



Quiz Bowl is an academic competition in math, science, history, literature, and culture. Students practice weekly and compete in tournaments throughout the year. One of the highlights is participating in WKAR's televised "QuizBusters" show, which is hosted by Okemos Public School's very own Matt Ottinger. This will be a special season for the Quiz Bowl students, as "QuizBusters" will film its 29th and final season this fall.





OHS Quiz Bowl's 2016-17 varsity team



Quiz Bowl has existed at Okemos High School for several decades and is currently coached by OHS German teacher Andrew Floyd. Students participate in practices each Friday during the school year-and many students are so passionate about their team that they organize informal practices during the summers too.

The 2016-17 season was an especially successful one, with the team placing 25th (out of 304 teams) at the National Academic Quiz Tournament championship meet in Atlanta. As Mr. Floyd put it, "This could very well be the most successful year in OHS Quiz Bowl history! I can not adequately express how proud I am both of their results and of the exemplary manner in which they always represented our school and community."

For several years, a number of Quiz Bowl students earned \$5,000 scholarships to Michigan State University based on their participation in "QuizBusters."

Mr. Floyd thanks the OEF for its continued support of Quiz Bowl. "None of this could happen without the OEF's ongoing support of the program through its funding of the advisor stipend, as well as a mini-grant that offsets a significant portion of the national championship registration fee. Every Friday, 20+ OHS students gather in my classroom and an adjacent one to practice, improve and have a lot of fun. Especially for my varsity players, their determination to better their quiz bowl knowledge extends well beyond that practice into hours of weekly individual study. They are truly passionate about and dedicated to quiz bowl. As I've said before, for many of them it is THE extracurricular activity they most enjoy and look forward to every week."

Thank you to the OEF donors who make this experience possible for our high school students!

Quiz Bowl is just one of 26 after-school clubs that the OEF supported in 2016-2017. Each one provided Okemos students with valuable educational, social, and leadership opportunities that are not available during the normal academic schedule. Learn more about OEF-supported clubs at www.oefsite.org/clubs

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2016 OEF AWARD RECIPIENTS



Back row: Marian Murembya, Sue Angell, Julie Lawton-Essa, Cindy Erickson, Bob Helmic, Michael Litos Front row: Theresa Weber, Justin Turner, Ann Helmic, Stacey Molenda

Announcing the **2017 Okemos Education Foundation** Award Recipients

The OEF is pleased to announce the recipients of this year's awards for excellence, given to educators, support staff, community volunteers, and distinguished alumni who have made a significant impact on the Okemos school community. Learn more at *www.oefsite.org/2017banquet*.



Nicole Langdon, Social worker



Cindy Wolff, Kinawa math teacher



Joel Schut, OHS Orchestra director



Sue Tague, Food Services Administrative Assistant



Rhianna Walworth, Central Office Administrative Assistant



Mark Tomczak, Chippewa science teacher



Ron Styka, Volunteer



Central Learning Center Aides: Krista Grettenberger, Hei-Won Lee, Peggy Baldwin



Joel Peterson, Class of 1965

The 2017 Okemos Education Foundation Awards Banquet

featuring keynote speaker **Alena Zachery-Ross,** Superintendent of Okemos Public Schools **Thursday, November 16, 2017**

Kellogg Center at Michigan State University

5:30 pm: Social Hour • 6:30 pm: Dinner and Program

Please purchase banquet tickets by Nov. 8



PRESERVE THE CORE, STIMULATE PROGRESS

Superintendent's Message by Alena Zachery-Ross

I t is my honor to correspond with you as the new Superintendent for the Okemos Public Schools. As I began my journey to Okemos from Muskegon on July 1st, I was impressed by this wonderful community which embraces its diverse neighbors as fervently as it embraces its public schools. My husband and I are looking forward to becoming more familiar with the rich educational history of excellence here, along with the extraordinary people who are members of this community.

As with any change in leadership, constituents often wonder about the new leadership and their vision moving forward. My background is strongly rooted in education. I grew up in Detroit, a daughter of a public school teacher. After attending Grand Valley State University, where I focused on psychology and special education, I returned to Detroit to begin my teaching career. While in Detroit, I taught at William Davison Elementary School, a Blue Ribbon School in the Detroit Public School District. I became a school psychologist for the high school team prior to leaving to serve most of my career in the Van Dyke Public School District. At Van Dyke, I served as teacher consultant, elementary principal, middle school principal, and finally as assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. Most recently I was the Superintendent of Schools for the Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System, where I served for the past five years.

In my years in education, my vision has been the same: for all students to perform at or above grade level and graduate with the skills to be productive citizens in the world. This vision aligns with Okemos' vision statement: "Every student is encouraged, challenged and given the opportunity to reach his or her full academic, artistic, athletic, civic and social potential. Through this vision, Okemos Public Schools will strive to set a higher standard for schools throughout the state and nation."

