

# Biography

## Dr. Freda Deskin

Freda Deskin is an award-winning educator more than 4 decades of experience as a veteran teacher in rural, suburban and inner city schools throughout Oklahoma. Dr. Deskin taught at the University of Oklahoma College of education where she was honored with the Career Achievement Award in 2010. She was the founding dean of STEM education at Oklahoma City University before starting ASTEC Charter School, an inner-city public school that serves a highly diverse student body in Oklahoma City where she has served as superintendent and CEO.

Out of necessity, Deskin began working when she was 13 years old and continued working while earning three degrees and additional post-doctoral studies. She was recognized as a “Distinguished Scholar” as an undergraduate and as a National Collegiate Scholastic All-American Scholar as a graduate student. Freda earned a B.S. in education from the University of Central Oklahoma, a Masters in Education and a Ph.D. in Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Deskin holds a certificate in Strategic School Management from Harvard University; she has completed post-graduate work in International Finance at Oklahoma City University (OCU) and has more than 2500 clock hours training in the aerospace sciences.

While teaching in Pauls Valley, Dr. Deskin was selected from a field of more than 11,000 applicants, to become a national finalist in the NASA’s “Teacher-in-Space” project. The shuttle mission associated with this program claimed the lives of teacher, Christa McAuliffe and the crew of the Challenger space shuttle. After returning to Oklahoma, Deskin founded the Oklahoma Aerospace Academy summer space camps where tens of thousands of students were introduced to the STEM subjects for 26 summers. Her contributions earned her a place in *National Women in Aerospace* Hall of Fame.

Freda Deskin is the founder the Oklahoma Odyssey of the Mind, the OU and OCU Ropes Leadership courses and is the co-founder of FYI, a dropout awareness program. She has assessed standards for other states and has developed curriculum, guides and books for national organizations such as the Challenger Center for Space Science Education, NASA, the American Institute of Architects, Disney’s EPCOT Center and the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), among others. In addition, Deskin has trained teachers in almost every state. She has been featured in a number of national publications including Education Week; she has also appeared in various educational videos.

Dr. Deskin has been honored numerous times at every level for her teaching, leadership and civic contributions by more organizations than can be mentioned. She is a graduate of Leadership Norman, Leadership Oklahoma City and is a lifetime member of Leadership Oklahoma where her classmates selected her as Class Ambassador. Freda holds membership in a number of organizations, including the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, Rotary International, National “Women President’s Organization” (WPO) and the International Women’s Forum. She has served on a number of non-profit boards, has chaired the education committee for the Red Earth and is currently the education chair for the Annie Oakley Society of the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Center.

Deskin was selected three times for The Journal Record, “50 Making A Difference” award which placed her in their “Circle of Excellence.” She received the Marita Hynes Award for her contributions to young women in sports, the “By-liner Award” from Women in Communications, “Women in the News” award by the Oklahoma City Hospitality Association was named “Woman of the Year” by the Girl Scouts.

A true champion for children, Dr. Deskin was a runner up in 2012 for the prestigious Brock International Prize in Education and is a member of the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame.