children at both Eisenhower and Kendall Whittier Elementary Schools. "This has been a great experience for all involved," reports Spanish teacher Lyda Wilber. "Our students have the opportunity to practice their Spanish and put into practice what we are studying in the classroom. At the elementary schools, Hispanic children as well as those who are learning the language as part of their language learning requirements look forward to our monthly visits."



Booker T. Washington High School students Grace Bielawski, Tuyen Pham and Johah Wei-Hass perform a Spanish version of the "Three Little Pigs" during a field trip to Eisenhower Elementary School. Photo by Lyda Wilber

The **Broken Arrow Public Schools Foundation** delivered record-setting support to its district in 2004-05, awarding more than \$49,662 in grants to 93 teachers. The foundation also awarded \$5,000 to the Teacher of the Year and provided \$500 each to nine Teacher-of-the-Year finalists. For the second year, the foundation awarded \$100 worth of school sup-

plies to 50 randomly selected teachers at the district's back-to-school meeting in August.

Cyril School Foundation reports that they have had several unique and successful fundraisers, including selling Christmas cards designed by district students; a "Hee Haw" production featuring community talent; and a Birthday Fund, which encourages Cyril graduates to send a donation on their birthday that equals their graduation year. For instance, a 1970 grad would send \$19.70.

The **Grove Education Foundation for Excellence** Gala was held in May, netting more than \$95,000 for the foundation and paying tribute to outstanding students and teachers. The event, held at the Royal Banquet Yacht Club, was attended by more than 300 community supporters and featured a banquet, student entertainment, a video presentation and silent auction. "Mystery Gift Sacks" were sold for \$20 each and distributed by Grove High School Top Scholars.

"Telling Our Story," became a special focus for the **Okmulgee Education Foundation** as it celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2004. Foundation leaders made scrapbooks, completed a huge photo album and made a promotional video, which they will share during a spotlight session at this year's Fall Forum. In addition to awarding teacher grants, the foundation annually partners with the Sam K. Vierson Foundation to send students to fine arts performances at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center and provides complete funding for a third through fifth-grade "Spirit Choir."

Stillwater Public Education Foundation was selected by Toyota to be featured in the Aug. 15 issue of *TIME Magazine*. One of the foundation's supporters, Janzen Toyota, selected the Stillwater foundation and the Spanish language education program at Westwood Elementary to be featured in a magazine section sponsored by Toyota.

The Stillwater Foundation has awarded \$9,320 over the past two years to provide quality Spanish language instruction and cultural education to all students at Westwood. "With the diverse nature of our world today, it is vital that we provide foreign language exposure as early as possible," said SPEF director Lorrie Janzen. "The equipment and resources provided to this school will be a permanent framework for enhancing and continuing language learning, as well as other subjects, in the future."

The **Waurika Public Schools Foundation**, chartered in August 2004, reports that it raised over \$20,000 in its first year and awarded over \$4,000 in grants to teachers this spring. Through the efforts of the foundation, the entire elementary school learned writing from author O.B. Comer and music from Keri Bradley, who teaches history through the arts. The 4-year-old program will have the same literature and English curricula as the rest of the elementary school; and the high school mathematics and science programs will have access to a calculator-based ranger (CBR).

Woodward Middle School students combined science and art instruction through a grant funded by the **Woodward Education Foundation**. Through their grant titled "Astronomy Through the Mind of an Aerosol Artist," Woodward teachers were able to bring professional artist Carey Huckabey to their school for a stellar art demonstration using aerosol paint cans. Each student combined his or her art lessons with research on the solar system to create a "My Planet Book."



Children's book author Susan Stevens-Crummel enacts her book *Jackalope* with the "Jack the Jackalope" (second grader Zachery Henry) at Harvest Hills Elementary School. Stevens-Crummel and her sister, Janet Stevens, who illustrated the book, are two of the many authors who visited the Putnam City Schools. Their visit is made possible through a grant from the Putnam City Public Schools Foundation, which annually brings published authors to the district's 19,000 students. Since the Putnam City Author Program's inception in 1999, more than 1,000 personalized, autographed books have also been donated to appreciative students. Photo by Steve Lindley



Bright Ideas for LEFs

Newcastle Prize Patrol Surprises Grant Recipients

Got an innovative fundraiser or successful program idea that you would like to share with other Oklahoma LEFs? If so, please send a brief description to bwheelock@ofe.org. We'll consider your Bright Idea for the next issue of *The LEF Leader*.

Move over Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes! There's a new Prize Patrol in Newcastle, and this one is surprising teachers with grants that will enhance the teaching and bring new excitement to the classroom.

The Newcastle Education Foundation, established in 2004, announced its first teacher grant recipients during the 2004-05 school year. Foundation leaders decided to inform the recipients by making surprise visits to each school.

"We had a prize patrol complete with large checks, balloons and plants for the teachers' rooms so they would have something personal to remind them they had received the grant," said Kris McKay, secretary of the NEF board. "We even gave them goodie bags and personalized coffee mugs indicating that they received a grant for 2004. It was a complete and total surprise to the teachers!"

McKay said one elementary school principal was so excited about the announcement that he organized a parade down the hall and had students make construction paper pompons to help celebrate.

The Newcastle Foundation will be among those featured at a Spotlight Session on "Successful Startups" during the Oct. 25 Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations. For more information on the Newcastle Foundation or its Prize Patrol, contact Kris McKay at (405) 392-2476.



Second-grade art teachers at Newcastle Elementary School display goodies they received as Teacher Grant recipients from the Newcastle Education Foundation's "Prize Patrol."

Help Us Update Your Foundation Records

If you have a new board president or need to change the primary contact person for your foundation, please contact the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. To help us communicate better with you, we need the following information: current president, primary contact person (if not the president), mailing address, daytime phone, e-mail and your foundation web site.

Please send updates to Charlotte Jones, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420-W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102 or e-mail cjones@ofe.org.

Contact Us!

Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence

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Welcome Career Tech LEFs, School Administrators

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is reaching out to a wider audience with this newly expanded issue of *The LEF Leader*. In addition to serving 171 public school foundations, the Foundation for Excellence is also providing services to 21 career tech foundations in Oklahoma! We welcome you to the LEF network and look forward to sharing ideas and information with you.

Oklahoma superintendents and principals have also been added to our mailing list to keep school administrators better informed of what is happening among Oklahoma's public school foundations. We welcome you and encourage you to join us at this year's Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations and to contact our office if you need any assistance. If your district is not currently served by a local education foundation and you would like more information on how to start a foundation, contact Charlotte Jones, director of LEF Outreach, at (405) 236-0006 or e-mail cjones@ofe.org.

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, founded in 1985, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools. Through its Local Education Foundation Outreach Program, the Foundation provides free technical assistance, resources and networking opportunities to new and established public school foundations.



Executive Directors Unite

Executive directors from several Oklahoma local education foundations gathered in Tulsa in August to network and share their unique experiences as foundation staff. Charlotte Jones, (lower left) director of Local Education Foundation Outreach for the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, met with the group, which included (lower right) Jenny Dakil, Norman; (top from left) Caroline Gist, Putnam City; Kinnee Tilly, Jenks; and Mary Bower of Claremore. All LEF executive directors are invited to participate in the biannual meetings. The next LEF directors' meeting is tentatively scheduled for Jan. 12 in Oklahoma City.