I recognize that Okemos Public Schools has always been a high performing district with high quality people, who have high expectations for all, and I also recognize that in this ever-changing world, we must continue to raise the bar to continue excellence. Therefore, I hope that we will all embrace the work of Jim Collins from his book, Built to Last. He states that "the drive for progress is never satisfied when the status quo is working well. ... We can always do better; we can always go further; we can always find new possibilities." As Henry Ford said, "You have got to keep doing and going." We must preserve the core of the excellent foundation that has been established in Okemos over the years, while also stimulating progress. This important work is not work that I or even our extremely talented faculty can do alone. We MUST do this together. We must all embrace the district's mission of "Together ... educating with excellence, inspiring learners for life!" It is my fundamental belief that during these times of change and social unrest, it is most important to hold firm to our core values and beliefs more than ever.

I look forward to working with each of you to ensure a successful 2017-18 school year by continuing to preserve the core while stimulating progress!

New Staff: 2017-18

The Okemos Education Foundation extends a warm welcome to the district's many new staff for the 2017-18 school year. This list was current as of August 28, 2017.

BENNETT WOODS

Melissa Miller, *Kindergarten* Holly Bodjanac-Reinhart, *Social Worker*

CENTRAL

Abigail Showerman, ASD Classroom Daniele Budd, Physical Education Caity Biermann, Music Mariann Frank, Paraprofessional Karyn Thrush, Paraprofessional Shawn Donaldson, Paraprofessional Rebecca Rose, Paraprofessional

CORNELL

Grace DeLadurantaye, 3rd Grade

HIAWATHA

Morgan Dahnke, *3rd Grade* Aimee Pinkelman, *Paraprofessional*

KINAWA

Casey Bissot, Science and Social Studies Lauren Dombek, Science and Math Sheree Jungwirth, Physical Education and Exploratory Megan Shannon, Paraprofessional Todd Page, Paraprofessional Bronwyn Welter-Reed, Paraprofessional

CHIPPEWA MIDDLE SCHOOL

André Ridley, Assistant Principal Jillian McKimmy, Math and Science Forest Tate, Montessori Nicole Hagen, ASD Classroom Sara Baker, Math Lisa Swihart, Social Studies and English/Language Arts

OKEMOS HIGH SCHOOL

Benjamin Dontje, *Math* William Harnica, *Math* Mischael Kunji, *Science* Carrie Inglis, *Counselor* Marcy Mosher, *Administrative Assistant*

ALL-DISTRICT STAFF

Chad Spensley, Speech Language Pathologist Lexie Starnes, Speech Language Pathologist Larry Decker, Lead Fleet Mechanic, Transportation

Author **Denise Brennan-Nelson** visits Okemos Schools



ach spring, the OEF and Horizon Bank team **E** ach spring, the **OET** and **I** and schools. This author spends one day in each of our four buildings, giving presentations to our students. In 2017, the OEF was proud to bring Michigan author Denise Brennan-Nelson to our schools. Brennan-Nelson, who has authored 20 picture books, including Buzzy the Bumblebee, Willow, Leopold the Lion, and Someday, spoke to students about using their imaginations to spark ideas, which are the start of any story. "Keep your imaginations turned on," Brennan-Nelson told students, "and don't ever stop wondering." Brennan-Nelson encouraged students to keep a journal. "Ideas come at us all the time. Be ready for them." The author showed students a stack of her own journals, one started at age 10, another begun in 1932 by her grandmother. "She wasn't an author," Brennan-Nelson told students," but her journal is the best story I've ever read." Brennan-Nelson made the point that writing isn't just for authors: "Everyone is a writer because no one else can tell your story."

The OEF is grateful for the continued support of Horizon Bank in making this annual event possible. Learn more at **www.oefsite.org/author.**

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS



Montessori at Central: Students learn about animal structure

Okemos Students Get Hands-On, Active Learning Opportunity

Ever wonder what an owl eats? The 3rd and 4th grade students at Okemos Public Montessori at Central can tell you. They dissected owl pellets as part of a science unit on animal structure last year.

Owls consume their prey whole, then regurgitate a mass of indigestible parts. These hard, dry pellets can be pulled apart to reveal the contents of the owl's meal. Using toothpicks, OPM students gently separated the different parts of the pellets, which were purchased from a scientific supply company. The students used photo guides to identify the types of bones. Bone identification led to the discovery of what type of animal the owl had eaten (bird, rodent, etc.). In some cases, the pellet contained enough bones to allow students to assemble the bones in the proper structure on paper, building a skeleton of the prey.

