



Chelsea Roberts

Woodward Middle School
Woodward Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"I have only been teaching in my own classroom for two years, but what I lack in experience, I feel that I make up tenfold with the burning passion I have for my cherished subject matter, American history and government."

Educational Preparation

M. Ed. In History from Northwestern Oklahoma State University
B.A. in Political Science from the University of Oklahoma

Current Teaching Position

8th-grade American History

Years of Experience

2 years in present position
2 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"First, in order to be successful in the classroom, you must be passionate about your subject area. Secondly, it is important for educators to make learning as fun as possible and their classrooms as welcoming as possible. Lastly, it is vital that we connect and build meaningful relationships with our students."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"The myriad of success stories that illustrate the positive impact that teachers have on their students is what truly exemplifies the teaching profession. We educators must do a better job of telling those stories to those looking for a meaningful career."





Eddie Lou Strimple

McKinley Elementary School
Enid Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHER

"As I enter my classroom, I aspire anew to create avenues of learning that will stir young minds by being a teacher."

Educational Preparation

M. Ed. in Elementary Education from Phillips University
B.A. in Music Education from Phillips University

Current Teaching Position

Pre-Kindergarten through 5th-grade music

Years of Experience

20 years in present position
42 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"The foundation of my teaching philosophy is 'possibilities.' Possibilities exist in every day, in every learning experience, in every class period, and in every child. An outstanding teacher builds opportunities for students to master skills and reinforces concepts so every child is successful."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"My message to Oklahoma public educators and stakeholders is to express deep appreciation to teachers. Educators warrant high validation for their efforts, daily giving of themselves to serve the needs of all Oklahoma's children."





Peter L. Markes

Edmond North High School
Edmond Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"When our students graduate, they will become spouses, co-workers, community leaders, teachers, and most importantly, parents. To do these things well, they must be kind, loving, patient and gentle. I believe one of my greatest contributions to my profession is drawing more students to this possibility through their opportunity in music."

Educational Preparation

B. Mus. in Education-Instrumental from Oklahoma City University

Current Teaching Position

8th- through 12th-grade string orchestra and Advanced Placement music theory

Years of Experience

11 years in present position

12 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"A great reward in teaching is, as with anything, the feeling of success. While I will never know where my influence ends, the sense of achievement through hard work and overcoming adversity is highly rewarding for both me and the students."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"We are obligated to engage the child in such a way that she knows how she fits into her world and her parents' world, and she knows how to create her own future. The inspiration around the dinner table will tell if we have done our job. If the child is part of that community, excitedly supplying her family with a relevant, meaningful event from our classroom while passionately reminding them of their own experiences, then we have bested even ourselves."





Barbara Bayless

James Griffith Intermediate School
Choctaw-Nicoma Park Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"Every day I am privileged to have multiple opportunities to make a difference. My job is to empower students who feel powerless. I get to make the world better, one student at a time."

Educational Preparation

M. Ed. in Reading from the University of Central Oklahoma
B.A. in Art History from the University of California Berkeley

Current Teaching Position

3rd-grade, Reading Specialist

Years of Experience

5 years teaching 3rd grade, will be a Reading Specialist in the coming school year
9 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"Students react positively and are receptive to learning when the teacher creates lessons where the instruction is clear and explicit, where the students practice in a socially safe, non-judgmental and challenging environment that fosters intellectual demand and conceptual thinking."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"My educational banner would read: Changing the Way We Do Business to Prepare Students for Success in the 21st Century. The world has changed. The way we learn has changed. Our kids, in how they live have changed. We need to get rid of 'one-size-fits-all' solutions. We have to surround our kids in authentic, relevant learning experiences every day that foster critical thinking, creativity, adaptation, persistence, communication and productive collaboration."





Dana Moore

**Woodland Hills Elementary School
Lawton Public Schools**

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"Teachers are servant leaders because they have tremendous capacity to willingly sacrifice so much of their own time and heart to lead children to success. I know that what I am doing will make a great difference for the future."

