

Press Release

Orange County Education Foundation Continues To Expand Teacher Innovation Grant Program

April 22, 2014

Members of the Orange County Education Foundation's (OCEF) Board of Directors hit the road again on Friday, April 18 as they travelled from the Taylor Education Administration Complex, to the Locust Grove campus of Germanna Community College and then on to eight of Orange County's

nine public schools. Along the way, they generated squeals, giggles, tears and cheers as they dispensed another round of their increasingly popular teacher innovation grants, or "TIGs."

Due the ever-increasing success of the Foundation's annual "Celebration of Education" fund-raising campaign, the total amount of money awarded reached \$7,250 this year. That is up from \$2,900 in 2013 and \$1,500 in 2011 and 2012. Twenty-one grants were awarded this year, up from 16 last year and nine in both 2011 and 2012. This year's recipients were selected from 45 applicants and they included a team of Orange Elementary School teachers who received the Foundation's first-ever \$1,000 "Triple I" (Involve, Inspire, Innovate) grant.



Orange County Education Foundation Board (OCEF) members surprised Gordon-Barbour Elementary School Head Start teacher Cheryl Lamb and her class on Friday. Ms. Lamb (center) received a \$250 Teacher Innovation Grant (TIG) for her project, Outdoor Classroom. Pictured, left to right, are OCEF Board members Tim Ferguson, Jonathan Chasen, and Bryan Hargett.

the same number of applications this year as last year, it was very gratifying to see that we were able to fund 47% this year as opposed to 36% last year," said Tim Ferguson, OCEF Board member and chairman of the TIG committee.



Locust Grove Primary School teacher Cherri Norris and her students celebrate her \$250 grant.

Traveling by van instead of by their traditional school bus, Foundation Board members upheld their tradition of awarding grants to teachers in their classrooms and in the presence of their students. Guided by the school principal, the group entered each classroom unannounced and presented each teacher with balloons and an oversized check representing the amount of the grant. After hugs, handshakes, student applause and photos, the Foundation group departed for its next destination.

Ferguson and fellow OCEF Board member Jonathan Chasen have participated in the award of every OCEF TIG since the program was initiated in 2011. This year, they were joined on the day-long tour by OCEF President Bryan Hargett and by Board members Carol Hunter and Bob Grimesey. Board member Pam Frederick participated in the grant awards at Germanna Community College. They were joined by Orange County School Board members Judy Carter and Bette Winter at several stops along the way.

Former School Board member Lou Thompson and retired Orange Elementary School teacher Ernestine Reid joined the group at Lightfoot Elementary School for the award of the grant named in honor of Mrs. Reid.

Fifteen \$250 grants were awarded from the Foundation's General Fund for Innovative Teaching. They were divided into six clusters: grades K-2; grades 3-5; grades 6-8; high school; higher education; and a "TIG Committee Choice" category. Two additional \$500 "Judges' Choice" grants and the \$1,000 "Triple I" grant also were awarded from the General Fund for Innovative Teaching.

A \$500 grant was awarded from the Ernestine Reid Fund for Innovative Teaching. Respective \$500 grants also were awarded from the Kathleen Ellington Hargett Fund for Library and Media Center Resources and the Paul M. Cogar Fund for Classroom Innovation.

The April, 2014 recipients of the Orange County Education Foundation's Teacher innovation Grants include the following:



Unionville Elementary School (UES) teachers Liz Osterhout and students celebrate the receipt of her \$250 grant.



OCEF President Bryan Hargett presents Orange County Public Schools math specialist Tracy Munger with a \$250 grant.

Grade pre-K – 2 cluster

Cherri Norris, Locust Grove Primary School (LGPS), *Proloquo2Go: Communication for Non-Verbal Students*. Ms. Norris will use her \$250 grant to purchase iPad applications that will provide limited- verbal and non-verbal special needs students with multiple means by which to communicate orally, visually and through text.

Liz Osterhout, Unionville Elementary School (UES), *What did he say?* Ms. Osterhout will use her \$250 grant to set up a library that will be accessible to all UES kindergarten teachers. It will include bilingual dictionaries and books written in both English and other languages to make learning more accessible to limited-English-speaking (ESoL) students and their families. "This grant means so much to us at UES," Ms. Osterhout said. "All of the kindergarten teachers worked to make this possible."

Cheryl Lamb, Gordon-Barbour Elementary School (GBES) Headstart, *Outdoor Classroom*. Ms. Lamb will use her \$250 grant to construct a garden that incorporate nature as an integral and joyful part of daily learning. Her plan is to construct raised-bed gardens in which the children and their families will plant, care for and harvest fruits and vegetables.