Students wrote a newsletter article about their learning, prepared visual presentations for a schoolwide display, and gave a verbal presentation for an OEF board member.

This activity taught students grade-appropriate science lessons about animal diet, bone structure, and how both predator and prey fit into an ecosystem. But it also taught them about the excitement of scientific discovery, how to analyze findings and compare them to a chart, broadened their vocabulary, honed their written and verbal presentation skills, and, most importantly, made learning fun.

Okemos Students Get Hands-On continued...

Students beamed with pride as they showed off their bone diagrams and explained what they learned. "It was so fun!" "I loved it!" Not all students were so enthusiastic at first. One student was disgusted by the idea of the project and hung back as his classmates started pulling apart their group's pellet. But, after he saw the tiny bones, he was intrigued and participated in the rest of the activity. And that may be the most valuable lesson of all.

The Okemos Education Foundation provided funding for the owl pellet project through the OEF Micro Grant program.

Jazz Artist-in-Residence

In 2016, OHS Director of Bands Mark Stice received an OHS grant to have jazz artists Julian Valesco and Max Colley, Jr. work with OHS' two jazz ensembles. The artists visited weekly to work with students on listening and improvisational skills and were featured during jazz performances in the spring.

The visiting artists had a positive influence on the bands' performance, as indicated by feedback received during the Michigan State Board and Orchestra Association District 8 Jazz Festival. Students also reported that the experience increased their performance confidence and helped them gain a deeper appreciation for jazz. One student said the artists demonstrated how to use "the existing library of recordings of jazz music as inspiration for improvisational solos." Another student was reminded of the "importance of listening to jazz in order to learn." After working with Max Colley, one student observed, "I have come to understand that jazz is more of a language, and a performance is just a conversation between members of the ensemble."

KidBlog

In the fall of 2016, Kinawa received an OEF grant to purchase an online subscription to KidBlog for every 5th grade Language Arts classroom. This child-focused blogging program gives Kinawa teachers a new and fun way to help Okemos students

KidBlog continued...

hone their writing skills. As teacher Joan Ferguson explains, blogging "has allowed our students to share experiences and ideas with an audience instead of just their teacher. Students are more motivated to write well because they know their classmates will be reading and commenting on their work."

Blogging has been integrated into the curriculum in many different ways, including journal writing, writing about current events or assigned reading passages, practicing correct writing formats, learning to give appropriate feedback and have meaningful discussions through commenting, self-reflection, cultural diversity projects, book reviews and more. The blogging site also allows students to add visual interest to their writing (background images, color, varying fonts, etc.), making the experience more fun and creative for young students.

Fifth-grader Liam said, "KidBlog has helped me become a better writer. I like that I can comment on people's writing so that I can take observations and make my writing better." Melody said, "I like KidBlog because it gives me confidence." And Norah observes that she enjoyed using KidBlog because "when you see other people's writing, you want to do a better job yourself."

> The Okemos Education Foundation is grateful to be able to fund creative and interactive educational tools, supplies, and programs. Thank you, Okemos teachers, for bringing these valuable experiences to our students. And thank you, OEF donors, for making the grants possible through your generous contributions.

Learn more about the projects and programs made possible by OEF funding at www.oefsite.org/grants

2016-2017 Financial Report

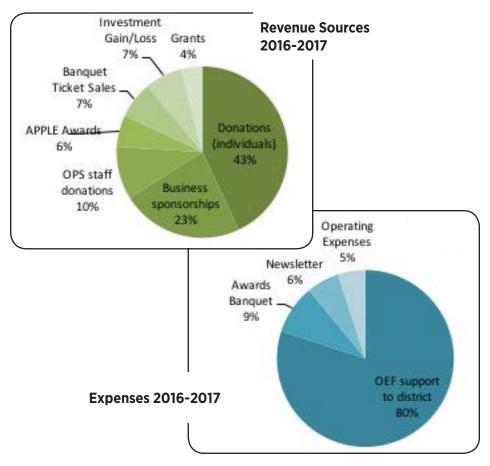
A Message from OEF Board Chair: Martha Hentz

For 33 years, the OEF has been supporting academic excellence in Okemos Public Schools, and the need for a strong education foundation has never been greater. The classroom grants, educational programs, and after-school student clubs funded by the OEF provide valuable experiences for Okemos students that would not be possible within the district's normal operating budget.

Our community values the exceptional education provided by Okemos Public Schools, and our strong schools are a defining characteristic of our community. The OEF exists to ensure that opportunities for excellence exist for all students, and that an Okemos education continues to attract the best and brightest to our community.

Our donors-our 'Partners in Education'-come together to provide the extra funding necessary to give our faculty the tools they need to provide Okemos students with a world-class education. Your investment in the OEF creates a bright future for Okemos students. Please join us by making a donation today. Use the form on the back of this newsletter or donate online using our secure website: **oefsite.org/donate**

With your help, we can strengthen the impact that the Okemos Education Foundation has on our students.



