

THE LEF LEADER

SUMMER 2006

A Publication for Local Education Foundation Supporters

Fall Forum Offers Opportunities to Network, Strengthen Foundations

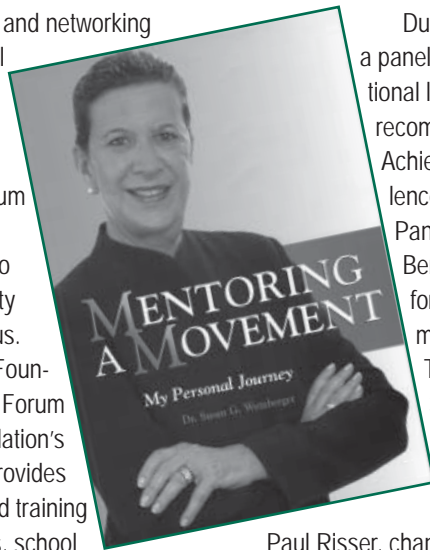
Whether your local education foundation is large or small, newly established or a seasoned veteran, you'll find a variety of training and networking opportunities at this year's Fall Forum to strengthen your foundation and motivate your volunteers.

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. 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 who has been recognized for her expertise in establishing, maintaining, and evaluating school, corporate and community-based mentoring programs and school-to-work initiatives.

The board development track features two presenters who will share information about effective board recruitment and development and maximizing the work of a board. Frank Merrick, president of Foundation Management Inc., and

J.P. Audas, vice president for development at OU, will lead the first two board development sessions.



Paul Risser, chancellor of the Oklahoma System of Higher Education.

"As LEF leaders, it is important for you to know the efforts that are being made through the ACE taskforce to infuse standards, curriculum and assessments with the rigor and

During the third session, a panel of Oklahoma educational leaders will discuss recommendations from the Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE) taskforce. Panelists will include Phil Berkenbile, state director for the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education; Sandy Garrett, state superintendent of public instruction; Sen. Susan Paddock; and

relevance necessary for Oklahoma students to be prepared for college and the workplace," said Charlotte Jones, LEF Outreach director.

This year's fundraising track will be led by Steve Blair, vice president for Institutional Advancement for the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, as well as Sandy and Art Cotton. Sandy Cotton currently serves as director of Development at Oklahoma City University, while her husband, Art, serves as vice president of Institutional Advancement at the university.

Headlining the spotlight sessions track will be presentations by the recipients of the inaugural Outstanding Program Awards for Local Education Foundations.

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.

Fall Forum information is available online at www.ofe.org, and brochures will be mailed in August.

LEF Program Award Winners Announced

Four public school foundation programs have been selected as recipients of the inaugural Outstanding Program Awards for Local Education Foundations sponsored by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

The awards, which recognize innovative programs sponsored or administered by public school foundations in Oklahoma, will be presented at the Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations on Oct. 24 on the University of Oklahoma Norman campus.

Nominations for recognition can be made by any member of a community served by the local education foundation or from anyone knowledgeable about the foundation, including its board members.

The 2006 winners, highlighted on the next page, have been invited to share more information about their award-winning programs during the Fall Forum.

(continued on next page)

Contact Us!
Oklahoma Foundation
for Excellence

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LEF Program Award *(continued)*

Scholarship/Mentoring Program – Bixby

The Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation's scholarship/mentoring program provides 22 endowed or underwritten scholarships totaling more than \$52,000 annually. What makes Bixby's scholarship program unique is a "mentoring component" that provides advice and encouragement to scholarship recipients as they enter and complete their first year of college. During a summer reception, students receive tips for college success and are given contact information for board members as well as campus mentors who can answer questions and provide continued support. Foundation board members continue to follow up with students with letters of encouragement and birthday cards. Another component of the program, established in 2004, is a Scholarship Mentor, who visits the local high school weekly to aid students in the financial aid and college application process.

"Our success is not only measured in our financial contribution to Bixby students, but also by the support and encouragement we provide through recognition, mentoring and follow-up communication," wrote Jayne Bowen, foundation vice president.

Classroom Differentiation Training – Jenks

Also honored will be a districtwide professional development program in classroom differentiation, sponsored by the Jenks Public Schools Foundation. Since the program began five years ago, 385 elementary and secondary teachers and administrators have received training on how to provide different learning strategies for the many different kinds of learners in their classrooms. The program is based on the Differentiated Classroom research of Carol Ann Tomlinson, who provides strategies and tools for educators to accommodate the diverse skills, interests and learning styles of their students.

