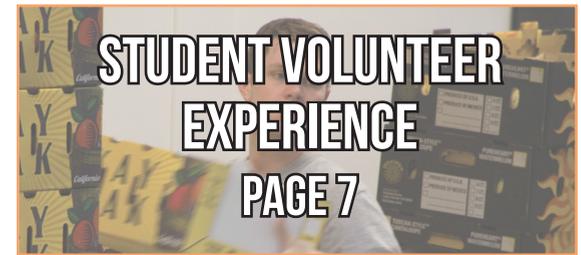


# PIONEER



## ITT Chaos: Former students face *tough* choices



**ITT Tech:** No activity at school at 50 Penn Place in Oklahoma City. *Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer*

**SOPHIA BABB**

Editor

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**S**ylvia Treat has been a nursing student at ITT Technical Institute since 2014. With two young children, a part time job and a full schedule of classes, Treat said she was excited to become a registered nurse after years of hard work.

Treat enrolled at ITT Tech. She enjoyed the time she spent there.

"I had a good experience at ITT, I really liked the school," she said. "I started in December of 2014, I was supposed to graduate June of 2017 with my nursing degree."

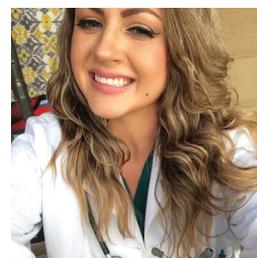
But like thousands of ITT Tech students across the nation, Treat's dream of graduating at her school was cut short.

"I found out the school was closing the day it closed," she said. "I woke up to an email around 8:30 a.m. I was completely in shock."

Thirty minutes after finding out her school had closed, Treat learned that she had not only lost the chance of earning her degree on time, but she had also lost her job.

"I received an email from my job stating that since I was no longer a student working towards my RN, I could no longer work there," she said. "My entire life has been pulled out from beneath me."

ITT Technical Institute closed on September 6, after the U.S. Department of



**Sylvia Treat**

See ITT Page 9

## College expects more than \$600K in surplus funds

**VICTOR A. POZADAS**

Art & Music Writer

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Though Oklahoma City Community College is expected to receive more than \$729,000 from the state budget surplus, most of those funds will be stashed in a savings account, President Jerry Steward told the school's Board of Regents last week.

Speaking at a Board of Regents meeting on Sept. 19, Steward said OCCC expects to receive about \$528,000 in the state budget surplus fund from fiscal year 2016.

And most of that money, he said, will be saved.

"We're not just going to start spending it," he said.

Steward said OCCC also expects to receive an additional \$184,000 which is earmarked for the schools' concurrent enrollment program and \$17,000 to be used for capital projects or improvements.

The funds are the college's share of the \$20.7 million returned to State Regents for Higher Education from the Oklahoma Legislature.

In a recent web post, the Oklahoma State Regents For Higher Education said they have set aside a portion of the surplus to go into Concurrent Enrollment programs at campuses across the state in a \$2.3 million allocation.

"While the concurrent enrollment budget request has never been fully funded, these earmarked dollars will restore funding from 35 percent to 62 percent of the total cost to the institutions," the post on the regent's website said.

State Representative Dennis Casey, R-Morrison, a member of the House of Representatives Higher Ed and Career Tech Committee, said lawmakers support concurrent enrollment due to the benefit it brings to students.

"Students don't pay that tuition, and the main motivating factor is that these students during their Junior and Senior year of high school are getting up to twenty or thirty hours of college



**Jerry Steward**

See BUDGET Page 9

## EDITORIAL/OPINION

EDITORIAL | SQ 779 COULD GENERATE \$615 MILLION A YEAR FOR EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

# Time to do your part for education



State Question 779, also known as the Oklahoma One Percent Sales Tax, will be on the upcoming November 8 ballot.

Oklahoma voters should vote yes on the question.

SQ 779 is a proposed constitutional amendment that levies a one percent tax increase, the proceeds would be used for funding Oklahoma's education systems.

Specific funds from the increase will be allocated for teacher pay raises, increasing reading scores in early grades, improving college readiness, and making college more affordable.

Ballotpedia lays out the meaning of a "yes" or "no" vote as:

A "yes" vote for SQ 779 is a vote in favor of increasing the state sales tax by one percent to generate a predicted \$615 million per year for education funding.

A "no" vote for SQ 779 is a vote against increasing the state sales tax.

SQ 779 comes at a vital time for Oklahoma education. Many public schools are suffering from inadequate funding and teacher shortages, caused by legislative budget cuts.

Earlier this year, a three percent decrease in oil revenue caused a loss of \$900 million in the state budget. Major cuts were made to state agencies, including the Department of Education and the Regents for Higher Education.

A study by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association showed Oklahoma school districts started the fall semester with more than 500 vacancies in teaching positions. In addition, 1300 support staff and teaching assistant positions have been eliminated since the 2015-2016 school year.

Teacher shortages have increased classroom sizes and the number of under-qualified teachers hired with emergency teaching certificates. Shawn Hime the executive director of the OSSBA said people who have never trained a day as a teacher are now responsible for teaching elementary school students how to read and do math.

"We have high school students who can't take Spanish because their school can't find a teacher," Hime said.

Shortened school weeks have also presented obstacles for low-income students who rely on school meals for their main source of nutrition. A 2015-2016 report by the Oklahoma State Department of Education shows that two out of three Oklahoma students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.

Removing a day from the school week would cause some children to go three days without an adequate meal.

Oklahoma education is ranked 46th in the nation for education quality by the Education Week Research Center, with rankings calculated on the basis of K-12 achievement, student chance for success, and the amount of school financing received from the state. Without an increase of funding for schools and teachers, Oklahoma's ranking will likely stay the same.