How OEF donations are spent on our students...

OEF Approved Funding: 2016-2017: \$80,303

Approved Funding by Subject Area*

Club Support: Science:	\$ 40,500 \$ 15,276
Language Arts:	\$ 8,386
Commitment to	
Excellence Awards:	\$ 5,000
Bldg. Materials / Educ.	
Enchancement:	\$ 3,430
Fine Arts:	\$ 3,150
Math:	\$ 3,100
Special Education:	\$ 1,461

Approved Funding by School*

Bennett Woods	\$ 8,215
Chippewa	\$ 9,992
Cornell	\$ 8,880
Hiawatha	\$ 8,215
Kinawa	\$ 10,007
OHS	\$ 27,641
OPM at Central	\$ 7,353

*OEF funding varies each year, based on grant requests received by faculty and the generosity of OEF donors.

THE OEF OFFERS EXPANDED SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

OEF donors can now choose to sponsor a specific club, educational program, or classroom grant. See www.oefsite.org/business for more information about program availability and recognition benefits.

Sponsorships received by October 20, 2017 will also qualify for recognition at the annual OEF Awards Banquet.

ALUMNI NEWS BY ROD ELLIS

The Okemos Alumni Association received news about several reunions this past summer. The classes of 1977, 1972, 1967, 1962, and 1957 each held events that rekindled friendships, shared news, and reminded all of fun times in Okemos Public Schools.

The Okemos Alumni Association was re-organized this past spring and is now a nonprofit corporation

that provides a variety of services and facilitates financial support to Okemos Public Schools through the Okemos Education Foundation. "We, who have benefited so much from our school experience, pledge to help maintain that experience for future generations," says Rod Ellis, Class of 1965 and Okemos Alumni Association president. The Alumni Association maintains a free website for alumni, teachers, and staff to help plan reunions, announce news and events, and record the history of Okemos alumni.

Log onto www.OkemosAlumni.org

and take a look at all it has to offer. There are several projects in the works to create biographies of noted graduates for the Alumni Hall of Fame to honor Okemos alumni who have made significant contributions. Through the Okemos Alumni Association, you can enjoy the history, contribute to the history, and donate to the school. If you are an Okemos alum, please reach out. We'd like to hear from you and we welcome you to share your memories with others.



Class of 1967 Reunion

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THE OEF

Make a Donation Your contribution will help to enhance the education of all Okemos students.

Sponsor an OEF program or event Let the OEF help you advertise your generosity as you help the OEF support Okemos students. Learn more at www.oefsite.org/business.

Purchase an Okemos Education Foundation **APPLE Award** to honor an Okemos teacher or staff member.

Leave a Legacy Support Okemos students with a planned gift through your will or trust.

Attend the annual **OEF Awards Banquet** and enjoy a memorable evening as we celebrate educational excellence in our district.

Volunteer your time and talents. We need help with development/fundraising, publicity, graphic design, and website support.

Follow the OEF on **Facebook** or **Twitter** and help spread the word about the OEF.

Contact OEF Chair Martha Hentz at **chair@oefsite.org** for more information. **Thank you!**

2016-2017 **OEF DONORS** (7/1/16 through 6/30/17)



The Okemos Education Foundation relies on financial donations in order to fulfill its mission. Thank you to our 2016-2017 Partners in Education for supporting Okemos students!

Platinum Partners (\$2,500-\$4,999)

Dart Foundation DTN Management Co. Horizon Bank Chivukula/Simmons Family

Gold Partners (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Catherine J. Ash Chris Buck & Martha Hentz Chuck & Karen Canestraight Courtesy Ford Lisa Crites Elevation Okemos Rod Ellis, Class of 1965 Granger Grewal Law PLLC & Church Wyble PC Gupta Allergy & Asthma/Dr. Dave Gupta, MD John J. Hood Drs. Laurie & Tomas Hult Paul F. Mantica Mid-Michigan Oral Surgery Scott & Alba Ried Ms. Ritta Rosenberg Dr. Hina Shah JoAnne Sorlie & Subhash Gupta Peter & Sherry Trezise Howard J. Weyers

