

### Eastern grant program sponsors workshop at Canadian schools



“Poverty is relative and occurs in all races,” explained Lorrie Russ, GEAR UP Professional Development Coordinator. “Generational and situational poverty are different. Individuals bring with them the hidden rules of economic class in which they were raised.”

Russ presented an overview of *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* at a half-day professional development training held at Canadian on January 18. She addressed 49 elementary, middle and high school teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* was developed by Ruby K. Payne, Ph.D. with aha! Process. Dr. Payne’s framework is based upon economic diversity and not racial or cultural

diversity.

“Dr. Payne focuses on generational poverty and not situational poverty,” said Russ. “The framework for understanding poverty is about issues of class and how class impacts so many of the things we see.”

“Education and relationships are two things that will help one move out of poverty,” added Russ. “Some individuals want to leave poverty—if they have vision or goal, they have a key relationship with someone who offers encouragement or they have a special talent or skill they can promote.”

Through Dr. Payne’s framework, teachers learn that individuals can become aware of their personal resources and learn how to gain those necessary to elevate themselves out of poverty. The learning process of personal resources also promotes the building of positive relationships that encourage individuals to elevate themselves from the poverty economic class.

“As educators,” Russ concluded, “we are the only positive relationship some of our students have in their lives and are remembered for our encouragement for years.”

Canadian Public Schools is one of 23 partner schools with Eastern Oklahoma State College’s GEAR UP for a Brighter Tomorrow grant. The program is in its fourth year of implementation. The \$6.7 million grant currently serves over 1,400 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in five counties.

Photo Caption: GEAR UP Professional Development Coordinator Lorrie Russ discusses Dr. Ruby Payne’s *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* at Canadian Public Schools.