

PIONEER ONLINE

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EDITORIAL

ONLINE GROUP HELPS STATE LITERACY RATE

Staff Writer Casey Akard says more Oklahomans need to be proactive in helping children improve reading skills. Read more.

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CAMPUS LIFE

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS, JOB OPTIONS

Turn inside to find out how to survive the summer heat and avoid skin cancer. Also, check out some cool summer jobs around the Oklahoma City area.

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SPORTS

OCCC MAKES PLANS FOR SUMMER

The college isn't slowing down for the summer. From College for Kids to swimming lessons, OCCC offers a lot. See inside for more information.

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CAMPUS LIFE

MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPGRADES

Turn to page 10 to find out about the newest musical equipment and technology OCCC is now using.

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PIONEER

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MAY 4, 2012

WWW.OCCC.EDU/PIONEER

COVERING OCCC SINCE 1978

Laser tag fun



CHRIS JAMES/PIONEER

Deven Thompson, Pathways student and temporary lifeguard at the Aquatic Center, takes out fellow Pathways student Fernando Corralez in a round of laser tag at OCCC on April 25. Mobile Laser Forces brought the laser tag equipment to OCCC.

Student loan debt exceeds \$1 trillion

SARAH HUSSAIN

Senior Writer
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Student loan debt exceeds \$1 trillion dollars across the nation — a figure that likely exceeds credit card debt, said Linette McMurtrey, Financial Aid assistant director.

All student loans are given out through the Department of Education, McMurtrey said. She said students taking out these loans should be aware of the interest rate and what they're

See **LOANS** page 13

MANY AT THE COLLEGE LIVING FROM PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK

Some OCCC students, workers near poverty

WHITNEY KNIGHT

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Almost 14 percent of OCCC employees are living within \$5,000 of the poverty line for a single-person household.

Out of the 902 full-time and part-time faculty and staff positions listed in OCCC's 2011-2012 Staffing Plan, the salaries of 123 employees fall within \$5,000 of the \$11,139 poverty line as defined by the Census Bureau in 2010 for a family of one.

Of those employees, 75, or about 8 percent, are below the poverty line.

Learning to live with less

Living in poverty is a "daily struggle" for one OCCC employee, who wished to remain anonymous.

She said she has worked at the college for five years. And in addition to taking a cut in hours, the part-time employee has not seen a pay raise since her first year on the job — despite rising costs of necessities like gas and groceries. She makes \$8.73 an hour.

"It's almost impossible to make a living," she said. "By the time I pay rent, the telephone, put insurance on the car, and put gas in the car so I can go to work, there isn't much left."

She said she doesn't use Internet at home,

“By the time I pay rent, the telephone, put insurance on the car, and put gas in the car so I can go to work, there isn't much left.”

—OCCC EMPLOYEE

or pay for unnecessary television channels.

"I don't have cable, I use a converter box," she said. "You don't need 300 channels to watch good TV."

You also don't need copious amounts of cash to look good, she said.

"No spending \$100 at the beauty salon," she said. "I go to the beauty college and get it done for \$10. I do my own nails. You don't need to spend that much money to feel good about yourself."

She said she also uses coupons and almost always cooks at home.

"You have to make a budget and you have to stick to it," she said.

But, she said, you also have to have a little fun along the way.

"Even if it's just \$10 a week, you have to give yourself some fun money. If you want a chocolate cupcake, you have to get that chocolate cupcake.

"You have to do that because you don't

want to feel poor. No one wants to feel poor. I may be living in poverty, but I'm not poor."

OCCC President speaks out

OCCC President Paul Sechrist said he is sure that some employees struggle financially.

"We hope that state leaders understand that some state employees are struggling to meet their financial needs," Sechrist said.

All OCCC employees are state employees.

He said in order for the college to give raises to employees, they must be funded in some way.

"The primary source of funding for the entire college is through state appropriations," Sechrist said. "OCCC is a state-funded college. Without increases in state funding to the college, raises are very difficult.

"While we increased tuition in two of the last three years, we used the increased tuition to fund mandatory cost increases and additional part-time staff to fund services and classes to an increasing student population."

He said the college chooses not to increase tuition to fund pay increases for employees.

Raises require additional funding or cuts in other budgets — such as those for supplies or reductions in numbers of employees — to pay for them, Sechrist said.

See **POVERTY** page 4

OPINION

EDITORIAL | Whiz Kids gives the community a chance to help educate next generation

Helping kids with literacy rewarding

If you are able to read these words, consider yourself fortunate enough to have been given the gift of literacy.



CASEY AKARD

According to the Oklahoma Literacy Resources Office, nearly one in five Oklahomans grow up without the literacy skills they need.

If that isn't enough to motivate change, www.whizkidsok.com reports a whopping 74 percent of Oklahoma's fourth graders read below the proficient grade level.

Letting these facts and figures lay dormant in my mind was not an option.

It was enough to motivate me to do something different, and my discovery of Whiz Kids was the mold of change I was looking for.

Whiz Kids is a one-on-one volunteer tutoring and mentoring program committed to helping prevent delinquency. It is a non-profit, faith-based organization that targets inner city schools whose students are reading below their grade level.

Different churches in the metro area host Whiz

Kids once a week. Children first through sixth grade concentrate on reading, learning activities and character building.

The end of Whiz Kids is wrapped up with a short Bible lesson during Club Time, helping nurture the spiritual lives of children as well.

Approximately 90 percent of the children who participate in Whiz Kids qualify for federal assistance or free and reduced lunches.

There is a strong tie between education and poverty levels. Low literacy levels cost the American economy billions a year in lost productivity, and Whiz Kids has focused on reversing these bad statistics.

Perhaps just by reading this you still can't imagine the poverty stricken background these kids come from.

Imagine an innocent, 11-year-old face telling you what he or she wants for Christmas is a jacket that isn't ratty or torn. Or, that they've been doing their homework before the sun goes down because they don't have electricity. Now take that same innocent face and imagine a room full of them.

Volunteering as a tutor just a couple of hours a week makes a difference in their test scores. It's a huge encouragement to see their test grades improve — for us and for them.



Graduation:
Now available in ridiculous

JEREMY CLOUD

But the need for this service outweighs the resources we can provide. For every child in the program, there must be a tutor and as it stands now, there are some children Whiz Kids can't reach. Still not compelled? As a fringe benefit of being a Whiz Kids tutor, time spent volunteering can also qualify you for a Civics Honor thorough OCCC's Student Life.

But don't let that be the selling point because the real honor is being able to enrich the lives of children, by helping them to read and succeed.

The best gift you can give yourself is by giving back. Consider volunteering for Whiz Kids and making our next generation a more educated community.

—CASEY AKARD
VIDEOGRAPHER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | www.kidsandcars.org provides good advice about child safety around cars

Kids should never be left alone in a car for even one minute

To the Editor:

Each summer too many children lose their lives because parents and caretakers make the unwise decision to leave children alone in a car. Or, those people get so caught up in other things, the child is actually forgotten and left for hours inside of a hot vehicle.

A joint study by the National SAFE Kids Campaign and General Motors found that the inside temperature of a car parked in the hot sun can reach deadly heights within a short time. The study found the temperature inside a van reached 120 degrees within 30 minutes, although the outside air was just 70 degrees. Think about how you feel when you first get in your vehicle on a warm or hot day. The windows have been up and there's a sort of smothering feeling, a feeling of not being able to breathe as well as you'd like. But once the AC kicks in, everything is fine.

Now, imagine the AC doesn't work. The windows are broken and can't be rolled down. In fact, the

doors won't open and you are trapped. Your body temperature rises minute by minute. You scream for help but none arrives. You panic as it becomes increasingly difficult to get air into your lungs. After awhile, you can hardly breathe. Sweat pours from your skin. Your body temperature continues to rise as hot air fills your lungs.

The lungs of a child are small and don't survive long in the conditions just described. And you can bet that child will use up every ounce of air in those tiny lungs screaming to be rescued — a rescue that won't come. The death that will finally occur is a welcomed relief from the horrible agony that child has experienced while waiting for someone to remember he is alone in the car, too small to save himself.

Imagine being the one to finally discover the child. Is that an image anyone wants to live with?

According to the website at www.kidsandcars.org:

- Children should never be left alone in a vehicle,

not even to run a quick errand.

- Keep vehicles locked at all times, even in the garage and driveway.
- Keys should never be left within the reach or sight of children.
- Teach children never to play in or around a vehicle.
- Check that all child passengers have left the vehicle after it is parked. Don't overlook sleeping infants.

Lisa Pardi, Summit County's SAFE Kids coordinator, said, "young children, the elderly and pets are vulnerable because their bodies are ill-equipped to fight off the heat and resulting dehydration."

So please, don't leave a child in a car alone for even one second. What may seem like a few minutes of unburdened time may end up costing you a lifetime of guilt and grief. Of course, that's a small price compared to what the child pays — his life.

—RONNA AUSTIN
OCCC EMPLOYEE

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The PIONEER welcomes letters to the editor and encourages the use of this publication as a community forum. All letters must include the author's name, address, phone number and signature. E-mail letters should include all but the signature. The PIONEER will withhold the author's

name if the request is made in writing.

The PIONEER has the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be fewer than 250 words. Students must list their major. OCCC staff and faculty must list their work title.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the PIONEER office, located in room 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S. May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included. The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at www.occc.edu/pioneer.