Silver Partners (\$500-\$999) Anonymous

Jim & Kathy Ault Deb & Mick Baughman Ann Austin-Beck & John Beck Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices Tomie Raines, Inc. Dean Bolton & Helen Taylor Chris Hogan Brynn Mark & Kim Burzych Peter H. Cooke & Barbara A. Fretwell Larry Cushion Trophies & Engraving Steve & Gina Delp Doctor's Approach Dermatology Joel C. Eddy Erin Frisch & Andrew Hagman Great Lakes Hand Surgery Center Sue Hallman Heat 'n Sweep Xuefei Huang Mark & Gwynne Kadrofske Radhika Kara Kevser Irem & Tunga Kiyak Lansing Community College Dr. John S. & Kathryn H. Lanzetta The Matusz Family Dan McCole & Jill Stephenson-McCole Cheri Meier Punya Mishra & Smita Sawai Aanand Mody Minesh & Hina Mody

Physicians Health Plan Therese & Rod Poland Eric & Heather Pricco Mark & Erissa Renfer Mary Rhodes Kris & Steve Schoen Christine & Dan Sermak Jane & Gordon Spink Thrun Law Firm, P.C. Asja & Bill Wilcox

Bronze Partners (\$250-\$499)

Dr. Bruce K. Alexander Bridget & Ric Balesky Allan Beegle & Suzi Yunker Birchen & Dutcher @ BHHS Tomie **Raines Realtors** Cedar River Insurance Kimberly & Colin Cronin Mary Davidson/Jazzercise Wanda Derochowski Dr. Ellen Dohr/DeltaVision Optical Careena Eggleston Jennifer Everhart & Joseph Thomas Fluid Salon Tara Frv Graff Chevrolet Okemos Jim & Tina Grant Andrea & Chris Hallead David Hallman, DDS R. Hammerschmidt Barbara Hoevel Tom & Sue Hopper Independent Bank Lee & Martha Kliebert Jeffrey & Michelle Korb David & Sally Langley The Lawton Group, Inc. Hui Li & Tina Zhuang Susan & Peter Long Chris & Krista Loose Maner Costerisan John & Michelle Mitchell MSU Federal Credit Union Okemos Auto Collection Okemos Optometry, PC Noelle Palasty Drs. Samir & Smruti Parikh Alana & Jim Pignataro Anthony M. Recca Bidhan & Prasanna Redey Dr. Michael & Mrs. Melissa Samluk Richard Schwendeman Amy & Michael Stephenson Jeff Stuckey & Mary Pat Jaracz Georgia & Ron Styka Rich & Amy Suhrheinrich Ms. Cathrine Tan Jeff & Kathy Tavormina

Antoinette & Stuart Tessmer Philip R. Trosko Angela & Jeremy Wilson Sarah Wohlford & Justus Nieland Yimin Xiao & Yin Zhang Young Automotive/Kia of Lansing Matthew S.M. Yun, DDS

Friends (\$50-\$249) 1 World Realty Rich & Sarah Allen Asian Buffet/Henry's Place Paula M. Audas Susan Bathke & Stuart Landay Jack Behar Mr. & Mrs. Steve Betterly Lance & Angela Boldrey The Bonemer Family Joseph & Beth Bonsall Karen Brown Murray & Elaine Brown Marianne Bubolz David Bueche Martin J. Bukovac Amy Cavanaugh Debra Chamberlain-Hamilton Errin & Lilly Chapman Jiquan Chen Gary & Terri Climes Mr. Hyun Kag Cho Kathleen Tamara-Luchini Colbry Patrick & Jody Corbett Yuehua Cui Joseph Dunn Okemos Allstate Agency Dr. Melissa Eades Deb Federau @ Keller Williams Floer-Martinez Family The Fritzsche Schwartz Family Bin Gao & Zhenmei Zhang David Gift Jeff & Chandra Grabill Kay & Andy Granskog Tom & Christine Hammond Harkness Law Firm, P.L.L.C. Lynna Hassenger Larry & Mary Hennessy John & Kathleen Herrick Todd Hickox & Carmen Ventocilla June & Scott Hicks Charles & Nadean Hillary Rudy & Mary Jo Hirt David & Iris Horner Josh & Kristin Hundt Tyler & Christie Hursey Dante Ianni The Igel Family Dan & Barb Ilgen

John & Meg Janssens Dr. Cuneyt Kalfa Ann & Paul Kinzer Manooch & Laurie Koochesfahani Jeff & Jessica Kovan Donald Kulhanek Joey Latterman Elizabeth Lentz Cindy LeVine Melanie C. Lynn Julie & John MacKenzie Martha Marcero & Simon Chow Marilyn McCarthy The McConnell Family Barry McGuire Meridian Eye Care, P.C. Kim Midglev Plummer & Jeri Mifflin Chuck & Terry Miller Teresa Tickle Miller William J. Mireles, III Mary Nowack Eleanor Omoto Amol & Kanchan Pavangadkar Gail Peterson Monte Aaron Pride Lauree Cushion Roney Karen M. Salmon Ethan & Miho Segal Michelle Selby Ms. Irene Shutt Patricia D. Smith The Sowa Family Samuel Stanley & Jisha Stanley Steve & Kristyn Stierley Heather Swain Dennis & Kathleen Swan Dr. Christine A. Tenaglia, DDS Betty Tesner Pratiksha & Pratin Trivedi Liz Troldahl Justin Turner Steve & Darlene Vagnozzi Lynne VanDeventer, Coldwell Banker Pankaj Vij Frederick W. Vogt Jack & Carol Voss Cheryl & Joe Wald Frank & Shar Walsh Mrs. JoAnn Warren Cvndi Webster Dan & Linda Wertz Carin H. Whybrew, Broker Pamela Williams Steve Zepf & Christina Schwarz Jingshi & Xianda Zhao