Locust Grove Elementary School (LGES) teacher Heidi Pettyjohn celebrates her \$250 grant. Pictured left to right, back row: OCEF Board members Jonathan Chasen, Bryan Hargett and Tim Ferguson. Front row, left to right: Pettyjohn, Jesse Magruder, LGES principal and Bette Winter, School Board member.

Grade 3-5 cluster

Tracy Munger, Taylor Education Administration Complex (TEAC), *Libraries – Not Just for Language Arts*. Mrs. Munger will use her \$250 grant to purchase resource books that she will make available to all Orange County teachers in grades 3-5 teachers. The books will provide teachers with ideas to build math vocabulary and to enrich number sense concepts. "I've always wanted this for our teachers," Ms. Munger told Foundation Board members. "I wondered how it would feel to win the big prize. Thank you so much, now I can start a lending library to build reading and math skills!"

Heidi Pettyjohn, Locust Grove Elementary School (LGES), *Colonial Day*. Mrs. Pettyjohn will use her \$250 grant to cover the cost of authentic materials associated with the Colonial Day social studies enrichment activity. Among other things, the activity allows students to participate in Colonial period dances and to design and use Colonial period toys.



Rose Devaney, LGES guidance counselor, and Tammy Jones, LGES librarian, celebrate receipt of a \$250 grant. Pictured, left to right: Bryan Hargett, OCEF Board member; Bette Winter, School Board member; OCEF Board member, Tim Ferguson; Devaney; Jones; OCEF Board member, Jonathan Chasen; and LGES principal, Jesse Magruder.

Rosemarie Devaney and Tammy Jones, LGES, *Breaking Down Barriers with Books*. Ms. Devaney and Ms. Jones will use their \$250 grant to purchase books and magazines that provide information that supports families whose children are experiencing behavioral and emotional difficulties. They will include topics such as: coping with ADHD; dealing with sibling rivalry; effective responses to bullying; and childhood anxiety.

Grade 6-8 cluster

Robert Cox, Prospect Heights Middle School (PHMS), *Flipped Science*. Mr. Cox will use his \$250 grant to purchase a digital tablet with a built-in camera, headsets with microphones, and “Snagit” computer software. The items will be used to support a “flipped classroom” approach that will enable students to more effectively preview course content prior to in-class lessons. By previewing content prior to the lesson, students will be able to engage in more relevant projects, activities and in-class discussions.

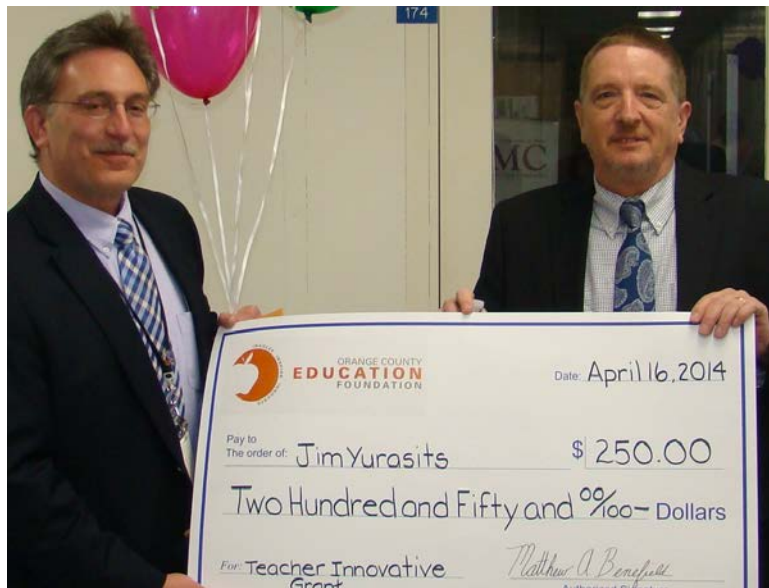


Prospect Heights Middle School (PHMS) teacher Robert Cox celebrates receipt of his \$250 grant with (left to right) PHMS principal, Renee Bourke; School Board member, Judy Carter; OCEF Board member, Tim Ferguson; Cox; OCEF Board members Jonathan Chasen and Bryan Hargett.



PHMS teacher Jessica Kelly celebrates the \$250 grant she received jointly with Jennifer Hudson-Foskett (not pictured). Pictured, left to right, PHMS principal, Renee Bourke; School Board member, Judy Carter; OCEF Board member, Tim Ferguson; Kelly; OCEF Board members Jonathan Chasen and Bryan Hargett.