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

RESTAURANT REVIEW | Beans and Leaves gets top rating for tastiness, atmosphere

Coffee shop blends services well

Finding a relaxing coffee shop can be difficult. Many coffee shops are either tiny or seem pretentious to newcomers.

Beans and Leaves, near NW 39th and Penn, is the alternative to the cramped coffee shop.

The restaurant itself is cozy and spacious. There are several tables for those who want to study and many armchairs for those who just want to relax with a cup of java.

The selection of treats changes, but cookies tend to be a constant.

My favorite are the chocolate chunk cookies, which have just a hint of nutty flavor.

If you're lucky, you can have the blackberry cheesecake which has

a layer of blackberry sauce on top. I've also heard several people rave about the key lime pie.

The drinks are delicious as well. Last week I tried the black and white, a drink combining white chocolate, dark chocolate, and espresso.

It was loaded with whipped cream and tasted like a fine hot chocolate with just a hint of coffee.

If you're looking for a cold drink, try the jasmine lemonade. On first sip, you may get the slight bitterness of jasmine, but it's immediately canceled out by the sweet and sour of lemonade.

Beans and Leaves also promotes local art. Once a month, a differ-

ent artist gets his or her work put on display.

Friday nights are live music nights, and several open mic and poetry groups gather as well.

But what really makes this restaurant is the staff.

Gary, the owner, will ask his customers how their day is going while he's making their drinks, plus go around the restaurant asking if anyone wants another drink and taking away trays after you're finished.

He really cares about his customers.

Rating: A+

—MARY MCATEE
STAFF WRITER

CATERING REVIEW | Writer says Petroleum Club failed at recent journalism gathering

Catering firm serves Three Stooges style

Getting a bunch of journalists to co-exist in a room together for more than five minutes requires at least one of three things: alcohol, free food, a paycheck or the equivalent — the promise of awards.

The Society of Professional Journalists, Oklahoma Pro chapter, offered the last of the trifecta, with an option on the first.

At a recent awards banquet, journalists from dozens of state media outlets worked to plaster on smiles and enjoy sitting through an hour-long presentation in the hopes of hearing their names attached to a prestigious award.

Unfortunately, before the awards comes the meal. And the meal was an unmitigated disaster.

The Petroleum Club, operating out of the Jim Thorpe Event Center where the award ceremony was held, provided a three course meal ... but with all the overtones of the Three Stooges, complete with mad dashing in every direction as they tried to repair errors of foresight.

Kicking off the comedy of failure was an apparently delectable salad. I say apparently, because I never got to eat it. I am violently allergic to milk, and the salad was coated in feta cheese and a creamy dressing from top to bottom.

When I asked for a substitution, I was politely informed by a harried manager that they had pre-prepared all the food, and there were no substitutions possible. So, no salad.

As the entree course encroached, it became clear the Club had not only failed to take unusual diners such as myself into account; somehow they also had failed to take the number of diners into account.

Servers ran from table to table frantically collecting spare salads and desserts to give to other guests.

But soon enough, the covered carts carrying the food rolled out.

My hopes of an enjoyable meal died a quiet death at the sight of chicken fillets stuffed with cream cheese and spinach, served alongside mashed potatoes and

battered vegetables.

However, the annoyance of attempting to cleanse the offending items from my food was postponed for about a half hour as the servers seemed to make a deliberate attempt to avoid not only our table, but every person in the room.

Waiters and waitresses filled their arms with plates of steaming chicken before performing an oddly tribal dance involving three passes around the room, weaving in and out of the tables, and possibly a round of "eeny-meeny-miny-moe" to decide which diners would receive food when their arms grew tired.

Just as my tablemates were gathering up every spare bit of fruit garnish from our already placed dessert plates to prevent me from passing out, half our table finally got their entrees.

That was followed by another 10 minutes of interpretive dance before I, and the other half of my fellow diners, saw food finally appear before us.

I picked my food apart, eating what I could to keep from passing out with hunger, consoling myself with the thought of the bread baskets I'd seen circulating around the room. Ah, but there went another quarter hour and no bread materialized.

When my boss finally flagged down a server and asked for bread, he cheerfully offered us the two rolls left in the basket he was carrying.

Oh, yes. They didn't have enough bread, either.

The arrival of the bread was followed by several rounds of table cannibalism as they hijacked our coffee, water refills, tea refills, and the remainder of our bread to serve to other tables, always without asking if we were done with it.

The piece-de-resistance of this whole barrel of worms?

While the servers were delighted to take away items and food we were still using, the dirty plates and cups stayed sitting on the table the entire evening.

Only once did someone come to clear a moderate handful away and only then because my boss had

COUNSELOR'S Corner

Student support available

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it." — Helen Keller

Some semesters seem more difficult than others, perhaps because they are. Many of you are limping toward the finish line this semester with plans to quickly regroup and begin more classes in the next semester. Some of you may be coasting now because the hard parts are behind you. A few of you have fallen off course and can't make your way back in time.

We in Student Support Services want you to know that the college offers resources to help you get off to a good start and to finish strong each semester. As an institution, we care very much about your success. There are tutors in each learning lab, professionals in the library, and faculty and student services staff waiting to listen and to help you find solutions. However, no matter how much we care about your success, we can't care more than you. Ultimately, it is up to you to reach out to those who can help you and to use the various resources that we offer you free of charge.

Making mistakes and falling down do not equal failure. They simply mean that you are human. However, simply getting up again also doesn't equal success. Success requires learning from your mistakes so that you do not repeat them. As we end this semester, I encourage you to look back over the past few weeks and evaluate what went well and what did not. Figure out why certain things did not go well, and identify what you can do to change those things for the future. In a perfect world, we would all have everything we need to be successful all the time. In the world that we have, it is important to first acknowledge what we do have and then to make the best possible use of it.

Whether you will be with us for the summer or plan to rest until fall, we in Student Support Services invite you to work with us to identify your resources, plan for your success, and enjoy the journey toward your academic goals.

—MARY TURNER

LEARNING SUPPORT SPECIALIST

bussed the area in front of her.

So if the need to feed a large group ever arises, definitely look elsewhere. The Petroleum Club is obviously incapable of serving a group of rabid badgers, let alone a party.

Rating: F

—JEREMY CLOUD
EDITOR

JESUS HOUSE RESIDENTS GET HELPING HAND FROM OCCC CLASS

Students learn first hand about giving

WHITNEY KNIGHT

Online Editor

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When English adjunct professor Minnie Flowers assigned her Reading II class a project based on Jim Stovall's novel "The Ultimate Gift," she never dreamed three of her students would go above and beyond to give others a special gift of their own.

Flowers said "The Ultimate Gift" centers around Red Stevens, a spoiled young man whose uncle leaves him his inheritance with a catch. Before he can claim the millions, Red must complete 12 assignments in a year, each of them centered around a different "gift."

After her class read the book, Flowers said, she tasked them with writing papers about different gifts, like those of sharing and money.

Three of her students put down their

pencils and instead took to the streets.

OCCC students Cherri Decker, Robin Ellison, and Destiny Parker first took \$50 of their own money to the McDonald's on Sheridan and Western in downtown Oklahoma City and ordered 50 burgers off the dollar menu.

"The cashier thought we were joking," Decker said with a smile. "She was like, 'Are you serious?' and I told her I was really hungry and I needed to eat 50 cheeseburgers.

"Then I told her the truth, and she thought what we were doing was really cool."

What they were doing was taking those burgers to the nearby Jesus House, where they stood outside and handed them to the homeless.

Parker said the experience was "eye-opening."

"We were trying to think of things that wouldn't just better us but would

better other people too," she said. "It wasn't what I expected. We met a lot of different people, and most of them didn't really look homeless."

Decker said she was shocked by the different walks of life represented on the streets.

"Some of them were veterans, but it was really all ages," she said. "Some people were in school and they were homeless. They were going to school and they were still homeless.

"One man, we gave him more than one because his wife was pregnant," Decker said. "We wanted to give them extra so they could eat more."

Ellison said "people were really grateful" for the burgers.

"It showed them that people really do care and they're not alone," she said. "I would do it all over again."

Even after they ran out of burgers to give, Decker said, the girls stayed a

while longer to talk to the people they met and hear their stories.

"I learned a lot from it," Decker said.

"Don't be greedy. Don't take what you have for granted. If you have people who love you, keep them close and spend as much time with them as you can."

Parker said the experience she took away will stay with her a lifetime.

"We sit here thinking we hate today and we wish today wasn't happening and we want it to be better, but our life is better than what they have," she said.

Flowers, who has taught for more than 50 years, said she was "very proud" of her students' actions.

"Students don't have that much money anyway," she said. "They did this from their own pockets and from their own hearts.

"If I can inspire them to continue to do well, I have done my job and so much more."

Poverty: OCCC has many under or near poverty level

Continued from page 1

"Without regular increases in state appropriations, raises in salaries will be a challenge," he said.

Student concerns

But it isn't just college employees who struggle to make ends meet.

Brittany Anderson, computer science major, said despite working two jobs, she still struggles to pay for her tuition each semester.

"I have to take out student loans," Anderson said. "I can't afford to pay for my tuition and my books."

Now, she said she worries what life after college has to offer. "I'm graduating this fall, and I'm going to have to pay those loans back. I don't know how I'm going to do that."

Community college students face an increased risk of poverty, said Abigail Clarke-Sayer, Single Stop USA community colleges program officer.

Single Stop USA is a non-profit organization that provides low-income families with health insurance, child care,

and tax resources.

"Community colleges make post-secondary education accessible to low-income, high-need populations," Clarke-Sayer said. "They are one of the most effective vehicles for moving people from poverty to self-sufficiency."

