



OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE

2022-23

IMPACT REPORT



RECOGNIZING AND ENCOURAGING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN OKLAHOMA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Barbie Jackson (left), STEM teacher at Limestone Technology Academy in Sand Springs, receives a \$5,000 jumbo check and honoree display from Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence staff members Elizabeth Inbody (center) and Brenda Wheelock during a school assembly. Jackson is the recipient of the 2023 Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Elementary Teaching. The foundation introduced new activities this year to salute honorees in their school communities.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In today’s mega-channel media world, we are provided with a multitude of options to read about the news around us. Regardless of the media option we select, all of us are looking for the headline that captures our attention and motivates us to read on. The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence aspires to be the headliner, providing the few words on the page or screen that spark the reader’s interest and curiosity to learn more. Oklahomans, now more than ever, need to be aware of the incredible impact Oklahoma educators are making in their classrooms and applaud the impressive academic achievement of our brightest students.

We tried something new this year, and I am happy to report that some impressive headlines were created as a result. For 36 years, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has celebrated Medal for Excellence educators at our annual Academic Awards Banquet. We’ve called it an “Academy Awards-like” celebration. It’s our opportunity to invite exceptional educators from all over Oklahoma to take the stage and receive the recognition and attention they deserve.

This past year, we extended the celebration. We traveled to their communities with our big signs and a BIG check. We asked school administrators to provide us with an opportunity to celebrate the 2023 Medal for Excellence educators in their communities with their students, peers, and school leaders. We traveled to Stillwater, Cherokee, Sand Springs, Woodward, and Tahlequah, and several trustees joined us along the way. The experience exceeded our expectations; our mission was met! Five exceptional educators were honored in a way they deserved, and we created a headline-worthy event. This fun and impactful activity is destined to become an Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence tradition. I invite anyone reading this report to join us next year so that you, too, can celebrate academic excellence in Oklahoma public schools.

As we moved the mission of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence forward last year, more headline material will be found in the 2022-2023 Impact Report. The pages ahead will share the impact of our programs. We are incredibly grateful to our trustees for their dedication and commitment and to our donors for their investment supporting academic achievement in Oklahoma public schools.

In gratitude,
Elizabeth Inbody
Elizabeth Inbody
Executive Director

AROUND THE STATE AND IN THE NEWS



Local educators visit Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute

Choctaw-Nicola Park's Janet Cornsilk and Mid-Del's Regina Hein were among 34 Oklahoma history teachers.

ELI ALLEY ACHIEVES NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Eli Alley, Class of 2023 Valedictorian, for successfully becoming a National Merit Scholar. As a Merit Scholar, Eli has qualified for the \$2500 National Merit Scholarship and additional scholarships from the university he will attend.

To become eligible for the scholarship, students must take the PSAT/NMSQT test in the fall of their senior year. Approximately 1,349 million students entered the 2023 National Merit Program. A student meets certain requirements, and their score on the test is compared to the score of all other students. The student must be one of the top 16,000 to be Commended or a Semi-Finalist. 16,000 are selected as semi-finalists, with the number proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating high school seniors, which is less than 1%. 16,000 become Finalists, and then 7,200 advance to become National Merit Scholars (in the whole United States).

Eli is the first student (that anyone is aware of) from Buffalo High School to score a 96 perfect score on the ACT. He was also a member of the National Honor Society.

Education gala to be broadcast on OETA

Five educators, including Barbie Jackson, will be honored at the 2023 Oklahoma Medal for Excellence gala. The gala will be broadcast on OETA on April 12, 2023. The gala will celebrate the 2023 Medal for Excellence educators and their students. The gala will also feature a performance by the Oklahoma State University marching band.

NSU prof earns Medal for Excellence in Teaching Award

Northeastern State University Professor Dr. Anna Proctor was named the 2023 recipient of the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Teaching. Dr. Proctor has been honored by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence for her outstanding teaching and leadership. She has been a member of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence for several years.