In Memory Of

Brian Cavanaugh William & Connie Clarkson Bob Cooley Kenneth Cosgrove Connie Osborn Deits Benjamin & Marion Kinzer Matthew Kolstoe Melinda Malchock MaryAnne Masterson Jefferey Patterson Alex Powell Susan Rhann Gunvant K. Sawai E. Kathleen (Kay) Weyers

In Honor Of

Catherine Ash Mrs. Bellamy 2017 OHS Graduate, Meghan Corbett Sheryl Hudler Sitakumari Kara Karen Sanders Pratin Trivedi Jessica Warren Christine Sermak, Joel Schut, Claire Bellamy, & Beth Josephson and all they have done in support of Anja Simmons Chivukula.

In-Kind Donations

A.J. Boggs & Company avani-design Allegra of Lansing Larry Cushion Trophies & Engraving Lifetouch National School Studios

Please contact us at chair@oefsite.org if you find errors in this information.

Our donor list is always available on our website at www.oefsite.org. Make a donation today and we'll add your name.



The Importance of School Science Fairs By Okemos parent Marcela Westrate

I would like to thank the Okemos Education Foundation for supporting Science Fairs at Okemos schools. Both of my girls really enjoy science and have participated in fairs at both Bennett Woods Elementary and Kinawa Middle Schools. I appreciate the opportunity that the fairs give them to explore science first-hand through the process of conducting independent projects that are displayed at the annual fair.

OEF Grants: Science Fair Support

I've found that science fair projects expose my girls to many important skills. They learn to conduct research at both the library and through various science websites, and they develop organizational skills by thinking through the steps of the project



and creating the necessary supply lists. Designing the project display board allows the girls to combine their love of art with effective writing skills. Finally, they learn about the steps of the scientific method and about how it's okay to be wrong, since sometimes the projects do not have the results that the girls expect.

When the fair finally arrives, the girls have the opportunity to present their projects, teaching them confidence and important public speaking skills. Science Fairs offer a way for students to combine nearly every subject and come away with the pride of completing a project that is important to them.

I'm so appreciative of the opportunities that the Okemos Public Schools provide, and I'm glad that the district and the OEF recognize the importance of science.







The OEF offers \$350 annually to each school in support of their annual science fair. This funding, coupled with funding provided by each school's parent group, covers expenses for event materials and outside exhibitors' fees. Thank you, OEF donors, for making these science fair grants possible. Learn more and see additional photos at **www.oefsite.org/science-fairs**

OKEMOS FRATION FOUNDATION



Freshman Connect

Each 9th-grade student is invited to attend a half-day orientation program at OHS before the school year begins. Students are divided into small groups, led by two upperclass student mentors. These Connect leaders facilitate the orientation program and then check in with their assigned students throughout their first year at OHS. Here are some thoughts from students involved in the program:

"As a new student, Freshman Connect allowed me to make friends before the school year started. I felt better seeing a familiar face on the first day."

> "I found out that one of my freshman students was struggling with chemistry, so I offered to give her a hand with her homework and with studying for her test. So we met up in the library during lunch, and I gave her a hand with her work. It has been a pleasure to be her Connect leader this year."

"I texted one of my 9th graders to see how they were doing and we got to talking about school and life. We ended up having a long conversation about some of the problems they were facing and how I was dealing with a lot of the same stuff. It made me realize how Connect can help Freshmen but is also a great experience for the upperclass leaders."

CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

4th Grade Safety Patrol

Each Okemos elementary school has a safety patrol program. Fourth grade students serve as "safeties," helping students safely cross the road, assisting with bus loading and unloading, and enforcing hallway safety rules. Bennett Woods 4th-grade safety patrol student Iris Nieland shares her thoughts:



"I was excited to apply to be a safety at the end of third grade. I knew that it was a lot of responsibility but that it was also fun. I was so excited when I found out that I was going to share a morning post with one of my best friends."

"One of my favorite things about being a safety is seeing all the adorable kindergartners. I get lots of hugs from kindergartners who get off the bus in the morning, and it really gets my day off to a good start! I like helping them out."