The numbers

However, she said, because community colleges make higher education possible for those who could not otherwise afford it, students at schools like OCCC face more obstacles than those at four-year institutions.

Six years after starting at a two-year institution, 46 percent of community college students drop out without completing their degree, according to statistics at the Single Stop USA website at www.singlestopusa.org.

Clarke-Sayer said the low retention and completion rates are not surprising given the many obstacles students confront.

"Community college students struggle with barriers such as inadequate child

care, housing and financial problems, family illness, immigration issues, and other concerns that make it difficult to stay — let alone succeed — in school," she said.

Getting help

Student Support Services Counselor Jenna Howard said she has seen many students struggling with poverty over the years, especially in times of economic hardship.

"I've seen students that have lived in shelters and are coming to school, and students that are staying with friends because they don't have a consistent place to live," Howard said.

She said living in poverty and attending classes makes life a "big struggle."

"It is stressful thinking about trying to survive and trying to do well in school," Howard said. "You're trying to get your basic needs met and your schoolwork done."

Student Support Services provides extra support for students who are struggling by publishing a community resource guide online, she said.

Listed services range from

clinics that provide immunizations to those who cannot regularly afford them, to help with transportation and shelters close to OCCC. That resource can be found by visiting www.occc.edu/support/community.

Howard said the list is updated every year.

"A shelter isn't the best place, but [the people who work there] are trying to help. They help people get jobs and and get a place to live.

"I remember one student had a place he was staying but he needed a job, needed a car, needed a new place to stay," she said.

"He was resilient. He got a job, he worked one day at a time and at the end of the year he had a car and a place to stay."

It didn't happen all at once, Howard said — and that's something others in similar situations should keep in mind.

"[Being in poverty] is a very stressful situation," she said.

"You have to take it one day at a time. You have to get support from other people and ask people for help. You will start to see things changing.

"It takes time for things to get better," Howard said. "Take it one day at a time. Things do get better."

Sechrist said the college offers students a variety of ways to reduce the cost of attendance, as well as to connect those in need of other services with corresponding agencies.

"There is probably more we could do, but we also do not want to duplicate services that are better provided by other agencies," he said.

"Our primary mission is to provide a college education. Other agencies have a primary mission to help with housing, food, health care, and transportation."

OCCC students can connect with these services by contacting Student Support Services at 405-682-7520, or visiting www.occc.edu/support.

Employees in need of assistance can contact Human Resources at 405-682-7542, or visit www.occc.edu/hr.

For a partial listing of a variety of services available in the Oklahoma City area, see page 5 of this issue.

Help available for those in need

Those who need a temporary place to stay, help with rent, or a warm meal, can find assistance through the many shelters and other helpful services in and around the metro area.

CLOTHING:

Good Shepherd Ministries
1201 N Robinson
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
405-232-8631

Provides clothing, food, medical, dental, and referral services. Bring ID, Social Security Card and proof of address. Minimum of 7 days between visits.

FURNITURE:

Christian Service Center
115 SW 24th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73109
405-236-5956

Misc. household items. No referral necessary for thrift store items. Bring picture ID.

DENTAL CARE:

Baptist Mission Center
2125 Exchange Ave
Oklahoma City, OK 73108
405-235-6162

Christian Family Health Care Center; call for Dental Dates (mobile van every three months). OKC residents only. Bring proof of residence; ID required.

EYE CLINICS:

Dean A. McGee Eye Institute

608 Stanton L. Young Blvd
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
405-271-6060

Forty percent discount for those without insurance; those with Medicaid and over 21 or those not on Medicare but have never had cataract surgery qualify. Accepts insurance. Without insurance there is a discount. Financial assistance available for surgeries.

HEALTH INSURANCE:

Insure Oklahoma
405-522-7300

www.insureoklahoma.org
Insure Oklahoma offers low cost health insurance plans for those who qualify. The Insure Oklahoma/O-EPIC Employer-Sponsored Insurance will pay part of the health plan premiums for eligible employees working for qualified Oklahoma small businesses (with 50 or fewer full-time employees). Participation in this program is voluntary. The Insure Oklahoma/O-EPIC Individual Plan is available to Oklahomans not otherwise eligible to participate in an Insure Oklahoma employer-sponsored Qualified Health Plan.

HOUSING:

City Rescue Mission
800 W California,
OKC, OK 73106
405-232-2709

www.cityrescue.org
Housing for men, women, and families. Hot meals provided.

IMMUNIZATION CLINICS:

First Baptist Church of Bethany
3800 Mueller,
Bethany, OK (west of MacArthur)
405-789-3312

Provide immunizations for children only. Please bring your child's shot records.

UTILITIES/RENT:

Neighbor for Neighbor
300 SW 13th St.
Oklahoma City, OK
405-236-0473

Helps with food, utilities under \$50, transportation to new jobs, prescriptions, and other emergency services.

FOOD:

Compassionate Hands
119 S 6th St.
Yukon, OK 73099
405-354-9591

Offer food pantry referrals and provide utility/rent, & prescription assistance to those who live in their service area.

For a complete list of organizations, visit www.occc.edu/support/community.

To help those in need, consider donating to local non-profit organizations such as Goodwill and the Salvation Army.

For help finding a charity to donate to, visit www.charitynavigator.org.

State falls below national cost of living average

What is the cost of living?

The cost of living is the amount of income or money needed to acquire a given quantity of goods and services or to achieve a given living standard. The cost of living notion is closely intertwined with inflation, the economy's price level, and the concept of purchasing power.

What is the cost of living in Oklahoma?

The cost of living in Oklahoma is lower than the nationwide average. The average yearly pay in Oklahoma is \$38,250, which is lower than the U.S. average annual salary by \$8,492.

What is the consumer price index (CPI)?

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services.

What is the CPI in Oklahoma?

The consumer price index (CPI) of 207 in Oklahoma is 7.59% lower than the U.S. city average CPI of 224.

How do prices of goods in Oklahoma compare to other states?

Gas

The price of gas in Oklahoma City is \$3.49
The price of gas in Oklahoma City is 3.8 percent lower than the national average
Kodiak, Alaska, is the most expensive city for gas at \$4.55 per gallon
Augusta, Ga., is the least expensive city for gas at \$3.11 per gallon

Coffee

The price of coffee in Oklahoma City is \$4.76
The price of coffee in Oklahoma City is 1.1 percent lower than the national average
Juneau, Alaska, is the most expensive city for coffee at \$7.29
Waco, Texas, is the least expensive city for coffee at \$2.79

Pizza

The price of pizza in Oklahoma City is \$8
The price of pizza in Oklahoma City is 11.8 percent lower than the national average
Dothan, Alaska, is the most expensive city for pizza at \$14.79
Ogden, Utah, is the least expensive city for pizza at \$6.33

— www.glossary.econguru.com
— www.cityrating.com
www.bls.gov

FIVE HIGHEST-PAYING FULL-TIME JOBS AT OCCC:

- President - \$227,429
- Executive Vice President - \$148,291
- Vice President for Academic Affairs - \$116,860
- Vice President for Human Resources - \$114,664
- Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services - \$110,326

FIVE LOWEST-PAYING FULL-TIME JOBS AT OCCC:

- Library Circulation Assistant - \$21,966
- Shipping and Receiving Clerk - \$21,811
- A/V Delivery Technician - \$20,998
- Child Development Teacher Assistant - \$20,080
- Water Safety Instructor - \$18,768

—salary information obtained from the 2011-2012 OCCC Staffing Plan, Copies are available to the public and in the college library

HELPFUL MONEY-SAVING, MANAGING WEBSITES

www.wisebread.com — “Living large on a small budget” is the mantra for this site, chock-full of money-saving tips, articles and and daily consumer specials.

www.mint.com — “The best free way to manage your money” is what this website offers. Users can also download a free phone app to help track expenses.

www.groupon.com — “Groupon negotiates huge discounts — usually 50 to 90 percent off — with popular (local) businesses.” Daily offers are sent to email subscribers.



STUDENT EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER SERVICES

OPTIMAL RESUME

www.occc.optimalresume.com

Students' access ID is their OCCC email address
example > john.t.doe@email.occc.edu
Resumes Cover Letters Interview Skills

OKC-GO REMOVES FINANCIAL BARRIERS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

Scholarship program assists future students

LYRIC JACKSON
News Writing Student

Going to college is an achievable dream for every graduating senior in the Oklahoma City and Western Heights public school system, thanks to the OKC-Go Scholarship program at OCCC.

But students have to take the first step and apply, said Lauren McElroy-Walls, the admission adviser at OCCC who works with the program.

About 300 freshmen on campus are attending OCCC as part of the OKC-Go Scholarship Program, said McElroy-Walls.

Students must graduate from Oklahoma City public schools or Western Heights public schools to qualify, said McElroy-Walls. The OKC-Go program is designed to remove some of the financial barriers that might limit a student's ability to succeed in college.

"The response to OKC-Go scholarships has been awesome," she said.

McElroy-Walls also said they have four OCCC recruiters that go to different high schools in the two districts to make students aware of their choices. Recruiters do a PowerPoint presentation to the high school students explaining in depth what OKC-GO scholarships are all about.

Also, they leave applications for students that are interested to apply, so they can have easy access. McElroy-Walls said the scholarship doesn't have a deadline as long as the student is enrolled by fall or spring following their high school graduation.

Students also may apply for financial aid and still be eligible for Go scholarships.



