



OG&E and Foundation Invest \$185,000 in Education and Match Community Giving \$100,000 will fund teachers' projects for the 2021-2022 school year

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Fairview Elementary students playing bucket drums

Students at Fairview Elementary School in Fort Sill Public Schools in Arkansas play bucket drums in music teacher Joseph Reed's music class. OG&E made a donation through DonorsChoose to provide buckets for the music classroom for students to practice rhythm together.

FORT SMITH, AR (Nov. 24, 2021) – In Joseph Reed's music class at Fairview Elementary in Fort Smith, the kids are most excited on "bucket drumming" days, where they use plastic buckets as drums. Over the years, the original buckets became cracked and warped. Reed wanted to be able to provide his students with a high-quality learning experience. With a little research, he found more durable buckets that even matched school colors. A seasoned DonorsChoose teacher user, Reed posted the new project on the classroom crowdfunding platform: a set of durable, bright blue plastic buckets. OG&E donated funds toward the project, helping Reed reach his funding goal faster.

"I wanted these students to know that I value them and providing higher-quality tools and instruments is one way I can do that," said Reed. "The bucket drums are a cheap, but effective, way to teach all my students at the same time how to drum, keep a beat and work together to stay in rhythm. I can't even tell you how thankful I am," said Reed. "The day that my project was funded by OG&E, I was literally jumping up and down with excitement. It just touched my heart, and I can't thank them enough."

OG&E and the OGE Energy Corp. Foundation, Inc. have long supported education within the electric utility company's service area. This 2021-2022 school year, OG&E and the Foundation have renewed their commitment to education through \$185,000 in donations. Of the donations, \$100,000 will fund teacher projects through [DonorsChoose](#), serving educators in low-income areas and supporting families in the communities where OG&E operates. DonorsChoose is a crowdfunding platform supporting public school teachers nationwide. The platform hosts thousands of teacher projects, from basic school supplies to tablets in the classroom, and companies like OG&E can provide teacher grants and matching donations to boost a project's funding from private citizens.

"Supporting education is an important mission at OG&E and donating to teachers today energizes young minds with innovative classroom projects in Oklahoma and Arkansas for years to come," said OG&E Senior Manager of Brand & Marketing Kirby Nickolas. "We love hearing from teachers how the donations have positively impacted their students."

Since 2019, OG&E and the Foundation have collectively donated \$170,000 through DonorsChoose, helping to fund 536 projects which supported 413 teachers in 167 schools, creating 64,000 student experiences. OG&E invites Oklahomans and Arkansans to support teachers and help them complete funding for their classroom requests and meet the matching donations this school year.

"Our school and administration do a great job of providing us with what we need, but DonorsChoose and donations allow teachers to purchase things we may want in the classroom to bring 'out-of-the-box' learning opportunities to our students," said Pamela Seigel, a library media specialist at Monroe Elementary School in Enid.

Seigel is a past recipient of an OG&E Teacher Grant through DonorsChoose for a project to provide books about gardening to accompany the school's new children's garden. "For some of my students, this is the first time they ever touched soil or planted a plant. It brings me joy to provide our students with hands-on learning and new experiences through grants like these."

OG&E Teacher Donations and Matching Funds

OG&E and the Foundation will match donations for qualifying projects requesting books, educational kits, games and lab equipment that meet the STREM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering and Math) criteria. The criteria include classroom projects that promote energy efficiency or EPA-related.

The funds are available to projects in public schools located in the OG&E service area where at least 75% of the students are from low-income households. STREM projects must have a total cost of \$600 or less.

"I wish donors could see the way that my students' eyes light up when we are gifted new books, school supplies and even playground equipment we receive through programs like DonorsChoose," said Shari Mosley, a third-grade teacher at Kennedy Elementary School in Norman. "It is an opportunity to change the lives of children, and it is such an easy tool for teachers to use to bless their students in ways that we cannot do alone. I am forever grateful for those who have donated to my classroom and school because every dollar counts and can positively impact students like mine."

Anyone can donate toward a teacher project, and donations are now being accepted on the DonorsChoose platform. To donate to a teacher or to find teacher projects OG&E is matching, visit donorschoose.org.

"In this season of giving, we hope others will join us to fund a teacher's project," said Nickolas. "You can search DonorsChoose by school or by a specific teacher's name, or you can browse for a project that is special to you. You can also select a company name, like OG&E, and search for projects that are being matched with corporate funds."

"Someone may think 'oh, ten dollars isn't a lot of money' but then someone else chips in ten dollars more and sometimes they chip in more than that – it goes quickly," said Seigel. "Our school benefits so much from DonorsChoose and from the community. We wouldn't have what we have if it wasn't for people being so generous to us."

In addition to the DonorsChoose matching funds, OG&E and the Foundation have designated \$50,000 for teacher scholarships to attend the National Energy Education Development's annual conference and \$35,000 to sponsor Pop-Up Teacher Stores in partnership with Feed the Children this school year. The stores kicked off in late July with shops in Enid, Muskogee, Shawnee and Ardmore. Along with the monetary donations, OG&E also provides employee volunteers to help run these events.

About OG&E

Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, a subsidiary of OGE Energy Corp. (NYSE: OGE), is Oklahoma's largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided customers in Oklahoma and western Arkansas the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes with the nation's lowest electric rates, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence. Our employees are committed to generating and delivering electricity, protecting the environment, and providing excellent service to nearly 871,000 customers. OG&E has 7,081 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by low-sulfur coal, natural gas, wind, and solar. OG&E employees live, work, and volunteer in the communities we serve. For more information about OG&E, visit us at [OGE.com](https://oge.com) or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/oge), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/oge) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/oge).

About OGE Foundation

The OGE Energy Corp. Foundation Inc. provides grants to 501(c)(3) charities to support programs, organizations and institutions that enhance quality of life and economic well-being in the communities that we serve.

The Foundation's giving programs support nonprofit organizations throughout our service area. In 2020, the financial investments from the Foundation topped \$2.2 million. In addition to our focus on supporting early math and science education, we also support human services, the arts and community development organizations. The Foundation also matches employee contributions to institutions of higher education.

About DonorsChoose

DonorsChoose is the leading way to give to public schools. Since 2000, 5,019,363 people and partners have contributed \$1,160,951,965 to support 2,058,560 teacher requests for classroom resources and experiences. As the most trusted crowdfunding platform for teachers, donors, and district administrators alike, DonorsChoose vets each request, ships the funded resources directly to the classroom, and provides thank yous and reporting to donors and school leaders. Charity Navigator and GuideStar have awarded DonorsChoose, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, their highest ratings for transparency and accountability.

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