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Oklahoma Heritage Association seeks high school students to serve on Teen Board

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Heritage Association is seeking Oklahoma high school students to serve on its 2009–2010 Teen Board. Though still a new program for the Association, having started in 2007, the Teen Board has already made a big impact on the 82-year-old non-profit organization.

“The Teen Board members bring a tremendous sense of energy and enthusiasm to the Association & Museum,” said Shannon L. Nance, president of the Oklahoma Heritage Association and Gaylord-Pickens Museum. “It’s inspiring to our board and staff to watch them get involved with our mission in such a hands-on way, but probably the best thing we see is them developing a passion for the heritage of our state and a desire use their talents to make a difference in Oklahoma.”

The board offers ninth through 12th grade students the opportunity to promote Oklahoma pride in the community and state, while at the same time learn skills like event planning, fund-raising and collaborative group work. Students also have the opportunity to meet and have discussions with notable Oklahomans at several of their meetings throughout their term.

The Teen Board is responsible for planning and implementing a Battle of the Bands fund-raiser to benefit the Association and Museum, which also highlights the talents and skills of young people in Oklahoma. In its two years of operation, the board has raised upwards of \$50,000, \$30,000 of which has been donated back to the Museum and Association’s education programs.

“The Teen Board’s financial support is what launched our free field trip program, and their support inspired the Dell Foundation to get involved as well,” said Nance. “Now we are able to see more than 4,000 school children for free every year, and that all started with a group of teenagers who came together to give back to their community.”

The Teen Board has also sponsored scholarships for more than 30 at-risk children to attend the Museum’s summer camp and will provide a new \$1,000 cash scholarship to a high school student through the Oklahoma Heritage Scholarship Competition in 2010.

“It makes me really proud to know that kids from all over the state can come to this Museum to learn about all these great Oklahomans because of something I helped with,” said Jack Malone, a two-year Teen Board member and chair for the 2008–2009 board. “And we were all excited to start this new scholarship for another high schooler just like us who could use a little extra money to go to college.”

Teen Board members are selected after completing an application and interview process. Each application must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from an adult (other than a parent or relative) who knows the applicant well. Board terms run from September to April. **The deadline to apply for the 2009-2010 Teen Board is Aug. 25.** Applications are available for download at www.oklahomaheritage.com.

The Oklahoma Heritage Association preserves Oklahoma's unique history and promotes pride in our great state. Through each of its programs and the Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum, named the 2009 outstanding attraction in Frontier Country, the non-profit tells Oklahoma's story through its people.

For more information about the Teen Board, Oklahoma Heritage Association or Gaylord-Pickens Museum, visit www.oklahomaheritage.com or call 405.235.4458.

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