The response to OKC-Go scholarships has been awesome,"

—LAUREN McELROY-WALLS
ADMISSIONS ADVISER

Once the students have begun taking classes at OCCC, McElroy-Walls said she would like for every Go scholar to come speak with an admission adviser before transferring to another college or dropping classes to make sure they are aware of their choices.

McElroy-Walls also wants to make sure students fully understand the scholarship guidelines. Students have to be enrolled in at least six credit hours to qualify for an OKC-Go scholarship.

She suggests that if students would like to transfer to a four-year college, they should at least fully use their OKC-Go scholarship, so they can have their associate degree to transfer.

If a student skips a semester for any reason, that student will not be eligible for the OKC-Go scholarship anymore.

McElroy-Walls also said that OCCC has other scholarship programs to refer students to that don't qualify for OKC-Go scholarships. Education is the key to success, she said.

For any questions about OKC-Go scholarships or other scholarship programs, contact McElroy-Walls through email at lmwalls@occc.edu or by phone at 405-682-7530.

CO-ENROLLMENT OFFERS VARIOUS BENEFITS

OCCC classes save students time and money

MATTHEW WARE
News Writing

Every semester hundreds of students are admitted to OCCC as transfer non-degree seeking students. Students from the University of Oklahoma and University of Central Oklahoma are coming to OCCC to take classes because of time, location, and price.

Jon Horinek, director of Recruitment and Admissions, said an estimated 600 to 700 students per semester come here to take transferable classes.

Ronald Hernandez, 20, a sophomore at UCO, is studying health and exercise science.

Hernandez said he drives twice a week to OCCC where he is taking Chemistry 1.

"The reason I'm taking it at OCCC instead of UCO is because it was more convenient for my schedule," he said. "I didn't want to have class three days a week as well as lab hours. They weren't convenient at all.

"I decided OCCC was perfect for my schedule, and I can go twice a week, with a lab once a week, and I really like it."

An OU public relations major, Ariel Watkins, 19, is taking online Spanish with Professor Brooks, because the class was full at OU.

She also is taking an on-campus journalism class.

"The main benefit of being co-enrolled at OCCC and OU is that I am able to get classes done all in one semester rather than waiting until next fall," Watkins said.

"The only drawback about it is having to drive to the city every Tuesday and Thursday, but it is not bad."

Students sometimes feel more comfortable taking certain classes at OCCC rather than at universities. At OU and UCO, the classes are much bigger and are taught differently. That's another consideration for Hernandez.

"At OCCC my chemistry professor goes more in depth and is a very good instructor," he said.

"At UCO not all of the professors are good. A lot of them are graduate assistants who have never taught a day in their life."

Students who are at OU or UCO have larger freshman and sophomore level classes and may be more interested in having smaller classes at OCCC, at half the cost.

"You're more likely to be taught by a full-time faculty member here, more likely to have a smaller classroom experience, and more access to labs," said Horinek.

Smaller classes enable the student to be in contact with the teacher more, he said.

Horinek said if you have a question, you can raise your hand and your professor will be able to help you right away.

But workload can be a problem, Horinek said.

Students have to manage their time carefully in order to be successful.

"I had to create a calendar with very important dates so that nothing surprises me and also so that I could stay ahead on



The main benefit of being co-enrolled at OCCC and OU is that I am able to get classes done all in one semester rather than waiting until next fall."

—ARIEL WATKINS
CONCURRENTLY ENROLLED OCCC STUDENT

my classes," Hernandez said. Horinek said the reasons students come to OCCC are varied.

"Students want to graduate as quickly as possible, and sometimes the scheduling at their home institution may not be as convenient as it is here, or their home institution simply runs out of space," he said.

Correction: Page 6 of the April 27 edition of the Pioneer incorrectly identified Congressman Tom Cole as Senator Tom Cole.



STUDENT EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER SERVICES

JOB BOARD

www.collegecentral.com/occc

Students register with their 7-digit student ID number
Alumni enter AL+last 5 digits of Social Security number

Find Jobs Post Your Resume Apply for Positions

DIANNE BROYLES LEAVES OCCC IN SEARCH OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND MUSIC

Language professor to retire after 21-year career

ARIEL WATKINS
News Writing Student

French and Spanish Professor Dianne Broyles will be saying “au revoir” and “adios” to OCCC students, faculty, and staff as she closes the door on her 21-year career in May.

As a professor of modern languages, Broyles said she intended on leaving and passing down her title at the end of her twentieth year but, when the time came, she was a bit unsure about retirement.

Broyles is now sure this semester will be her last.

“I believe this is a good time for me to have a more flexible schedule and for another language professor to have the opportunity to teach at OCCC,” Broyles said.

Broyles previously held two other titles at OCCC: 10 years as department chair for Languages and the Arts and one and a half year as acting director of the department of Communications and the Arts.

Broyles said she has always loved studying languages. While in college she decided that teaching would be the most rational career option.

“I wanted to share my passion for foreign languages and cultures with others, and I have enjoyed it very much,” Broyles said.

Linda Robinett, professor of learning skills, said Broyles has touched the lives of not only OCCC students, but also fellow faculty as well.

“She pioneered the online courses for foreign languages,” Robinett said. “She led many student trips. She led faculty development workshops and was always a star in the OCCC choir. She is just involved in everything.”

Broyles has encouraged her students to travel to other countries, including trips to Mexico, Ecuador, Spain, and France.

“I have also participated as an instructor in 12 travel-study courses and about 18 Spanish Immersion weekends,” Broyles said.

Broyles said she has much to look forward to after her retirement.

“My plans include practicing my French and doing more music, especially singing,” Broyles said.

“I also hope to travel more both in the U.S. and abroad. My husband and I really enjoy traveling together.”

Robinett said, with Broyles’ passion for languages, culture, and music, she was the perfect fit for OCCC and will leave a lasting legacy.

“She is so enthusiastic and dedicated, and has accomplished so much here. She is a huge deal to the college.”

“ I wanted to share my passion for foreign languages and cultures with others, and I have enjoyed it very much,”
—DIANNE BROYLES
MODERN LANGUAGE PROFESSOR



CHRIS JAMES/PIONEER

Dianne Broyles, professor of modern languages, stands in front of a book case in OCCC’s World Languages and Cultural Learning Center. Broyles said she donated many of the books on the shelf behind her during her 21 years at OCCC.

OCCC Testing Center to be open late during finals

JUSTIN VODA
News Writing Student

The OCCC Testing Center will remain open 90 minutes later during finals week, May 7 through 11. The facility will be open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 12.

Testing Center Director Jim Ellis said students must arrive at least one hour before closing to start a test and must have their college photo ID.

The extended hours are particularly useful to students who work unpredictable schedules.

“My job requires me to work odd hours throughout the week,” student Hillary Kessler said. “I never know when I’m going to get off work so it’s comforting to know that I will have extra time to take

my finals.”

Last spring the number of students who used the Testing Center was abnormally large, resulting in longer waiting times, Ellis said.

“Last year was an unusual year. This year I think it will be a little less than last year,” Ellis said. “To avoid crowds, students should remember there are fewer people taking tests in the mornings.”

He said to help speed things along, students should come prepared with the exam’s course category, course number, instructor’s name and test number.

The Testing Center uses two rooms that can accommodate up to 85 students as well as an additional third room for overflow, which can seat up to 35 more students, Ellis said.

Ellis said that students are reminded that no per-

sonal items are permitted in the Testing Center, and calculators are available.

He said professors determine calculator use on their own exams.

Ellis said all other electronic devices are prohibited and the exam session will be terminated if a student brings one in.

“No phones,” Ellis said. “Don’t even bring your phone.”

The Testing Center provides free lockers for students to store their belongings temporarily during their exams.

“We do have some larger lockers than we used to, to accommodate people’s industrial-sized backpacks,” Ellis said.

For more information about the Testing Center visit www.occc.edu/acs/testingcenter.html.

HOLIDAY PROMOTES ACTIVITIES FOR MOM AND FAMILY

Mother's Day events abundant in metro area

EMILY SCHORR

Staff Writer

staffwriter1@occc.edu

A very special Day is approaching, and the majority of people should be thankful. Sunday, May 13, is Mother's Day.

For those who have a mother, stepmother, grandma, or just any mom figure in their life, it's the day to show your appreciation.

Flowers along with a nice breakfast, brunch, lunch, or dinner are always nice and appreciated.

However, Metro Family, Central Oklahoma's Parenting Connection, has outlined many events in the metro area in recognition of Mother's Day.

There are plenty of activities for children of all ages, as well as mom herself, ranging in price. In addition to great ideas Metro Family has to offer, there are many other options.

Take mom out for an extra special dinner in downtown Oklahoma City. A classier option might be Sophabella's Chicago grill or The Melting Pot.

Another option: Let your mom be taken away from her daily routine and release any stress by treating her to a spa day.

Try Eden Spa. It was rated one of the top 100 spas in the U.S. by Elle magazine.

If your mom is more adventurous, take her on a water taxi ride to see bricktown from another perspective, take her to the Paseo District and visit the art galleries, visit the Oklahoma City Zoo, or the Myriad Botanical Garden.

One thing to remember about this special day: Show your mothers how much you genuinely appreciate and love them. This is what will matter the most, not how much money you spend or the exact details of the place you shared dinner, but the memory of the time that everyone shared together.

