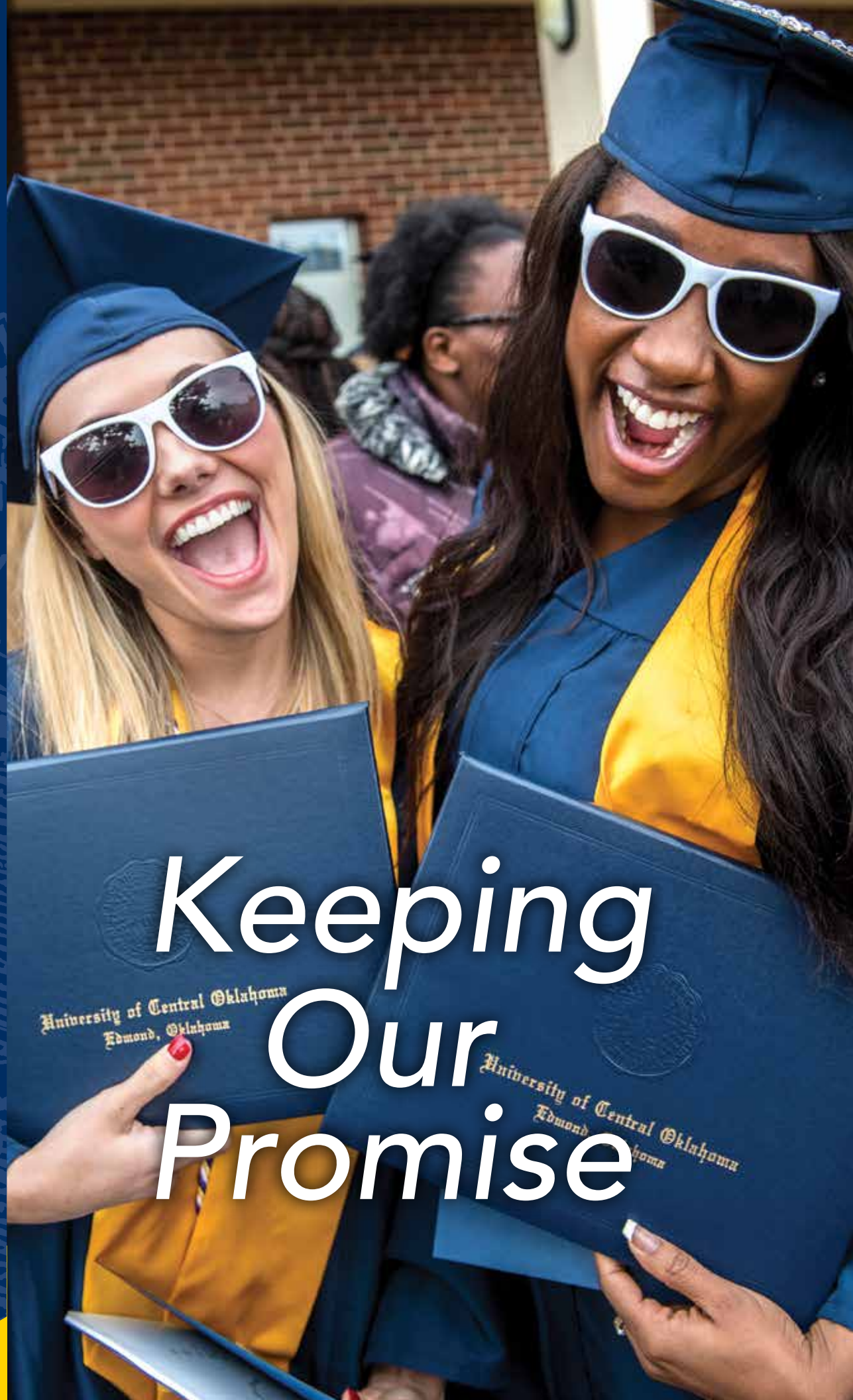


# OLD NORTH



MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

SPRING 2017 • VOL. LIV, NO. 1



## Keeping Our Promise



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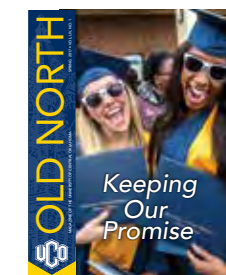


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*...a magazine published by the University of Central Oklahoma for its alumni and friends.*

## On the Cover



Central's faculty and staff promise students that they'll get more than a degree at UCO. They're promised a personal experience, unmatched value, connection and the competitive advantage to be confident in their future. This issue of Old North magazine explores some of the many ways those promises are fulfilled.