"I'm really glad that the OEF gives schools money to help pay for the safety patrol program. Thank you OEF!"

| 13 |

APPLE Awards

The following Okemos staff members were honored with an APPLE Award from 7/2016 - 6/2017

APPLE AWARD RECIPIENTS:

Abrams, Ashley Adams, Joanna Aho, Phil Allis, Melissa Andersen, Ashley Ash, Cathy Atkins, Katie Austrins, Mariana Ballor, Lee Beck, Michelle Belanger, Shawn Bellamy, Claire Benton, Tori Berridge, Nicki Black, Susie Brazier, Dorean Brummette, Jora Buggia, Dean Campbell, Janet Canestraight, Karen Carpenter, Nita Carrier, Kelly Case. Tim Casler, Karen Chance, Marsha Chapman, Dave Chase, Joy Christensen, Stacy Cironi, Allison Clarkin, Derm Clements, Adam Cook. Stacy Cosby, Missy Counseller, Morgan Coy, Jamie Cramer, Kori Crites, Lisa Culling, Kevin Davis, Staci Dreja, Elizabeth Dwyer, Meredith Eddy, Jennifer Erdman, Larry Erickson, Cindy Evia. Kathleen Facione, Denise Fahy, Ethan Fesko, Ashleigh Finnerty, Trish Frantz, Megan Freeman-Baldwin, Rachel

Fricano, Sarah Fry, Tara Garmon, Jennifer Garvey, Trisha Greenberg, Hannah Gutierrez, Jose Hagon, Adrienne Hallead, Andrea Harrod, Lindsay Hawks, Brynn Heethuis, Kristen Heisler, Sally Hendrix, Jennifer Henry, Hannah Hetfield, Tammy Hiner, Kari Hinze, Paul Holcomb, Jennifer Holcomb, Lisa Hoort, Jill Hopper, Tom Hough, Jill Howe, Lori Hudler, Sheryl Hughey, Jonathan Huntley, Amy Hursey, Tyler Hussain, Angela Ives, Danielle Johnson, Lauri Kampf, Laura Keller, Julie Kelly, Leah Kilpela, Marsha Knudson, Kori Kregelka, Donna Krier, Rachel LaFerier, Erin LaMarre, Missy Langdon, Nicole Long, Susan Mankowski, Jocelyn McJames, Margie McNeilly, Heather Medina, Amanda Mitchell, Jessica



The **Okemos Education Foundation APPLE Award** offers families a way to publicly honor Okemos staff members who have touched the lives of their students. For a \$20 donation to the Foundation, the OEF will deliver a full-color, personalized 5x7 certificate that includes the specific reason why that person is being honored. This program is a win-win: it gives a "pat on the back" to our deserving staff and also provides needed donations to the OEF to fund programs for our students. APPLE Awards are available at any time of the year and can be ordered at **www.oefsite.org. Thank you for your support!**

Mlaker, Susan Moore, Andy Mowy, Don Ms. Janet, Mrs. Pancy & the Central Enrichment Room Nishon, Erica Olivarez, Amy Olstad, John Pakonen-Zubal, Mya Palasty, Noelle Petersburg, Amy Pignataro, Alana Pline, Russ Poore, Don Prinz, Matt Pruden, David Pulter, Paula Pursley, Vicki Quinn, Kate Rappuhn, Erin Richter, Laura Rigling, Julie Roberts, Dezirae Rogowski, Michelle Roland, Sara Ross, Laura Rozeboom, Gloria Sainz, Melissa Samluk, Melissa Saros, Jason Schmidt, Ivv Schoen, Kris Schoonover, Chrissy Schut, Joel Scribner, Margaret Shattuck, Erin Sheufelt, Andy Sheufelt, Cathy Shubel, Courtney Shubel, Robb Sinila, Tena Skoutelas, Christine Smith, Marie Smith, Melissa Staudt, Cathy Stice, Mark

Swan, Gene Tandoc, Danielle Thomas, Cari Tomczak, Mark Tracy, Brenda Warren, Jessica Weber, Theresa Weber, Theresa Wehling, Katie Weiss, Rachel Wertz, Leslie Whitmyer, Kortney Williams, Susan Woodruff, Jenny Zambiasi, Jennifer

APPLE AWARD DONORS:

