Mission Moment: Superstar Teachers

Remember when it was the first day of your first adult job? You might have been a little nervous, but you were so excited to have this job and took care to pick out just the right desk set and the right clothes to make a great first impression.

Being a first-year teacher is no different, except that all day long you have no less than 40 eyes watching your every move. Add to that a principal who stops by on your first day to “just see how you’re doing” (thanks Pam King), a copy machine that won’t cooperate, and a child getting sick all over your new carpet, and you will maybe understand why this year’s best early career teachers earned the moniker “superstar.”

The Superstar teachers award started three years ago as a way to recognize those first- and second-year teachers who have exceeded expectations.

The Foundation is grateful to be a part of recognizing our best so that they are more likely to build a career in Putnam City.

We hosted a reception for the Superstars in conjunction with the Putnam City Association of Classroom Teachers and the district at Victory Church, before bringing them in front of our school board to receive more praise.

We are so proud of them! Thank you for choosing to teach in Putnam City!

2018-19 Superstar Teachers

Jennifer Boyes, Mayfield Middle School
Jennifer Brooks, Lake Park Elementary
Emily Buchalla, Northridge Elementary
Sara Campbell, Apollo Elementary
Makenzie Colton, Windsor Hills Elementary
Jacob Dail, Harvest Hills Elementary
Tamara Ellis, Overholser Elementary
Kylie Godwin, Ralph Downs Elementary
Laura Griffith, Will Rogers Elementary
Kyle Hood, Overholser Elementary
Lindsey Johnson, Western Oaks Elementary
Aaron Jones, Kenneth Cooper Middle School
Melanie Lambert, Putnam City North
Brian Lockart, Putnam City North
Kendall McWilliams, Kirkland Elementary
Melia Mullins, Putnam City High
Claire Myers, Rollingwood Elementary
Stephanie Olson, Arbor Grove Elementary
Brittany Owze, Coronado Heights Elementary
Faith Salyer, Overholser Elementary
Denise Starnes, Western Oaks Middle School
Justin Stevenson, Hefner Middle School
Christine Swank, Kirkland Elementary
Karina Tarpey, Western Oaks Middle School
Lynsey Thomas, Putnam City West
Katie Thorne, Central Elementary
Jessica Trotter, James L. Capps Middle School
Mercedes Vega, Tulakes Elementary
Andrew Wiggins, Northridge Elementary
Jessica Williams, Hilldale Elementary
Cassidy Wion, Hefner Middle School

Ogres and Trolls and LEGOs

Trolls and the new LEGO movie would be a pretty fun guy, and Mike certainly met that expectation.

Our audience thoroughly enjoyed hearing Mike share stories of his experiences growing up, including his work illustrating part of Dennis’ yearbook and getting to create an anatomical rendering of the human ear for a science class. You can view his remarks from our Facebook page.

We ask all our honorees if they’d like

Mike Mitchell addresses the crowd after becoming the latest Wall of Fame inductee.
Common Planned Giving Myths Busted

Many readers may gloss over this article, believing that they are not the “right kind” of person to make a planned gift. Nothing could be further from the truth. Thanks to our friends at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, we want to demystify planned giving as a concept. Read below for some myth-busting facts.

Myth #1 I have to be wealthy to make a planned gift.
You do NOT have to have piles of cash laying around like Scrooge McDuck in order to make a planned gift. You might have property, jewelry or other assets that could be turned into Early Birds kits and STEM labs. Beyond that, the most common planned gift is a bequest, so you could leave something to the Putnam City Schools Foundation in your will, providing a legacy to our students.

Myth #2 Planned giving is difficult, costly and time-consuming.
While people with complex financial pictures may need an attorney to execute a planned gift, most of us can make one by simply naming Putnam City Schools Foundation as the beneficiary for a particular policy or investment fund. Sometimes those changes can easily be made online.

Myth #3 The funds I intend to leave behind hardly qualify as a “planned gift.”
There is no donation to the Putnam City Schools Foundation that is not truly appreciated. There is no gift that won’t help our children. EVERY dollar you are able to give will help children. We do amazing things with small donations every day because they add up to big ones when we all work together for children.

