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EDMOND — Trusting that teachers know best how to engage and energize their students, Fund for Teachers recently awarded, through the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and the Tulsa Community Foundation, 66 Oklahoma PreK-12th-grade teachers with fellowships for self-designed professional development totaling about \$250,000.

Edmond Fellow Carrie Clark from Central Middle School will use LabQuest technology to collect soil and water samples in Yellowstone National Park to demonstrate how to maximize the use of technology in science exploration and methodology.

"We recognize that the teacher is the decisive factor in students' learning," said Karen Kovach Webb, executive director of Fund for Teachers. "We are deeply committed to the growth of teachers through strategic investments in their own areas of personal and professional interest."

Clark said she is looking forward to using new technology that has been provided for the classrooms including LabQuest equipment and probes costing from \$80 to \$180 purchased through a bond issue.

"I will be able to use some LabQuest handsets that I have for the classroom," Clark said. "Our school has a whole bunch of handsets with probes for motion detectors, light sensors and other things."

Clark said she hopes to bring back knowledge of different ways to use the handsets so the classroom teachers will be able to use them more often.

"I am going to take of video of me using one at Yellowstone in some of the research I will be conducting," Clark said.

She plans to bring the video back and use it in her own classroom to train students on how to use the equipment. She also plans on showing the other teachers practical applications they can apply in their own classrooms.

"We as grownups have a tendency to avoid technology, especially when we have to manage and trouble shoot for yourself much less for 30 students," Clark said.

"Lots of problem-solving applications come with the program, and it is a terrific resource using electronic technology, what real scientists are using today. More and more scientists are using equipment like LabQuest."

Each fellowship is as unique as the teacher who designed it; and regardless of the destination or discipline, these newly named Fellows will return to 37 Oklahoma schools inspired by the pursuit of ideas, terrains and cultures in 17 countries this

summer.

"I felt that Yellowstone National Park is the complete package," Clark said. "It contains something from every field that I teach: earth science, life science, chemistry and motion and forces."

"In terms of being a perfect backdrop, I couldn't think of a better location."

The Fund for Teachers fellowship application becomes available online each October, with an application deadline in January. Awardees are notified in April and fellowships take place during the summer.

Clark and her Yellowstone experience may be followed by going to www.outsidewithus.com.

