

Leveling the Playing Field for Students With Special Learning Needs

Since 1985, the Donna Nigh Foundation has been changing the lives of Oklahoma's developmentally disabled citizens. In celebration of its 25th anniversary, the foundation awarded \$27,000 in grants to provide 10 digital whiteboards in classrooms that serve nearly 400 students with special learning needs.

Digital whiteboards offer a multimedia presentation that is verbal, visual, auditory and interactive, all essential in drawing students into the subject matter. The grants will benefit classrooms in Adair, Antlers, Beggs, Duncan, Kingston, Oklahoma City, Sand Springs and Wagoner.

Central Fine Arts Academy is a K-2 school located in a high poverty area of Sand Springs. For special education teacher Aimee Whipple, the challenges her students face are magnified due to the lack of a familial structure that encourages learning. "In addition to their educational disabilities, many of my students also have very stressful home environments," she explains. Ms. Whipple says the digital whiteboard will help support the best possible learning environment for her students by offering a "hands on" approach.

"We may not be able to provide the actual learning experiences, but we can replicate them closely with technology," says Ms. Whipple, who intends to incorporate use of the whiteboard into her daily lesson plans. "I've seen whiteboards used in other special education classes and the uses are limitless."

"Over the past 25 years, we have been fortunate to assist many projects benefitting Oklahomans with disabilities," says Donna Nigh. "These grants will add important resources into the classrooms serving students with special learning needs and we are so pleased to be able to provide the whiteboards."

In 1998, administration of the Donna Nigh Foundation was transferred to the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, ensuring that the Donna Nigh Foundation will continue to provide support for special Oklahomans in perpetuity. If you are interested in learning how you can make a difference, please contact us at 405/235-5603 or visit www.occf.org.



Donna and George Nigh (left and center in top photo) watch as a digital whiteboard is used in a Shawnee classroom (bottom photo).

Helping Our Community

Through a Great Grant.

The Donna Nigh Foundation has been leveling the playing field for Oklahoma's developmentally disabled citizens for 25 years. In 1985, friends of then Oklahoma First Lady Donna Nigh joined together to form the foundation as a birthday gift in honor of her commitment and work on behalf of the state's developmentally disabled residents, a cause she has championed since 1968. Since its creation, the foundation has funded a variety of projects including adaptive playground equipment in public school districts, accessible bathrooms and ramps in the homes of children.

In 1998, Donna and George Nigh transferred the administration of the foundation to the Oklahoma City Community Foundation to ensure it will continue to provide support for these citizens for generations to come. To discuss how you can help your community, please contact us at 405/235-5603.

Donna Nigh with a friend.



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