



Masonic  
Charity Foundation  
of Oklahoma

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma Newsletter

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SPRING 2020

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ISSUE 1

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## IN THE ISSUE

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New Board Elects

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"Continuous effort - not strength - is the key to unlocking our potential."

- Winston Churchill



# 2020 ELECTION OF OFFICERS



It's 2020 and we have newly elected officers!

President: William J. Cloud Blanchard #395

1st VP: Neil A. Stitt Lone Grove #25

2nd VP: C. Kent Callahan Moore #359

Secretary: Robert G. Davis Guildhall #553

Treasurer: Elwood M. Isaacs Norman #38

Asst. Secretary: John L. Logan Guildhall #553

Thank you for your service on the board!

Ordo Ab Chao

## GRANTS AUTHORIZED FOR 2020

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 4-H Foundation of OK                          | Masonic Service Association    |
| Autism Speaks                                 | NewView Oklahoma               |
| Cavett Kids Foundation                        | NextGen Under 30               |
| Children's Center and Rehabilitation Hospital | Payne Education Center         |
| Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma       | Promises Matter                |
| Dale K. Graham Veterans Foundation            | Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma |
| Demolay International Foundation              | Senor Essay Program            |
| Foundation Century Fund                       | Teach of the Year              |
| FFA Foundation of OK                          | USAO HS Scholastic Program     |
| George Washington Masonic National Memorial   | Vizavance                      |
| Hearts For Hearing                            | YMCA Military Welcome Center   |
| Junior Achievement                            | Youth Order Trusts             |



## WELCOME OUR NEW COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Lauren Riepl is an avid historian who graduated with a master's degree in Public History in 2017 and a Bachelors in History/Museum Studies in 2010. Lauren is active in the arts and culture community, serving through membership and volunteering in such organizations as the Oklahoma Archivists Association, deadCenter Film Festival, the Oklahoma Museum Association, and the Oklahoma Arts Council. In her free time she also serves on the Young Professionals Board for Wings OK and is a Big in the Big Brothers Big/Sisters of OK. She was previously the Programs Director for the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network. She has held director and administrative roles pertaining to communications and program development. Lauren has always found joy in nonprofit work and she currently serves on committees for the Oklahoma Women's Coalition, The Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma, and the American Cancer Society.



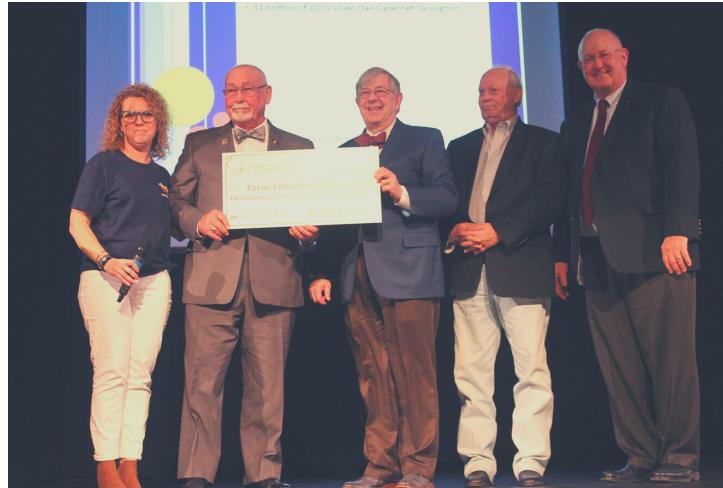
# RECENT PRESENTATIONS

## NEW VIEW

The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma recently awarded NewView Oklahoma with a grant totaling \$256,650. This gift will offset costs for capital needs for NewView's Center for Low Vision and Blindness and will cover expenditures for building improvements, including greater accessibility and security. A generous donor to NewView Oklahoma since 2017, the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma has been an enthusiastic supporter of NewView's efforts to improve the lives of visually impaired Oklahomans. Gifts from the Foundation have played a vital role in NewView's recent renovation of and relocation to a facility on Classen Boulevard, a move that has dramatically expanded NewView's capacity to serve individuals challenged by vision loss. This additional gift will ensure that the new facility is up to date on security and accessibility measures. "We are deeply grateful for the immense generosity of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma," said Lauren Branch, NewView president, and CEO. "This gift allows us to serve our clients and community to the highest standard, and we are excited about the additional opportunities it creates."



