



For Immediate Release

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### **57 Oklahoma Teachers Awarded Fund for Teachers Grants for Global Learning Odysseys**

*Will spend summer in 16 countries/4 continents to model lifelong learning for students*

HOUSTON (May 3, 2011) While America's educational system navigates budget cuts resulting from state shortfalls, 57 Oklahoma teachers will navigate the world on [Fund for Teachers](#) fellowships this summer. These preK-12 educators proposed their ideal professional development experiences to Fund for Teachers through an online application and, fueled by \$5,000 individual and \$10,000 team grants, will now embark on their self-designed odysseys to seven global destinations.

"This grant will further charge our already strong passion for teaching children," said Kristine Weyher, teacher at Park Lane Elementary in Broken Arrow, who, with her colleague Kelly Parrot, will explore landmarks and educational systems of England, France and Germany highlighted in Annette Langen's *Felix* books to dramatically recreate these European cultures in the classroom. "Our zest for learning will be dynamically enriched through our adventures in these countries and we plan to enthusiastically inspire students and peers when we return with our newfound knowledge."

Additional Oklahoma teachers awarded Fund for Teachers grants include:

- Lorna Chavarria De Munger and Carrie Lenhart (Central Elementary in Putnam City) who will explore Oaxaca, Mexico's culture, history and language to create a cultural awareness curriculum that connects an increasingly Hispanic student body with their language and culture;
- Mark Bishop (Carver Middle School in Tulsa) who will, using Orwell's *Animal Farm* as a literary device, explore Vermont's organic, sustainable farms to discuss the book's theme of power and how the same lessons may be transferred to humane, sustainable farming practices; and
- Cherina Brown (Moss High School) who will travel throughout Scotland analyzing the use of geometry in the construction of castles, historic sites, formal gardens and landmarks to underscore the real world application of math in everyday life.

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Fund for Teachers partners with the [Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence](#) and the [Tulsa Community Foundation](#) to locally administer the selection process.

“Oklahoma teachers have received more than \$2.78 million in Fund for Teachers grants over the last ten years,” explained Karen Kovach Webb, FFT executive director. “These fellowships catalyze a ripple effect of inspired learning for the teacher, their students and school community. Our goal and expectation is that teachers, when empowered as lead learners, will deliver better instruction to more engaged students.”

In total, 430 teachers across America received \$1.7 million in Fund for Teachers grants to travel this summer on self-designed learning odysseys. A complete list of these teachers’ project descriptions and destinations, including [every Oklahoma recipient](#), is available at [fundforteachers.org](http://fundforteachers.org).

#### About Fund for Teachers

A national, donor-supported organization, Fund for Teachers makes an important contribution to America’s educational conversation by expanding the definition of teacher professional development. By investing \$16.2 million in 4,500 educators over the past ten years, Fund for Teachers inspires teachers’ pursuit of meaningful, self-designed work that translates into skills and scholarship directly impacting student learning. For more information, visit [fundforteachers.org](http://fundforteachers.org), [facebook.com/fundforteachers](https://facebook.com/fundforteachers) or [twitter.com/fundforteachers](https://twitter.com/fundforteachers).

#### About the Oklahoma Foundation for Education

Founded in 1985 by then-U.S. Sen. David L. Boren, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma’s public schools. Its programs include a televised academic awards program to recognize outstanding students and educators, a training and outreach service to public school foundations, a partnership with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to provide teacher training and electronic field trips to Oklahoma schools, and a mentoring initiative to promote the establishment and growth of school-based mentoring programs throughout the state.

#### About the Tulsa Community Foundation

Tulsa Community Foundation (TCF) was organized in 1998 by a group of esteemed business and civic leaders to be the recognized community institution that initiates, teaches and encourages personal and corporate charitable giving today to ensure that the philanthropic needs of eastern Oklahomans can be met for all generations. Through donor-created and nonprofit endowment accounts, TCF grants tens of millions of dollars each year to area charities.

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