



Media Contact:

Hilary Reiter

Redhead Marketing & PR

435.901.2071 | Hilary@redheadmarketingpr.com

www.carltonlanding.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CARLTON LANDING ACADEMY TO BECOME OKLAHOMA'S FIRST RURAL CHARTER SCHOOL

Innovative Curriculum Available to All Students in the State's Newest Town

CARLTON LANDING, OK – This summer, Carlton Landing Academy will become the first public charter school outside of Oklahoma and Tulsa counties. Offering public, tuition-free education to any student in the state, the new school is scheduled to begin its academic year on August 8, 2016.

“As a public charter school, the Academy will offer a fresh, innovative educational model that incorporates best practices from other charter schools across the country,” says Carlton Landing Town Co-Founder Jen Humphreys. Humphreys, who earned a Master of Education Administration from Baylor University, serves as chairperson of the Carlton Landing Academy School Board, which is composed of local residents.

That model is built on a solid foundation of reading, writing and math proficiency. But it also includes nature-centric and project-based learning whereby Academy students reconnect with nature through an “Edible Schoolyard” curriculum and regular time in the Carlton Landing Nature Center, located just across the street.

As a public charter school, Carlton Landing Academy will receive state funding typical to other traditional public schools. It can also apply for additional local, state and federal monies, including grants and special education assistance. The Academy will be required to maintain state accreditation and meet or exceed state testing standards. However, as a public charter school it will be exempt from many state regulations, allowing it to explore innovative learning model. The school board, comprised of local residents, will maintain local control of school policy to best serve students.

“Parents are hungry for educational options, and we believe the Academy is poised to become a model for excellence,” says Humphreys.

Academy students also will benefit from “expeditionary learning,” based on the ideas of Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound, and education experts from Harvard. Stressing the primacy of self-discovery, expeditionary learning helps students overcome their personal fears in order to more fully explore their potential. “Different students learn in different ways,” Humphreys explains. “We want our kids to not only be able to memorize facts, but to truly understand concepts through direct experience, and then be able to apply that knowledge in their everyday life.”

Additionally, the Academy features blended classrooms of variously aged pupils. “We have found learning works best when students can coach and mentor one another,” notes Humphreys. “By limiting our class size to just 20 students, teachers will have time to assist with this peer-based learning process.”

Charter schools have grown increasingly popular in the state’s urban centers. Last year, the Oklahoma legislature passed a law that both toughened the school application process and paved the way for charters in rural areas. On March 1, the Canadian District School Board voted to sponsor Carlton Landing Academy as a public charter school.

Currently, the Academy draws students from as far away as Stigler and McAlester, and projections call for the student population to double next year and double yet again the following year.

“The Academy plans to offer pre-kindergarten through 12th grade school education starting with the 2016-17 school year,” says Humphreys. “A few years from now, we hope to have up to 300 students.” She added that the Academy, which now comprises three building and six classrooms, could expand to include eight buildings and 16 classrooms.

Student applications for Carlton Landing Academy are available at <http://carltonlanding.academy/enroll-now/>

ABOUT CARLTON LANDING

Carlton Landing is Oklahoma’s newest town. Grant and Jen Humphreys, the lakeside community’s first residents, founded the community in 2011. The town occupies one of Lake Eufaula’s most picturesque areas, with sandy beaches, towering cliffs, beautiful woodlands and some of the lake’s finest water quality. Famed planner and architect Andreas Duany, known for designing the Rosemary Beach and Seaside communities on the Florida panhandle, crafted the Carlton Landing master plan with Humphreys in 2008. Inspired by the New Urbanism movement—which holds that life, work and play are all central to a community’s vitality—Carlton Landing is the first development of its kind to become a distinct municipality. The master plan includes schools, a waterfront chapel, Nature Center, community parks, trails, and a town center with restaurants and shops. Plans call for more than 3,000 homes, a private residence club and a generational development timeline. For more information, visit www.carltonlanding.com.

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