SQ 779 gives public school teachers a \$5,000 pay raise. The current average salary for Oklahoma teachers is \$44,549, which is below the \$47,887 regional average. If SQ 779 is passed, Oklahoma teachers will earn as much as Texas and Colorado educators. This raise could not be used for superintendent salaries and cannot be used to fund superintendent positions.

The expansion of existing programs and the adoption of new programs will also be a part of SQ 779. Higher graduation rates, college and career readiness, and the improvement of reading skills in early grades are the focus of academic initiatives addressed in SQ 779.

Opponents of SQ 779 include Sen. Kyle Loveless. Loveless wrote a public statement against SQ 779, saying the legislature needs to lead the charge in reducing the number of districts and eliminate wasteful mandates.

"The legislature needs to encourage competition by expanding public-charter schools and by creating an education savings account program that would

empower parents to be more flexible when choosing their child's educational path," Loveless said.

Loveless' suggestion for a reduction of school districts would not solve the lack of funding for Oklahoma schools, but cut jobs and restrict access to closer neighborhood schools. Charter schools often serve a select population of students, with more obstacles in the enrollment process than traditional public schools.

The outcome of SQ 779 will affect every Oklahoman, including students at every level, teachers, professors, and all taxpayers contributing to the increase. A quality education for Oklahoman children is vital for our communities to thrive. As Benjamin Franklin wrote in *The Way To Wealth*, "an investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

Oklahomans should vote yes on SQ 779 for the future of educated children in Oklahoma.

—SOPHIA BABB  
EDITOR



We value your opinion.  
Send your letters to the editor to [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu)  
and visit our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/OCCCPioneer](https://www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer)

# COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

MUSIC REVIEW | NEW ALBUM "SONDERLUST"

## Kishi Bashi makes heartache sound beautiful

Seattle native singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist Kaoru Ishibashi creates sounds of uplifting heartbreak -- a confusing and paradoxical feeling, to accept or deny anything you can do for someone to love or belong to you.

Ishibashi, who goes by Kishi Bashi, has gone through the motions of a thirteen year relationship, with an ending that left him writing and creating his fourth full length album.

"Sonderlust" is a compilation of wishes, hurt, and second chances. I can imagine nothing more cathartic than creating something that encapsulates the good, the bad, and the hope of love after knowing and understanding the complexities of what makes a relationship rise and fall.

Ishibashi is an artist that can be hard to categorize. He takes his influences and sounds in a wide variety of ways. It's a disservice to his talent to try and call him one genre or style, but for this review's sake let's call his music indie, progressive, electro-acoustic pop.

There's a beauty in Ishibashi's wide soundscape. The amount of space a person can almost feel when a song is played is what this album excels at.

It's not as simple as just putting more layers on a track, there is an art to making so many sounds and harmonies work in perfect unison and still be pleasing to listen to.

It's all about the approach to the craft. Ishibashi doesn't restrict himself to any label or adjective that people come up with. He has a wide variety of instruments to his artistic capacity, and it really shines in his album.

Strings and vocal manipulation set the stage for this short, ten-song tracklist of the creative, upbeat, and beautiful.



**Kaoru Ishibashi:** Kishi Bashi released his new album "Sonderlust" on Sept. 16 [kishibashi.com](http://kishibashi.com)

A definite highlight is the song "Can't Let Go, Juno". It starts with a simple melody that carries the song once the percussion and strings join. In a gorgeous transition, synthesizers and violins take the lead to introduce Bashi for a song of breakup and recovery.

It's not a tune talking about pain and suffering. It takes the situation of "what if?" and leaves it to you.

Would you burn all those letters? Could you fake it after it happened? Could you let go?

Wrap yourself in a world of optimistic sadness, "Sonderlust" is available on digital markets and streaming platforms.

—VICTOR A. POZADAS  
ART & MUSIC WRITER

**Do you have an idea for a review? Send it to the Pioneer!  
Email to the Pioneer editor at [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu)**

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The PIONEER is a student publication of Oklahoma City Community College through the Division of Arts. It is published bi-weekly during the 16-week fall and spring semesters and the eight-week summer session.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the PIONEER, the college or the publisher.

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 reserves the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be no more than 250 words. Students must list a major. OCCC staff and faculty must list a 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](mailto:editor@occc.edu) with a phone number for verification included.

The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at <http://pioneer.occc.edu>.

# Quiet corner of campus set aside for veterans

**SOPHIA BABB**  
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The sign above the door reads, “Veterans Lounge.” Found in the back of the Social Sciences building, a large room with couches, chairs, computers and a kitchen set sits empty on a Thursday afternoon.

After a few minutes, Laura Hancock, a veteran of the US Army, comes in with her service dog.

A few others slowly walk in and a conversation starts between them.

Hancock, a Psychology major at Oklahoma City Community College, is one of the veterans who frequents the lounge.

“I use it for studying, getting away from everyone, talking to other vets,” she said.

The lounge is located in the Social Sciences Center, in room 1H12 – but it’s not easy to find.

In fact, some veterans, including Hancock, have commented on the hard-to-find placement of the room.

“Since no one knows about it, the location is kind of hard to get to even when you explain directions,” Hancock said. “I only found out about the lounge by being over there. I was sitting over there and I just looked up and asked, ‘was that sign there the whole time?’”

Lance Witherow, Marine Corps veteran and OCCC student since March, had a similar experience.

“I had no idea about the veterans lounge until two days ago. It’s kind of hard to stumble upon it when it’s in the back corner of a forgotten room,” Witherow said. “I went to go check it out and it was locked. I just left. Not to sound like it’s an unimportant thing, but if I have to put a lot of effort just to study in there, I can find a different place to study.”

