



Application for local education foundation presidents

Spring 2003

Advocates for education

State LEFs offer creative responses to budget crisis

IN HIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS at the Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence Chairman David Boren challenged participants to be proactive in responding to the unprecedented cuts in public education.

"If we can mobilize the state's 156 local education foundations to be advocates for education in this critical time of budget crisis, we can make a huge difference," Boren said.

Recently, the Foundation for Excellence asked state LEFs to describe innovative ways they are responding locally to the budget crunch. Those responses are highlighted below.

In response to the \$1.5 million deficit in its school district budget, the **Claremore Public Schools Foundation** has temporarily changed its funding focus from grants to teachers to new Fast-Track Grants.

"These are being directed principally to those areas that have lost district funding — libraries, science, art, music and academic field trips," Burks said. "These are to be awarded to the schools based on requests from teachers and approved by the respective principals and the district superintendent."

Claremore schools also are receiving a shot in the arm from longtime LEF supporter Frank

Robson, who has provided a \$50,000 challenge grant to the foundation, challenging the community to provide matching dollars.

The Claremore Foundation has also implemented a volunteer program to help fill the need for paraprofessionals and classroom aids, which were eliminated through budget cuts.

Bixby's Educational Endowment Foundation reports that it has pulled together a nucleus of community leaders to address the budget issue and has identified a leader to meet with the superintendent and take an in-depth look at how they can best serve the district during the

budget shortfall.

In addition, its board members have been e-mailing and writing state politicians and joined local teachers at the education rally at the capitol on Feb. 12.

"In every newspaper article regarding the foundation, we are also stressing the importance of adequate school funding," added foundation President Kathleen Phillips.

Board members of **Jenks Public School Foundation** have joined concerned parents in a task force to address the district's \$2.2 million deficit.

"This task force is sending a request letter to all Jenks Public Schools parent households in our

*"If we can mobilize the state's 156 local education foundations to be advocates for education in this critical time of budget crisis, we can make a huge difference."
- David Boren*

(See *Education advocates*, page 4)

Check out this sampling of LEFs on the Web:

Claremore
claremore.k12.ok.us/cpsf/

Duncan
duncanpublicschools.org

Moore
moore.k12.ok.us/foundation/index.html

Oklahoma City
okckids.com

Perry
PerryOK.org/pef/

Purcell
purcellps.k12.ok.us/psf.htm

Skiatook
skiatookfoundation.org

Stillwater
stillwater.k12.ok.us/spef/

Tahlequah
psfoundation.org

Stillwater education foundation receives LEF Medal for Excellence

THE STILLWATER PUBLIC EDUCATION Foundation has been named the recipient of the 2003 Oklahoma Medal for Excellence for Local Education Foundations. The foundation, a 2002 finalist for the award, will be honored May 17 at the Academic Awards Banquet at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Finalists for the LEF award are the Enid Public School Foundation and the Edmond Public Schools Foundation.

"I was thrilled when I got the call," says foundation President Teresa Wilson. "I thought to myself, 'Our perseverance paid off!'" Wilson, who is in her sixth year with the organization, says she has watched the foundation evolve and grow. She credits "her awesome board" for the foundation's success. "We have a tremendous hard-working board," she says. "We are always looking for better ways to serve our schools."

Since its inception in 1984, the Stillwater Public Education Foundation has built an endowment of nearly \$250,000 and supports a number of programs, including Grants to Teachers; school-site

grants; and its recently endowed Adopt-an-Author Program, which brings in nationally known children's book authors and illustrators. The foundation also responded to Stillwater High School's need for a performing arts center by raising more than \$100,000 for an endowment to support ongoing programming for the arts.

Wilson says the \$7,500 cash prize from the Foundation for Excellence will help fund professional development for teachers and awards at the Teacher of the Year Banquet to be held later this spring.

Two of the Stillwater foundation's key fundraisers are "The Taste of Stillwater," which features foods donated by area restaurants and nets approximately \$10,000; and "The Chair Affair," a silent auction of crafts and other donated items displayed on decorated chairs at a local restaurant. SPEF Executive Director Marcia Karns said the Chair Affair has been so successful that annual proceeds have grown from \$2,000 to \$20,000 in six years and have helped fully endow Stillwater's Adopt-an-Author Program.

Zarrow Foundation offers training scholarships

LOCAL EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS IN northeastern Oklahoma can receive scholarship assistance from the Zarrow Foundation to attend nonprofit educational programs provided by the Sarkeys Foundation in Norman.