"The goal of the training is for teachers to become knowledgeable and comfortable using various differentiation strategies to improve student learning," said Diane Bosworth, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. "This training has changed how we teach across our district."

Partners in Education Program – Oklahoma City

The Partners in Education Program, sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation, seeks to recruit, support and retain 10,000 volunteer tutors/mentors by the year 2007 to serve district students. The foundation has partnered with the Greater Oklahoma

City Chamber of Commerce to recruit businesses and has launched an intensive marketing campaign to promote the program. Through its recruitment initiatives, the program has increased tutoring partnerships by 38 percent in the last two years. Each volunteer spends at least an hour per week working with a student, primarily in reading and math. Already, the program is being credited with helping to raise students' test scores in reading and math.

"Any teacher or principal will tell you that mentors and tutors are invaluable to the educational process," said Superintendent Bob Moore. "When a student knows there is one person out there who is setting time aside each week to come and help them, they begin to view learning as fun and energizing. Some children even make education a higher priority in their life."

Author Visits – Putnam City

The Author Visits Program, co-sponsored by the Putnam City Public Schools Foundation, also will be honored. The project gives the district's 19,000-plus students an opportunity to interact with published authors and illustrators. The goal of the program is to improve academic achievement by increasing students' interest in reading and writing. However, all areas of the curriculum benefit as teachers and library media specialists create hands-on, interactive activities that complement authors' and illustrators' subject matter. The program also provides free autographed books for many students.

"According to the district's library media specialists, author visits motivate students to read more," said Caroline Gist, foundation executive director. "Prior to author visits, many students visit the media center asking for books written by the authors. One librarian says the check-out rate of a visiting author's books increased 140 percent above the previous year."



Children's book author Susan Stevens-Crummel reenacts one of her stories with a student at Harvest Hills Elementary School. Stevens-Crummel is one of the many authors who participates in the Author Visits Program made possible through a grant from the Putnam City Public Schools Foundation. *Photo by Steve Lindley*

The David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative:

Six Steps Your Foundation Can Take to Promote School-Based Mentoring

With the introduction of its new David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is encouraging Oklahoma's 195 local education foundations to be leading advocates for mentoring in Oklahoma's public schools.

OFE founder and chairman David L. Boren has challenged LEF leaders to help "harness the goodness" of Oklahomans by mobilizing volunteers in their communities to mentor students in need. Inspired by Boren's vision and the proven impact of mentoring on academic success, the foundation has launched the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative to promote the growth and development of school-based mentoring programs throughout the state.

The initiative was launched at last year's Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations with the introduction of a new mentoring track. The foundation has also created a mentoring initiative Web site at www.ofe.org/mentoring. The

Web site includes detailed guidelines on how to start a mentoring program, tips for prospective volunteers and a directory of Oklahoma mentoring programs.

The foundation is also planning a statewide publicity campaign to promote mentoring and has received the endorsement of Oklahoma's First Lady Kim Henry, who will assist in promoting the initiative during National Mentoring Month in January.

Charlotte Jones, director of Local Education Foundation Outreach, says there are numerous ways that LEF leaders can get involved in promoting mentoring in their communities:

1. Familiarize yourself with the mentoring initiative and the resources available to schools, community leaders and prospective volunteers by visiting the mentoring Web site at www.ofe.org/mentoring.

2. Help the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence identify mentoring programs that already exist in your community so that we can add them to our

online directory and help your community recruit more volunteers.

3. Talk to school administrators at both the elementary and secondary levels to assess what the needs are for mentoring in your school district. Are there already programs in existence? If so, could your foundation help in recruiting volunteers to serve in those programs?

4. Encourage local businesses, churches, civic groups and retiree organizations to "adopt" schools by providing volunteers who are available to mentor weekly with students.

5. Organize a community mentoring summit or help arrange for mentor training by contacting the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence at (405) 236-0006. We have a list of experts who can speak in

your community about how to establish safe and effective mentoring programs. You can also invite school and community leaders to attend the mentoring sessions offered at this year's Fall Forum on Oct. 24.

6. Become a mentor! Research has demonstrated that mentoring improves student learning, increases self-esteem and helps students develop

healthier relationships. Demonstrate your foundation's belief in the power of mentoring by encouraging your board members to become mentors.

"Reaching out to others through mentoring will also help support and market the fundraising efforts of the LEF by increasing visibility in the community," Jones said. "This is a win-win commitment for the foundation, the mentor and the student."

