

2010 Student Scholarship Recipients

Each scholarship recipient will receive \$500 to use towards their college education. All recipients are majoring in education and are related to a member of TRTA. The 2010 TRTF student scholarship recipients are:

Brianna Bonnette is a senior at Hightower High School in Missouri City. Among her activities, Brianna cites leading musical therapy activities for special needs children and the Texas All State Choir. Brianna wants to be a choral music educator.

Quote: "The most rewarding experience I can imagine would be providing children with the same musical motivation to believe in themselves as I was blessed to receive in my own life."

She is related to Billy Hall of the Smith County RTSPA.



Natalie Berry will be transferring from Tarrant County College to the University of Texas at Arlington in the fall and entering the teaching program. While attending school, Natalie has worked as a pre-school teacher at the Children's Courtyard, and interned at a local elementary school for the Ready, Set, Teach program.

Quote: "I want to teach first grade for an elementary school in the Metroplex. I love Texas and really want to stay here to pursue my dreams."

She is related to James and Angela Berry of Grand Prairie, Texas.

Kyra Sloan's many extracurricular activities include membership in the Texas Math and Science Coaches Association and Business Professionals of America. Kyra has led cheerleading camps and was a "Little Dribblers" coach for three years. After graduating from Guthrie High School, she will attend McMurry University and major in elementary education.

Quote: "With both of my parents being teachers, and all four of my grandparents being retired teachers, naturally I feel comfortable standing in front of a classroom and teaching."

She is related to Dan Sloan of the Knox County RSPA.

Wendy Neal is a single parent, a “Band Mom,” a “Tennis Mom,” and a secondary mathematics teacher. For the 2008-2009 school year, she was awarded Teacher of the Year for her school district. After 12 years of teaching, Wendy has decided to pursue her master’s degree in educational counseling at Amberton University.

Quote: “An educator is a caring, focused, ethical, devoted professional whose main goal is student success.”

She is related to Ronald and Penny Eubanks of Kaufman, Texas.



Karlee Wright attends the University of North Texas majoring in elementary education. As a student with a 3.9 gpa, she is a member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society. She is also a member of the Texas Association for the Improvement of Reading. While attending school, she works as a pre-school teacher and a coach for Stretch-N-Grow.

Quote: “I want to be a teacher because I genuinely care for children and their education. I want to be a positive light in their lives and instill in them a heart for learning.”

She is related to Nancy Ogden of the Northeast Hunt County RTA.



Leslye Richmond is a sophomore at Tarleton State University majoring in kinesiology and special education. Not only is Leslye a tremendous athlete (she was Female Athlete of the Year in Denton in 2008), she is involved in volunteering for Special Olympics and Shoes for Orphan Souls. Leslye also reads to second graders at Calisburg Elementary once a week.

Quote: "Having been diagnosed in the second grade with dyslexia, I was able to overcome its effects through the efforts of a gifted teacher. I knew then I wanted to do the same for others."

She is related to Dallie Johnston of the Smith County RTSPA.



Guy David Nell is a history major attending Texas Tech University. He is involved in intramural sports and campus ministries. Guy has also rebuilt homes in Lubbock as part of a volunteer organization. His goal is to be a positive influence in a profession that needs more male role models.

Quote: "In Texas schools, with our melting pot of cultures, teachers must be aware of the many diverse cultures in the classroom and celebrate these differences."

He is related to Marilyn Byrd of the West Grayson RSP.

Kayci Cox has recently been accepted into Texas A & M University. As senior class President and UIL One Act Play lead actress, Kayci still finds time to serve as a Heart O' Texas Sweetheart/Ambassador for the central Texas area. Kayci has over 200 hours of community service and is active in her local, district, and area FFA.

Quote: "At the age of 14, I was diagnosed with an auditory processing disorder. Once I understood my learning style and acquired strategies to compensate, I began to excel. Teachers saw my need, believed in my potential, and helped me achieve far

greater than I envisioned for myself. I choose to use this experience to do the same for others.”

She is related to Philip and Rosemary Shook of the Hereford RSEA.



Kendle Templeton is a goal-oriented young man who plans to become a middle school science teacher then later pursue a master’s degree in administration. At North Shore Senior High School in Houston, Kendle participates in UIL Solo and Ensemble and Marching Band. Outside of school, he volunteers for Relay for Life and the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club.

Quote: “I would like to participate in planning curriculum that will engage students and motivate their learning. I want Texas to excel in education with technology, college prep courses, vocational, and even trade courses.”

He is related to Vivian Henderson of Houston, Texas.



William Bonner is a doctoral candidate at Texas A & M Corpus Christi. As a husband and father of three, William is focused on family and work. Through his work in the IT field, William has had the opportunity to guest lecture at various universities. It is because of these experiences that he has chosen to pursue a degree that will allow him to become a professor.

Quote: "For the past 14 years, I have had the opportunity to travel the world and support Fortune 500 businesses in leveraging technology to innovate and enhance their operations. This passion has crystallized and through this experience, I have come to the conclusion that I need to work with students to build them an educational foundation."

