

Greetings OKCEO Members and Partners!

We are pleased to welcome and introduce our three newest OKCEOs!



Dr. Deena Fisher is the Dean of Northwestern Oklahoma State University (NWOSU) Woodward Campus and is also a professor of history. Originally from Elk City, Dr. Fisher believes in servant leadership and active community involvement and serves on the boards of several local and statewide organizations. She was recognized, along with Pat Potts, in 2011 Journal Record's "50 Women Making a Difference" program and received the 2010 Woodward Citizen of the Year recognition.

John Harper serves as the Vice President of External Affairs with Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO). John is a graduate of Evangel University and earned an MBA from Oral Roberts University. He was just named 2012 recipient of Evangel University's Regius Award. A native of Denver, John is a graduate of Leadership Oklahoma Class XXV and serves on the Executive Board of the Oklahoma Academy, as well as several other local boards.



Randy Decker is the Director of Community Relations for SandRidge Energy. A native of Prague, Oklahoma, in his prior career he spent 19 years an educator with Edmond Public Schools working as a teacher, coach and administrator. He also taught Personnel Administration at UCO as an adjunct professor. Randy has served on YMCA of Edmond Board and the Edmond Chamber of Commerce Board and currently serves on the Oklahoma City Memorial Education Committee.

[Recent Articles & Events](#)

Drive a car, learn to read

Ramona Paul, Oklahoma Gazette Commentary, 5.9.12

"Thank you to the Oklahoma Legislature for funding a high-quality program for all 4-year-olds whose parents choose to give their children the opportunity to attend public school. As a result, Oklahoma has ranked first in the nation for the past eight years in access to preschool programs." <http://ow.ly/aYt7Y>

Sowing the seeds for economic growth: Early childhood education and its tie to workforce development

By Jessica Mitchell, The Journal Record, April 12, 2012

"Research shows that the first five years of life is the most crucial time in the development of a child's brain. Whether foundations for many life skills are established at this time could pave the road to success – or failure. Early childhood is a critical period of physical, language and cognitive development."

<http://ow.ly/aYt3h>

Early childhood education in Oklahoma tops nation

By Megan Rolland, Staff Writer, OPUBCO, Sunday, April 29, 2012

"We've got more support for enhancing our education system than I have seen in my lifetime," said Bob Harbison, 72, who pushed a freshman lawmaker to introduce the universal prekindergarten bill in 1998. I really look at early childhood education as being an investment that pays off, and I think way, way too many people equate investment in early childhood education with what I would call welfare type handouts to adults. I just don't see it that way," Harbison said. <http://ow.ly/aYsQJ>

National Smart Start Conference – Debra Andersen and Pat Potts presented in early May at the National Smart Start Conference in North Carolina. The workshop topic was on "Development of a Business Champions for Investment in Early Childhood" initiative. Oklahoma has the only statewide effort led by a three-way partnership – Oklahoma Business Roundtable, Smart Start Oklahoma and the Potts Family Foundation. We shared information about the process and tools we used along with learning from our challenges and successes.

Advocacy and Framing Workshop – Additionally Pat attended a workshop on framing – using language in advocacy that helps persuade. The speakers commented that the words 'prosperity' and 'ingenuity' were well received by both progressives and conservatives in describing early childhood developmental outcomes. According to the presenters, people make decisions based on values (emotional) not facts (data). However both are needed to persuade most audiences. The key is what is 'heard' through filters we all utilize rather than what is "said".

[Upcoming News & Events](#)

- We wish Rob Crissinger well as he leaves to become Marketing and PR Director at City Arts! Coming on board to perform these functions for the OKCEO initiative will be Koch Communications. Smart Start Oklahoma is also working with the same firm. So we hope it will enhance our shared efforts. Koch Communications brings some 26 years of marketing and public relations experience along with media contacts statewide. We trust this time our working relationship will match success with longevity!
- We continue to solicit your help in securing speaking venues – civic groups, community groups and events, churches – please contact Margie Marney at mmarney@pottsfamilyfoundation.org or (405) 319-8262. Also, remember to report all speaking engagements to our office as we are making every effort to document and quantify our outreach.
- Social media outlets both inform us as to what is "trending" in early learning" as well providing a forum for us to share our work. You can help push our message out faster and further. Please "like" **OKCEO** and **Potts Family Foundation** on **Facebook** and follow **OKCEOs** and **PottsFamilyFdn** on **Twitter** and ask your friends to do the same.

[Recommended Reading](#)

Emotional trauma may hurt toddlers' later learning

Suffering emotional trauma such as witnessing domestic violence or being abused early in life may inhibit children's intellectual development, according to a new study. The researchers also found that the impact of trauma seems to be most damaging when it occurs during the first two years of life.

[Read full article.](#)

Berkelhamer: 'Toxic stress' has health consequences

Dr. Jay Berkelhamer, Opinion

Studies have repeatedly shown that toddlers who have secure relationships with not only their parents, but also other caregivers such as early-education teachers, experience less stress and have a markedly lower chance of suffering the damaging effects of toxic stress.

[Read full article.](#)

Home visiting program reduces child abuse, neglect

Robert Gregoire, Opinion

Our Maine Families Home Visiting Program served more than 3,000 first-time and adolescent families in 2010, helping parents reduce...illness and injuries, thus reducing health care treatment costs and improving lives.

[Read full article.](#)

States and the New Federal Home Visiting Initiative: An Assessment from the Starting Line

Voluntary home visiting programs pair families with trained professionals, who provide ongoing information and support services in the families' homes during pregnancy and through their child's first three years. When programs adhere to approaches with scientifically documented effectiveness, set clear standards for child and family outcomes and are monitored to ensure that they meet these goals, they are proven to help states and communities recoup substantial savings in health care and other public expenditures.

[Read full article.](#)

As always, thank you for your commitment to be a voice for our "at risk" children and their families and the connection to economic development in our state!