For more information, contact Charlotte Jones at (405) 236-0006 or e-mail cjones@ofe.org.



The new Web site for the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative at www.ofe.org/mentoring provides information on how to coordinate a successful mentoring program and resources for prospective volunteers, including a directory of Oklahoma Mentoring Programs.

Help Us
Learn About
Mentoring
In Your
Community

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has created a brief online registration form to gather information about mentoring programs around the state. Help us identify and promote mentoring programs in your community by completing the form online at www.ofe.org/mentoring or by contacting Charlotte Jones at (405) 236-0006 or cjones@ofe.org.

Welcome to these LEFs who are new or have recently become affiliated with the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence:

- Barnsdall Education Foundation
- Boley Public School Foundation for Academic Excellence
- Broken Bow Education Foundation
- Chisholm Education Foundation
- Depew Education Foundation
- Dover Public School Foundation
- Drumright Public School Foundation
- Duke School Foundation
- Harrah Educational Enrichment Foundation
- Mustang Public School Foundation
- Oklahoma School for the Deaf Foundation
- Seiling Public School Foundation
- Westville Public Schools Foundation

Director's Thoughts:



Taking Time to Complete LEF Survey Helps Us Better Serve You, Oklahoma's Schools

Each year, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence queries public school foundations to find out how much money you have awarded this fiscal year and what types of programs you sponsor in serving your community schools. I strongly urge every foundation president to complete the LEF Survey and return it to us by Aug. 1. In addition to providing the survey below, we have made it available in a quick, easy-to-use format on our Web site at www.ofe.org/lef.

Why is it important to complete your LEF survey? First, data from this survey helps us measure the economic impact that Oklahoma's local education foundations have statewide. Your survey responses also help us recognize and celebrate local education foundations for their outstanding contributions to the quality of education throughout Oklahoma.

Second, your updated contact information helps us communicate regularly with your foundation through newsletters, e-news updates and invitations to the Fall Forum and other networking opportunities.

Finally, the survey helps us to evaluate our services to find out what is most helpful and learn how we can serve you better. Please take a few minutes to complete your LEF survey online or by mail. We look forward to hearing from you!

Charlotte Jones

Charlotte Jones
Director of LEF Outreach

Oklahoma Survey of Local Education Foundations

Name of foundation: _____

Name of foundation president: _____

Mailing address of foundation: _____

Primary e-mail contact for foundation: _____

Amount of money awarded by your foundation in the 2005-06 school year: _____

Total amount of money awarded by your foundation, from inception to date: _____

What year was your foundation established? _____

What programs does your foundation sponsor? _____

Does your foundation have a Web site? If so, what is your Web site address: _____

Which OFE resources were utilized in the past year? (Please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Forum workshops/presentations | <input type="checkbox"/> OFE Web site at www.ofe.org |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact with Director of LEF Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> LEF Outreach networking meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LEF Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> LEF Retreat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____ | |

Please mail your completed survey to Charlotte Jones, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420-W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102. You can also complete your survey online at www.ofe.org/lef.

Qualify for Free Admission for Four to the Fall Forum

Return your LEF survey by Aug. 1, and your foundation will qualify to participate in a drawing for four complimentary admissions, valued at \$200, to attend the Oct. 24 Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations!

OFE Hosts Regional LEF Meetings

Local education leaders throughout the state met for regional meetings in February and March to discuss issues affecting their organizations and exchange ideas.

Charlotte Jones, director of Local Education Foundation Outreach, introduced foundation leaders to the David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative and discussed ways that foundations can help promote mentoring in their communities.

Participants reflected on several issues, including the strengths and weaknesses of their foundations, current volunteerism and how to strengthen participation among their board members. Participants also learned about the programs provided by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, with a focus on Outreach Services.



▲ Ruth Raupe, Dorothy Resneder, Brian Hayden, Susan Bowers and Charlotte Jones discuss program ideas at the LEF meeting held in Enid at the home of Bowers.



▲ Kathy Zervas facilitates discussion at the regional meeting in Tulsa.



▲ Diana Brown of Chickasha and Edmond's Ken Buettner, co-chair of LEF Outreach committee, visit during the Oklahoma City metro area regional meeting.



◀ Kathy Zervas (center) and host Cathy Render welcome guests during the Tulsa-area meeting.

► Susan Adams, Karen Filley, Charlotte Jones, Lisa Taylor and Caroline Gist exchange ideas at the meeting in Edmond. "The regional meeting in Edmond was great," said Gist. "My new board member learned so much."