Educational Preparation

M.S. in Educational Leadership from Cameron University
M. Ed. in Early Childhood from Cameron University
B.S. in Elementary Education from Cameron University

Current Teaching Position

Kindergarten

Years of Experience

19 years in present position
19 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"The best teachers I know are dedicated, committed and competent in their craft. These teachers are also caring and willing to go above and beyond to help their students succeed. Teachers must be reflective about their teaching strategies and willing to make changes and accommodations that are in the best interest of all students."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"If selected as Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, I would want to convey to the general public that teachers are professional leaders. I feel strongly about professional development and a desire to continue enhancing and refining teaching skills to improve student success. I want to share with others about the major impact quality teachers can have on the success of students."





Betina Jones-Parra

**Noble High School
Noble Public Schools**

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHER

"My entire life I have looked for ways to explain how things work. While in school, I analyzed the lessons to which I was exposed for different ways to explain the same topic to my peers."

Educational Preparation

Graduate Certification Program, Math Education from the University of Oklahoma
M.S. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Oklahoma
B.S. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Oklahoma

Current Teaching Position

10th-12th-grade Advanced Placement calculus,
pre-Advanced Placement calculus and Algebra II

Years of Experience

5 years in present position
21 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"A good teacher will happen upon the profession in many ways, but will always be identified by a profound passion for students and student opportunities to learn. I am so passionate about math in all its beauty and I pass that enthusiasm along to my students."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"I have fought to make myself heard in a world that still thinks girls are not good in math. I have fought to make myself heard in a world that still thinks if you have an accent you must be foreign. I had to think for a while to identify my message. Should it be to 'break down stereotypes'? Should it be to 'Help one another'? And then I found it, along with a slogan: 'We are in the same boat, let's row together.'"





Therese D. Rawlinson

Jane Phillips Elementary School
Bartlesville Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"Each teacher taught me how to be confident, resilient and grateful for every single educational opportunity afforded me. Each teacher represented a future day when my present day seemed stagnant. Each teacher helped to fortify a strong foundation for the love of learning. As an adult, I seek to pay it forward, instilling hope and belief in children. They can be what they wish and work for, especially when they have someone behind them who really believes in them."

Educational Preparation

M.Ed. in Reading Education from Northeastern State University
B.S. in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University

Current Teaching Position

5th-grade

Years of Experience

2 years in present position
9 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"I feel it is important to create a stimulating learning environment. I love walking into my room, an hour and/or minutes before students arrive, and feel the positive environment and energy, even before the academic day begins. It motivates me as well as the students who enter the room, to perform to our best expectations."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

S.C.H.O.O.L. – The acronym for success:

School community – As a teacher, we have the responsibility to support staff within our building. We have to do this wholeheartedly.

Class community – The class community sets the tone for the whole academic year.

Heart – We have to teach with our whole heart, with the kind of passion that draws children in.

Optimism – Optimism works within the classroom and within the school community.

Obstacles – What happens when teachers make a goal and an obstacle or rather a few obstacles get in the way? How do we handle disappointment?

Lifelong learning – We have to keep the wheels spinning.





Jentri Guinn

**Porter High School
Porter Consolidated Public Schools**

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHER

"My greatest contribution is spending every day of the school year challenging and inspiring young minds to become everything they dream of. I influence great minds into becoming doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, pilots, computer programmers, or even teachers by providing every student with the key to success, education."

Educational Preparation

B.S. in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University
Associate Degree in Liberal Arts from Tulsa Community College

Current Teaching Position

10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade English

Years of Experience

1 year in present position
8 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"It takes a fine balance in the classroom to meet all the mandates of the job while also meeting every students' needs. It is my choice to make a positive impact on students' lives, as well as meet the needs of every learner. It is through sheer determination and utmost respect for the learners that I am able to maintain my dedication to each and every student."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"The one and only thing that matters most, is the students. Each and every student sitting in a desk across the state and nation deserves the highest quality education. Although it is easy to become consumed in so many other factors of teaching, every decision related to a student's education must be in his or her best interest."





