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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Potts Family Foundation announces new additions to
Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities expert panel**

***OKCEO group aims to give Oklahoma's children chance to develop their potential, advances
early childhood initiatives throughout the state***

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. – Officials with the [Potts Family Foundation](#) announced today the addition of three members to its statewide panel of early childhood experts focused on enhancing opportunities for the youngest Oklahomans. Joining the [Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities \(OKCEO\)](#) campaign are Randy Decker of Edmond, Dr. Deena Fisher of Woodward and John Harper of Tulsa.

Margie Marney, OKCEO executive director, said the three new members join 35 other business and community leaders who work year-round to ensure at-risk children, parents and caregivers are aware of and have adequate access to resources.

“With each passing day, we see more national and international research supporting our core belief – the first few years of life truly are the most critical in shaping the cognitive as well as social/emotional development of children,” said Marney. “This dedicated, powerful panel of experts helps us reach all corners of the state as they present to civic clubs and encourage local resource providers to enhance early childhood services in their local communities as well.

The OKCEO initiative began in 2010 as a collaborative effort between the Oklahoma Business Roundtable, Smart Start Oklahoma and the Potts Family Foundation. OKCEO members focus on showing the impact early-childhood services, or the lack thereof, have on every aspect of society. Members focus on highlighting four main areas, including family-friendly business practices, health and wellness, education and economic impact.

Marney said OKCEOs are available for speaking engagements at civic clubs and organizations. Persons interested in having an OKCEO present can call Margie Marney at (405) 319-8262. For more information about OKCEO visit www.PottsFamilyFoundation.org or www.OKCEOs.org.

Bios for new OKCEO members:

Dr. Deena Fisher

Fisher is the Dean of Northwestern Oklahoma State University-Woodward campus and also is a professor of history. Originally from Elk City, Okla., Dr. Fisher believes in servant leadership and active community involvement and serves on the boards of several local and statewide organizations. She was recognized in 2011 Journal Record's *50 Women Making a Difference* program and received the 2010 Woodward Citizen of the year recognition.

John Harper

John Harper serves as the Vice President of External Affairs with Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO). John is a graduate of Evangel University and earned an MBA from Oral Roberts University. He was just name 2012 recipient of Evangel University's Regius Award. A native of Denver, John is a graduate of Leadership Oklahoma Class XXV and serves on the Executive Board of the Oklahoma Academy, as well as several other local boards.

Randy Decker

Randy Decker is the Director of Community Relations for SandRidge Energy. A native of Prague, Okla., in his prior career he spent 19 years in his prior career as an educator with Edmond Public Schools working as a teacher, coach and administrator. He also taught Personnel Administration at UCO as an adjunct professor. Randy has served on the YMCA of Edmond Board and the Edmond Chamber of Commerce Board and currently serves on the Oklahoma City Memorial Education Committee.

Participating OKCEOs:**Ada**

[Lisa John](#), Administrator, the Chickasaw Nation Division of Education Services

Alva

[Dr. Deena Fisher](#), Dean, Northwestern Oklahoma State University-Woodward Campus

Ardmore

[Wes Stuckey](#), President and CEO, Ardmore Development Authority

Chickasha

[Marilyn Feaver](#), Executive Director, Southwest Oklahoma Impact Coalition

Duncan

[Stacie H. Elfrink](#), M.D., OB/GYN, Duncan Medical Associates

Edmond

[Ramona Paul](#), Ph.D., former Assistant State Superintendent of Professional Services, Oklahoma State Dept. of Education

Enid

[David Burrows](#), Owner, David Burrows Allstate Insurance

[Martie Oyler](#), Regional Manager, Oklahoma Natural Gas

Idabel

Brit Messer, CEO, McCurtain Memorial Hospital

Lawton

Fred Fitch, Mayor, City of Lawton

Robert Harbison, Sr. Vice President, Williams Companies (Ret.)

Midwest City

Kathy Cronemiller, President, Oklahoma Child Care Association

Norman

[Kim Henry](#), Executive Director, Sarkeys Foundation

Oklahoma City

[Lt. General Richard A. Burpee](#), USAF (Ret.)

Randy Decker, Vice President of Communications and Community Relations, Sandridge Energy

Peter B. Delaney, Chairman, President and CEO, OGE Energy Corp.

Dr. Marny Dunlap, Medical Director, OU Latino Clinic

[Dr. Tom Friedemann](#), Superintendent/CEO, Francis Tuttle Technology Center

Craig Knutson, Chief of Staff, Oklahoma City University

[Dave Lopez](#), Secretary of Commerce, Oklahoma Department of Commerce

John McCarroll, Executive Director, OETA

David McLaughlin, Co-Founder, Advance Food Co.

Mary Mélon, President and Publisher, *The Journal Record*

Ray Potts, Founder and Vice President, Potts Exploration

Matt Robison, Vice President, Government Affairs, The State Chamber of Oklahoma

[Robert J. Ross](#), President and CEO, Inasmuch Foundation

[Natalie Shirley](#), President, OSU-OKC

[Blake Wade](#), President, Oklahoma Business Roundtable

Ponca City

Tom Sipe, Federal Programs Coordinator, Ponca City Public Schools

Stillwater

Ed Long, former Oklahoma state Senator

Tulsa

[Robert W. Block](#), MD, FAAP, President, American Academy of Pediatrics

[Jim East](#), Consultant, Saxum PR

John Harper, Vice President of External Affairs, Public Service Company of Oklahoma

[Kenneth J. Levit](#), Executive Director, George Kaiser Family Foundation

Christopher Mills, Agency Specialist, Tulsa Area United Way

Joe Moran, Managing Director, Lighthouse Properties

Roy Peters, Board of Commissioners, Tulsa Development Authority

[Stuart Solomon](#), President and COO, Public Service Company of Oklahoma

About Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities

Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities is a statewide initiative to educate business, community and legislative leaders about the strong link between early learning and economic growth. The OKCEO initiative mobilizes business and community leaders as advocates for adequate resources supporting parents and caregivers in the critical first few years of life.