- TCF Offers Challenge Grants
- The Tulsa Community Foundation will award over \$1 million in challenge grants to eastern Oklahoma nonprofit agencies that establish their endowment funds with the foundation. TCF is also offering free "Planned Giving 101" classes July 10, 24, 31 and Aug. 7 open to all Oklahoma nonprofits. For more information, visit the foundation's Web site at www.tulsacf.org or call John Wolfkill at (918) 494-8823.

Want to Accept Gifts Online?

Several e-philanthropy services provide low-cost Web services for nonprofits to collect online donations, recruit volunteers or send mass e-mails. Check out these possibilities:

www.networkforgood.org
www.groundspring.org
www.schoolfoundations.org

LEF News Roundup

EDITOR'S NOTE: The LEF News Roundup is a new feature designed to recognize LEF achievements and share ideas with others. It is also updated regularly on our Web site at www.ofe.org/lef. To submit items for the roundup, e-mail drowe@ofe.org or write to the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420-W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

In 2006, the **Blanchard Public Schools Foundation** began working to raise \$250,000 for an endowment for scholarships and grants for teachers. The foundation's recent fundraising effort included a drawing for a five-day Carnival cruise for two.

Four Clinton Public Schools teachers – Janice Berrong, Sue Ayn Moore, Candy Mueller and Marie Pool – have received a Toyota Tapestry Grant of \$9,992. The grant is an expansion of the "Turn Right at Pleiades" grant funded by the **Clinton Public Schools Foundation**. The original grant funded a Vixen ED102S telescope, which is used at astronomy camps for students in fourth through ninth grades. The Toyota grant funded another telescope, a sun-viewing telescope, new GPS, four laptops, projectors and a photo printer.



Clinton students demonstrate one of the new telescopes purchased through a grant from the Clinton Public Schools Foundation.

The **Collinsville Education Foundation** garnered extra publicity for its grant program by publishing thank-you letters from Collinsville teacher grant recipients and their students in the local newspaper. The "Thank-You" page featured pictures of students using new classroom equipment and materials made possible through the grants.

The **Coyle School Foundation's** membership drive exceeded the original goal of \$20,000, bringing in a total of \$27,000. For each \$100 donation, individuals received a ticket for a drawing to win a 2006 Chevrolet truck. Word of the membership drive spread, and the foundation received a \$15,000 contribution

from an anonymous donor who did not want to be included in the drawing.

Through a grant from the **Deer Creek Community Enrichment Foundation**, Deer Creek Middle School students are utilizing high-tech equipment to improve their writing skills. The grant paid for most of the 33 Palm Pilots and wireless keyboards used by two eighth-grade English classes.

The **Frederick School Enrichment Foundation** and the Oklahoma Arts Council co-sponsored artist-in-residence Rosemary Carroll, who spent two weeks working with the kindergarten students. Carroll used her art background to teach students different art techniques and to produce a variety of artistic projects.

The **Granite Education Enrichment Foundation** raised more than \$700 for future programs by collecting pennies from kindergarten through 12th-grade students. The local Guarantee State Bank sponsored a pizza party for the class that collected the most pennies.

Holdenville Education Foundation and the Holdenville Creek Community provided funds to purchase and install playground equipment for the pre-K class at the Indian Community Center. In addition to a few swings and a basketball goal, the playground now contains a structure with two slides, a tower, playhouse, arch climber and stairs.

The **Lexington Public School Foundation** and the **Purcell Public School Foundation** partnered to host a Mascot Challenge last fall. In the week leading up to a football game between the two towns, students donated money at their schools, and during the game, cheerleaders from each team passed buckets through the crowds. The event raised a total of \$3,500.

The **Mustang Public Schools Foundation** kicked off its fundraising efforts by hosting the Harlem Entertainers. The "professional clowns of the court" played against teams which included police

officers, firefighters, Mustang teachers, coaches and alumni. This spring, the new foundation awarded its first round of grants, totaling nearly \$12,000.

Foreign language students at Norman North High School are using iPods for something other than music. The iPods, purchased using a grant from the **Norman Public School Foundation**, are allowing students to leave the classroom to privately record their voices for playback and evaluation. The technology gives the foreign language teacher a better assessment tool and enables students to improve their diction without an audience.