Jack Adair Jensen Adair Teya Ali Ahmad Pranav Ajjarapu The Akers Family Luke and Jackson Allen Anonymous Dhruv Sai Aylum The Backus Family Arielle and Alia Benbow Shoshana Bennett and Family Maya Bubolz The Buck/Hentz Family Chaithanya Budida Tate Burton Li Cao The Castle Family Colin Cavanaugh Isaac Chan and his family Tianyi Chen The Coleman Family The Collins Family The Cook Family Jody and Patrick Corbett Meghan Corbett & Family Cornell Kindergarten Teachers James Craft Mena de Hoyos Family Kemal Demirer The Douma Family The Elliott Family Jamal Fatteh Tanya Fatteh Claire and Lila Foster Monika Francsics Ping Fu Daniella Gan Ceci Martinez Gomez and Nathan Good The Good Family The Gunns Family Olivia Hallan David Hargy Matthew Hauser Lanlan Hennessy Kaylee Holcomb The Holcomb Family The Hong Family Amy Huang Fimmy Huang Maddie Idema Jannah & Mindy Max Jiang The Jing Family The Kalfa Family Jackson Keller Sophie Keller Hyunjoo Kim Ji Hyuk Kim Sung Soo Kim Timucin Evren Kirac Kocas Parker Krawczyk Krystyniaks HaYoung Lee Bokang Li Rvan Li Tongtong Li Tony Li Sophia Liu The Lock Family Chloe Long

APPLE Award Donors continued....

Hannah Long James Lu The Luyendyk's Yogesh Maheshwari The Malkus Family The Mankowski Family Manolov Family The McConnell Family Member of the Okemos community Karen Mena Sandra Mena John Michael Nick Michael The Midgley Family Yongpil Moon The Morgan Family The Morris Family Cameron Moy Lanigan Mugg Nadine Nakfour Lila Nieland Sarah U. Onye Abi Papala Jiya Amitkumar Patel Nimai Polamarasetti Heather Poland

Ian and Heather Poland James Poletes Henry Pollex and Family Vasilisa Pozdeyev Kristen, Steve, & McKenzie Pricco The Pruden Family Israa Qureshi The Randle Family Serene Rayamajhi Neera Richards and Family Andrew Robinson Robinson-Fox Family Schoenherr Family Paul Schwartz Jordan Schwitzer Max Schwitzer & Christina De Jong Savanna Seeling Matthew and Michelle Selby Karthikeyan Senkodi Jacob Shapiro Shash Yunyan Shen The Sherman Family Alex Short

Johnny Short Drew Sinnott The Sowa Family The Suhrheinrich Family David Sui Yi Sun and Limai Ren The Trebesh Family Anushri Welipitiya The Westrate Family Josie Winslow Stella Winslow Will Wright James Xiao Siqi Xu Rui Yao Jessie Yu Rui Yu (Lisa) Marin Zegarac Eric Zhang Hongbo Zhang (Bobby) Peng Zhang & Hui Liu Selena Zhang Shirui Zhou and Family The Family of Eagle Zhu

Meet the New Trustees



Matthew Koehler



Shruti Nandani



Joanna Wangerin



Alena Zachery-Ross



Yitian (Tina) Zhuang

.....

Meet all the OEF trustees at www.oefsite.org/board.



Martha Hentz, Board Chair Martha Kliebert, Vice Chair Joanna Wangerin, Treasurer Karen Brown, Asst. Treasurer Michelle Mitchell, Secretary

Deborah Baughman Lloyd Bingman Aly Boggs-Smitley Rod Ellis Sue Hallman Joshua Hundt Matthew Koehler Shruti Nandani Melissa Smith Ron Styka Pratin Trivedi Sarah Wohlford Alena Zachery-Ross Yitian (Tina) Zhuang

Ex-Officio: Robert Miller, Jr.



www.oefsite.org

.....

JOIN US ON facebook

This newsletter is designed by smita sawai | avani-design.com



Printed by Allegra of Lansing www.ally-press.com



Okemos Education Foundation 4406 Okemos Road Okemos, MI 48864

www.oefsite.org

Non Profit Org US Postage PAID Okemos MI Permit No 5

Your donation helps the OEF support educational excellence in our schools. **Donate today!**

DONATION FORM

Thank you for supporting the Okemos Education Foundation.

Please include this form with your donation. Donations are tax-deductible, as permitted by law. Please see our website for recognition benefits based on levels of giving. Online donations can be made at **www.oefsite.org**

Name:	Please accept my gift of:
(as you wish to be recognized)	
Address:	I would like my gift to be used:
City/State/Zip:	 Wherever Needed Most OEF General Fund: Program/Project Support OEF Endowment Fund: Future Needs
Phone:	_
Email:	I wish to honor a special person with this gift:
Check all that apply:	
□ Parent/Grandparent (circle one) of Okemos student	I wish to remember a special person with this gift
□ Parent/Grandparent (circle one) of Okemos grad	
Okemos Alum (year:)	Please make checks payable to:
□ OPS staff (current/former)	Okemos Education Foundation 4406 Okemos Rd, Okemos, MI 48864 Or donate online at: www.oefsite.org

Thank you for supporting Okemos students!