Three Bartlesville youth mentor programs receive OFE grants

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has awarded grants to three youth mentor programs in Bartlesville. The grants will support the programs' efforts to provide mentorship and support for at-risk youth. The programs are: Bartlesville Boys and Girls Club, Bartlesville Youth Center, and Bartlesville Youth Mentoring Program.

Carl Albert graduate named an academic all-stater

By Alyssa Dalley-Schofield, Staff Writer. Carl Albert's recent graduate, Maya Joseph, was named an academic all-stater by the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. Maya is a senior at Carl Albert High School and is a member of the Oklahoma State University marching band.

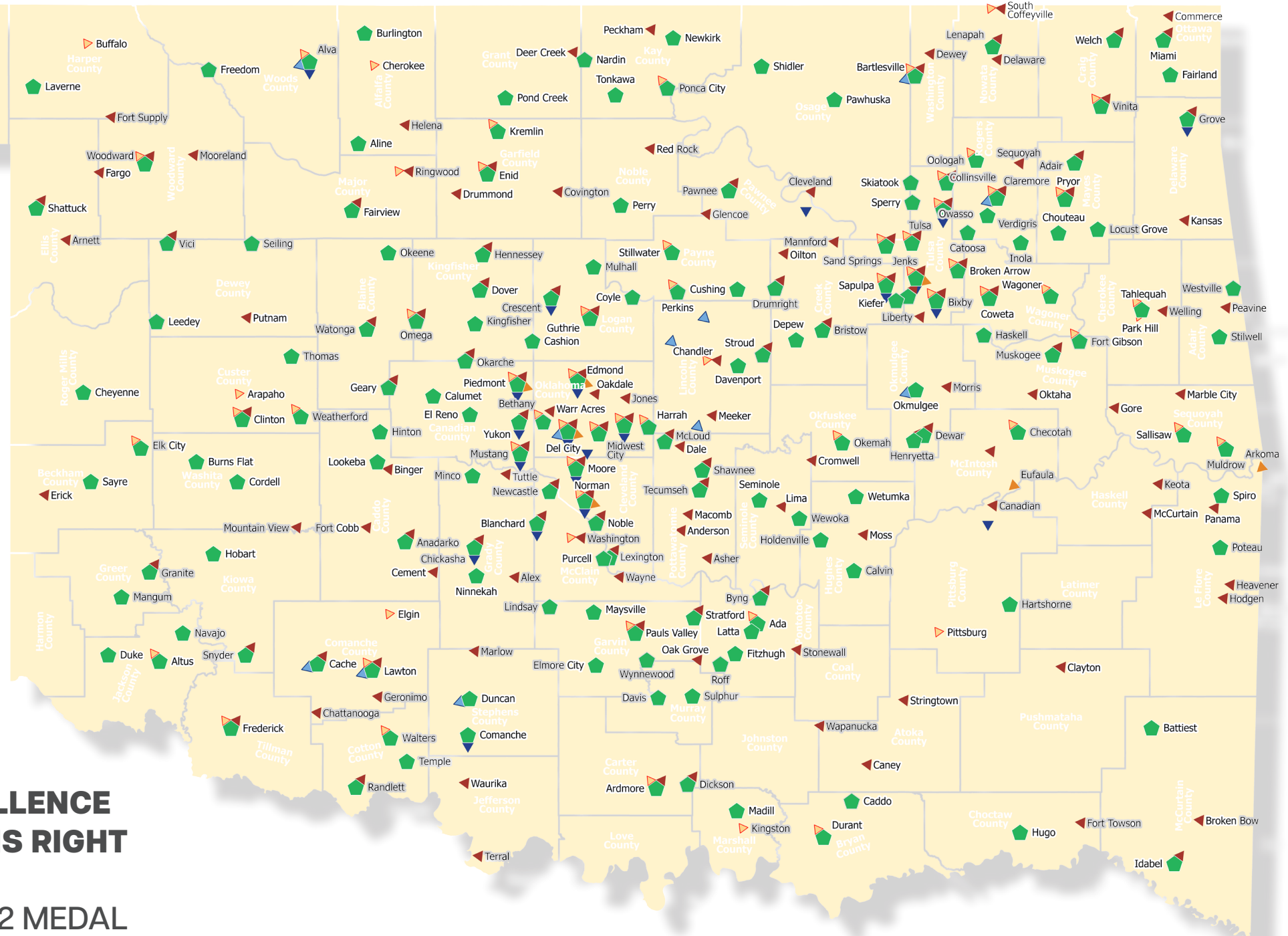


STATEWIDE IMPACT

- ▶ **105** Academic Awards Honorees
- ▶ **160** Virtual Colonial Days
9 Colonial Day at the Capitol
Participating Districts
- ▶ **35** Colonial Williamsburg Teacher
Institute Attendees
- ▶ **13** Boren Mentoring Initiative
Grant Recipients
- ▶ **18** Oklahoma Fund for Teachers Fellows
- ▶ **207** Oklahoma School Foundations
in Network

**“THE OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE
SHINES THE LIGHT ON EVERYTHING THAT IS RIGHT
IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.”**

– ELAINE HUTCHISON, 2022 MEDAL
FOR EXCELLENCE RECIPIENT



ACADEMIC AWARDS PROGRAM

THE OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE ACADEMIC AWARDS PROGRAM

is Oklahoma's premiere awards program honoring academic achievement, innovation and leadership among students and educators in Oklahoma's public schools. Our flagship program celebrates those who excel in our public schools and lifts them up as role models, inspiring others to aspire to excellence.

The 2023 Academic Awards Banquet, held at the Cox Convention Center in Tulsa, honored 100 outstanding public high school seniors as Academic All-Staters and five extraordinary public school educators as Medal for Excellence winners.