Tulsa's Zarrow Foundation board recently voted to provide scholarship assistance to nonprofit staff and board members in the northeast quadrant of the state (east of Interstate 35 and north of Interstate 40) to attend Sarkeys' training programs.

The Sarkeys Foundation offers training on a variety of topics ranging from board development to grant-writing. For a listing of available programs, check the Sarkeys' web site at www.Sarkeys.org or phone 405/364-3703. All classes are held at the foundation's Conference Center at 530 E. Main St. in Norman.

To obtain scholarship assistance, send a letter of request to: Jeanne Gillert, Zarrow Foundation, PO Box 1530, Tulsa, OK 74101.

Director's Thoughts

On the road again for regional meetings

ONE OF THE GOALS of the LEF Outreach Committee this year is to provide networking and training opportunities to our local education foundations at locations throughout the state.

This goal is being met through a series of three regional meetings held in Tulsa, Enid, and Ardmore. While regional meetings were also held last year, they were informal lunchtime discussions of LEF programs.

This year's regional meetings have been held in an all-day format that allows LEF board members to better understand their roles and responsibilities and how marketing and strategic planning affect fundraising strategies. Sandra LeVan of Nonprofit Planners has led the training, and the meetings have been made possible by a grant from the Sarkeys Foundation.

We greatly appreciate the

A letter to the editor

I know how much the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence values and supports quality education in our state. During these very challenging financial times, local education foundations are playing an even more vital role in enhancing excellence in education.

Great Expectations is an Oklahoma-based program created in 1990. There is no question that Great Expectations is having a positive impact on students' lives throughout the state.

Educators attend Summer Insti-

generosity of the Sarkeys Foundation. They are committed to training for nonprofit leaders and offer a variety of courses to meet nonprofit needs at their facility in

"Our ongoing goal for LEF outreach is to provide you and your local education foundation with the resources and tools that you need to be successful..."

Norman. The Zarrow Foundation is offering some scholarships for individuals in the northeast quadrant of our state to attend classes at Sarkeys (see related story, page 2). For those who weren't able to attend one of the regional meetings or who would like more training, this could be a great

opportunity for you!

Our ongoing goal for LEF outreach efforts is to provide you and your local education foundation with the resources and tools that you need to be successful in your work of benefiting the students in your local schools. Please let us know how we may be of help to you!

Susan Paddack

Susan Paddack, Director of LEF Outreach

tute on one of seven campuses. Attending every year is so important to their growth. Unfortunately, school districts have limited funds for training. If your foundation has the flexibility to be supportive of teacher training, I strongly urge you to consider requests to attend Great Expectations Summer Institute.

Sincerely,
Charles E. Hollar
Founder and Chairman
Great Expectations

Mark
your
calendar

April 15
Fall Forum
Committee
Meeting

May 17
Academic Awards
Banquet, Cox
Convention Center,
Oklahoma City

Oct. 22
Fall Forum,
University of
Oklahoma,
Norman

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News for Local Education Foundation Presidents

If you are no longer president, please notify the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and pass this newsletter on to the new president.
Please feel free to copy this newsletter for your board.

(continued from page 1)

Education advocates

district ..." said Executive Director Kinnee Tilly. "The foundation is cooperating with this committee, to assist them in the goal of raising the money to make up for the district funding shortfall."

The Jenks Public Schools Foundation Associates program, an auxiliary arm of the foundation, is raising funds to assist site principals with basic needs. The money for these items will be raised by the Associates, primarily through the Principal for A Day program.

Woodward Public Schools Educational Foundation has launched a fund drive designed to "Double the Endowment." President Trent Yadon reports that increased publicity of the crisis has helped the foundation raise over \$150,000 in eight weeks.

If your LEF would like to share its experience, please e-mail a brief description to bwheelock@ofe.org. We will post responses on the LEF section of our web site at www.ofe.org.

Reasons to join the OFE

It's NOT TOO LATE for your Local Education Foundation to become a 2003 member of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Among the reasons LEFs join the Foundation are:

- To be part of a cohesive statewide network of support for public education.
- To strengthen LEF Outreach programs and resources.
- To affirm the Foundation's mission of recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in our public schools.

Show your support for the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence by becoming a member LEF today. To begin or renew your membership, send your check to the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, 120 N. Robinson, Suite 2618, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.