

## PUMPING UP for Jump\$tart Your Money Week

The Oklahoma Jump\$tart Coalition is sponsoring the second annual Jump\$tart Your Money Week on April 24-28, 2006. JYM Week is a statewide, coordinated effort to raise awareness of financial education issues in Oklahoma. Service organizations, businesses, and educational institutions are offering a wide variety of financial literacy events during JYM Week, and special projects include an insert in *The Oklahoman* listing events and sponsors, a kick-off luncheon, Capitol Hill day, and coordinated press releases throughout the week. For more information, visit the JYM Week website at [www.kansascityfed.org/jumpstart](http://www.kansascityfed.org/jumpstart).



To celebrate JYM Week, the Oklahoma State University Service-Learning Volunteer Center, an OKMM AmeriCorps field site, is hosting a nationally-recognized **Poverty Simulation** workshop on Tuesday, April 25. This interactive simulation is designed to help participants step inside poverty - to see it, feel it, and understand it - and broaden the sensitivity and awareness of those who frequently deal with low-income families. The workshop includes an introduction and briefing, the actual simulation exercise, and a dialogue session about effecting change in our communities. There's no cost to attend, but seating is limited. To register, contact Joyce Montgomery, Coordinator of the OSU Service-Learning Volunteer Center, at 405-744-5145 or [jmont@okstate.edu](mailto:jmont@okstate.edu).

## FORE! a Good Cause

Not that you need an excuse to play, but why not golf to support financial education? On April 21, the Oklahoma Council on Economic Education (OCEE) is hosting a golf tournament at Rose Creek Golf Club in Edmond. The four-person scramble begins at 1:00 p.m., with dinner, live entertainment, and a silent auction to follow at 5:00 p.m. The entrance fee is \$125 per player, and non-golfers can enjoy the evening for only \$25! Corporate sponsorships are also available.

Proceeds from the golf tournament benefit the OCEE's educational programs, which provide workshops and materials for K-12 teachers and students to support financial learning in the classroom. If you'd like to participate in or sponsor this worthy event, contact Lacy Meyers at 405-974-5343 or [lmeyers4@ucok.edu](mailto:lmeyers4@ucok.edu).

On February 15, nearly 2,500 students from five counties gathered in the Payne County Expo Center for **Career Paths**, an innovative, interactive educational event supported by the OSU Service-Learning Volunteer Center, Meridian Technology Center, OKMM, PITSCO, the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, and Stillwater Medical Center.



At **Career Paths**, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders glimpsed their economic future while participating in personal finance sessions and exploring career opportunities. OKMM AmeriCorps members from OSU, Tulsa Community College, and the University of Central Oklahoma taught the educational sessions, and more than 70 local businesses were represented in the career fair!

# A\$\$ETS

Tips of the Trade

## College Prep 101

It's never too early for families to start thinking about a college education. Don't miss the boat by failing to plan; preparing financially and academically is essential. Need a few tips to ensure student success?

- **Start saving** money as early as possible. One option in our state is the Oklahoma College Savings Plan (described at right).
- **Consider career options.** To select the right school and course of study, students must research occupations that suit their skills, interests, and preferences.
- Encourage your high school student to **take the right classes.** Information about college admission standards, the courses to take, and the grades to make is available in the *Student Center* section of the State Regents' website.
- **Investigate scholarships, grants, and work-study opportunities.** Talk to guidance counselors, visit with campus officials, and explore the *Grants and Scholarships* section of the State Regents' website ([www.okhighered.org](http://www.okhighered.org)). Pay close attention to specific application timelines and eligibility provisions. For example, to earn free college tuition through the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program, students must apply in 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, or 10<sup>th</sup> grade and successfully complete a prescribed academic curriculum, among other requirements.
- Get the scoop on **federal financial aid.** Begin by visiting [www.ogsip.org](http://www.ogsip.org), the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program's website, to find out about loan options and the financial aid process. To qualify for any type of federal aid, including grants and loans, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Learn more about the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## HOUSEHOLD BUDGET

Mildred and Fred were tightening up their household budget, so Mildred was proud to report that she'd saved \$5 by hand-washing her dress instead of sending it to the drycleaners. Without missing a beat, Fred replied, "good work, Mildred. Wash it again!"

