

MIDDLETOWN EDUCATION

TPS Names District Finalists

Congratulations to Tulsa Public Schools' five 2017 Teacher of the Year finalists:

- Shaye Adams, special education teacher at Hamilton Elementary School.
 - Sarah Bailey, third grade teacher at McKinley Elementary School.
 - Susan Proctor, special education teacher at Eliot Elementary School.
 - Kate Remington, English teacher at Booker T. Washington High School.
 - Elizabeth Steinocher, second grade teacher at Skelly Elementary School.
- "These five teachers exemplify our core values of equity, character, excellence, team, and joy in their work with their colleagues, students, and families," says TPS superintendent Dr. Deborah A. Gist. The TPS 2017 Teacher of the Year will be announced in the spring.

Shaye Adams began her career in education as a paraprofessional and became a certified special education teacher with Tulsa Public Schools in 2014. At Hamilton Elementary School, she has also served as faculty sponsor for the student newspaper and as the school's basketball coach. Adams

brings her coaching off the court as a team leader who provides hands-on professional development support for her colleagues. She encourages her students to think beyond high school by working with "Career Buddies" who demonstrate the options available to college graduates.

Sarah Bailey is a third grade teacher at McKinley Elementary School and has been with Tulsa Public Schools for four years. Bailey sits on the site leadership team at McKinley. She is also a member of both the Superintendent's Teacher Cabinet and the district's newly-formed Equity Ambassadors group. She and the McKinley third grade team came together last summer for two weeks of intensive planning to create exceptional teaching and learning experiences for the 2016-2017 school year.

Susan Proctor is a special education teacher at Eliot Elementary School and joined the TPS family in 1995. In addition to providing great learning experiences for her special education students, Proctor has been a team leader for her colleagues, chair of the Eliot social committee, and member of the suspension review and advisory com-

mittees. Proctor incorporates mindfulness into the classroom through "yoga breaks" that help students to re-center and relax during the school day.

Kate Remington teaches English at Booker T. Washington High School and joined TPS in 2013. She coordinates the school's food pantry, leading donation drives and ensuring that food insecure students have access to meals during evenings, weekends and holidays. She also serves on the site safety team, student affairs committee, and district-level Equity Ambassadors group. Remington develops strong relationships with her students by using Friday "Highs and Lows" to share celebrations and empathy while building community.

Elizabeth Steinocher teaches second grade at Skelly Elementary School and has been with Tulsa Public Schools for nine years. Steinocher served as Skelly's second grade team leader and as a summer faculty advisor with Teach For America. She was named as Skelly's Teacher of the Year in 2010. Steinocher is committed to bright futures for Tulsa children and believes that "you don't plant trees, you plant seeds."

Local Engineer Builds Lego Model of Central Library

Throughout the month of February, a Lego model of the recently-renovated Central Library downtown Tulsa has been on display, created by library customer and 2012 graduate from Oklahoma State University's School of Architecture Ricardo Montoya. Montoya began building Lego models in middle school, which fueled his interest in pursuing a career in architecture. He is now a structural engineering intern with 60 Engineering Group, PLLC, the structural design consultant for Central Library's renovation.

"I used LDD, a free software, to create a digital model and ordered by exact types and quantities of Lego bricks for this specific project," says Montoya. "This is the largest custom model I have built. It is approximately 1,000 pieces and took 16 hours to build!"

Central Library is not the first of its kind in Oklahoma-specific Lego models. Montoya recently built

models of Guthrie Green and The Boxyard in Tulsa, and the Devon Tower, Chesapeake Boathouse and Skydance Pedestrian Bridge in Oklahoma City.

"I would like to bring an awareness to the great architecture in Oklahoma," he says. "Lego models are a fun and visual way to highlight great design and the community who takes who takes enormous pride in their projects."

Montoya documents the process of creating his Lego models on his website, katyndricardo.square-space.com. He also encourages Lego builders to contact him with ideas or to become part of a local Lego network.

The Tulsa City-County Library also regularly presents Lego activities for children and teens to build and share ideas while expanding their knowledge of STEM-based learning. To find a list of its monthly events, visit tulsalibrary.org or call 918-549-7323.



ARCHITECTURAL AWARENESS: Ricardo Montoya, a 2012 graduate from Oklahoma State University's School of Architecture, holds his Lego model of downtown Tulsa's Central Library. Montoya's model has been on display at Central Library throughout the month of February.

NEW MCCLAIN FIELD HOUSE



FUTURE CONSTRUCTION: In February, Tulsa Public Schools representatives, McClain students and Flintco Construction celebrated the upcoming construction of a new field house for McClain High School. Construction will begin in August, with expected completion by November 2018. The field house will include two basketball courts and space for volleyball and wrestling. The project is funded by the 2015 bond issue.

TPS Announces Series of Community Forums

In February, Board President Dr. Lana Turner-Addison and Superintendent Dr. Deborah A. Gist announced a series of five monthly community gatherings centered around diversity, justice and acceptance. The first gathering was held Feb. 7.

Below is the letter sent to Tulsa Public Schools team members by Turner-Addison and Gist.

Dear Tulsans,

The start of the 2016-2017 school year marked the beginning of our bold journey to make Tulsa Public Schools a destination for excellence in teaching and learning.

Together with input from thousands of Tulsans - we developed a vision and commitment to work with our community and families to ignite the joy of learning and prepare every student for the greatest success in college, careers and life.

Of course, a successful journey would direct the implementation of Destination Excellence, we knew that it was critical to demonstrate our commitment to transformative change by putting equity at the forefront.

The success of young Tulsans should not be predicted by their race, gender, zip code, socioeconomic status, or any other factor. We must ensure that all of our students have equal opportunities to fulfill their greatest potential.

Change starts with people who care about doing what's right, regardless of whether it's easy. It won't be easy to create the equitable conditions we want for our children, but we can start working toward it together through learning, reflecting, and sharing honest dialogue.

Starting in February, we will hold the first in a series of five community gatherings designed to provide a space for Tulsans to learn about a variety of issues which affect diversity, justice and acceptance. These conversations will be facilitated by community leader and advocate Hannibal Johnson and will take place monthly through the end of the school year.

Our first community conversation, Exploring Equity: Oklahoma and Tulsa History, will take place on Tuesday, Feb. 7 at 5:30 p.m. in the Selman Room at the Education Service Center (3027 S. New Haven Ave. in Tulsa). Dinner will be available at 5:30 p.m. with learning and conversation beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Future gatherings will include conversations about Greenwood and North Tulsa history, religious diversity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and immigration and immigrant communities. We look forward to engaging with you as we examine these critical subjects and work to identify ways in which we can begin to confront and combat the systemic inequities that have limited our children for far too long.

Sincerely,
Board President Dr. Lana Turner-Addison and Superintendent Deborah A. Gist