The lounge was opened in the spring, and dedicated by OCCC President Jerry Steward on May 16.

In an email to the Pioneer, Steward said that the lounge was created “to provide students with veteran status a quiet and relaxed environment to study and enjoy the company of fellow veterans.”

OCCC reported 660 veteran students enrolled during the 2015-2016 school year.

However, due to a lack of advertising and signage, many veterans are unaware of the lounge. A number of veterans spend their time in the Veterans Services Office, located in the main building.

Air Force veteran Kira Strickland had never heard of the Veteran’s Lounge before, and did not know how to get to it. “I’ve been in the building before but never been to the lounge,” she said. “I heard it’s always locked, I don’t know if I’ll bother going over there.”

Strickland said she’s met other veter-

ans at the Veterans Services Office while getting her enrollment processed.

“I sometimes eat lunch in there too so I won’t just be sitting by myself,” she said. “It’d be nice if it [the lounge] was closer. I actually thought to myself, ‘I wish we had an area where we could go. My old school had one, but everything was in the same area so you got to know the veterans staff as well as the other veteran students.’”

Hancock said she wished the two rooms were closer, too.

“There is a lot of people who hang out in the small little office of Veterans Services,” Hancock

said. “It would be more convenient if Veterans Services was closer. It’s hard to have several service dogs in that small room too.”

Steward said the lounge was located away from high traffic areas on purpose.

“The space is purposefully designed to be set apart from the busy activity of classrooms, labs, and other high traffic areas on campus so students using the lounge will have a quieter and more calm work space,” he said.

A report by the Community College Research Center indicates that 44 percent of student veterans have “four or more risk factors associated with non-completion, such as part-time college enrollment, working full-time while enrolled in college, and supporting a family.”

Steward said he wanted to address the difficulties of returning to civilian life with the opening of the veterans lounge.

“Our students with veteran status face unique challenges when they return from duty to civilian life, and the lounge provides a dedicated space for these students to study and focus on these goals,” he said. “It also provides them an opportunity to interact with

students with similar life experiences.”

Witherow agreed, adding that many veterans face challenges when returning from a military lifestyle.

There are people who build camaraderie in the lounge and Veterans Services

office so they can better assimilate into a school population,” Witherow said. “That is a difficult transition to go from a military mentality to a mostly liberal mentality. When you meet those people, you’re able to connect.”

Though the veterans lounge is being used by veteran students, many said they wish the lounge was advertised and easier to find.

“At least having the Veteran’s Lounge being advertised more,” Witherow said. “Addressing things up front would be helpful, saying this is why we have it, this is why we need it, so other students won’t say ‘oh the veterans are crazy, they need their own space.’ That’s not true, so advertising it for its purpose would be good.”

**“There is a lot of people who hang out in the small little office of Veterans Services,” Hancock said. “It would be more convenient if Veterans Services was closer. It’s hard to have several service dogs in that small room too.”**



**The Veterans Lounge:** in room 1H12 of the Social Sciences Center. Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer



**Keisha Williams:** Single Mothers Academic Resource Team Coordinator, connects single parents with resources. *Mateusz Gugalka/Pioneer*

## Program allows single parents to pursue a degree

**ERIKA FIERRO**

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After discontinuing her college career two years ago, Rachel Maag, a diversified studies major and mother to three-year old Henry, returned to continue her education.

Establishing a comfortable daily routine with Henry has been a challenge, she said.

Maag said her biggest need was financial assistance. “Keisha was really good about listening to my needs,” Maag said. “She connected me with resources to help pay my rent and utilities.”

Keisha Williams, is the statewide coordinator of Single Mothers Academic Resource Team, a support group for single mothers seeking to continue their education.

Including Maag, the program has served nearly 200 students since it began at OCCC in 2012, Williams said.

To qualify, single mothers must be a current Oklahoma City Community College student or must be seeking to enroll, she said.

“If they’re not yet a student, I physically help them with the enrollment process at the main campus,” Williams said.

Mothers taking general educational development classes also qualify for SMART.

Williams said she understood the challenges faced by working mothers who are going to college. Trying to juggle work, school and providing for a family as a single parent is not easy, she said.

“I was a single mother going through college and I know the barriers the mother’s face on a daily basis,” she said. “It’s a very emotional journey.”

Williams said there is an application process where she meets with the single mothers on an individual basis to determine their needs as they begin their journey in higher education.

Although the program focuses on single mothers, Williams said single fathers can also be a part of the program.

SMART primarily focuses on providing the mothers with information about resources in the community that they may not be aware of, Williams said. Some of the organizations include the Infant Crisis Center, Oklahoma Money Matters and The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

Every month the moms come together to share their thoughts, interests and needs, she said. “I wish something like this would’ve been in place as I was raising my children,” Williams said.

Not only does Williams act as a liaison between the mothers and different organizations, but the mothers learn from each other, Maag said.

“I’ve only been with the program for two months and during the first monthly support group meeting I learned about WIC and how it works from another single mom.”

Williams said her greatest challenge as a single mother and a college student were finances. “There was never enough money.” Another barrier was finding safe and reliable child care for her two daughters, Briauna and Aysia.

Although child care services are not offered directly by SMART, the single parent is referred to the Child Development Center, located at OCCC’s Family and Community Education Center.

The Child Development Center offers students who are parents childcare. Williams said does charge for its services but the center also accepts funding through the Department of Human Services.

Maag said DHS provided child care financial assistance so that Henry could attend the Child Development Center while she’s in class.

“I wouldn’t have made it without my close relationship with God,” Williams said. “Secondly, my kids gave me the determination to make something of myself.”

Williams said she graduated from Southern Nazarene University with a Bachelor’s degree in family studies and gerontology.

Williams became the SMART statewide coordinator in 2014.

