

READ, LEAD, Succeed



OPERATION ROUND UP TEACHER MINI-GRANT PROVIDES SHALLOWATER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL WITH NEW READING PROGRAMS

The Operation Round Up Board of Directors initiated a program offering small, \$500 grants to teachers. Grants were available to K-12 teachers in math or language arts for the 2016-2017 school year. The funds are made available by South Plains Electric members who ask to have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar. The extra change, averaging only \$6 per year, funds projects like the teacher mini-grants, scholarships and much more.

Operation Round Up was established in 1993 to help communities and individuals needing a hand up, not a hand out. The program's tagline, "neighbors helping neighbors," is at the heart of why South Plains Electric Cooperative exists.

During the past 24 years, Operation Round Up has helped hundreds of individuals and organizations. Many donations go unpublicized out of respect for the individual recipients. Operation Round Up, under the guidance of a 10-member board, sometimes works quietly to improve members' lives.

Nine teacher mini-grants were awarded for the 2016-2017 school year. The

recipients were: Amy Drake, Lubbock ISD; Amanda Dunn, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; Kara Gibson, Shallowater ISD; Ollie Hart, Abernathy ISD; Morgan Hisey, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; Jennifer Rodriguez, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; Lisa Sanders, Cotton-Center ISD; and Jana Simmons, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; and Carol Trent, Shallowater ISD.

If all of our members were participating in Operation Round Up, we would have over \$200,000 a year to give back to our local communities. You can sign up for Operation Round Up online or call 806.775.7766. You may also sign up by checking the Operation Round Up box on your monthly bill.



A SINCERE THANK YOU

Trent's students send a special 'thank you' to SPEC.
They love their new reading materials!

TRENT'S STORY

Carol Trent is a second grade English-language arts and reading teacher at Shallowater ISD and is a 2016-2017 Operation Round Up mini-grant recipient. With the grant money she received, Trent invested in a multitude of classroom programs and equipment to help her students become more attentive learners and better readers. Here's her story.

"Research shows us that students learn best when they have hands-on activities to keep them engaged in learning," Trent said. "The problem today is our educational expectations have become so rigorous that students with disabilities or language differences have a hard time focusing on and understanding what's being asked of them."

Carol Trent has been a teacher for almost to 40 years. Throughout her years, she has experienced how much more difficult it is to teach her students currently than when she first began teaching.

"We know a child can sit and listen for as many minutes as their age, which tells us a second grader can sit and listen for seven to eight minutes," Trent said. "Teachers must move instruction to learning stations utilizing games and technology to keep student engagement high enough for learning to occur."

Trent believes higher-level comprehension skills are needed for a student to be successful in today's world.

IMPACT OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

Trent said the programs and equipment she purchased increased class participation and excitement. The Word Work stations used hands-on games to teach comprehension skills. These specific skills, such as main idea and fact and opinion, were emphasized with the interactive games.

The headphones Trent bought with the mini-grant money were used to help students focus on their computer programs while other students were working on different assignments in the classroom.

"The headphones are amazing!" Trent said. "I can work with students in small groups on their reading skills without disrupting students working at the computers."

Other materials Trent purchased, such as posters and incentive charts, book bags and privacy folders, have also had a tremendous impact on her students. The posters and incentive charts aid the visual learners, allowing them to better understand the concepts being taught.

The book bags have personalized her classroom. Each student can choose a book on their individual reading level during class time. Privacy folders have helped students with attention challenges focus on their independent work without being distracted.

"The privacy folders really help the students focus when they are required to independently work," Trent said. "Assessments also go much smoother because I can tell where individual student need help instead of what they have copied off their neighbor's paper."

"MY STUDENTS LOVED THE GAMES. THEY WOULD SHOUT 'YAY!' WHEN IT WAS THEIR TABLE'S TURN TO HEAD TO THE GAME STATION."

REMARKABLE RESULTS

Initially, Trent wanted her project to help students with learning disabilities and those with English as their second language. However, when her project began, Trent noticed the positive impact it had on all of her students.

"Students in the two reading classrooms had improved scores in reading," Trent said. "Not only the students with disabilities and language challenges were able to benefit from SPEC's generosity, all students benefitted from the new learning tools. Thank you very much for caring and providing for the needs of Shallowater Intermediate School students."

