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Olympia teacher Laura Chase wins DAR classroom grant



Teacher Laura Chase helps students learn about American history and colonial

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PHOTO BY LEW MAUDSLEY

By Shirley Stirling

Laura Chase, a teacher of second through fifth grade at the Sunrise Beach School in Olympia, recently won the annual Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Helen Pouch Memorial Fund Classroom Grant for this coming school year.

Two recipients from each state plus the District of Columbia were announced on July 3, 2022 at the 131st annual DAR Continental Congress, in Washington, DC. Sponsored locally by the Sacajawea DAR Chapter of Olympia, this one-time \$500 grant assists teachers in both public and private schools with



special classroom activities within the goals of DAR: Education, Historic Preservation, and Patriotism.

Highlight on Laura

Described by Principal Roxanne Cox as, “a truly amazing teacher, wife, and mother,” Laura has been married to Bill Chase for 35 years. She received her WA State Teaching Certification 32 years ago and began a teaching career at Seattle Christian School, with 4th graders. "Laura used her excellent skills to successfully homeschool their seven children for 29 years," according to Cox.

Recently, Chase worked at Northwest Christian High School in Lacey and then, in 2021-2022, joined the staff at Olympia’s Sunrise Beach School and Sunrise High School. When asked for comment, Principal Roxanne Cox stated, “The students, staff, and administration feel so very thankful to have such a knowledgeable, intelligent, and loving teacher on staff.”

Historical Trek This Fall

This fall, Mrs. Chase will teach American History beginning just after the Revolutionary War, covering the Louisiana Purchase, Lewis & Clark Expedition, and Oregon Trail. With the grant, she will embark on a historical trek with her 3rd to 5th grade students, visiting Cape Disappointment in Washington State and then on to Fort Clatsop in Oregon, as they explore the Lewis and Clark Trail. Each site she has chosen offers special experiences geared for children.

Colonial Life

Mrs. Chase loves early American History and the colonial era. Earlier this year, she worked with the Sacajawea DAR Chapter and the John Rogers Clark Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), on interactive colonial skills and topics. This locally created program, *Colonial Life*, offers students with a hands-on glimpse into the past, with the following DAR/SAR coaches: Bev York, Art Dolan, Franida and Lew Maudsley, Judi Hine, this writer and others. With these adult volunteers, her students explored spinning, weaving, butter churning, colonial clothing, writing with a quill pen, colonial toys, and more.

About Daughters of the American Revolution

The Sacajawea Chapter of DAR has operated in the greater Olympia area since 1905, as a service, lineage, and patriotic organization. Sacajawea Chapter Regent Mary Blake may be contacted at marya.blake@outlook.com.

About Sunrise Beach School

The Sunrise Beach School/Sunrise Beach High School is a Pre-K – Grade 12 private Christian school located at 1601 North Street SE in Olympia. Contact Principal Roxanne Cox at rcox@sunrisebeachschool.org.



A young student shown with her weaving project as part of the hands on lesson.



One of Laura Chase's classes on American history. PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNRISE BEACH SCHOOL



Hands-on experiences like weaving are explored in Laura Chase's class. Bev York pictured dressed in American Colonial attire weaving on a manual wooden loom with a student.

PHOTO BY LEW MAUDSLEY



Dressed in American Colonial attire, volunteer Bev York demonstrates fiber art skills and other skills from colonial times.

PHOTO BY LEW MAUDSLEY



Students dress up in colonial costumes as part of learning early American History. PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNRISE BEACH SCHOOL