SMART is funded through a grant from the Women’s Foundation of Oklahoma, she said. According to the foundation’s website, wfok.org, since 2004 \$260,000 have been disbursed in grants.

“I didn’t know what I was getting myself into when I joined SMART but I encourage other single mothers to give it a try,” Maag said. “Don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

The SMART office is located at the off-site branch of OCCC, Family and Community Education Center. For more information about the program contact Williams at 405-682-1611 ext. 7117 or by e-mail at keisha.l.williams@occc.edu.

# Children's art becomes larger than life at local studio

VICTOR A. POZADAS

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Remember the stories you imagined as a kid? Whisking yourself away to faraway lands, hanging out with your favorite characters and daydreaming to your heart's content?

Local artist Erin Shaw brings the adventure her son Samuel wrote to life with a new visual tale that can be explored and experienced.

"The Stream of Stories" is hosted by Current Studio on 1218 N. Penn and is open to the public on regular exhibit hours from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday - Sunday and from noon to 9 p.m. Thursdays.

Artist Erin Shaw said she was very pleased with her work and was taking a step back to remember how the project started to finally seeing the big picture.

"It's different than any show that I normally do because it was so collaborative. I love watching people come in and look at their reactions as they're experiencing it as well," she said.

Shaw said she gives much love and credit to her son Samuel, who wrote the mysterious and surreal story. "Without a doubt he's influenced me probably as much as any person out there."

The journey began on a simple snow day.

Samuel was drawing with his mother. Shaw then noticed something she never considered and acted on it. "He looked at his drawing and looked at my drawing, then put a big 'X' through his," Shaw said. "He didn't think it was good enough, and so that kind of started this 'I wonder how I can help protect that part of his creativity?'"

Shaw said she never saw him experience self-criticism before, and it was heartbreaking.



**Stream of Stories:** Exhibited at Current Studio until Oct. 13 in Oklahoma City. *Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer*

She found a way to preserve Samuel's art and it blossomed into a series of collaborations.

"That's kind of how it started," Shaw said, "I took photographs and made paintings out of them. It very organically evolved into 'Let's do another project, what should we do?' This is definitely the most amazing collaboration that we've done so far."

Co-Founder of Current Studio Kelsey Karper said the exhibit walks people through the story and explained how the exhibit is a demonstration of what an artist can do with some time and support.

"Erin did all of this on site, so she was working in the space the entire month of August," Karper said, "We provided her financial and logistical support and it helped her make it all possible."

The inspiration Shaw had not only came from her child, but also other children with their own visions of the characters – but the children who contributed did not know what the story was about.

"Shaw put out a call to kids throughout OKC to submit drawings of the characters in this story," Karper said, "So rather than giving them the story, she gave them a list of all the things she needed drawings of; clouds, trees, birds in clothes, campfires, tents. We gathered all these drawings from kids."

The event's theme was children's drawings and Samuel's vision, so Shaw took elements of those drawings, blew them up to larger than life and hand painted them to create this environment that illustrates Samuel's story.

Shaw said picking the right drawings out of the lot was easy, and made sense to her.

"It seemed pretty obvious to me as I was looking at all of them. The setting was actually in a cave and I wanted to have cave drawings on the wall so we were able to incorporate a lot more drawings because of that," Shaw said.

Current Studio holds regular "Current Thursdays" that serve as an open house to the public.

"The Stream of Stories" exhibit will have its closing day on October 13, so hurry up and dream.

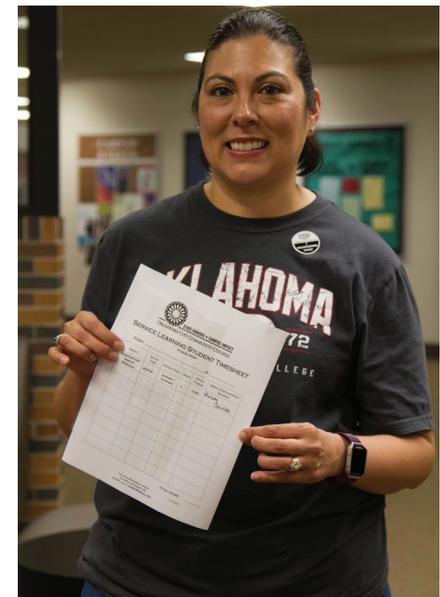


**Art from the Kids** *Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer*



**Noah:** Draws for the show *Current Studio*

# OCCC students volunteer at Food Bank



Photos by  
Aaron Cardenas  
Pioneer



**Service Learning:** (Top left) Esther Barr, volunteering at the Regional Food Bank on Friday, September 16th. (Top right) Elka Ford, a member of Student Life's Civic Honors program which requires students to complete 50 hours of service learning/volunteering. (Center left) Cornelia Vann, Travis Ruddle, and Kristi Fields. (Center right) Student Life Program Assistant, Kristi Fields. (Bottom) Left to Right: Aaron Cardenas, Esther Barr, Cornelia Vann, Travis Ruddle, Melvin Mathews, Elka Ford and Barbara Crawford helped sort donations into 10,838 meals.

# Derek Scarsella: From fearing school to mastering it

GRACE BABB

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Derek Scarsella is a vibrant presence on Oklahoma City Community College's campus – known by many as a hard worker, conscientious student and friend.

Her roots at OCCC go back to her adolescence, where she spent summers at the campus with former Pioneer Lab Director Ronna Austin, whom she called her “second mom.”

During high school, Scarsella said she felt pushed away by her teachers, and became discouraged about pursuing a higher education.

“Growing up, I was a problem child. You couldn't keep me in a classroom, I had been marginalized by a lot of teachers and adults in my life. I didn't feel worthy of an education,” she said.

