

Local woman honored as 2007 Distinguished Community Leader  
By Special to the E-E

OKLAHOMA CITY — The 2nd Annual Fit Kids Coalition Awards Luncheon was held on Dec. 6, 2007 during the Oklahoma Turning Point Council and Oklahoma Fit Kids Coalition Conference. Fit Kids honored those who were making positive and significant contributions to improving the health of Oklahoma children and youth. Those honored were represented in the following categories: Healthy and Fit School, School Staff (such as teachers, principals, school nurse, etc.), Corporation, Public Official, and Youth/Community Leader.

Among the award winners were Gale Mills, Washington County OSU Extension Family and Consumer Science Educator receiving the Community Leader award.

“To be nominated and receive the 2007 Distinguished Community Leader Award from the Oklahoma Fit Kids Coalition is truly an honor. Being recognized for the work that I do makes me want to work harder,” said Mills. Teaching nutrition to others is a real passion of mine whether teaching youth or adults. I have found that having been a dietitian for more than 20 years, it is a lot easier to teach young people about making healthy food choices so they don’t have to deal with some of the health problems their parents are facing now.”

Ameyka Pittman, Fit Kids Project Coordinator, explains the mission of the Oklahoma Fit Kids Coalition is to improve the health and well being of Oklahoma youth and families by reducing childhood obesity.

“Through a group of dedicated physicians, pediatricians, health, and child advocates, the coalition has transformed the legislative perspective for school health in Oklahoma,” she said. The coalition is dedicated to reversing the trend in Oklahoma toward childhood overweight and obesity; and is committed to achieving its mission through education, collaboration, and advocacy.

“Turning Point is anchored in two convictions: communities have strength and everyone has a stake in public health,” Pittman said. Turning Point is a national initiative of the W.K. Kellogg and Robert Wood Johnson Foundations to transform and strengthen public health infrastructures, founded on the idea that diverse groups working together can better identify and influence the determinants of health. Turning Point starts at the local level, building broad community support and participation in public health priority setting and action. Stan Hupfeld, President and CEO of Baptist Integris and Board President of the Oklahoma Fit Kids Coalition presented the awards saying, “It is a pleasure to stand before you to recognize the achievements and contributions of teachers, youth leaders, public officials, and schools that are making a difference in the health, fitness, and nutrition of Oklahoma children and youth.”