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## UCO Campus, Old North Springing Forward

Dear friends,

Hello to each of you from the UCO campus.

The taste of spring has fueled our spirits and supported the diverse projects underway. The softball complex moved toward completion throughout the early months of 2017, as did the Backstage@ Mitchell Hall project, slated for dedication in early May. The south chiller plant advanced since my last message to you and will be brought on line later this year to provide needed power to the south portions of campus, including new construction, as well as provide the critical redundancy UCO needs to heat and cool our facilities. The revitalized Murdaugh Hall will open by late summer to serve as a campus residence for another 80 years.

Importantly, in February we broke ground for the Interdisciplinary STEM Research and Teaching Center just north of the Forensic Science Institute. This is an initiative, conceived and led by the College of Mathematics and Science, that directly answers the OKC metro's and Oklahoma's call for more STEM graduates. By fall of 2018, this uniquely-designed facility will anchor UCO's continuing commitment to recognized undergraduate research programs, and it will become a focal point for collaboration among various disciplines to inspire and graduate problem-solvers.

In April 2018, we will celebrate our devotion to student success by hosting the National Council for Undergraduate Research (NCUR) conference, which annually attracts more than 4,000 students and their faculty mentors from across the country. It will convene in Oklahoma for the first time in its 32-year history.

The capstone for early 2017 was the re-emergence of Old North as a vibrant symbol of UCO's celebrated focus on its compelling history and student success. After 15 years of shuttered silence as an unsafe venue, and with deep gratitude to



At the reopening celebration for Old North, President Betz visits with retired UCO professor Gene McPhail, who died the next week. Read on page 38 about the last visit of a man described as always having a smile and a twinkle in his eye.

the 926 donors to Old North in the "Always Central" campaign, Old North is once again securing its rightful position as UCO's iconic crown jewel. From Feb. 21-23, hundreds of students, faculty, staff, alumni and citizens converged on the "cathedral of learning on the plains." The chimes struck the hour, and our UCO chorus beautifully intoned the alma mater as Old North's doors opened to welcome alumni of all ages to once again revisit this repository of their memories.

As found in these pages, with more to come in the future, the personal stories tied so unwaveringly to Old North, are to be celebrated and cherished.

For Old North's tale, revived by creating her anew to serve for another century, is far

too relevant and precious to be set aside. Fresh, new connections, that will assuredly impact Oklahoma, will be forged here. Old North once again welcomes us and challenges us to create the next Oklahoma for our great-grandchildren.

You are most welcome at UCO anytime.

Don Betz  
President





# Honoring A Noble Profession

*By Lorene Roberson*

When Raul Font, Ed.D., recently attended a UCO event honoring teachers, he couldn't help but think about his own unlikely journey to a career he cherishes. Without the support of teachers along the way, the man, who today has a doctorate, might never have gone beyond middle school.

Font, a former teacher himself, is president of Oklahoma City's Latino Community Development Agency, and a man focused on helping others succeed. He is motivated by memories of the boy he once was, a struggling 12-year-old running the streets of Chicago, calling himself a "man of the world." Teachers — especially one teacher and coach — are the people who turned his life around, he said. They are the reasons he earned a master's in education from UCO and a doctorate in education administration, curriculum and supervision from The University of Oklahoma.

So, Font felt grateful to be among 300 guests at UCO's third annual "Honoring a Noble Profession: Celebrating Teachers and Teaching," held in December in the Nigh University Center.