He is related to Emily Bonner of the Texarkana-Bowie County RTA.

2010 Classroom Assistance Grant Recipients

Each classroom assistance grant recipient will receive \$500 to use towards a unique project or learning platform that enhances students' learning. The grant recipients are:

Justin Harper teaches criminal justice courses at the Jack E. Singley Academy High School in Irving. His project, called "The Crime Scene," allows students to simulate crime scene investigations and courtroom presentations. The TRTF grant will enable Mr. Harper to purchase the Chief Architect software that will make these classroom projects possible.

Quote: "Our school provides links between classroom experience and real world outcomes. Many of our students do not learn the hidden rules of the business world at home and we prepare them to be successful in post secondary education in the careers of their choice."



Board member Carolyn Lance awards a grant to Justin Harper. School principal David Saenz looks on.

Mansoor Kapasi works at the Austin Can! Academy High School in Austin, which serves over 450 highly at-risk students each year. Mansoor’s algebra and geometry classes use three-dimensional origami to assemble figures such as cubes, octahedrons, and double pyramids. This project allows students to explore mathematical concepts hands-on and increases student engagement in the learning process.

Quote: “Over 90% of our students have dropped out of high school at least once. The students inspire our staff because despite their circumstances and against all odds, they come to school every day making an effort to obtain their high school diploma.”



Mansoor Kapasi and project partner Sam Wolloch pose with student projects.

Heather Hattori’s project “Homegrown!” allows students to acquire skills in construction, science, mathematics, language arts, and social studies. At John Guyer High School in Denton, Ms. Hattori has her students build planter frames and gives them the responsibility of developing, maintaining, and harvesting garden produce. Successfully harvested produce is then donated locally or incorporated into culinary classes on campus.

Quote: “Through group oriented instructional strategies, students will build relational skills and interact with the local community in ecologically responsive ways.”

Lisa Lester works for Junction Elementary School, a K-5 campus in the Texas Hill Country. Her project, “Bringing Biomes to Life,” will provide students with opportunities to observe and care for plants and animals. The grant funds provided by TRTF will help Ms. Lester purchase the needed terrariums and aquariums which will represent biomes such as bogs, woodlands, and deserts.

Quote: “88% of the 5th graders at Junction Elementary School struggle with certain topics, especially earth science and physical science.”

Elizabeth Varughese is a beginner and advanced level ESL teacher at R.L. Turner High School in Carrollton. The funds from TRTF will enable her to purchase picture books, allowing her to conduct read-alouds, facilitate cultural connections, and teach grammar and language patterns. The illustrations in picture books enhance students' comprehension of the content.

Quote: "Multicultural picture books provide students with another outlet to share their own immigrant experiences and allow all of us to learn more about the individual cultures of each student in the class."

Dena Davis, who teaches 4th through 6th grade science courses at Comanche Middle School, will use her funds from TRTF to build a butterfly garden. The garden will enable students to research the biology of butterflies, types of plants that grow well in the Comanche area and which ones attract butterflies, and practice plant maintenance. Students will help build the garden from soil and seeds purchased with the grant.

Quote: "I am confident the garden will reinforce science mastery and allow 4th-6th grade classes to work collaboratively."

Josephine Rodriguez works for Mirabeau Lamar Elementary, the first elementary school in the San Antonio Independent School District. 95% of the students at her school are economically disadvantaged, with 32% experiencing limited English proficiency. In order to improve the language skills and reading of her students, Ms. Rodriguez will use the grant funds to purchase "Hands on Phonics." This program allows students to enrich their vocabulary and increase phonemic awareness.

Quote: "It is my goal to nurture life-long readers and learners that will continue throughout their school career prepared with a solid foundation."



Teacher Josephine Rodriguez poses with her first grade students.

Tracy Rich's project will allow the 500 8th grade students at George Junior High School in Rosenberg to acquire CPR certification. In cooperation with the American Red Cross (ARC) and at the request of the students, they will increase the amount of laypeople available to respond to cardiac emergency and increase the rate of survival for victims. The \$500 will purchase a class set of ARC curriculum for CPR certification, mouth guards, and rental of resuscitation dummies.

Quote: "Middle students can struggle making the connection between science and their future. By using CPR to review major components of the TEKS, we can create a desire in students to become lifelong science learners."

Maria Miller teaches a unique course at Weslaco East High School, where students learn to create movie animations, three dimensional characters, and movie posters. Ms. Miller is also hosting a School Animation Movie Premier Extravaganza where her students can present their projects. The funds will be used to purchase computer designing equipment and scanners.

Quote: "Our budget is not large because of funds needed in other educational courses in our school. My class is the only one of its kind in our community. It gives students an opportunity to start a career in Technology, Media, or Communications."

Joanna Marsh will be supplementing her agriculture science classes with hands-on activities thanks to the TRTF grant. In her Cypress Lakes High School in Katy classes, students will learn about micropipetting, taking lab samples, and biotechnology. Specifically, Ms. Marsh will be able to purchase a microscope for better examination of samples.

Quote: "I believe teaching my students these skills will better prepare them for the competitive work force in the agriculture studies and biotechnology industries."