Questions? Call us or visit https://www.occf.org/howandwhattogive/ to learn how easy it is to help Putnam City’s children today, and tomorrow.

From the Blog: Seeing is Believing

Did you know that the Putnam City Schools Foundation has a blog? It comes out each Thursday on our website www.pcf4kids.org and includes news about Putnam City, musings on Jennifer’s time as a student and teacher in the district, and thoughts on the state of education in Oklahoma. The blog below is from Jan. 24, 2019. Please take time to read and comment on them each week!

Many of you are aware that the Putnam City Schools Foundation funds teacher projects and training through a program we call YES! Grants. We named it that because more often than not, we get to say yes.

It has been such a pleasure seeing the creative ideas, the impactful training, and the much-needed resources our teachers ask for each year in use.

Our most recent newsletter has a list of many of our YES! Grants from this school year, and today my board was able to see one of those grants in action. Coronado Heights Elementary School counselor Erin Frizzell requested a special curriculum to help students learn how to name and understand their feelings. The kit comes with dolls and books to represent many different feelings a child might have, and gives them the language they need to share how they feel with those around them.

Ms. Frizzell visits the regular classrooms weekly and shares each new emotion with the children. Today

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Indoor Recess Trivia & Game Night

We had a ton of fun last year, so we thought we’d try it again! Make plans to join us at the 2019 Indoor Recess where teams of eight compete for glory and prizes.

It’s not just trivia, but a series of games and challenges your team must execute masterfully in order to be crowned champion — or Valedictorian!

We are hosting the event at Walker Terrace, located at NW 10th and Walker, **Tuesday, June 25th**. Your entry fee includes dinner, snacks, dessert, and drinks.

We’ll have a few door prizes, a raffle, and a prize for best theme execution.

Stay tuned to our social media pages to get more information and sign up soon, because space is very limited.

From the Blog

**Continued from page 2**

she had them grouped on the front carpet reading them the book that went with Bella Rose, the sensitive doll. The children were able to answer questions about the story, and used the new language they had acquired to express how she was feeling.

So many of our supporters don’t get to see the day-to-day good that results from their gifts to the Foundation. It is hard for us to find ways to really let people see how much of an impact these small grants make on the daily life in a school.

We are doing our best to describe the good we see and to post pictures and stories so you all will know the difference being made. If you have ideas about how we can do that more effectively, I welcome the suggestions.

Faculty Scholarships Awarded

We are excited to announce the winners of the Foundation’s faculty scholarships. **Jamie Taylor**, a fourth-grade teacher at Arbor Grove Elementary, was awarded the Ralph Downs Memorial Scholarship. Jamie is pursuing a master’s degree in educational leadership at the University of Central Oklahoma. She has been a teacher in Putnam City for nine years.

Named for one of our former superintendents, the Downs Scholarship is awarded to a faculty member who wishes to pursue graduate or undergraduate courses in administration or counseling.

**Samantha VanOsdo**, a kindergarten teacher at James L. Dennis Elementary, won the Roberta Jo Lowe Memorial Scholarship. Samantha has been teaching in Putnam City for 10 years. She is working towards a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction emphasizing mathematics education at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Roberta Jo Lowe was a beloved faculty member at Hefner Middle School. Her family established this scholarship to provide an opportunity for faculty members to pursue graduate or undergraduate courses in a variety of subjects Ms. Lowe loved.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO THIS SEMESTER’S MAJOR DONORS**

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Rivendell Resources LLC
Sodexo
Ogres and Trolls and LEGOs

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Students in Jeff Bishop’s computer animation class at Putnam City West were delighted to learn from Mike Mitchell.

to speak to current students at their alma mater. We want the students to see someone who could be a role model for them. Mike was not only willing to talk with film students at his alma mater, Putnam City North, but also spoke to Putnam City West’s computer design students.

Mike complimented our students on their insightful questions and their engagement in his presentation.

