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EDUCATORS HALL OF FAME ANNOUNCES INDUCTEES FOR 2016

(Oklahoma City, OK) – In April 1982, a lifetime of service ended at the age of 92 for education icon Kate Frank. In 2015, seventeen-year-old Kayetlyn Wilhite, now a senior at Muskogee High School who hopes to become a teacher, nominated Frank for induction into the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame (OEHF).

The OEHF Board of Directors selected two renowned educators who are active education advocates as well – **Jo Arnold Pettigrew**, of Shawnee, and **Kathryn Turner**, of Bridge Creek – to be 2016 Educators Hall of Fame inductees along with **Kate Frank**, of Muskogee. Being honored in ceremonies this summer:

- **Jo Pettigrew, Ed. D.** – Jo Pettigrew always wanted to be a teacher and even received the Future Teachers of America award at Cushing High School. With 35 years in education, she served as executive director of the United Suburban Schools Association for nine years, and Assistant Executive Director and Legislative Director of the Oklahoma State School Boards Association for a dozen. A founding member of the Oklahoma Education Coalition, Gov. Brad Henry appointed her to the Oklahoma Ethics Commission in 2007. Reappointed by Gov. Mary Fallin in 2012, Dr. Pettigrew has served two terms as chairperson and continues as a member of the Oklahoma Ethics Commission today. She is active in such diverse organizations as the Mid-Del Food Pantry, Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Christian Women’s Fellowship. Prior to being appointed to the Oklahoma Ethics Commission, Jo Pettigrew developed a reputation as an effective lobbyist at the state and federal levels, and a well-researched advocate for education at the state Capitol.
- **Kathryn Turner, M. Ed.** – Superintendent of Fletcher Public Schools from 2004 to 2012, Kathryn Turner focused staff on results and vertical alignment of curriculum to improve student achievement. For the State Department of Education and various education organizations, Turner has been a mentor to school leaders statewide. Previously in Adult Education, Business and Industry Services at Moore-Norman Technology Center and developer of numerous innovative programs serving all grade levels, Turner may be best known as a Bridge Creek Elementary Principal. On May 3, 1999, Kathryn Turner began an 18-hour stint managing triage and morgue locations at the school; and in the following days and months, led her community through the aftermath of one of the most devastating tornadoes in world history. Just four years prior, she organized work crews to support emergency workers after the Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City. An accomplished advocate for rural schools and, specifically, helping military children transition to new schools, Kathryn Turner is currently an active board member for Positive Tomorrows, a school that serves homeless children.

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- **Kate Frank, M.Ed.** (Feb. 5, 1890 – April 14, 1982) – Beginning her teaching career at age 18, Kate Frank taught eight grades and served as janitor in a one-room school in Missouri before taking a business education position at Muskogee schools in 1919. Throughout nearly 40 years teaching, she was active in local, state and national teacher associations. Kate Frank was the first female president of the Oklahoma Education Association (1937-38), and after her retirement in 1954 was well known as “Muskogee’s most active retired teacher.” In 1958, Frank was a founding member of the American Association of Retired Persons while also vice president of the National Education Association. The same year, she secured funding and opened a nine-story, 96-apartment building in Muskogee especially for retired teachers. She was named National Retired Teacher of the Year in 1972, and continued her work in support of retired educators and senior Americans until her death. Frank's name lives on through the NEA Kate Frank/DuShane Fund which provides legal support for teacher rights and education issues in state and federal trial and appellate courts.

“Our Board is proud to have chosen three esteemed educators to join the 95 leaders who have been inducted into the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame since its inception in 1984,” OEHF President Eugene Earsom said.

Nominees for the annual honor are evaluated in seven areas: Professional Experience, Recognitions and Awards, Professional Model, Research, Educational Service, Community Service and Leadership. After induction, inductees’ portraits will be added to those on display in the Hodge Education Building, State Capitol Complex, Oklahoma City.

OEHF Executive Director Dr. Sharon Lease noted, “As Oklahomans, we are grateful for these educators’ service over their lifetimes of teaching children and adults and being advocates for education.”

The 2016 Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame Banquet and Induction Ceremony will be held on **Friday, August 5, at Quail Creek Golf and Country Club, Oklahoma City.**

The Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame was incorporated in 1984 as a nonprofit organization to recognize and honor those professionals who have exemplified a commitment to quality public-supported education while demonstrating exceptional abilities in realizing the ideals of research, service or leadership through their contribution to Oklahoma education. The Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame is co-sponsored by private donors and underwriting organizations.

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EDITORS: Photos will be available soon on the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame webpage, hosted by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, at <http://www.ok.gov/sde>. Or, contact Wendy Pratt, (405) 842-8408 (weekdays); (405) 437-8204 (cell), or (405) 344-6810 (home).