Thirteen years passed between the time she graduated high school and the day she returned to school to take classes at OCCC in the spring of 2014.

Math was a source of difficulty throughout high school, so Scarsella feared taking college algebra.

For years, she didn't believe that she was capable of succeeding, but that turned around within her first year of attending college classes.

“I was math phobic in high school, so I didn't go to college,” she said. “When I aced my college algebra class, it was a defining moment for me.”

Being immersed into the culture of academia and education lifted Scarsella's self worth. She found purpose and value in herself through volunteering and helping in every area of the college that she could.

“Going from a very mediocre high school student, to doing the things on campus that I do and keeping the grade point average that I have has done more for my self esteem than any counseling or therapy could have done,” Scarsella said.

This past year, Scarsella was picked to receive the Nigh Academy Scholarship. She called the award one of the most remarkable things she has experienced during her time at the college.

“Just knowing that out of the 20,000 or so students we have here, that I was the one who got picked, it was remarkable,” Scarsella said.

The scholarship helped her to focus less on money, and more on her education.

“I'm a single mom, so it helped me take care of my daughter. It helped me be able to focus more on my education,” Scarsella said.

Scarsella's resilience showed through last semester, when personal hardships began to take their toll.

“I went through a divorce, and that was, person-



**Derek Scarsella:** Known among professors and peers as a superstar of OCCC. *Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer*

ally, the hardest thing I have ever gone through,” Scarsella said.

Through it all, Scarsella missed a total of three classes, and ended up making her first B.

“It was gut wrenching for me. I had a pristine GPA,” Scarsella said.

She doesn't feel completely negative about the grade, though.

“Now, I look back at my transcript, and I see that B as a marker that represents my ability to continue on through whatever life throws at me and still be successful,” Scarsella said.

Scarsella began working on campus in the Student Life office during the spring of 2016.

Colette Pouliot worked alongside Scarsella for about six months, the pair formed a connection in that short time.

“I look up to her so much because she had so much great advice on life. She was a really wonderful person to be around,” Pouliot said.

Apart from working in Student Life, Scarsella has been actively involved in various campus affairs during her time here.

“In my first semester, I started in Campus Impact and Civic Honors. One of my Civic Honors projects was to do tutoring with Dr. Vaughan,” Scarsella said.

Scarsella has taken a total of three classes with political science professor Dr. Sharon Vaughan, and will take another with her next semester before graduating.

“She is by far my favorite professor here. She doesn't

dumb stuff down. She expects you to do well, she raises you up,” Scarsella said.

Vaughan and Scarsella were both new to the college when they first crossed paths.

“I had Derek for American Government my first or second semester here. She was a very good student,” Vaughan said.

Both Vaughan and Pouliot touched on Scarsella's ability to keep going despite difficult times.

“She had one tough semester, but she bounced back, and is doing well,” Vaughan said.

Pouliot agreed: “She was strong, and kept going. I really admire her for that.”

Dr. Vaughan sees Scarsella completing her associate's degree and going on to get her bachelor's degree with no trouble.

“I really think she will go on to get a graduate degree. I could see her even being a professor someday. I could easily see that,” Vaughan said.

Derek will graduate in the spring of 2017, transferring to the University of Oklahoma to continue her Political Science degree.

“I'm sad to see her go, but I know she's on to do bigger and better things elsewhere,” Pouliot said.

“I will absolutely miss OCCC. I'm nervous,” Scarsella said.

“I'll be just as nervous to start at OU as I was to start here. I have to start at the bottom again and work my way up, but it will be fun to prove myself again.”

# ITT: Consequences of closure unforeseen

Continued from Page 1

Education announced it would no longer give federal financial aid to new students enrolling in the school. In Oklahoma City, more than 82 percent of ITT's freshman class received federal grants. With similar numbers found nationwide, the loss of federal aid money became a death sentence for the school.

Published reports estimate that more than 40,000 students were affected by the closure, leaving the majority of those students in a quandary regarding student loan debt and unfinished degrees. In addition, a posting on the school's website told students that they would have trouble transferring to a new college or university.

"It is unlikely that any credits earned at the school will be transferable to or accepted by any institution," a posting on ITT's website said.

For Treat and thousands of others, the question is simple: "Where do I go from here?"

The U.S. Department of Education has outlined the options for ITT Tech students, many of which have particular qualifications and proceedings. Students are eligible for a 100 percent discharge of federal loans if:

The school closes while the student enrolled, and the student did not complete their program because of the closure.

The school closes within 120 days after the student withdraws.

Federal laws adds another level of difficulty. Students are not eligible for a discharge of loans if they seek to continue their education. Those students

who transfer any of their academic credits earned at the closed school to another school, or if they have completed all of their coursework from the closed school, will have to repay their loans.

For Treat, her \$10,000 in student debt will continue.

She decided to transfer her earned credits to Wesleyan University in Bartlesville. Because she is transferring, none of her loans will be forgiven. Treat said hopes to have her degree finished in May of 2018.

But other ITT students – including those who hope to transfer to colleges such as Oklahoma City Community College – won't get the opportunity to transfer their credits. Amanda Williams-Mize, OCCC's Assistant Director of Graduation, Employment and Transfer Services said the credits earned by students at ITT Tech will not transfer.

"ITT Technical Institute is accredited through the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools, which means it is not regionally accredited," she said in an email. "OCCC, as most colleges and universities, only accepts transfer credit from regionally accredited institutions. We are unable to award any transfer credit for ITT Technical Institute due to this practice."

It would be rare that a state college or university will be able to accept any of their coursework at ITT Tech, Williams-Mize said.