Jessica Kelly and Jennifer Hudson-Foskett, PHMS, *Strong Seeds*. Ms. Kelly and Ms. Hudson-Foskett will use their \$250 grant to purchase materials that will help students to better understand inferences, to identify figurative language, and to express themselves in more elaborate written fashion. They will engage in a classroom project that involves germinating, transplanting and growing plants that will serve as inspiration for reading, and written and oral expression.



OCEF Board Member Tim Ferguson (right) presents Jim Yurasits, Director of Testina, Data and School Improvement with a \$250 grant.

Jim Yurasits, TEAC, *GERRIE the Robot*. Mr. Yurasits will use his \$250 grant to purchase a kit he will use to construct a robot named “GERRIE.” He will then make “GERRIE” available to middle school teachers to inspire student learning in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). “GERRIE” stands for “Generating Enthusiasm for Relevant Robotics in Education.”

High School cluster

Page Almond, Orange County High School (OCHS), *iPAD for Math*. Mrs. Almond will use her \$250 grant to purchase several iPad applications that are intended to promote student understanding of Algebra concepts and functions. The applications are designed to be beneficial to students at various levels of Algebra proficiency, Mrs. Almond said.



OCEF Board members (left to right) Bryan Hargett, Jonathan Chasen and Tim Ferguson present Orange County High School (OCHS) teacher Page Almond with a

Joseph Parker, OCHS, *The Value of Reducing Carbon Footprints*. Mr. Parker will use his \$250 grant to purchase solar hydrogen education lab sets. The sets are intended to build student understanding of the importance of alternative energy solutions.



OCHS teacher Joseph Parker (center) celebrates his \$250 grant with OCEF Board members (left to right) Bryan Hargett, Tim Ferguson, Jonathan Chasen and School Board member Judy Carter.

Leigh Ann Yurasits, OCHS, *Making a MEMORy Board*. Mrs. Yurasits will use her \$250 grant to purchase a variety of consumable materials, from plywood to ribbon. Students will use the materials to construct boards that will display photos, notes, awards and other citations related to their school experiences. The project supports the independent living goal of the family and consumer sciences curriculum, according to Mrs. Yurasits.

Higher Education cluster

Sunithi Gnanodoss and Leigh Hancock, Germanna Community College (GCC), *Follow Your Dream and Lead by Example*. Ms. Gnanodoss and Ms. Hancock will use their \$250 grant to provide stipends for guest speakers in GCC's new Honors English class. The speakers are selected based on their ability to share stories that broaden student exposure to the world outside of Orange County. "Thank you so much for this," Ms. Gnanodoss told Foundation Board members. "Ms. Hancock and I have so many big ideas and with this award now we can actually implement some of them. This money will benefit so many students in so many ways."

Teacher Innovation Grant (TIG) Committee Choice

Jamie Kluender, GBES, *Hands-On Learning through Math Stations*. Ms. Kluender will use her \$250 grant to purchase math manipulative materials to encourage individualized student instruction and independent student exploration. As Foundation Board members entered her room and started to explain their visit to her students, Ms. Kluender's expression evolved from surprise and confusion to tearful delight. At the end of the introductory comments, Mr. Kluender squealed, "I won! I can't believe it." She thanked the Board members and then turned to her students and announced, "I am going to use this money for a new math center. You all are going to love learning with these new materials."

Lois Davis, LGES, *Electricity Circuits*. Ms. Davis will use her \$250 grant to purchase consumable supplies to build student understanding of electrical



Germanna Community College (GCC) teacher (center) receives her \$250 grant from OCEF Board members (left to right) Jonathan Chasen, Tim Ferguson, Pam Frederick, and Bryan Hargett.



OCHS teacher Leigh Ann Yurasits celebrates her \$250 grant with her students.



OCEF Board members Bryan Hargett, Tim Ferguson and Jonathan Chasen present Gordon-Barbour Elementary School teacher Jamie Kluender with a \$250 grant.

circuits. “I can’t believe this,” Ms. Davis told Foundation Board members. “I am starting the unit today! I’ll be able to get the supplies now and use them tomorrow.”

Judges’ Choice

Ruth Fugee, GCC, GCC Nursing Program Long-Term Care. Ms. Fugee will use her \$500 grant to support the expenses incurred by community volunteers who participate as subjects for students in the GCC nursing program. “The grant will promote volunteer activity, retain existing volunteers and recruit new ones,” Mr. Fugee said. “It is important to recognize the valuable service provided by volunteers.”

