



For more information, contact:
Claudia Morlan, 713-524-0661 or
Carrie Pillsbury, 713-296-6776

Fund for Teachers Announces Oklahoma Recipients of the 2009 Education Grants

OKLAHOMA CITY AND TULSA, OK (May 5, 2009) – Fund for Teachers joins today’s celebration of National Teacher Day by announcing its list of 2009 Fellows in Oklahoma, in conjunction with the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and Tulsa Community Foundation. This summer, **73 local teachers** who received **\$292,820** in Fund for Teacher fellowships, will close their classroom doors and embark on odysseys around the world that they designed to further personal and professional growth.

Begun eight years ago by one Houston businessman in appreciation of a profoundly influential teacher, Fund for Teachers has since awarded almost 3,500 teachers approximately \$12 million in grants and subsequent life- and career-changing experiences. That total includes approximately \$2 million in grants to 645 teachers from 347 Oklahoma schools.

“We truly believe that Fund for Teachers changes the world one teacher at a time,” said Karen Kovach Webb, executive director of Fund for Teachers. “These grants act as catalysts to inspire and bring about change within the teacher, the classroom and the community.”

Examples of the life- and career-changing adventures awaiting these Oklahoma teachers include:

- Participating in a 10-day expedition in Costa Rica to study conservation efforts, environmental education, rural and urban schools systems, and rainforest diversity;
- Crossing the Pyrenees on horseback from France to Spain to compare and contrast the two cultures; and
- Touring Targu Mures, Romania, to study the school system, culture, churches, castles and geographical regions to design an interdisciplinary unit.

Emily Stratton, executive director of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence, commented, “Teachers have an incredible influence on their students. By teaming up with Fund for Teachers, and the Tulsa Community Foundation, we are providing our teachers with professional learning opportunities that will benefit thousands of students and bring a fresh perspective to the classroom.”

Tulsa Community Foundation Executive Director Phil Lakin Jr. continued, “TCF is involved in supporting projects that will be beneficial to our community. The teachers’ testimonies and experiences bear proof that this program is successful. Teachers have a new base of knowledge because of FFT, and pass this knowledge down to our children.”

Unlike other educational grants, Fund for Teachers gives teachers the freedom to design the experience that will most impact their lives, their profession, and their community. Teachers who apply and are selected work with students in grades pre-K-12, have a minimum of three years' teaching experience and spend at least 50 percent of their full-time schedule in a classroom setting. Applicants document their vision in a proposal detailing how their summer fellowship will make them a better teacher, in addition to ways their experience will impact their curricula. Selections are based on how the proposed summer activity will make the applicant a better teacher, how the knowledge acquired will be implemented in the classroom, and how the improved skills will benefit students, curricula and the school.

Made possible by generous corporate and individual donors, see the list of [2009 Fund for Teacher Oklahoma grant recipients](#).

###

About Fund for Teachers (FFT)

FFT's mission is to enrich the personal and professional growth of teachers by recognizing and supporting them as they identify and pursue opportunities around the globe that will have the greatest impact on their practice, the academic lives of their students and on their school communities.

About The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to recognizing and encouraging academic excellence in Oklahoma's public schools. Through its Academic Awards Program, the foundation provides nearly \$260,000 in scholarships and cash awards annually to honor outstanding graduating seniors and exceptional educators. It provides free technical support and training to local education foundations across the state and sponsors the annual Fall Forum for Local Education Foundations, held each October on the University of Oklahoma Norman campus. For more information, please contact www.ofe.org.

About Tulsa Community Foundation

Tulsa Community Foundation is a tax-exempt, public charity organized in 1998 to be the recognized, community-owned organization that initiates, teaches and encourages personal and corporate charitable giving today to ensure that the philanthropic needs of Oklahomans can be met for all generations. Tulsa Community Foundation is the largest community foundation in America. For more information, visit www.tulsacf.org.