# Value-Added

*Resources for Your Financial Future*

## Oklahoma College Savings Plan [www.ok4saving.org](http://www.ok4saving.org)

Saving enough money to pay for higher education can seem overwhelming. To make this goal attainable and affordable, the Oklahoma College Savings Plan (OCSP) offers a convenient, flexible savings option. The OCSP is Oklahoma's 529 plan – a state-sponsored education savings program specifically designed to help families save for college.

Parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends at any income level can open an OCSP account and contribute on behalf of a beneficiary child. Funds can be applied toward tuition and other related expenses at any eligible educational institution in the nation or abroad. Contributions grow tax-free, are Oklahoma tax deductible up to a certain level, and may be payroll deducted by employers. There's no annual limit to the amount you can contribute (a lifetime limit per beneficiary applies), and if a beneficiary decides not to attend a post-secondary institution, contributed funds can be transferred to another eligible beneficiary.

The OCSP website features a comprehensive program overview, detailed investment options, a 'Frequently Asked Questions' section, and online program enrollment. Check out the OCSP today!

# The OKMM AmeriCorps Connection

## for Site Supervisors:

### Making the Case

It's no secret that we're busy; most of us juggle multiple priorities and face consistent demands on our time. Member recruiting can be challenging in a time sensitive climate, but the simple truth is this – people make time for things that are important to them.

How can Site Supervisors make the case for OKMM? The key is to identify and focus on the aspect of community service that motivates the individual candidate. Fortunately, there are many benefits to serving as an OKMM-EAP member, including:

- an **Education Award** to pay current college expenses and repay student loans. OKMM-EAP members are also eligible for deferred payments and payment of interest accrued during the service term for qualified student loans.
- the **chance to serve** with a nationally-recognized team of volunteers. AmeriCorps members across the nation make a difference every day. OKMM-EAP members strengthen communities by helping fellow Oklahomans improve their quality of life with sound financial planning.
- **personal and professional development** opportunities. AmeriCorps members have a range of exciting experiences to highlight in a resume and career networking options through the alumni organization. OKMM-EAP members also learn personal finance skills to build a brighter financial future.

## for Members:

### National & Global Youth Service Day and National Volunteer Week



On April 21, 2006, millions of youth will participate in *National & Global Youth Service Day*, the largest service event in the world. NGYSD encourages a lifelong path of service and civic engagement, and educates the public, media, and elected officials about the role of youth as community leaders. Volunteers will tutor young children, provide disaster relief services, and teach communities about nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention, and various other social issues. To honor NGYSD, plan an activity today!

April 23-29 is *National Volunteer Week*. Sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation, the week is about recognizing and honoring one of our nation's most valuable assets – its volunteers – and acknowledging the contribution volunteers make in our communities. This year's theme is "Inspire by Example," reflecting the power of volunteers to inspire not only the people they serve, but to inspire others to serve, too!



These areas of focus are closely aligned with the AmeriCorps ethic and the OKMM mission. Every moment spent in service to others is worth celebrating. **OKMM-EAP members, we salute you!**

### Future Dates

- April 21** National & Global Youth Service Day
- April 23-29** National Volunteer Week  
Jump\$tart Your Money Week
- April 25** Poverty Simulation at OSU
- May 11** Site Supervisor Meeting (*date tentative*)

### Way to Go!

**Shelley Wagner**, OKMM-EAP member at UCO, is serving as Executive Chair for *The Big Event* on her campus! **Denesa Colon** at NEOAMC is working with campus staff to add OKMM as an official student club!

Welcome to our newest field sites,  
**OSU Extension of Seminole County and Langston University - Tulsa!**