Sand Springs STEM teacher Barbie Jackson, recipient of the Medal for Excellence in Elementary Teaching, said she "felt like royalty" from the day of her awards announcement to the honoree video shoot and recognition assembly at her school, to the culmination of recognition at the gala awards ceremony.

"The entire day was full of little details and touches that only enhanced the experience," Jackson said. "The Roots and Wings sculpture I received is proudly displayed in a hand-crafted wooden hutch built by my father. With the prize money, I can now travel on a bucket-list trip to see where Monarch butterflies overwinter during migration and bring that experience back to my students to enhance their learning."

"As I look over the list of phenomenal educators who have received this honor in the past, I am humbled to have my name among these champions in education. This award celebrates the teaching profession and showcases the positive experiences in our classrooms."

— 2023 Medal for Excellence recipient
Barbie Jackson (right) pictured with
2009 honoree Claudia Swisher



**"I WORKED VERY HARD
THROUGHOUT MY HIGH
SCHOOL CAREER, AND THE
OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION
FOR EXCELLENCE IS
HELPING SHINE A LIGHT
ON MY EFFORTS."**

— BENTON RAYMER,
2023 ACADEMIC ALL-STATERS

“THOSE WHO CAN DO IT BEST MUST TEACH!”

— JASON PARIS, SECONDARY TEACHING MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE HONOREE

IN ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM THIS YEAR'S ACADEMIC AWARDS BANQUET,

Secondary Teaching honoree Jason Paris, a fine arts teacher from Cherokee, beseeched Academic All-Staters to consider a career in teaching.

“The education system remains our society’s greatest accomplishment. Education is the one thing that can solve all the problems. ... And look, I know some of you Academic All-Staters plan on, you know, making a living, but I’m asking you to consider being a teacher instead.

Because if we want to cure disease or stop sea levels rising, we need our best scientific minds in the classroom. If we want our politics less divisive, then we need our best philosophers in the classroom.