Saturday • May 5

Mother's Day Flower Pots at Martin Park Nature Center (5000 W Memorial, OKC): Invites little ones to decorate flower pots planted with native seeds for Mom's special day. \$8, includes supplies. Starts at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. For more information, call 405-755-0676 or visit www.okc.gov/parks/martin_park.

Saturday • May 12

26th Annual Ostrich Egg Breakfast at the OKC Zoo: Includes an all-you-can-eat breakfast of pancakes, sausage, scrambled hens' eggs, waffles and Ostrich Egg Omelets. Pre-register. \$10 adults, \$6 children ages 3 to 11 for members; \$12 adults, \$8 children ages 3 to 11 for non-members. The breakfast will run from 8 to 11 a.m. For more information, contact 405-425-0618 or visit www.zoofriends.org.

FREE Pamper with a Purpose: Special Mother's Day Health and Wellness Screening at INTEGRIS Comprehensive Breast Center of Oklahoma (3525 NW 56th Street) invites women to enjoy an exclusive, stress-free morning of relaxation including heart health screenings, cancer screenings, breast health, bra fittings, chair massages and spa hand treatments from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call 405-951-2277.

Marvelous Mother's Day at the Orr Family Farm (14400 S Western): Offers FREE admission for moms, mining for gemstones and special goodies in the Sweet Shoppe from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call 405-799-FARM or visit www.orrfamilyfarm.com.

FREE Build and Grow Kid's Clinic: Picture Frame Planter at Lowe's stores offers kids an opportunity to complete a wooden project (perfect for a Mother's Day gift!) and receive an apron, goggles, a project-themed patch and a certificate of merit. Starts at 10 a.m. For more information, visit www.lowesbuildandgrow.com.

FREE Crafts for Kids "Handprint Keepsake" at Lakeshore Learning (6300 N May): Invites kids to create a sweet gift for Mom for Mother's Day. Ages 3 and up. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 405-858-8778 or visit www.lakeshorelearning.com.

Saturday • May 13

Mother's Day Brunch at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum: Dining at Persimmon Hill restaurant includes museum admission. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 405-478-2250 or visit www.nationalcowboymuseum.org.

Sunday Brunch at the OKC Museum of Art (415 Couch, Oklahoma City): Reservations recommended. Brunch runs from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 235-6262 or visit www.okcmoa.com.

Mother's Day Special at The Melting Pot (4 E Sheridan, OKC): Features a four-course menu with optional drink specials and gifts available for mom. Call for reservations or to pre-arrange a gift package. \$40 per adult, \$20 per child 12 and under. For more information, call 405-235-1000 or visit www.meltingpot.com.

FREE 2nd Sunday Concert at the Downtown Library: Jazz Harpist Jessica Tate performs for the whole family from 2 to 3 p.m. For more information, call 405-231-8650 or visit metrolibrary.org.

Mothers Get Pampered at OKC Redhawks: Join the Redhawks as they take on the Tucson Padres at the Bricktown Ballpark. Includes mini-spa treatments, massages and nail services while kids can make special Mother's Day T-shirts. Starts at 2 p.m. The cost runs from \$5 and up. For more information, call 218-1000 or visit www.okcredhawks.com.

FREE Admission for Moms on Mother's Day (May 13):

- Oklahoma Aquarium in Jenks open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information call 918-296-FISH or visit okaquarium.org.
- OKC Zoo, open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 424-3344 or visit www.okczoo.com.
- OKC Museum of Art open from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, call 236-3100 or visit www.okcmoa.com
- Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum (620 N Harvey, Oklahoma City) open from noon to 6 p.m. For more information, call 405-235-3313 or visit www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org.



Experts say protection from sun necessary

SARAH HUSSAIN
Senior Writer
seniorwriter@occc.edu

Although the sun is an extremely important part of every day life, it also brings substantial dangers.

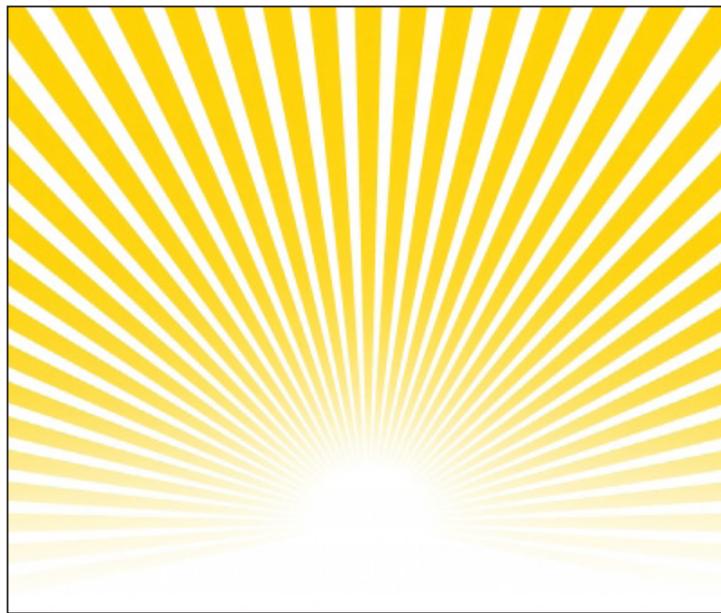
Sun exposure is necessary for everyone in limited amounts. It's the primary source of vitamin D for bodies, which helps to absorb calcium.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology website, there are six different skin types.

Those run the gamut from type one, which is the extremely sun-sensitive skin that burns easily, through type six, which is sun-insensitive skin that never burns.

Depending on which skin type you are determines the type of sunscreen you want to apply regularly.

Dr. Steve Sutter, a dermatologist from Midwest Dermatology Inc., suggests looking for



COURTESY FREEDIGITALPHOTOS.NET

either 40 or 50 SPF sunscreens. Broad-spectrum sunscreens will block both UVA and UVB rays and have that written right on the bottle, he said.

Sutter said sunlight gives off two types of harmful rays: ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB).

UVA rays are the type that cause aging and UVB rays are

the type that cause burning, he said.

Sutter said excessive amounts of both rays can lead to melanoma, the most common type of skin cancer.

"I see skin cancer patients year 'round, not just during the summer," Sutter said.

"The sun damage has been cumulative over the years;

“My older patients usually had a couple extremely bad sunburns when they were teens and in their 20s and just like bad karma, it comes back to haunt them when they're older,”

—DR. STEVE SUTTER
DERMATOLOGIST

most of my skin cancer patients are between 60 and 80 years old.

"My older patients usually had a couple extremely bad sunburns when they were teens and in their 20s and just like bad karma, it comes back to haunt them when they're older," he said.

Sutter said the most common consequence of unprotected sun exposure is sunburn. There is no treatment to normal first-degree sunburns, he said.

However, second-degree burns, which lead to blistering and fevers, need immediate medical treatment, Sutter said.

He said if a sunburn does result from exposure to the sun, cool baths with a tablespoon of baking soda will calm the skin.

Keeping hydrated also is key, he said, because the sun dries out the skin. Refrigerating aloe vera cream or gel and then applying it to the burnt area helps.

Dehydration is another common risk of overexposure to the sun, Sutter said.

The sun can take plenty of energy out of the body, Sutter said. But staying hydrated reduces that outtake.

Sutter said water is the best drink, but sports drinks such as Gatorade provide electrolytes that are lost through sweat.

Finding a summer job made simple for students

MORGAN BEARD
Staff Writer
pioneermedia@occc.edu

While the closure of the spring semester usually signals a time of relaxation for the following three months, most students will be on the lookout for a way to make some money over the summer.

Debra Vaughn, Director of Student Employment Services, says her office assists students with both on-campus and off-campus job information.

"We have a variety of summer employment resources to share through Student Employment and Career Services," Vaughn said.

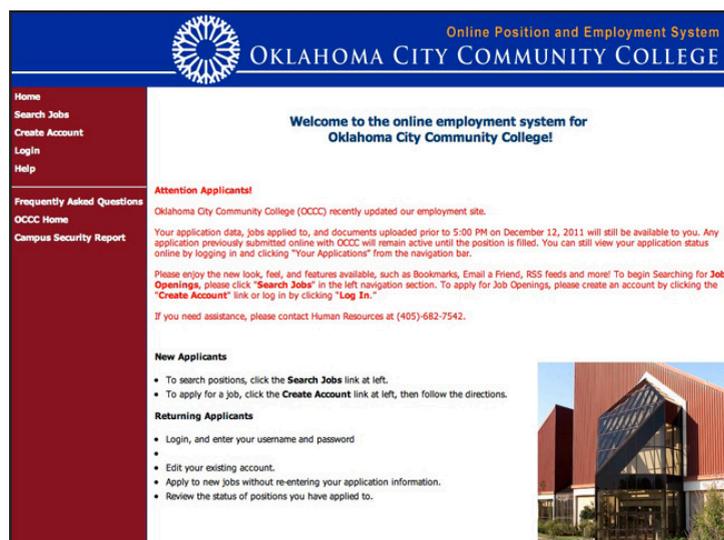
The days of submitting numerous applications to fast food eateries may be over with the help of Student Employment and Career Services.

"I recommend that students apply for jobs that correlate with their future career field," Vaughn said.

"Each student has interests, skills, and strengths that attract them to (certain) jobs."

Vaughn said that numerous individual jobs have different requirements for students and that it's best to read each job description carefully.

If students are worried about limitations in the job market for the summer,



“Some people can search for a job the entire summer, but with the help of the school, it will allow people to find a summer job much more quickly.”

—CHANTAL SHIRKEY
OCCC STUDENT

Vaughn said that there are currently approximately 200 student jobs available.