A limited number of schools will accept credits from ITT Tech, including other for-profit schools such as the University of Phoenix and DeVry University. These schools are similar to ITT Tech -- a majority of their revenue comes from federal aid. And, federal

records show that both the University of Phoenix and DeVry are being investigated by the Federal Trade Commission for misleading claims.

In 2014, ITT Tech was listed in second place on Time Magazine's list of "The 5 Colleges that Leave the Most Students Crippled by Debt". The University of Phoenix was ranked as number one, DeVry University was number four.

Still, for some ITT students who choose to come to OCCC, a few options are available.

"If a student does come to OCCC to continue education, there are options for them to take CLEP tests in an area they feel proficient in, which would allow them to get credit for a course without having to actually take the course," Williams-Mize said.

CLEP, or the College Level Examination Program, provides students with the opportunity to test out of certain college courses.

A link to all the CLEP tests and scores required to earn credit at OCCC can be found at <http://www.occc.edu/get/apclep.html>.

Though she will be able to finish her education, Treat remains upset because of ITT's sudden closure and the fact that she has to start again at a new college.

A lesson, she said, she won't forget anytime soon.

"The students (at ITT) had no idea. A couple weeks prior to the closing, they stopped accepting new students but told us it in no way affected current students," she said. "I have cried everyday and I don't understand why this is happening or why all of us are going through this. They have completely destroyed countless lives and are now tearing families apart."

## Budget: School waiting to receive reserve funds

Continued from Page 1

credits," he said.

Casey, a former CareerTech superintendent, said the classes student are taking come with no strings attached, and these students can get a feel to prepare for higher education.

The surplus funds became available after the projections on last year's budget overcompensated in calculating revenue failure, which served as a margin of error for the state budget.

"The money just didn't appear, the budget was cut too much by one percent," said State Senator Kyle Loveless, R-Oklahoma City. Loveless said the legislation didn't have any discretion on the the distribution of those funds.

OCCC Chief Financial Officer John Boyd said the college's budget was cut by \$2.4 million, after the

Oklahoma Legislature declared a revenue failure.

"We've already prepared our budget for seventeen, so what we've budgeted for expenditure is all we can

***"Until I have the money in the bank, those are just words to me. I'm not going to hold my breath."***

spend," Boyd said. If received, money could be spent in FY 2017, but Boyd said the funds are expected to be used in the plan for the FY 2018 budget as a carryover.

Boyd said OCCC is still waiting on the bulk of the allocated funds to be paid.

"All we've received, to date, is the seventeen thousand of section thirteen money. We have not been told how the five hundred and eight thousand will be received, we've been told it will be part of our base

allocation for FY17," he said.

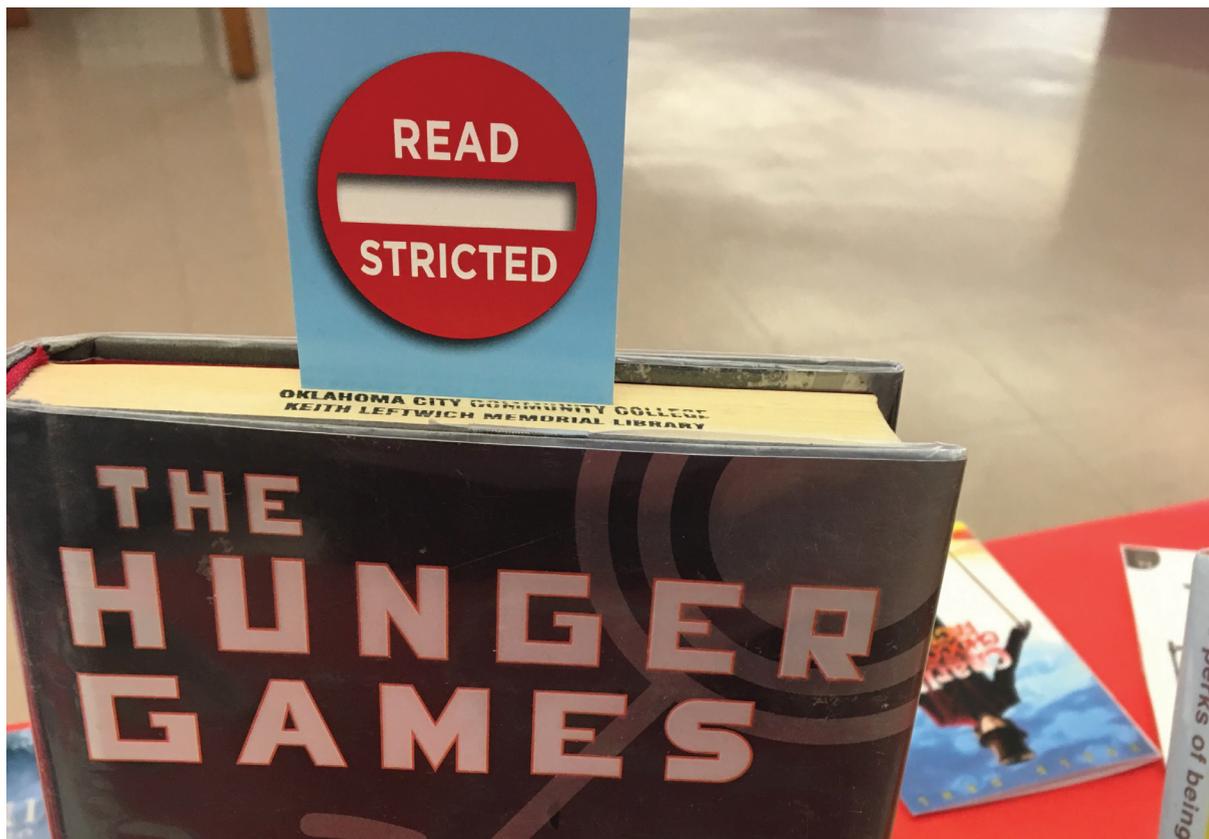
Boyd said the college has not been informed of how the allocation will occur or if it will occur. "We could have another revenue failure. Then those additional monies will be taken right out of our budget," he said.