Susan Shifflett, Orange Elementary School (OES), Terra/Aqua Bottle Habitat. Mrs. Shifflett will use her \$500 grant to purchase science equipment that she and her students will use to study living systems. They will use “Terra/Aqua Bottles” to make connections between land and water habitats. In the process, Mrs. Shifflett hopes the project will help add relevance to student learning about the scientific method.

Triple I (Involve, Inspire, Innovate) Grant

Felicia Figgins, Alicia Dick, Lisa Yager, Katie Heatwole and Sharon Mohrmann, (a.k.a. “STEAM Team), OES, Full STEAM Ahead. STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. The OES STEAM Team will use the \$1,000 grant to purchase materials and resources to establish a STEAM Lab for all OES teachers. Mohrmann said the team recently attended the Virginia Children’s Engineering Convention, where members learned how to teach students to write age-appropriate engineering briefs and how to set up a STEAM Fair to showcase student work. They also learned how to share their



LGES teacher Lois Davis and her students celebrate her \$250 grant.



Orange Elementary School (OES) teacher Susan Shifflett celebrates her \$500 grant with (left to right) School Board member, Judy Carter and OCEF Board members Tim Ferguson, Jonathan Chasen and Bryan Hargett.



Members of the OES Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) team celebrate receiving the OCEF’s first-ever “Triple I (Involve, Inspire, Innovate)” grant. Pictured left to right: Sharon Mohrmann, Tim Ferguson, Lisa Yager, Felicia Figgins, Jonathan Chasen, Alicia Dick and Katie Heatwole.

ideas with other teachers.

“This is so exciting. These teachers have worked so hard,” Judy Anderson, OES Principal, told Foundation Board members. “The grant will allow us to start a STEAM lab, where students and teachers can really apply concepts and solve problems. We have no idea where the opportunities this grant provides will take our students. Thank you so much. This is a wonderful day for Orange Elementary. I couldn’t be prouder of our staff.”

Ernestine Reid Fund for Innovative Teaching

Patrice Stokes, UES and Lightfoot Elementary School (LES), *Kindergarten to College*. Mrs. Stokes will use her \$500 grant to purchase materials that will enable students to set life and career goals, and to plan for careers. “This funding will broaden opportunities for our students – oh my we can do so many things,” Mrs. Stokes told Foundation Board members. “The students will complete career surveys. We’ll strengthen community partnerships, build resources to motivate our students, and help them set goals for the future. Now we can even visit a college campus!”

Kathleen Ellington Hargett Fund for Library and Media Center Resources

Anita Marshall, UES, *Books Are My Home*. Ms. Marshall will use her \$500 grant to purchase books to help students from low-income households to establish home libraries. “This means so, so much to me,” Ms. Marshall told Hargett, who awarded the grant, and other Foundation Board members. “I am so touched to have received the Kathleen Ellington Hargett Award. This award will make such a dramatic difference for my students. They will become readers and they will share the joy of reading with others at home and in school. Thank you.” Hargett is the son of Kathleen Ellington Hargett.



Unionville (UES) and Lightfoot (LES) Elementary School guidance counselor Patrice Stokes received the Ernestine Reid Fund for Innovative Teaching grant in the amount of \$500 from former School Board member Lou Thompson and retired Orange County Public Schools teacher Ernestine Reid.



UES teacher Anita Marshall received the Kathleen Ellington Hargett Fund for Library and Media Center Resources grant from OCEF Board member Bryan Hargett. Hargett is the son of Kathleen Ellington Hargett.



OCHS teacher Laurie Jamerson received the Paul Cogar Fund for Classroom Innovation grant from OCEF Board members Bryan Hargett, Jonathan Chasen and Tim Ferguson.

Paul Cogar Fund for Classroom Innovation

Laurie Jamerson, OCHS, *Student Leadership*. Mrs. Jamerson will use her \$500 grant to purchase materials for use in the OCHS Student Council Association's student leadership development program. "Receiving this award is such an honor," Mrs. Jamerson told Foundation Board members and her students. "We'll use it to grow the SCA leadership initiative, *Lead the Change*. I can purchase materials and curriculum that will help students make good choices and prepare for a positive and productive future. I am so excited."

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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.ocadofoundationva.org/>, or by contacting Matt Benefield, Treasurer, at info@ocadofoundationva.org or by calling him at (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 by calling her at (540) 661-4550.