Okmulgee Education Foundation

co-sponsored a College Knowledge session for eighth- through 12th-grade students and their parents. Topics discussed included ways to maximize scholarship opportunities; critical steps to take each year in grades nine through 12; secrets about the ACT, GPA's and class rankings; the right questions to ask college representatives; and what scholarship committees and admissions offices are looking for on applications.

The **Waurika Public Schools Foundation** distributed \$4,500 in grants during the fall

semester. The grants are being used for equipment and projects, ranging from technology that enables students to study behavior and radio telemetry to enrollment in a plagiarism prevention system and service with classroom management tools.



To stimulate and encourage honor students transitioning from fifth grade to middle school, the **Poteau Schools Education Foundation** sponsors the Academic Quest Program. Students who are entering the sixth grade and rank in the top 30 percent of their class are eligible to participate in this week-long program held immediately before the beginning of a new school year. The purpose is to further enhance the student's learning opportunities by providing leadership skills, hands-on science, computer technology, problem solving, and humanities in the arts and foreign language.

Thank you to these 2006 LEF Annual Members!

- Bixby Educational Endowment Foundation
- Blackwell Public School Foundation
- Blanchard Public Schools Education Foundation, Inc.
- Booker T. Washington Foundation for Excellence
- Cashion Education Foundation
- Clinton Public School Foundation
- Cushing Public School Foundation, Inc.
- Deer Creek Community Enrichment Foundation
- Duncan Public Schools Foundation
- Edmond Public Schools Foundation, Inc.
- El Reno Public Schools Foundation
- Enid Public School Foundation
- Frederick School Enrichment Foundation
- Geary Public Schools Foundation
- Henryetta Education Foundation
- Jenks Public School Foundation
- Kingfisher Education Foundation
- Latta Partners in Excellence
- Miami Public School Enrichment Foundation
- Moore Public Schools Foundation
- Norman Public School Foundation
- Okmulgee Education Foundation
- Poteau Schools Education Foundation
- Putnam City Public Schools Foundation
- Shawnee Educational Foundation
- Tonkawa Education Foundation
- Union Schools Education Foundation
- Vanoss Education Enrichment Foundation
- Watonga Foundation for Academic Excellence
- Woodward Education Foundation

Support LEF Outreach Programs in Oklahoma BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

We appreciate the many local education foundations who have demonstrated their commitment to the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and its LEF outreach efforts through a gift to our 2006 Annual Campaign. It's never too late to become a member. If you or your foundation would like to join the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, please complete the reply form below. Your support will help ensure that OFE continues to provide quality training and resources to Oklahoma's public school foundations.

Choose your donor level:

- Mentor: \$25 - \$99
 Scholar: \$100 - \$249
 Salutatorian: \$250 - \$499
 Valedictorian: \$500 - \$999
 Laureate: \$1,000 - \$4,999
 Special Friend: \$5,000 - \$9,999
 Patron: \$10,000+
 I am interested in making a gift as part of my estate planning.

Name _____

How do you want to be listed in OFE publications? _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____

My check is enclosed. Please bill my MasterCard/Visa (Circle One).

Amount _____ Name _____

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

Mail form to: Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 1420 W, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

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Take Advantage of Free LEF Services

Through its free outreach services to local education foundations, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has helped build one of the nation's largest and most effective networks of public school foundations, now 195 strong. Whether your school district needs guidance in launching a new foundation or your long-established LEF needs to re-examine your mission and goals, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is here to help. Services we provide include:

- An LEF Outreach Web site at www.ofe.org with sample forms, resources, foundation news from across the state, links to other foundations and more. There's also a free listserv you can join to share ideas with other LEF members.
- Free consultation services and board retreats provided by Charlotte Jones, director of LEF Outreach. She can be reached at (405) 236-0006 or by e-mailing cjones@ofe.org.
- The Fall Form for Local Education Foundations, an annual networking and training opportunity for LEF volunteers, school administrators and educators. Registration is just \$50 per person and includes luncheon admission and materials.

- The new LEF Outstanding Program Awards, recognizing successful programs sponsored or administered by Oklahoma public school foundations.
- Helpful news and information through the biannual *LEF Leader* and *HighMarks* newsletters, as well as e-mail OFE News Updates.
- Regional representatives assigned to each LEF who can also share practical experience and answer your questions. Find your representative online at www.ofe.org.

► Charlotte Jones, (third from right) director of LEF Outreach for OFE, meets with school and community leaders from Westville to help them start a new public school foundation. Also pictured from left are Patsy Gail Calhoun, Marty Hern, Jennifer Brantley, Eugenia Morris and Kris Kirk.