"Until I have the money in the bank, those are just words to me. I'm not going to hold my breath."

Boyd also said the money could potentially be spent on fees related to the FACE Center investigation. The FY 2017 budget has a "contingency fund" dedicated to legal fees, as "any college our size is going to have professional service fees," worked into the budget.

For more than a month, OCCC administrators have been investigation allegations for fraud and potential violations of the Oklahoma Computer Crimes Act at the FACE Center.

Take part in the conversation – leave a comment on our facebook page.  
[www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer](http://www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer)



**Visit the Library:** to learn about the First Amendment and why some have sought to ban and restrict some of literatures most popular titles. *Jorge Krzyzaniak/Pioneer*

## Library shows off naughty list

**RAVEN DIAZ**

Staff Writer

staffwriter2@occc.edu

“The Fault in Our Stars” has been banned – but it’s not the only mainstream literary work that’s been challenged.

Many popular novels, including “The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” “The Chronicles of Narnia,” and “The Great Gatsby,” have been challenged.

Beginning Sept. 25, those books will be celebrated at the Keith Leftwich Memorial Library, during Banned Books Week. The event, library officials said, is a week to defend the right to read, while acknowledging the celebration of knowledge.

More than 135 banned or challenged books will display at library.

Circulation Librarian Ann Raia said for a novel to be considered banned, someone in America or around the world has found that book to be “controversial or inappropriate” and a library has decided to remove that book from their shelves.

“Books being banned does not happen as often today, but sometimes books do become challenged, meaning that someone has made a complaint against that book and the library disagreed with that complaint, so they kept the book,” Raia said.

Electronic Services Reference Librarian Tricia Sweany said many students do not understand that books are challenged because of the content inside.

“Students will pick up a book and say, ‘why would someone want to challenge or ban “Harry Potter” or “The Hunger Games” or “Little House on the Prairie?”’ Sweany said. “We get a lot of questions on what exactly a banned book is, so it’s a big eye opener

when we have conversations about what exactly a banned or challenged book is.”

Sweany said raising awareness among students is what’s important about Banned Books Week.

Business Major Brian Tran thinks it is wrong to ban or challenge books.

“I think Banned Books Week is very interesting because it reminds us that we do not have the ultimate freedom to express ourselves,” he said. “Books are the foundation for our education and for them to be banned or challenged that would be counterintuitive towards students education, and I think we all should have the right to read and learn from that of which is trying to be hidden from us.”

English Professor Michael Snyder said censoring is a form of sheltering.

Snyder said studies have shown that literature allows for students to learn empathy. He said if a student is reading a novel about slavery or segregation they might be able to have more insight and understanding of those subjects and racism.

“Censorship is an impalement to education,” Snyder said. “Books that are being considered as banned or challenged should be looked at very carefully. Although, there are books that some consider really nasty, few might wonder if they have any redeeming features for them to be placed on the shelves of a library.”

Banned Books Week honors the First Amendment by highlighting the freedoms of expression.

Raia said she encourages students to stop by the display and look at the mini books with the reasons why that book was banned or challenged.

Students can check out these books with their student IDs for up to two weeks.

## CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

### Christians on Campus Bible Study

Bible studies take place Noon to 12:45 p.m. Mondays and 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Tuesdays in room 1C5. For details, email [christiansoncampus.occc@gmail.com](mailto:christiansoncampus.occc@gmail.com) or text/call 210-685-8718.

### Native American Student Meetings

The Native American Student Association hosts meetings 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday in room 1X5.

### Philosophy Discussion

The Agnostics, Atheists and Freethinkers club hosts the Socrates Cafe, part of an event series to discuss interfaith issues and encourage critical thinking about world issues and everyday life. Socrates Cafe takes place 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. every Tuesday in room 2N7.

### Transgender Panel

The Human Sexuality class at OCCC will host a Transgender Panel on Monday September 26. The panel will include those from the community as well as OCCC students. They will discuss experiences of being transgender and answer questions from students. The panel will be held in College Union (CU2) and is scheduled from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.

### Trio Financial Aid Workshop

Trio hosts a financial aid workshop 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 26 in CU1. For information call 405-682-7865.

### Hispanic Organization Meeting

Hispanic Organization Promoting Education will meet from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 27 in room 1H3. For more details contact [salvador.arcivar@my.occc.edu](mailto:salvador.arcivar@my.occc.edu).

### Business Club Meeting

The Phi Theta Kappa student organization will have meetings at 12:30 p.m. and 8:10 pm Tuesday Sept. 27. The afternoon meeting will be in room 2J5 and the evening meeting takes place in room 3N0. Email [charles.myrick@occc.edu](mailto:charles.myrick@occc.edu) for more info.

### Voter Registration

Register to vote Sept. 28 - 30 on campus at the voter registration table near the communications lab.

### Texas Tenors Performance

Thursday, Sept. 29 the Texas Tenors return with their blend of country, classical and Broadway hits after last year’s sellout show at OCCC. Visit [tickets.occc.edu](http://tickets.occc.edu).

### Day of Caring

This is a service opportunity for students, faculty and staff. OCCC partners with the United Way of Central Oklahoma to participate in service at one of 61 United Way partner agencies on Friday, Oct. 7. Email [studentlife@occc.edu](mailto:studentlife@occc.edu) for details or registration.

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**From the Child Development Center:**

The Oklahoma City Community College Child Development Center and Lab School is a participant in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. All participants in attendance will be offered the same meals at no separate charge.