OCCC student Chantal Shirkey thinks the help OCCC provides could benefit a lot of students.

"Some people can search for a job the entire summer," Shirkey said, "...but with the help of the school, it will allow people to find a summer job much more quickly."

Vaughn said the employment office has dozens of job postings on their bulletin boards and job tables, located on the first floor of the main building in Room 1G7.

An option to assist in the job search, Workforce OKC, is a widely known resource for students.

The Oklahoma Workforce website can be found at www.ok.gov/okworks. There, students can connect with other job seekers and future employers to form Oklahoma's workforce, per their website.

For more information on jobs on campus, contact Debra Vaughn at 405-682-1611, ext. 7519.

To apply for a student position, visit www.occcjobs.com and create an account and get started searching for jobs.

Gay Pride festivities longer, earlier in 2012

JEREMY CLOUD
Editor
editor@occc.edu

The 25th anniversary of OKC Pride is going to see a few changes, said Josh Sauer, OKC Pride vice president.

"We had a lot of different patrons and volunteers develop symptoms of heat exposure," Sauer said.

"We sent several folks to the hospital," he said.

"And that was a trend that didn't look like it was going away any time soon, and so we decided to move the dates one month early, to May."

Specifically May 18 through 27, Sauer said, and with the additional change of a Pride week, instead of the usual weekend.

Another change is the venue of the festival, which has been changed from the park down by 39th and Penn to the new Film Row downtown at Sheridan and Lee.

"We felt that Film Row would be a great venue to hold the festival in.

"It's fresh, exciting, lots of open space for vendors and families. This is our 25th year and we want to try and showcase the local community," Sauer said.

To that end, he said, Pride is partnering with a number

of local outreach and event groups in the Oklahoma gay community.

According to a press release provided by Sauer, "OKC Pride has partnerships with the Oklahoma Gay Rodeo Association; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays of Norman; Cimarron Alliance; and Church of the Open Arms."

At first, the rodeo planners voiced complaints that Pride was falling too close to the OGRA's annual rodeo.

"But what they overlook is that we're not competing with the OGRA," Sauer said.

"We're working with them. The festival and parade lead off Pride Week, and the rodeo ends it on a high note."

Sauer said that among the events lined up that excite him is the outdoor screening of "The Sons of Tennessee Williams," a film about "the all-gay Mardi Gras krewes of New Orleans" which will be presented by the film's producer and director, Tim Wolff.

But one of the great things about Pride this year is the anniversary, Sauer said.

"We've been here doing this for a quarter of a century now," he said.

For more information, go to <http://okcpride.org>.

2012 Pride Week Events

Thursday, May 17 : Eat a burger at any S&B Burger Joint. 10 percent of all total-day sales benefit OKC Pride.

7:30 p.m. Oklahoma City Museum of Art. Screening of LGBT film "Wish Me Away"

Friday, May 18: Outdoor Movie at Sheridan and Lee (Film Row). "The Sons of Tennessee Williams" will be screened at 8:30 p.m. in the parking lot at 614 W. Sheridan Ave. in downtown OKC. Presented by producer/director Tim Wolff and special guest Albert Carey.

Saturday, May 19: Festival, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Film Row in downtown OKC. Other Options Fashion Show – 7 to 9 p.m. with a \$50 admission.

Sunday, May 20: Parade, 6 p.m. Step-off, traditional route. Grandstand near 39th & Penn.

Monday, May 21: Wear Purple Day – Bring awareness to the bullying of youth.

Wednesday, May 23: PFLAG of Norman/Church of the Open Arms/Cimarron Alliance Film Night – A free viewing of "Fish Can't Fly" at Church of the Open Arms, at 3131 N. Penn starting at 7 p.m. Free light snacks.

Friday, May 25: Various club events on The Strip & "Wear Pink Day" – From the original rainbow flag; "Remembering where it all began; a symbol of gay pride."

Saturday, May 26 and 27: Great Plains Rodeo presented by O.G.R.A. at State Fairgrounds.

OKC Pride's recent website makeover makes an abundance of Pride Week and organizational information easily accessible. Visit OKCPride.org for the latest updates on Pride Week and to learn how to get involved.

Director says college in compliance with ADA

YVONNE ALEX
Staff Writer
staffwriter3@occc.edu

OCCC follows numerous laws and policies. Among those policies one of the most important to maintain compliance with is the Americans with Disabilities Act, said Pat Stowe, Student Support Services director. Stowe said the college adheres to the law.

The ADA is essentially protecting against discrimination of Americans with disabilities, Stowe said.

"Everyone on every campus has the same access to an education. When students enter college it becomes their responsibility to let us know that they have a documented disability," Stowe said. "It's our responsibility to get the information out there."

The college has two rooms in the testing center for

reduced distractions for students that have documented disabilities, she said.

"For instance, students who cannot see well enough to read can have the textbooks converted through a lengthy process to audio, then students can pick them up at Student Support Services," Stowe said.

Stowe said the purpose of ADA is to give students with disabilities equal access to an education.

"We offer assisting technology in the library and the communications lab. We also have talking calculators and other tools accessible in our facilities."

Besides technology, Stowe said there are interpreters willing to assist those in need on campus.

"There is a full-time interpreter on campus to go with the deaf wherever they go. We have to determine where our interpreter needs to be standing when we're in tight quarters," she said.

Stowe said the age of the college helped pave the way to compliance.

"Our philosophy of openness lent itself to accessibility," Stowe said. "We are lucky because we were built in the '70s and wide open."

Stowe said students are not required to seek assistance.

"A student with a disability does not have to use us," she said. "It is totally their choice,"

In addition to assisting students with disabilities, her staff offers a slew of information outside her offices that can help students locate community services such as low-cost medical and dental clinics.

Students interested in obtaining more information can find resources on the college website at www.occc.edu/support or stop by their offices located near SEM Entry 3.

Leaders are encouraged to volunteer globally

JEREMY CLOUD

Editor
editor@occc.edu

“Can you hear me?” were the first words heard from the Dominican Republic by a crowd of students and professors in the Bruce Owen Theater last week.

The words were a test for the video conference arranged by Akash Patel, early education major, and the Multicultural Business Club, with representatives of the Model United Nations working with the Office of the First Lady of the Dominican Republic.

The event was hosted by Patel, who introduced his fellow presenters, who spoke to the audience on Skype. The purpose of the conference, Patel said, was to educate students about the opportunities for work study and service learning available through the UN.

“Although the conference focused primarily on the programs available through the office of the First Lady, there are hundreds or even thousands of programs I can think of that students could get involved in,” Patel said.

“Those programs were only the focus because we were running short on time, and students didn’t really ask a lot of questions.”

The opening remarks were delivered by Germain Pichop, business and economics professor, and faculty adviser to the MCBC. He welcomed the audience, and spoke about the purpose of the MCBC.

“The club was founded to help students from different cultures link up with each other,” he said. “As the world moves forward to being a global community every day, it is necessary now more than ever to have a better understanding of different cultures.”

The fact that so many young individuals were present was inspiring, said Stanley Tomy, nursing major.

“Not many people think of volunteering as a big deal,” Tomy said. “They tend to think more about Facebook, and liking things, and so on. And I think for some, especially high school students, that it could be a real eye opener, and help us become better people.”

Victoria Harrell, public relations major, said she was pleased the college and



CHRIS JAMES/PIONEER

Young leaders from the office of the First Lady of the Dominican Republic video conference with students in OCCC’s Bruce Owen theater on April 24. Students were encouraged to ask questions about volunteer organizations which they can get involved with.

the MCBC were providing such an exciting opportunity to work with so many projects.

“But there were a few places where I had a little trouble understanding what was being said,” she said. “While the whole thing was great, I would have liked it if they’d had a handout to help explain the agenda and the programs being discussed.”

Patel said he is compiling a list of volunteer programs available to students, which he will email to anyone who requests it. For more information, Patel can be contacted through the Multicultural Business Club at <http://occc.campus-groups.com/msbc>.

Students win big against professional journalists

MIKE WORMLEY

Online Writer
staffwriter4@occc.edu

Three OCCC students won two awards at The Society of Professional Journalists awards banquet, April 21, at the Jim Thorpe Museum in Oklahoma City.

According to www.okspj.com Division B, the Pioneer’s division, is for newspapers that have a circulation below 25,000.

Pioneer Online Editor Whitney Knight and fellow reporter Joey Stipek took first place in the team investigative reporting category, beating out larger papers like McAlester who took third place in that category.

SPJ is a national organization that supports the community of journalists and journalism students in the U.S. Every year in the spring the SPJ Oklahoma Pro chapter presents awards for notable submissions in the

industry.

This year was unique because the submission process was done electronically and online.

According to the program for the event, 160 entries were entered and judged by chapters in Colorado, Utah, Indiana, Washington, and Kansas City.

First, second and third place awards were given in 126 different categories including the The Carter Bradley First Amendment Award going to Bryan Dean of The Oklahoman, Teacher of the Year given to Melanie Wilderman of Northwestern Oklahoma State University and Lifetime Achievement Award given to Anthony Shadid posthumously.

Knight, said that the major difference between the SPJ awards and the Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association awards is the level of the compe-



It blew my mind to be honored with these people.”

—WHITNEY KNIGHT
PIONEER ONLINE EDITOR

tition.

“OCMA is a huge honor,” she said. “But kind of on a different level. With SPJ we were competing not only with other schools but also small town newspapers.”