Frank V. Cooper

Charles Page High School
Sand Springs Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"Regardless of the activity, my primary objective is to shine light on others and make each individual feel valued. I am convinced that my mission is to touch lives and to empower my students to realize their significance."

Educational Preparation

Teaching Certification Courses at the University Center at Tulsa
J.D. from the University of Tulsa
B.A. in English and History from Vanderbilt University

Current Teaching Position

10th-, 11th- and 12th-grade world history and comparative religions

Years of Experience

20 years in present position
20 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"I am unable to imagine a more fulfilling profession than teaching. Where else can you study the lessons of the past, behold the wonders of the present, and look directly into the promise of the future? Teaching allows all of this while also offering the opportunity to make a lasting contribution."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"We need our children to take care of Oklahoma in the future, but they need us to take care of them now. This simple statement is a call to arms for anyone who has an impact on our children."





Tera Landrum

Oak Crest Elementary School
Broken Arrow Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"My teachers and coaches impacted my life more than they will ever know. They were the constants who were always there for me. They were the normalcy I craved, and the love and security I needed to continue living my potential. This too is my hope and prayer for my role as a teacher."

Educational Preparation

B.S. in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University

Current Teaching Position

5th-grade

Years of Experience

2 years in present position

3 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"First and foremost, I love and respect them (students); then I build a relationship with them; and finally, I teach them. If I teach them to have a good character, they will be influential and important. If I help them develop a strong work ethic, they will be successful in life. If I teach them to see the good, in both people and in life, then they will sail through the storms that life will undoubtedly bring."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"My message would be one of hope. I would encourage teachers to be that person. I would encourage teachers to pay it forward. Let my life and my story be one worth noting, not because I did anything extraordinary, but because I made it."





Mara Richards

**Durant Middle School
Durant Public Schools**

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"The teaching profession is a vocation second only to parenting in its importance. It requires a passion and a commitment that is difficult for others to understand; its impact on the future is phenomenal. I became a teacher because of my passion for learning, along with my desire to pass the passion onto others."

Educational Preparation

M.S. in Library Media from East Central University
B.S. in Biology from Southeastern Oklahoma State University

Current Teaching Position

8th-grade science and pre-Advanced Placement physical science

Years of Experience

13 years in present position
15 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"Teaching not only touches the lives of the future but also alters its course. Public school teaching is one of the most challenging careers; yet it is one of the most important professions. Being a teacher is about making positive, lasting impressions and indelible marks. Creating the foundation for my students that will build the rest of their lives is an honor. Without teachers there would be no other professions."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"I have a commitment to improve education and strengthen the teaching profession. I would like to encourage people to become teachers and for good teachers to stay in the profession and not move to a more lucrative job. As teachers, it is our responsibility to create the conditions that give the next generation the skills to invent the future and give every child and young person a chance to expand their minds and their freedoms."





Susan Rindal

Vanoss Elementary School
Vanoss Public Schools

2014 OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

"I believe children learn best when they are valued and feel loved. I also feel that education is not 'one-size-fits-all' and it is my job to find the ways in which each child will be successful. My greatest accomplishment in teaching is that my students know that I love them enough to keep trying to find ways to make them successful. They are willing to learn from me because they know I care about them."

Educational Preparation

M. Ed. in Reading from East Central University
B.S. in Education from Montana State University

Current Teaching Position

Pre-Kindergarten

Years of Experience

4 years in present position
15 years total

Philosophy of Teaching

"I believe an outstanding teacher is one who is always striving to be better. An outstanding teacher does not become stale, doing the same thing, the same way, everyday, year after year. Being willing to look at things in a different way and try new things is the mark of an outstanding teacher. She is one who makes a mark on her students by encouraging them, pushing them, and taking them to levels they never knew they could reach."

Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Message

"As educators, we must take a pro-active approach and begin early screenings that can help us identify children with early needs. If we focus our efforts on children whose brains are developing and flexible, perhaps we can cut down on the number of children who are being tested in the later years, after their brain pathways are more difficult to change. We need to make this investment in our children to secure their future."

