

the Putnam Pioneer

A Putnam City Schools Foundation Publication

Summer 2016

In the Midst of Budget Troubles, Putnam City Foundation Steps Up

In a sad and frustrated crowd last April, Putnam City Superintendent Dr. Fred Rhodes outlined the effects the state budget situation will have on our schools. The truth is that Putnam City had \$7.5 million more to use on behalf of our children in 2008 than we do in 2016, yet we have 575 more children today.

This means larger class sizes, and any parent knows it's much harder to supervise three children than one or two. But the cuts also mean cuts to programs. We've reduced athletics, summer programs, and after school extended learning. These enrichment activities make a difference in a child's learning that simply cannot be replicated in the traditional school day.

Thanks to the Putnam City Foundation's donors, there are a

few successful programs that will not be cut in 2016-17 school year. Many of you know that the district piloted a STEM education program at three elementary schools in 2014-15, and added three more sites for 2015-16.

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20th Annual Foundation Golf Tournament

What: 4-person team scramble

When: Monday, Sept. 26, 2016

Where: Quail Creek Golf & Country Club

Visit our website, www.pcf4kids.org and click REGISTER on the homepage. Join us for a day of fun, food, and prizes!

Inside this issue:

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Caroline Gist Retires

Caroline Gist made an impact on the Putnam City Foundation that will be felt for many years to come. She was the first full time executive director of this foundation, and took it from an all-volunteer run organization to a professional arm of the district.

During her leadership, the foundation started the Mayfield Legacy Society, which to date has brought in \$190,000 for the mission. She also helped start the Wall of Fame, which has recognized 13 graduates of the Putnam City Schools for their achievements during their careers.

While dollars raised and people honored show the depth of work Caroline did for Putnam City, no metric exists to measure how many friends she made for us. We had a wonderful Florida golf retirement party for Caroline, and collected generous donations to the foundation in her honor. If you'd like to support that effort, please consider a gift of \$130, \$10 for each of the years she led the Putnam City Foundation.

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The plan was to continue adding three schools until all 18 elementary schools had the program. The STEM program is truly transforming our children, and our teachers are utilizing it effectively. Unfortunately, the district simply can't shoulder the burden of continuing, much less expanding the program. This is where we've stepped in to help.

The Foundation is providing the full cost of providing STEM learning to half of our elementary schools for 2016-17. Our plan is to fulfill the goal of extending the curriculum to all 18 schools within the next few years.

The Foundation is also funding the entire cost of the English Language Literacy classes for our immigrant parents. These classes meet twice weekly during the academic year, and offer parents the chance to improve not only their English, but increase their understanding of civics and financial literacy. Thanks to our donors, these programs are fully funded for the 2016-17 school year.

Finally, thanks to a strong partnership with Smart Start Oklahoma, our highly successful Early Birds program will continue for this year, with the hope that there won't be a reduction in the number of

Wall of Fame 2016

The Foundation was pleased to have an opportunity to recognize yet another outstanding graduate of Putnam City Schools in Beth Garrett. Though Beth passed away after a brief but serious illness, her talent and skills had already left an impact on thousands.

She was named the first female president of Cornell University, after a long tenure serving as the vice president for the University of Southern California.



Beth was lauded by Oklahoma City University's President Robert Henry in the newly renovated OCU Law School this past April. He read a letter from OU President David Boren who thought of Beth like a daughter. It was obvious from these tributes that Beth had a brilliant mind. Putnam City is proud to have this 1981 graduate of Putnam City North on our Wall of Fame.

classes due to cuts in state funding. Foundation staff is working diligently to fund this program so there is no reduction for 2016-2017. Without that funding, Early Birds will reach 500 fewer families.

As you can see, the Foundation's mission to *enhance and enrich educational opportunities for children in Putnam City Schools* is more important than ever. This foundation is needed more than ever, and that means we need our donors, more than ever, to help us provide for our children and their teachers.

Connect with us!

www.pcf4kids.org



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Mission Focus: English Language Literacy classes for Immigrant Parents



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It was with great joy, tears and happiness that I was able to witness the elated families who graduated from the English Language Literacy classes this past May. Some students have completed all levels, and others are being promoted to the next level, but all were happy to celebrate this milestone together. There was dancing, singing, home cooked traditional food, and even some students still working on lessons.

As you read in the feature story, this program would not happen without the Putnam City Foundation's support. Having witnessed the impact it has - talking with students, and hearing their stories - I am convinced we are supporting a transformational program. These parents not only improve their English, but they are

also getting promotions at work, better jobs, and using their skills to gain more education.

For the schools, this program means parents are more comfortable coming to the building, a true barrier for lots of parents, and feel empowered to be a part of their children's education. Teachers have a committed partner in moving the students to academic success. As supporters of this foundation, you should be so proud of this program. You are making a difference in the lives of people - a ripple effect for generations. I encourage you to join me once to visit the classes, which meet twice-weekly through the academic year, so you can see the confidence your gifts are building.

J. Seal

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The Foundation shepherds several programs that benefit teachers and students in our district. Below are a few highlights:



Golf Tournament

The September 2015 contest saw 17 teams play a scramble at Quail Springs Golf and Country Club with awards given for closest to the pin, longest drive, and a Rolex offered by BC Clark for a hole-in-one.

Net income: \$19,413

Superstar Teachers

Putnam City Schools asked the Foundation to partner with them and the Putnam City Association of Classroom Teachers to recognize outstanding teachers in their first or second year of teaching. The Putnam City School Board congratulated 28 winners at a meeting held after a reception in their honor. Immediately after the meeting, the teachers were treated to dinner at Hefner Grill. Our goal is to utilize these leaders to improve professional development for this career group, and increase retention in the teaching profession.

Teacher/School Site Grants

- National Association of School Nurses – 13 memberships
- Link Crew Bullying Prevention
- PC West After-prom party

Amount paid: \$5221

Awards

Excellent Educators:

- Bailee Sossamon – Overholser Elementary School
- Linda Frantz – Rollingwood Elementary School
- Lauren Collings – Central Elementary School
- Liz Graham – Tulakes Elementary School

Teacher of the Year:

- Carla Young – Putnam City West High School

Golden Apple Awards:

- Bertha Rodriguez – parent, grandparent, and volunteer, Hilldale Elementary School
- Dana Boynton – teacher's aide, Lake Park Elementary School
- Eric Boswell – teacher, Lake Park Elementary School
- Spring Banks – custodian, Hefner Middle School
- Emma Lee – substitute, Ralph Downs Elementary School

These programs are sponsored by the Independent Insurance Agents of Oklahoma

Scholarships

1. **Roger Barrios Memorial Scholarship**, Austin Parker, Putnam City North – \$250
2. **Clay Culver Scholarship**, Caprie Gordon, Putnam City North – \$500
3. **Dorothy Nixon Scholarship**, Jasmine Luevano, Putnam City West , and Alexandria Rolling, Putnam City North – \$1,000 each
4. **Ralph Downs Scholarship**, Heather Burkhart, Capps Middle School teacher – \$500
5. **Thomas Glenn Scholarship**, Austin Williams, Putnam City High – \$1,000

Program Expenses

Teacher/Staff Recognition	\$8,793
Early Birds	\$8,500
STEM	\$40,000
ELL	\$60,000
Care Share	\$14,085

Wall of Fame

Honored Beth Garrett (now deceased), President of Cornell University, and 1981 Graduate of PC North (Full story on pg. 2)

Net income: \$19,181

Community Fund

- Seven eye exams for students

Amount paid: \$4264