Masonic labor is purely a labor of love.  
- Benjamin Franklin



## PAYNE EDUCATION CENTER

Payne Education Center, an Oklahoma City-based nonprofit teacher training and dyslexia advocacy center, was awarded a \$130,000 grant from the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma to offer an in-depth series of online Structured Literacy best practice videos for teachers and parents, as well as training scholarships for Payne Education Center's Structured Literacy-based reading instruction programs for Oklahoma's teachers. This unprecedented funding increase reflects the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma's understanding the need for more online resources and training for teachers and parents as well as more reading instruction training using Structured Literacy-based programs. "The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma's commitment to education, specifically literacy and those who struggle to attain it, has allowed Payne Education Center to extend our reach to give teachers the necessary tools to successfully teach children how to read," said Heather Johnson, Executive Director of Payne Education Center. "Thanks to their sustained generosity over 30 years, Payne will now be able to extend access to online resources and interactive curricula for teachers and their students and parents of those who struggle with dyslexia." John Logan, Executive Director of the Masonic Charity Foundation, commenting on their initiative, stated, "We are excited to help make Structured Literacy videos accessible for teachers and parents across the state of Oklahoma."

# RECENT PRESENTATIONS

## JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

"Every member of the fraternity, as well as those publications, that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the grand object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race."

- George Washington



## VIZAVANCE

Today, over 30 years later, the Masons are still partnering with Vizavance to provide vision screenings for children throughout the state. The Partners in Prevention is the oldest partnership of the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma, and over the years the vision of thousands of Oklahoma children has been saved. Currently, 191 Lodges assist with screenings in their communities. The Oklahoma Masonic Charity Foundation has contributed over 4 million dollars to fund the Partners in Prevention Program since its inception, and over 5 million children have been screened for vision problems. Three organizations are working together with One Goal, One Vision, and One Mission, Advancing Children's Education Through Better Vision! In March, the Masonic Charity Foundation presented Vizavance \$50,000 to advance children's education through better vision.

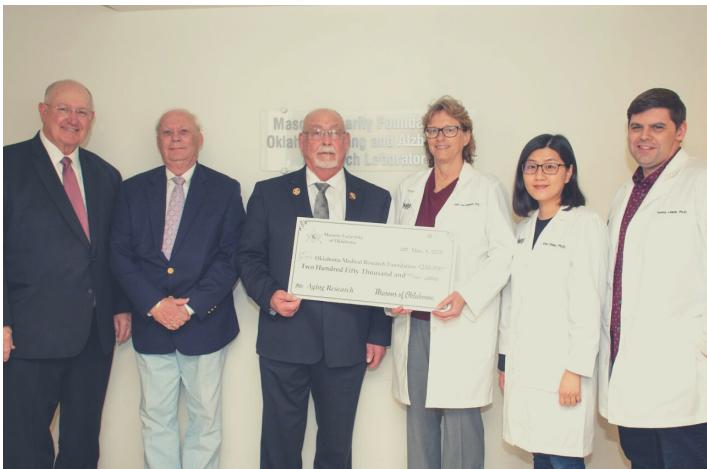
The Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma recently granted \$50,000 to Junior Achievement of Oklahoma. "These dollars will continue support for our efforts teaching the important life lessons of budgeting, financial investments, philanthropy, and personal finances through Junior Achievement capstone programs like JA Finance Park-Mobile that provide the outreach necessary to serve rural Oklahoma students," said Brian Jackson, development manager, Junior Achievement of Oklahoma. Through hands-on classroom activities and site-based experiences, JA Finance Park students build a foundation for making intelligent, lifelong personal-finance decisions. The JA Finance Park-Mobile will now include a new philanthropy kiosk named for the Masonic Charity Foundation. The Park-Mobile is dedicated to educating 7,000 Oklahoma middle and high school students in the basics of financial literacy, budgeting, investing, philanthropy, and managing risk, all while reinforcing the value of education and how it affects one's future. "The Masonic Fraternity is proud to support financial literacy education programs such as those offered by Junior Achievement. The financial knowledge gained in this program will empower students to make good financial decisions as they begin their adult lives," said Bob Peters, grand master of Masons in Oklahoma.