See, teachers are like rocks that society throws into the pond of humanity, creating ripples that lead to a better future. More than ever, we need our best rocks creating the biggest waves. And that’s why we need YOU. Because look, that old saying, ‘Those who can do, and those who can’t teach’ has always been wrong. Sure, those who can, do. But those who can do it best must teach.”



Cherokee students congratulate Jason Paris after he was recognized at school as winner of the Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Secondary Teaching.

\$150K
awarded to 100
Academic All-State
Scholars
(50% increase)

\$25K
awarded to five Medal
for Excellence-winning
educators

77%
total increase in 2023
Medal for Excellence
nominees

OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOUNDATIONS NETWORK

THE OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE PROVIDES FREE TRAINING, RESOURCES, AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

for new and established school foundations across the state, through its Oklahoma School Foundations Network (OSFN).

The program has helped build one of the nation's largest networks of school foundations, with 207 established to date. Together, these citizen-led nonprofits raise millions of dollars each year to support academic excellence in their districts and encourage community involvement in their schools.

“OSFN has been a vital resource to the Mustang Public Schools Foundation,” said foundation director Tasha Gammon. “We were recently able to utilize their strategic planning services, and that was more helpful than we could've imagined. Being able to connect with the other school foundations via monthly meetings has also been an incredible resource. We are in a transitional stage, having hired our very first employee, and the support that OSFN offers has made that transition much smoother.”

Janna Jackson, executive director of the Enid Public Schools Foundation, said she has particularly enjoyed being able to network monthly with other foundation leaders. “As a one-person office, this job can be very isolating,” Jackson said. “Having connections to others doing this work helps keep me energized and offers me the support I cannot get anywhere else. The knowledge in this group is unparalleled, and everyone is eager to help.”

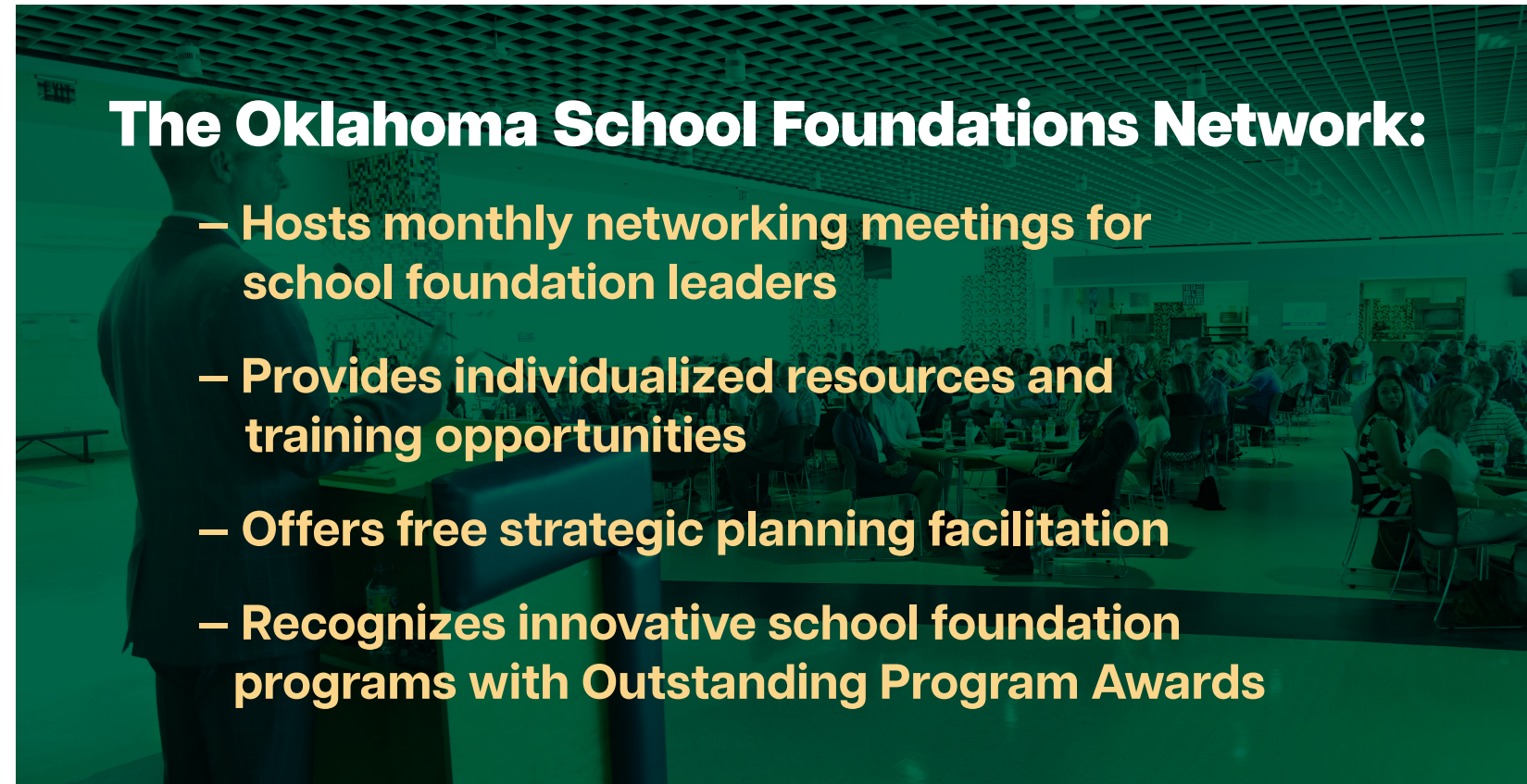
Lauren Dow (right), our new Oklahoma School Foundations Network director, joins school foundation leaders and school administrators at the 2023 Education Leadership Conference.



