

Press Release

Orange County Education Foundation Awards Seventeen Teacher Innovation Grants

April 21, 2015



Anita Marshall-Aleo (left) is congratulated by Unionville Elementary School Principal, Peggy Kinser for receiving the \$1,000 "Eminence in Education" Grant.

The Orange County Education Foundation's (OCEF) Prize patrol stuck again! On Friday, April 17, members of the Foundation surprised seventeen area teachers with grants intended to support innovative classroom instruction. Recipients were selected from 33 teachers who submitted applications as part of the Foundation's Annual Teacher Innovation Grant (TIG) Program.

"The good news is that we have provided funding for sixteen real innovative projects this year," said Tim Ferguson, chairman of the Foundation's Teacher Innovative Grant Committee. "It's great to support these teachers but at the same time over half of the grants submitted went unfunded. There's no doubt that the Foundation Board has its work cut out to draw more support from our community."

John Reid, Orange County Education Foundation president, along with other OCEF Board members, Superintendent, Dr. Brenda Tanner, and several School Board members focused their attention on celebrating the winners. Traveling throughout the county, the group visited the school of each TIG recipient. While principals were provided advanced notice, the recipients were not so advised. In each

case, the OCEF group arrived at each recipient's classroom door with balloons and an over-sized check. Grant awards were made in the presence of each teacher's students. After hugs, handshakes and photos, the Foundation group left for its next destination.

Eight grants of \$300 were awarded from the Foundation's Teacher Innovation Grant fund. They were divided into four clusters: grades K-2; grades 3-5; grades 6-8; high school. A Judge's Choice Award in the amount of \$500 and two TIG Choice grants of \$300 each were also awarded from the OCEF fund. In addition, the OCEF funds supported the "Eminence in Education" or "Triple I (Involve, Inspire, Invigorate) grant for \$1,000.

A \$300 grant was awarded from the Barbara Hill Fund to Promote Financial Literacy. The Ernestine Reid Fund for Innovative Teaching and the Paul Cogar Teacher Innovative Grant Fund both awarded \$250 grants. The Kathleen Ellington Hargett for Library and Media Center Fund awarded a \$500 grant.

Mr. Reid summed up the day with these remarks, "This was a fantastic day. I enjoyed seeing the responses of the teachers and their students. I am so excited about the work of the foundation. The OCEF brings many much needed resources into classrooms. I am glad to serve in this community."



Walter Bryant, received a \$225 grant for his *Release the Imagination through Art* project. Pictured left to right: OCEF President, John Reid, Walter Bryant, School Board Member, Sherrie Page and OCEF Board member Sam Kessler.

The April, 2015 recipients of the Orange County Education Foundation's Teacher innovation Grants include the following:

Grade pre-K – 2 cluster

Jennifer Ortman, Locust Grove Primary School (LGPS), *I Excel with IXL.com*. Ms. Ortman will use her \$200 grant to allow students access to online math instruction both in the classroom and at home.

Sherri McGhee, LGPS, *Ready, Read, Succeed*. Mrs. McGhee will use her \$300 grant to enhance reading instruction for English Language Learners. The grant will be used to purchase books on CDs and portable CD players giving the students access to both oral and written language.

Grade 3-5 cluster

Allison Wormuth, Lightfoot Elementary School (LES), *Non-Fiction Kindle e-Readers*. Mrs. Wormuth will use her \$300 grant to provide quality reading materials to her students by building an electronic classroom library. The grant will be used to purchase Kindles and electronic books.

Michelle Oehmke and Wendi Wolfrey, LES, *Timberwolves Making Tracks*. Ms. Oehmke and Mrs. Wolfrey will use their \$300 grant to promote physical fitness with every student at LES.

Grade 6-8 cluster

Nancy Vasi, Prospect Heights Middle School (PHMS), *Crime Scene Investigations*. Mrs. Vasi will use her \$215 grant to help her students to have hands-on learning experiences and to see how science is used in real life.