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[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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## WEEKLY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14									16						
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66												68			
69												71			

**Across**

1. Speak indistinctly
5. "Heidi" setting
9. Whole
14. Sleeveless garment
15. Civil disturbance
16. Smell
17. Potent particle
18. Engaged in festivities
20. Divorce city
21. Love dearly
22. Perfect scores
23. Tiny bit
25. Movie fish
27. Dozing ones
32. Tooth deposit
36. Tantalize
37. Too soon
39. Conceit
40. Bridge hand
41. Indian boat
42. Cut
43. \_\_\_\_ had it!
44. Tuckered out
45. Bride's path
46. Singer Willie \_\_\_\_
48. Rudolph, e.g.
50. Young adult
52. Deli loaf
53. "\_\_\_\_ dead people!" (2 wds.)
56. Slogan
59. Cumberbund
63. Fun and games
65. Group of three
66. Hurts
67. Border
68. Snaky fishes
69. Small porch
70. \_\_\_\_ Sea Scrolls
71. Lacking color

**Down**

1. Wound remainder	24. Imitate	45. Some
2. Not punctual	26. New Jersey cape	47. Sound system
3. On top of	27. Pub mug	49. Pressed
4. Most distant	28. Depart	51. Famous
5. Video game room	29. Painter's stand	53. Retirement acct.
6. Told fibs	30. Aft	54. Religious group
7. Horseback game	31. More rational	55. Canyon effect
8. Ship's rear	33. Nervous	57. Ocean current
9. Paving material	34. Spry	58. Roman garb
10. Speech-maker	35. Lasso user	60. Site
11. Shopping bag	38. Went by train	61. Window ledge
12. Prayer word	41. Movie house	62. Firefighter's need
13. Boys	42. Evade	64. Psychic inits.
19. Ladybug, e.g.	44. Shoe tip	

<http://pioneer.occc.edu>

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**DEADLINE: Nov. 7**

**TRIO**

For more information contact Matt Wedel, TRIO Apprentice at [matthew.s.wedel@my.occc.edu](mailto:matthew.s.wedel@my.occc.edu)

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# Fiesta coming to south Oklahoma City

ERIKA FIERRO

Staff Writer  
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Rich Hispanic culture, Latin rhythms and authentic traditional food will fill the streets of historic Capitol Hill on Oct. 1 as the Fiestas de las Americas celebrates the multi-cultural heritage of Oklahoma City, organizers said.

Fiestas de las Americas, an annual community event hosted by Calle Dos Cinco will take place in south Oklahoma City on SW 25th street between Hudson and Robinson, said Donna Cervantes, Calle Dos Cinco coordinator.

“You will see Guatemala, México, Colombia, El Salvador and many more countries represented during the festival,” she said.

The all-day event kicks off with a 5K run at 7 a.m., followed by the most anticipated part of the festival, the Parade of the Americas beginning at 9 a.m.

Tango Public Relations operations vice president Brenda Hernandez said historic Capitol Hill offers something very unique to Oklahoma City.

Hernandez said the districts around town offer unique festivals showcasing their area.

“You hear about the Plaza District, Film Row and all these wonderful things that are happening but what’s unique about historic Capitol Hill is the cultural diversity that we have, particularly our Hispanic culture,” she said.

Cervantes said elementary schools from the Oklahoma City district and the area’s surrounding colleges and universities show their school spirit and showcase their cultural roots on the floats designed for the festival’s parade. During the parade, floats are judged and one is named the best float of the parade.



Traditional dances and costumes are highlighted at Fiestas de las Americas in OKC. Photo provided

Oklahoma City Community College’s float won first place last year.

This year, OCCC’s Capitol Hill Center students and members from H.O.P.E., the Hispanic club on campus, are using their creativity and resources to make their float one of a kind.

“Our members have been working extremely hard in preparation for the parade,” said Salvador Arcivar, H.O.P.E. president and business major at OCCC. “I’m excited to embrace my culture and get involved in the Hispanic community.”

Jorge Hernandez, Tango Public Relations president encouraged faculty, staff and students from OCCC to come to the event.

“Expect a day to make new friends, to meet leaders and create relationships that will hopefully help open doors in the future,” he said.

“From experience, nothing helps a college student more than serving the community side by side with leaders who could be future employers.”

College students also make up a great number of the volunteers, Brenda Hernandez said.

“We purposefully recruited college students to be volunteers because we wanted our little ones to

be exposed to college students so they start thinking about higher education,” she said, “A very significant part of the festival is to celebrate the positive influence the Hispanic community is having on our city and our state which is our students.”

Cervantes said students wishing to volunteer can still sign up by visiting the event’s webpage.

Though admission to enter the event is free, food vendors will be selling authentic Hispanic dishes and flavors that can’t be found at any other festival in town, Brenda Hernandez said.

“The American favorites like funnel cakes, chicken on a stick and more will also be available,” she said.

Consistent growth in participation and support from the community continues year after year, Cervantes said.

She said that in 2015 about 12,000 people attended the event.

For 2016, organizers have added Lowrider cars in the parade, an artist market, and the first ever royal coronation of Fiestas de las Americas. Local bands such as La Onda Kaliente, Orquesta D’Calle, and folkloric dancers will take the stage throughout the day.

“This event is not only for the south OKC community but for anyone wanting to immerse themselves in the Hispanic culture in OKC,” she said.

Additionally, the OKC Energy Football Club will be in attendance with an interactive kids zone and businesses and community organizations will be on hand to talk about their services.

For more information about the event or to volunteer visit Calle Dos Cinco’s webpage <http://historiccapitolhill.com/fiestas-de-las-americas> or call 405-632-0133.



Children and university students showcase their cultural pride and school spirit during the “Parade of the Americas.” Photo provided