“OSFN HAS BEEN A VITAL RESOURCE TO THE MUSTANG PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION,”
— FOUNDATION DIRECTOR TASHA GAMMON

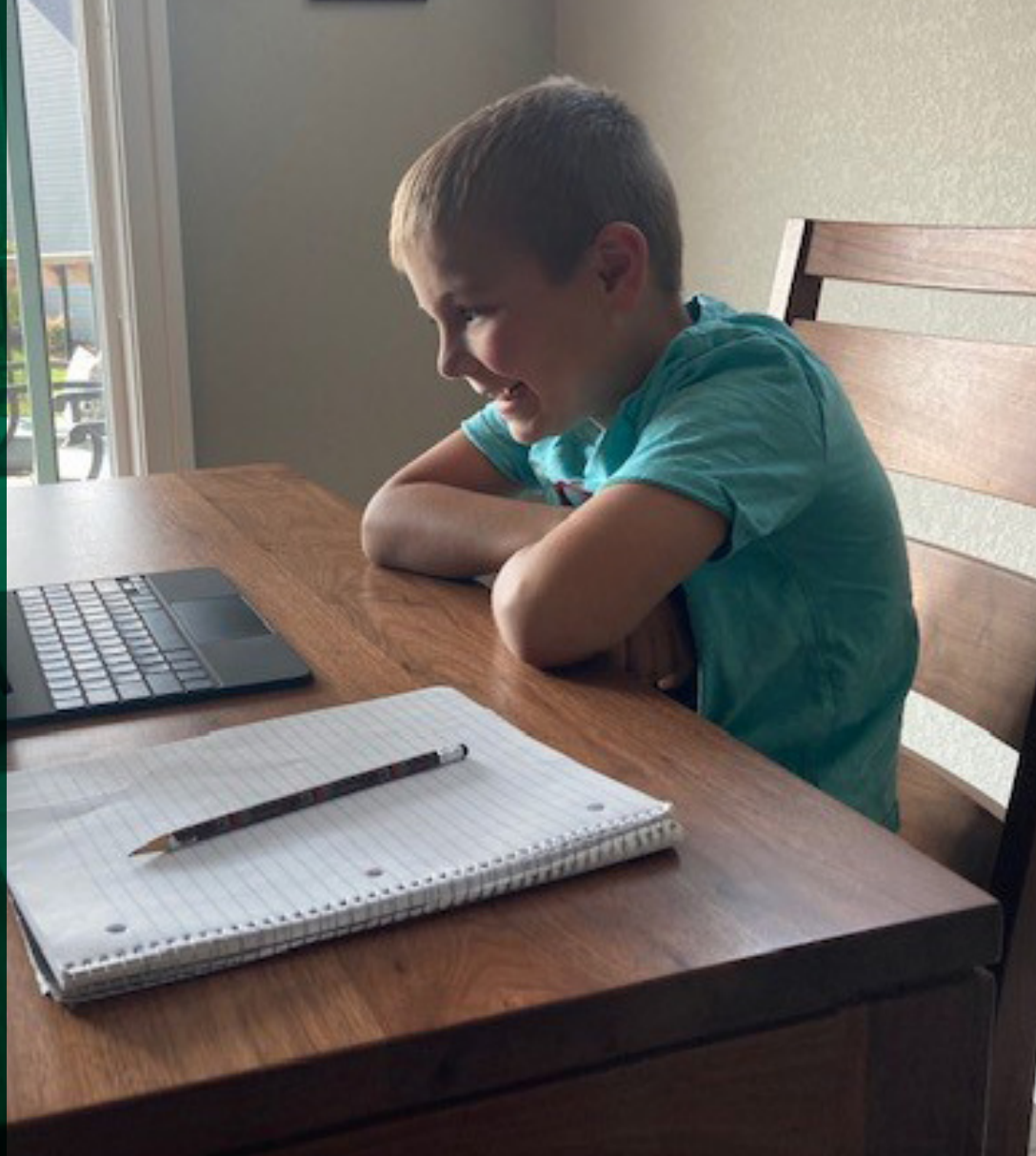
The Oklahoma School Foundations Network:

- Hosts monthly networking meetings for school foundation leaders
- Provides individualized resources and training opportunities
- Offers free strategic planning facilitation
- Recognizes innovative school foundation programs with Outstanding Program Awards



**“MY TUTORS
HAVE
HELPED ME
GET BETTER
AT READING,
AND IT GAVE
ME THE
CONFIDENCE
TO READ
OUT LOUD.”**

**— ETHAN,
NWOSU
LITERACY
CENTER
MENTEE**



BOREN MENTORING GRANTS

TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF K-12 MENTORING PROGRAMS,

the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence awarded \$22,500 in Boren Mentoring start-up and opportunity grants in 2023 – an increase of 50 percent over the previous year.

Two start-up grants of \$3,000 each were awarded to organizations in their first three years of development and were designed to encourage the establishment of quality K-12 mentoring programs. Eleven opportunity grants of \$1,500 each were awarded to existing mentoring programs to help fund programming, training, materials, and other needs that advance excellence in mentoring for K-12 students.

Among the recipients of the opportunity grants was Northwestern Oklahoma State University’s Literacy Center in Alva. Each semester, the program matches teacher education candidates with students for weekly mentoring and literacy tutoring either in-person or online. Mentors plan lessons based on students’ literacy needs, strengths and interests. During the pandemic in 2020, the program began virtual tutoring and found that it met a need for rural students who did not have access to literacy services. Through the Boren Mentoring Grant, the Literacy Center was able to purchase new laptops to help serve more rural students.

Ethan, a sixth grader who has been in the program since 2020, lives in a rural area and recently moved. The online program enables him to continue receiving tutoring. “My tutors have helped me get better at reading, and it gave me the confidence to read out loud,” Ethan said. “It also helped me with my handwriting because of the activities we did during my session.”