The pair won for their article “Investigation exposes food service issue” from the April 1, 2011 issue of the Pioneer.

Another award was received by Pioneer Editor Jeremy Cloud. He placed third in the editorial/commentary category from a piece titled “Animals should get their shots” from the Dec. 2, 2011 issue of the Pioneer.

Both Cloud and Stipek credit personal experience with the topic as a contribution to their success.

“I’m excited to receive this award,” Cloud said. “Especially for something I have an emotional, personal connection to.”

He said that he wrote the piece after disease took the life of his dog.

Stipek said that because of his food service background, after hearing complaints from students about the hours Carson’s was open he had to do an investigation.

Knight communicated a feeling echoed by the other two in their own words.

“It was incredible, the banquet was lovely, and standing around with people from the biggest news organizations was amazing,” Knight said. “It blew my mind to be honored with these people. It was one of the greatest feelings of my life.”

For more information, visit www.spj.org or www.okspj.com.

SPORTS

SPORTS | Summer activities offered

OCCC to host sports, academic classes for kids

MARY MCATEE

Staff Writer

staffwriter2@occc.edu

Although school is over for most students, that doesn't mean the college will turn into a ghost town. OCCC will host academic and fitness programs for both children and adults.

Brannon Dresel, coordinator of community education, said the community outreach and education division will offer College for Kids, a series of "academic enrichment programs" for children.

The program is for first through eighth graders, Dresel said.

The grade level is determined by what grade the child will be entering in the fall.

The classes will begin on June 4 and end July 27, with the week of July 4 off, Dresel said.

Each class is an hour and 45 minutes long, and lasts one week, he said.

A child can take up to four classes in one day.

Dresel said each class is \$39, but parents can get a discount if they maximize their child's schedule.

"The majority of parents choose to come all day, all week," Dresel said. "The reason for that is because an all day student who comes all week is charged \$99, which is a huge discount."

Dresel said this price "includes before-care and aftercare, and free lunch."

Jennifer Kellbach, Recreation and Fitness assistant, said the recreation and fitness center will offer summer camp for children again this year.

The summer programs guide lists several sports that will be offered, including basketball, volleyball, and golf.

"For the sports camps, which are from 8 a.m. to noon, it's \$65 a week," Kellbach said.

There will also be a Fit Kids camp and Camp Rec, two afternoon camps that are not specifically sports related.

Beat the rush



CHRIS JAMES/PIONEER

Eric Heuangsayaseng, allied health major, beats the crowd and scores two points, April 25. Heuangsayaseng says that he tries to hit the basketball court at least twice a week when his class schedule allows.

For Fit Kids camp, it's \$45 for the camp itself, and \$65 if they want to add a swim lesson.

Kellbach said another program, Teen Xtreme, will cater to older children.

"This is the second summer we have offered it," Kellbach said.

"It's geared toward kids who are too old for regular summer camp, but not old enough for a job yet."

Kellbach said the camp focuses on teaching responsibility and leadership, and allows participants an opportunity to volunteer.

"Last year, participants acted as junior counselors for the other camps," Kellbach said.

"They also volunteered at several community organizations, and even hosted a supply drive to send care packages to military personnel overseas."

Teen Xtreme is \$95 per week.

UPCOMING INTRAMURALS EVENTS

May 19: Water Safety Fair in the Aquatic Center begins. For more information, call the Wellness Center at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

May 24: OCCC Mighty Mites T-Ball begins. For more information, call the Wellness Center at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

May 29: 2012 Swim Lessons begin. For more information, call the Wellness Center at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

May 29: Fit Kids Camp begins. For more information, call the Wellness Center at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

June 4-8: OCCC Basketball Camp begins. For more information, call the Wellness Center at 405-682-1611, ext. 7310.

All event news is due Monday by 5 p.m. for inclusion in the next issue.
Email
sportswriter@occc.edu.

Sports camps will begin June 4 and end Aug. 3.

Both Dresel and Kellbach said there are a few programs that create a draw every year.

"The classes we get huge enrollments for are our musical theatre programs," Dresel said. "Those are very popular every year."

Dresel said one of the newest College for Kids classes is creating some buzz as well.

"The new one we're doing that we're finding out is very popular is called Stem camp," Dresel said.

The program is available to children going into grades 5 through 8, and focuses on science, technology, engineering, and math.

The Stem camp will be offered from July 16 to July 27, and is an all day program. The cost is \$50 for a full week of classes.

Kellbach said some of the most popular sports programs for kids are basketball, soccer, flag football, and cheer and dance.

"The flag football and cheer and dance are split between boys and girls and they're offered the same week," Kellbach said.

Community outreach and recreation and fitness will also continue offering adult classes.

For more information, contact the sports and recreation office at 405-682-7860.

Missing phone, injury reported to cops

SARAH HUSSAIN

Senior Writer

seniorwriter@occc.edu

A phone belonging to the college was reported missing at 8 a.m. April 18. Fitness and Recreation Director Roxie Butler notified the police department she had discovered her college-issued iPhone was missing when she came to work that morning.

According to a report filed by Evans, at 12:20 p.m. April 17, Butler attended a meeting on the fourth floor of the library.

Butler said she first realized her phone was pos-

sibly missing at 7 p.m. while attending a function in the Bruce Owen Theater. She said she was going to silence it and when she found it was not in her purse, assumed she had left it in the office.

The phone's serial number is S84927AUC3NP, OCCC Inventory number 031094. The phone is in a black Otter Box protector.

A report of an injured woman sent security officer Fredrick Evans to the aid of Teffany White, a visitor at the college at 2:24 p.m. April 19.

Security Officer Tim Densmore was on patrol outside when he informed dispatch that a woman with three children was sitting on the curb of J.L. Keels

Boulevard in parking lot A. Evans heard the call and started toward her location.

White told Evans she had stepped into a pothole, and twisted her ankle, causing her to fall to the ground.

According to the report, White had then crawled to the curb. She told offices her grandmother was en route to take her to a local hospital for evaluation, and she refused Emergency Medical Services. She was then given an ice pack to use as she waited.

To report a crime, accident, or campus theft information, call OCCC Campus Police at 405-682-1611, ext. 7691, or go to the Campus Police Department located on the first floor of the Main Building.

Capstone speakers to focus on political issues

RACHEL TILLMAN

News Writing Student

Hot-button topics such as the separation of church and state, social stratification and voting rights will be covered in presentations by students in Professor Markus Smith's Political Science capstone class from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 9, in CU3.

Smith is political science department chair and a political science.

One student, Kenneth Meador, said he sees this presentation as a stepping-stone to different opportunities in politics or a law degree.

OCCC College Democrats and College Republicans are working with Smith to make this event a fundraiser for OKC

“This class has pushed me. You learn a lot of material you’ve never covered before.”

—KENNETH MEADOR
OCCC STUDENT

Teacher's Warehouse, as well as an intellectual forum. These presentations give students the opportunity to discuss today's social issues, Smith said.

Six to eight students will present their capstone projects while faculty and students listen and then discuss the matters presented.

Smith said his students have been preparing all semester. Students had to complete a 15-page research paper and then create a five- to 10-minute presentation.

Political science major

James Hodges will present the topic of social capital.

Hodges said he has been able to do extensive research on the relationships people have with one another and how that affects social trust.

Hodges said he has benefited greatly from Smith's capstone course.

“This class has pushed me,” he said. “You learn a lot of material you’ve never covered before.”

Meador is presenting on religion and politics and how each affects the other.

“It is something I have always been interested in.”

Meador said he believes the

presentations give students a better knowledge of political topics and prepares them for the challenges they might face in the political field.

Both Hodges and Meador said they are ready to present their research to the audience but Hodges admitted to slight trepidation.

“I’m nervous because it’s my own work that I’m presenting,” Hodges said.

Smith said he hosts these presentations at the end of each semester. He uses each event to support different charities.

“The students turn presentations into a charitable event,” Smith said.

In years past he said, the students have adopted families for the Christmas holiday and held food drives.

Smith said he was inspired to support OKC Teacher's Warehouse because his wife is a social worker at a school located in an impoverished area where students' basic needs are not met.

Teacher's Warehouse helps approximately 40,000 students in the Oklahoma City area when parents cannot afford the basic needs of school supplies for their children.

The deadline to drop off donations is Wednesday, May 9.

Copy paper and facial tissue can be dropped off anytime at any of the bins located around campus or bring them to the event.

For more information, contact Smith by email at ms-smith@occc.edu or by phone at 405-682-1611, ext. 7730.

Loans: Bankruptcy not the answer to student loan debt

Continued from page 1

agreeing to when taking out the loan.

And, she said, enter into the agreement knowing the loans will have to be repaid once you graduate.

Those who have difficulty repaying the loans have a few options, McMurtrey said.

“We always encourage students [who are] having trouble making their payments ... to contact the organization servicing their loans.

“They can access all loan history on nslds.ed.gov. It would tell them who their servicer is, how much they owe, and how to get in contact with their

servicer,” McMurtrey said.

After graduation, she said, all students are set up on a standard repayment plan which often results in the highest payment for a student loan.

“If students are struggling with their loan payment, they may want to look at the other repayment options that are available and they may qualify for a forbearance or a deferment of their loan for a certain time period based on their financial situation.”

Although some look at filing bankruptcy as a solution, it usually isn't.

McMurtrey said there are certain criteria one would have to meet in order to file for bankruptcy.

“For student loans to be included in a bankruptcy, the individual would have to prove that it would cause undue hardship.