We hosted the event at the OKC Farmer’s Market this year, and early reviews are very positive. If you attended this year’s event, you should have already received a survey link via email. We value the input from our guests so we can continue to make this good event great.

Congratulations again, Mike!

Scenes from the Wall of Fame Celebration

Honoree Mike Mitchell (second from left) visits with friends from Putnam City North class of 1988.

Foundation Chairman Chuck Thomas is presented the Outstanding Program Award from Katy Leffel with the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.

Robert Yochum, Megan Hooper, and Steve Thompson of American Fidelity.

Justin and Moriah Holmes. Moriah is a music teacher at Apollo Elementary.

Retired Putnam City Schools Superintendent Paul Hurst with Ashley Hoggatt. Ashley is principal of Kirkland Elementary.

From left: Stephanie Cavner, Emily Funkhouser, Amye Glenn (PTO) and Holly Pollock from Harvest Hills Elementary, Jen Evans from Arbor Grove Elementary.

Clockwise from top left: Western Oaks Elementary’s Stephanie Treadway, Whitney Saladin, Jerilyn Cushing, and Lani Malcolm.

Terri and Mick Cornett. Mick graduated from Putnam City High School in 1976 and was the 2009 Wall of Fame Honoree.

Byron and Jayme Knox. Jayme is a third grade teacher at Arbor Grove Elementary.

Photos by Oklahoma School Pictures
Thank You for Being a Friend

Since 1987, the Foundation has invested over $3 million in Putnam City Schools. We do this through our many initiatives designed to meet the needs of the entire district. **Friends of the Foundation** are Putnam City employees who choose to support these efforts through a monthly payroll deduction. Employees of Putnam City Schools invest over $38,000 annually in the Foundation for the success of our schools. We are truly grateful for their generosity.
What is She Doing? How Community Relations Helps Putnam City’s Children

By Jorden Richard, Community Relations Intern

Many people are unfamiliar with what a community relations person actually does, so I thought I would use this space to tell everyone.

I act as a liaison between community resources and schools. Our goal is to determine a school’s needs and then find community partners to fill those needs.

I am currently working with Apollo Elementary School and Cooper Middle School on collecting materials for their STEM and arts classes.

Currently, we are seeking shelving and furniture to use in classrooms for both teachers and students. If you or anyone you know would like to contribute, please contact me!

What matters most to me is knowing that long after I leave this organization, our schools and their surrounding communities will have a lasting relationship.

It takes a village to raise a child and I am striving to empower the village to do so.

Friends of the Foundation

Continued from page 5

Melissa Nordmark
Kaci North
Candy Nunez
Laura Ogles
Dana Ormiston-Duston
Angela Owen
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Melissa Pagonis
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Linda Wolfe
Cheryl Wolf
Fallan Wolf
Kathryn Wonderly
Erin Wood
Amy Wright
Hallie Wright
Retanger Wyatt
Betty Yates
Belva York

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Thanks to YOU

Elementary music teachers across Putnam City were thrilled when Christy Gossett, the district’s elementary music chair, received a grant from the Foundation to help purchase air pumps for their Drum’s Alive! classroom sets.

The drums are a shared resource among music teachers and require frequent transport. Having additional air pumps allows the teachers to inflate and deflate them with ease. They give thanks to YOU for your support of the Foundation without which this grant wouldn’t have been possible.

About Us

Established in 1987, the Putnam City Schools Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization managed by a board of trustees which is comprised of involved patrons in the district, and two staff members.

The mission of the Putnam City Schools Foundation is to enhance and enrich educational opportunities of children in Putnam City Schools. The Foundation develops relationships with local businesses, foundations, and individuals, in order to garner resources and energies necessary to address the pressing needs of Putnam City Schools.

The Foundation supports many district activities, including Early Birds, ELL for Immigrant Parents classes, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) labs, Golden Apple Awards, Teacher of the Year/Excellent Educator Awards, YES! Fund Grants, and the Community Fund.

Annual fundraising events include a golf tournament, Indoor Recess Trivia & Game Night, and the Wall of Fame Celebration which recognizes distinguished alumni.