Literacy Center founder Jennifer Oswald was excited to hear from Ethan’s mom, who reported an increase in Ethan’s reading test scores. “You helped us get here, and we are forever grateful to the NWOSU tutoring program,” Ethan’s mom told Oswald. “We still have a lot of work ahead, but THIS is worth celebrating!”

\$6k

start-up grants awarded

\$16.5k

opportunity grants awarded

50%

Total increase in awards over 2022

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

As part of our mission to encourage academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools, we partner with other like-minded organizations to provide quality professional development opportunities for Oklahoma teachers.

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG TEACHER INSTITUTE

Thirty-five Oklahoma teachers are returning to their classrooms this fall with a renewed passion for early American history and a variety of engaging lesson plans after attending the Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute this summer in the restored capital city of 18th-century Virginia.

While in Colonial Williamsburg – the world's largest living history museum – Oklahoma teachers met character interpreters portraying 18th-century people and were immersed in early American history through hands-on activities and reenactments of historical events. Since 1993, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has partnered with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to select 947 Oklahoma teachers to attend the renowned teacher institute. Oklahoma ranks second in the nation, following California, in the number of teacher institute participants.

“It was thrilling to see and experience an area so rich in our nation's history,” said Alva fifth-grade teacher Annalisa Roggow. “I have a greater understanding and appreciation for the events and people that were instrumental in shaping the United States of America. The experience of actually seeing the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia, and walking on the battlefield of Yorktown made the history of these events so much more real.



“I have a greater understanding and appreciation for the events and people that were instrumental in shaping the United States of America.”

– Alva teacher
Annalisa Roggow,
2023 Colonial Williamsburg
Teacher Institute participant

“I learned much more through this experience than a textbook can share,” Roggow added. “I hope to be able to excite my students about history through the many activities I learned that will help make history more than words on a page, but something that real people lived.”

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence also partnered with Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute Alumni and historians from Colonial Williamsburg and Mount Vernon to present Colonial Day at the Capitol, a hands-on history education day for approximately 500 Oklahoma fifth graders. The foundation also presented Virtual Colonial Days, a series of webinars featuring such living history presenters as First Lady Martha Washington, Founding Father Benjamin Franklin and Revolutionary War heroes James Armistead Lafayette and the Marquis de Lafayette. “Windows to the Past, Knowledge for the Future” was the theme of the series, offering lessons from history to encourage students to become more engaged citizens for the future.

FUND FOR TEACHERS

Since 2006, the foundation has collaborated with the national Fund for Teachers and the Tulsa Community Foundation to award \$3.2 million in fellowships to 940 Oklahoma teachers for self-designed summer professional development opportunities in locations around the world.

“Through experiential learning, bold experimentation and the realization of personal ambition, teachers are better equipped to impart tools and skills which serve their students far beyond the boundaries of the classroom,” said Fund for Teachers Executive Director Karen Eckhoff.

Among the 18 Oklahoma teachers who received Fund for Teachers grants this summer is Evan Reininger, a science teacher at Deer Creek Middle School. She explored the capital cities of Denmark, Sweden and Norway to see what makes them world leaders in effective sustainability practices. “I want to help my students connect with real global issues, engage them in environmental advocacy, and motivate them to explore new tactics for a sustainable future,” she said.

One of the highlights was visiting Copenhill in Denmark, a combined recreational mountain sports facility and power plant that uses the city’s waste to power surrounding homes and businesses. She also learned how the community developed a state-of-the-art filtration system to produce more clean water than it consumes.

Reininger looks forward to sharing her experiences and developing interactive assignments where students research and present sustainable practices that interest them most. She also plans to engage students in a schoolwide conservation project, such as a recycled art contest, e-waste recycling, or a community swap meet.

Reininger was inspired by the tenacity and growth mindset of Scandinavian leaders who, through years of trial and error, have become pillars of sustainability.