Ashley Agee, PHMS, *Fraction Games and Manipulatives*. Ms. Agee will use her \$300 grant to purchase math manipulatives to help her students understand fractions and other math concepts.

High School cluster

Nora Coleman, Orange County High School (OCHS), *Building Multicultural Competencies*. Mrs. Coleman will use her \$300 grant to fund a field study at UVA's Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Museum and a world cuisine cooking class at the Lorna Sundberg International Center. These opportunities will challenge the Equity and Diversity Club members to step outside their own world viewpoint and learn about other cultures.

Walter Bryant, Alternative Education, *Release the Imagination Through Art*. Mr. Bryant will use his \$225 grant to inspire creativity and build critical thinking skills in his classroom.

Teacher Innovation Grant (TIG) Committee Choice

Jessica Johnson, LGPS, *STEM Lab*. Ms. Johnson will use her \$300 grant to create an area where teachers can find materials to promote hands-on learning. The lab will be stocked with consumable supplies and lesson plans ready to build concepts, strengthen critical thinking, and enrich core content instruction.

Megan Aylor, LGPS, *Bag It and They will Come!* Ms. Aylor will use her \$300 grant to compliment the *STEM Lab*, in that it will provide the supplies for "Brown Bag" projects. Each bag will contain an engineering brief and the materials necessary to fulfill the requirements of the brief. The grant also includes provisions for staff development designed to integrate engineering into the core curriculum.

Judges' Choice

Jenny Potter, Orange Elementary School (OES), *The Golden Paw Book Club*. Mrs. Potter will use her \$500 grant to strengthen her students' literacy skills. This program provides books and journals for students to use at home and in school. It strengthens the home school connection while building skills in both reading and writing.

Eminence in Education or Triple I (Involve, Inspire, Innovate) Grant

Anita Marshall-Aleo, Unionville Elementary School (UES), *You've Got Mail*. Mrs. Marshall-Aleo will use her \$1000.00 grant to fund a summer reading program. The program is designed to offset the summer reading loss by mailing paperback books to the students' homes. Bringing the school and family together to inspire a love of reading will go a long way toward building strong reading skills and strengthening the home school partnership.

Ernestine Reid Fund for Innovative Teaching

Katrina Stafford, OCHS, *Investigating Forensic Science*. Ms. Stafford will use her \$250 grant to purchase lab materials to conduct a course of study involving forensic lab science. Students will engage in forensic techniques such as toxicology, forensic biology, photography, crime scene investigations and more.

Kathleen Ellington Hargett Fund for Library and Media Center Resources

Susan Midland, Locust Grove Middle School (LGMS), *E-Books for Research and Recreation*. Ms. Midland will use her \$500 grant to augment research and recreational reading materials by providing digital versions which are updated with no additional cost and accessible by multiple students at once.

Barbara Hill Grant for Financial Literacy

Jenny Bond, OCHS, *Raised Garden Beds*. Ms. Bond will use her \$300 grant to allow her students to expand their Hungry Hornet Cart business to include the production of fresh produce. Students will use raised bed gardens to grow vegetables and flowers to be used in the Hungry Hornet Cart business.

Paul Cogar Fund for Classroom Innovation

Tammy Graves, PHMS, *24 Math Tournament*. Mrs. Graves will use her \$250 grant to purchase materials for the district and regional *24 Math Tournaments*. Students participating in these tournaments are examples of Mr. Cogar's legendary mantra, "be in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing."

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Further information about the Orange County Education Foundation may be obtained by visiting the Foundation's web site at <http://www.ocedfoundationva.org/>, or by contacting Matt Benefield, Treasurer, at info@ocedfoundationva.org or (540) 661-4550. Further information about the OCEF TIG program may be obtained by contacting Carol Hunter, OCEF Board member at chunter@ocss-va.org or (540) 661-4550.