# RECENT PRESENTATIONS

## ETHICS BOWL

High School Ethics Bowl is a new initiative by the Student Ethics and Education Development (SEED) Foundation and sponsored by the Masonic Fraternity in Oklahoma. It is a competitive yet collaborative event in which students discuss real-life ethical issues. In each round of competition, teams take turns analyzing ethical cases and responding to questions and comments from the other team and a panel of judges. An ethics bowl differs from a debate competition in that students are not assigned opposing views; rather, they defend whichever position they think is correct, provide each other with constructive criticism, and win by demonstrating that they have thought rigorously and systematically about the cases and engaged respectfully and supportively with all participants. The fourth Oklahoma Region High School Ethics Bowl was modeled after the National High School Ethics Bowl competition. All public, private institutions and home-school cooperatives are eligible to participate. A total of fifteen high schools competed in the third regional competition, fielding a total of twenty-eight teams. Dove Science Academy won 1st place, receiving for the fourth year in a row, winning \$4,000 towards traveling to the national competition. Second place was won by Oklahoma School of Science & Math, and third was Ringling High School. Congratulations to our winners.



## OMRF

On March 11th the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma awarded \$250,000 to OMRF. The funds are designated for research in OMRF's Aging and Metabolism Research Program, where scientists are investigating a wide range of age-related diseases, such as Alzheimer's, age-related muscle loss, osteoarthritis, diabetes, vision loss and neurodegenerative disorders, among others. "The Masonic Charity Foundation has a long history of supporting the needs of all Oklahomans from all walks of life," said Bob Peters, Grand Master for the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma. "If you live, you also age, and OMRF is looking for ways to add more healthy years to all our lives. We are happy to provide this grant in support of OMRF's mission, which serves our Oklahoma families." In 2017, OMRF dedicated its Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma Aging and Alzheimer's Research Laboratory, which houses Holly Van Remmen, Ph.D., chair of OMRF's Aging and Metabolism Research Program. Van Remmen's research focuses on diseases of aging, with an emphasis on loss of muscle as people grow older. The Masons have supported research at OMRF since 1999, with gifts totaling \$1.2 million. "With a growing aging population, these issues are becoming more and more important," said OMRF VP of Development Penny Voss. "The Masons deserve all of our thanks for their continued support of Oklahoma's aging population and they're an important partner in the hunt for solutions to diseases of aging."



## **HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT MCFOK**

We are inspired by our grantees' steadfast commitment to serving vulnerable communities and appreciate all the ongoing efforts to strengthen families, educate children and provide critical services to Oklahomans. Without supporters and generation donations the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma could not continue to do good work. Please remember MCFOK in your charitable giving and help us continue our mission to improve the lives of Oklahomans through hard work and good deeds.

## **COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Masonic Charity Foundation will respect the order of the Governor but will continue to serve the needy members of the Masonic family. Members are asked to email us at [information@mcfok.org](mailto:information@mcfok.org) to contact the Foundation. We will monitor the mail and will return phone calls when messages are left.

We encourage all of our members to act responsibly, check on their fellow members, and communicate with us when a member needs assistance.

## **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

Scholarship applications are now being accepted online until May 1st for Youth Order members only at [www.mcfok.org](http://www.mcfok.org). If you have any questions please email us at [information@mcfok.org](mailto:information@mcfok.org) or call the office at 405-348-7500.

**ONLY ONLINE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

Oklahoma DeMolay

Oklahoma Rainbow

Oklahoma Job's Daughters

Our annual ★ PHOTO CONTEST ★ is open until July 15, 2020! 12 photos will be chosen for our calendar and the photographer for each pic chosen for the calendar, receives \$25 for each winning photo! Submit your entries to: [information@mcfok.org](mailto:information@mcfok.org)