Fund for Teachers fellow Evan Reininger, a science teacher at Deer Creek Middle School, stands atop Denmark’s Copenhill, which is a waste-to-energy power plant combined with a mountain sports facility. “This will inspire out-of-the-box thinking from my students!” she says.



**“I WANT MY STUDENTS
TO SEE THAT THEIR OWN
JOURNEY MAY ALSO
BEGIN WITH TINY STEPS,
BUT NO MATTER HOW
SMALL THEY ARE,
THEIR GROWTH AND
IMPACT WILL STILL BE
MOVING THE WORLD
FORWARD!”**

DONOR RECOGNITION AND STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

THE OKLAHOMA FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE IS GRATEFUL TO OUR MANY DONORS

for their commitment to our mission of recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma’s public schools. We thank the following FY 23 major donors for their generous support.

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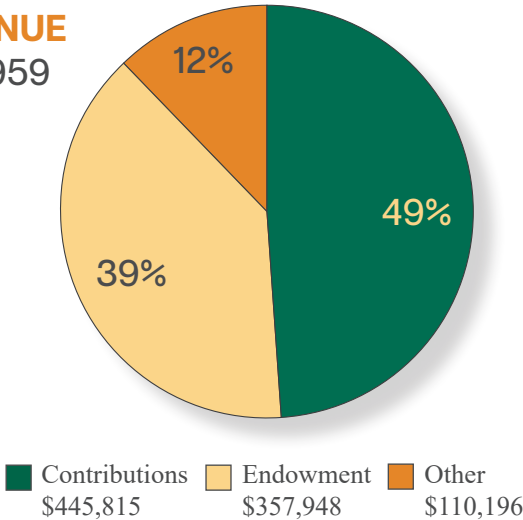


Generous donors like you make our work possible! Here, 2023 Academic All-Stater Jacklyn Crabbe is congratulated by her award sponsors Marty Postic (left) and David Postic of Postic & Bates Law Firm. David is also a 2009 All-State alumnus and OFE trustee.

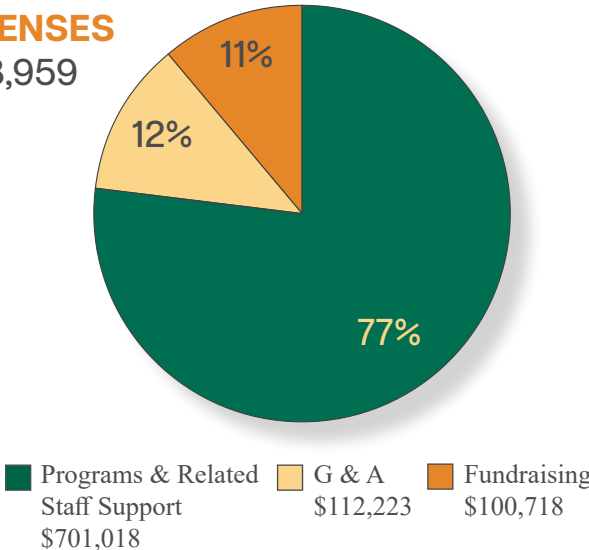
2022-23 FINANCIALS

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supported through private contributions. Depicted are unaudited financial results for the 2023 fiscal year. A summary of audit findings will be posted upon completion on our website at www.ofe.org. For more information about our financials, visit the About section of our website.

OPERATING REVENUE \$913,959



OPERATING EXPENSES \$913,959





2000 ACADEMIC ALL-STATE ALUMNUS KYDEN CREEKPAUM,

a Tulsa attorney, served as 2023 banquet chairman and was the first All-State alumnus to emcee the awards ceremony.

He first attended the banquet as a young Boy Scout leading a flag ceremony and said the experience and grandeur of the event inspired him to strive for becoming an Academic All-Stater. Creekpauum now serves as a foundation trustee.



www.ofe.org

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