“It requires that the individual show that they made a good faith effort to repay their loans, that they were not able to maintain a minimal standard of living and still repay the debt, and the conditions that prevent the individual from repaying the debt will likely persist for most of the full term of the loan,” she said.

“Even if an individual can prove that this could prove undue hardship, it's likely that even if approved it would result in a partial discharge of the debt.”

McMurtrey said federal and private loans are generally not able to be discharged through bankruptcy.

“There were several laws passed in the 1990s to protect taxpayers from the high number of student loans that were in bankruptcy.”

According to information on Above the Law's website (<http://abovethelaw.com>), it's estimated that “at best,” only 50 percent of student loan debtors are successful in their undue hardship claims.

“So unfortunately it looks like because of the laws and regulations, it doesn't look like bankruptcy is an option for the federal and some of the private educational loans,” McMurtrey said.

CLASSIFIEDS

Pioneer classified advertising is free to all enrolled OCCC students and employees for any personal classified ad. Ad applications must be submitted with IDs supplied by 5 p.m. Mondays prior to the publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail adman@occc.edu.

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Research Participants

(18-19 years old) needed for study on cognitive auditory information processing. This activity requires attending to a single 2.5-hr testing session at the OU Health Sciences Center; cash compensation is provided. Appointments are flexible to accommodate class and work schedules. To request a flyer with details call 405-230-7040, record your name, phone, and e-mail address. The flyer will be sent to your phone or e-mail address.

THIS WEEK'S PIONEER PUZZLE

Public Library

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Henry Ward Beecher quotation.

A C S E I V O M S E N I Z A G A M L I R B
R S H A V Y G O L O H C Y S P R W E N E R
Y A R E I R S N L I B R A R Y C A R D C E
G P B E C O E S E L B A T T Y A N I Y R I
O P L R P K S S O U A W O R R O B N H E P
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E I E P A H I V F T L O H H M I E S H E P
S E D E R D I N O O U N F P T U E T P I B
L N A R G F I S P C O R U H D A E N N U O
E C T B O E I E T L D T E R C E M S C Q O
V E E A E S D N O O E R E L I G I O N E K
O I T C G I I G E R R V A F I C T I O N S
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TRiO

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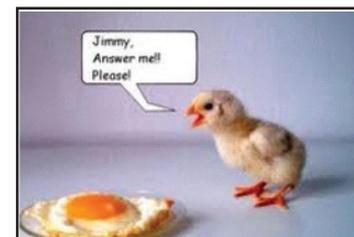
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CAMPUS COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY | Cutting-edge electronics assists music department



CHRIS JAMES/PIONEER

Music Professor Michael Boyle warms up the keys before a performance of “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum” last month in the Bruce Owen Theater. The music department is using some of its new technology, like the electronic drum kit shown, to create an orchestra for the musical.

Technology creates big sound

PARIS BURRIS
News Writing Student

“With only four musicians we could simulate an orchestra,” said Professor Michael Boyle, music director for “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.”

The musical comedy produced on campus in April allowed musicians to generate a big sound with a few instruments—plus the magic of modern technology.

For the first time ever at OCCC, with the use of a few iPads, Macintosh computers, and digital instruments, the music produced for the performances could be simulated without having a traditional full ensemble in the orchestra pit, which usually consists of about 20 members.

“What that means is there are three musicians in the pit band that are playing digital instruments,” Boyle said.

These included keyboard, bass guitar, drums, and other sounds, he said.

“In addition to the musicians and the computers

“With only four musicians we could simulate an orchestra,”

—MICHAEL BOYLE
MUSIC PROFESSOR

in the pit, we’ve got three separate mixers. Mixer number one handles the microphones that amplify the stage.

“Mixer number two amplifies the band Mixer number three amplifies the headphones that all the musicians are wearing,” Boyle said.

There are two sets of speakers on stage so the actors can hear everything and then there are the main speakers, so the audience can hear everything.

“It’s really weird to watch the band because if you were standing there without headphones on, you wouldn’t hear a thing,” Boyle said.

Musicians Zach Lebo, Elad Katz, and Nikola Gjorcezski accompanied Boyle in the pit while he conducted the entire show.

“I think it’s critical for our students to experience a show in the same fashion as the pros are doing it,”

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Service Day: Space Day

Student Life will sponsor a service day at the Science Museum of Oklahoma Friday, May 4, from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Everyone planning to attend should meet in Student Life. For more information, contact Student Life at 405-682-7523.

Gamer Guild: End of the Year Event

The Gamer Guild will host its end of the year event Friday, May 4, from 1 to 5 p.m. in CU1, 2 and 3.

Semester Ends

The Spring semester ends for all classes May 12. Students should remember to sign up for Fall courses early to assure a spot. For more information contact Enrollment and Student Services at 405-682-1611, ext. 7784.

New Student Orientation

New student orientation for the summer semester will begin at 9:30 a.m. Friday, May 9, in CU2 and CU3. Orientation allows students to receive a full tour of the campus and its facilities. Additional orientations are scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Thursday, May 17, 6 p.m. Monday, May 21, and 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 30. For more information on New Student Orientation or to volunteer, contact the office of Student Life at 405-682-7523.

**All Highlights are due
Monday by noon
for inclusion in the next issue.
Email your event to
communitywriter@occc.edu.**

Boyle said.

“And that’s one thing OCCC has always been really good at -- being abreast of all the current technology.”

Boyle said they used an iMac computer, a MacBook Pro laptop, an off-the-shelf MacBook laptop, and the Roland Digital V Drums, which are electronic drums that are quiet to the ear without the headphones or speakers that transmit the sound.

“It’s fascinating to do a show like this,” Boyle said.

Boyle has 30 years of experience in electronic music.

“This is fun,” Boyle said.

“This is what I love to do. I’m a computer geek.”

Boyle said funding for this new technology came through a variety of sources. Some came from the OCCC music budget, along with some extra funds from Academic Affairs.

Finally some of the technology was personal equipment provided by the musicians themselves.

For more information about the music department, contact Michael Boyle by email at mboyle@occc.edu or by phone 405-682-7558, ext. 7245.

Pathways senior receives coveted scholarship

ALEX BLETT

News Writing Student

A senior at Pathways Middle College High School, Brianna Dick, learned recently that she is one of 1,000 students in the U.S. to receive the Gates Millennium Scholarship.

This scholarship will cover the rest of her college education from her bachelor's degree to her doctorate.

The scholarship could total close to a quarter of a million dollars in tuition, books, and living expenses, said Carol Brogan, principal at Pathways, which is located on the OCCC campus.

Brogan spoke highly of her student. Brogan said Dick deserves all the credit herself.

She will be the first Pathways student ever to receive this scholarship.

"We'd like to say that we did something about it but she really is a top student," Brogan said.

"She does a remarkably good job."

After speaking with a family member who suggested that Dick, 17, apply for this scholarship, she and her teacher looked into the details, Dick



Brianna Dick

"I started jumping up and down once I opened the envelope," Dick said.

said. Barely submitting the application on time, the young woman waited for months to hear the good news.

Dick recalled the afternoon when she found out the news of her acceptance

"At first I was really down all day because they were supposed to notify us through email if we were a finalist in mid-April and it was three days past that," she said.

However, when she arrived home that afternoon there was something waiting for her in the mail.

“ I started jumping up and down once I opened the envelope,”

—BRIANNA DICK
PATHWAYS STUDENT

Dick, a Tulsa native who moved to Oklahoma City so her older sister could attend the University of Oklahoma, said she looks forward to attending college in the fall at either the University of Oklahoma or the University of Tulsa.

Dick expects to enter the university with 34 college credit hours under her belt because of Pathway's concurrent enrollment program, which allowed her to earn college credits in high school.

She plans to study business with a focus in management and one day hopes to obtain a top management position.

Pathways is an Oklahoma City public school that serves eighth through 12th grade students who must apply for admission.

Their mission is to serve motivated students who express a desire to earn a high school diploma and work toward a college degree.

For more information on the Gates Millennium Scholarship or for a list of scholar winners and profiles, visit www.gmsp.org.

Choirs to perform May 8

MOLLIE HAWKINS

News Writing Student

An original composition from one of OCCC's own choir students will be performed in the choral concert at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 8, said music Professor Ron Staton.

Vocalists will showcase their musical skills at the Wilmont Place Baptist Church, located at 6440 S. Santa Fe in Oklahoma City.

"We are expecting a crowd of around 500 people," Staton said.

The audience is too large to fit in the Bruce Owen Theater on campus, so Staton arranged for a larger venue off campus.

This is the sixth year Staton has conducted the school's choral music performances.

To prepare for such a large crowd, Staton said he and his students have been attending three rehearsals per week all semester long.

The program will include "Tocatta of Praise" by Joseph M. Martin, "Night and Day" by Cole Porter, and "If You Believe in Music" by Gary Fry, among

other selections.

Some of the music being performed will sound familiar to those in the audience, Staton said.

The students will be performing music from popular movies as well as Broadway musicals, in addition to the standard concert repertory found in many of OCCC musical performances.

"We just try to have a variety so there is a little bit of something for everyone," Staton said.

"People have different tastes and like different styles.

"By having such a wide range of music, all of our guests can hear something they like."

The 17 student performers are involved in different choral groups on campus, including the Concert Choir, the Chamber Singers, the Symphonic Choir and the Community Choir.

Student Kirby Shaw is a chamber singer in the concert.

"I really enjoy being in the spring concert," he said.

"Because so many of the songs will be recognizable, I think our audience will too."

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