Present, past and future teachers attended the event, hosted by UCO's College of Education and Professional Studies. Guests included current and past Oklahoma Teachers of the Year, District Teachers of the Year and State Teacher of the Year finalists.

The day-long celebration was created to highlight the importance of teachers and the teaching profession, James Machell, Ph.D., dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies, said.

"We live in a time when many teachers, both in our state and nationally, feel unappreciated and undervalued. Honoring a Noble Profession is an event that is a concrete way to show teachers they are valued, respected and appreciated," Machell said.

"It is especially important during this time of major teacher shortages in many fields. It is through events such as this that we will be able to continue to successfully recruit and retain outstanding individuals into the teaching profession."

**Sharon Rankin, center, has supervised UCO student teachers since 1996. Some of her soon-to-be May graduates are Krista Charlick, left, and Anna Adams.**

*continued on page 6*





**Connecticut's Jahana Hayes, 2016 National Teacher of the Year, shared her disappointment when turned down twice for a school administrator's position. Now, she said, she realizes how staying in the classroom changed her life, urging others to stay.**

2016 National Teacher of the Year Jahana Hayes, a veteran history teacher at John F. Kennedy High School in Waterbury, Connecticut, shared her story. In her keynote, she recalled her disappointment when applying for a school administrator's position twice and being turned down both times.

Although disheartened at the time, Hayes said she didn't know then how staying in a classroom would change her life, including the honor of being named the 2016 National Teacher of the Year.

Hayes reminded teachers not to give up.

"As I've been traveling around the country, I've struggled because there is this idea that the state of education is so bleak," Hayes said. "There is this fatalistic view in the direction of our education system and the work teachers do. But young people are still eager to enter the profession, and there remain many who are dedicated to this profession."

The state of education in Oklahoma is a challenge right now, and the people who still choose the profession are that much more important, Hayes said.

The event included 10 sessions focused on co-teacher training and high-impact practices. The day was made possible by UCO's College of Education and Professional Studies and a grant from the Oklahoma Teacher Connection at the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education. Stephanie Canada-Phillips, a UCO faculty member and 2008 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, coordinated the event.

*Thanks to reporters Ben Felder of The Oklahoman and Patty Miller of The Edmond Sun for their contributions to this feature. Author Lorene Roberson is coordinator of communications and public relations for UCO's College of Education and Professional Studies. She especially enjoyed the event because she sat next to her mentor and high school journalism teacher — Patty Miller.*



**From left, Raul Font, president of the Latino Community Development Agency; Gloria Torres, Oklahoma City Public Schools board member; and UCO's Dean James Machell.**



# Make plans to join us for Homecoming 2017!

**October 12**  
Bronchtoberfest

**October 13**  
Golden Bronchos Reunion Breakfast  
Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon

**October 14**  
Homecoming Carnival  
Football Game



# Designing Social Change

By Angela Morris



Lining the sheetrock walls of the UCO Department of Design Letterpress Lab — in between the gallery/workspace’s exposed ceilings and industrial concrete flooring — were letterpressed images of elephants: profile-views with Chinese script honoring the year of the elephant, elephants intertwined lovingly by their tusks, elephants centered in the eyeshot of a rifle, the light sketch of an elephant almost disappearing into a white background, the animal spray painted on a brick wall behind a timer counting down to zero. Each of the student-designed images was fastened to rows of display wire. All possessed the campaign’s slogan: “Design to Protect Elephants.”

These student-designed images not only were displayed this past fall in Edmond, but they reached a national audience, as Design to Protect Elephants was initiated to be part of an international effort to help stop the slaughter of African elephants. The UCO graphic design majors for this project used, in addition to print, multimedia platforms: videos, social media applications, a website. Each medium shed light on the fact that one elephant is killed approximately every 15 minutes for its ivory, and the fact that at this alarming rate, elephants in the wild could be extinct in 11 years.

So, how did these student-designed visuals become a strong element of a worldwide effort? How did UCO students end up partnering with national design firms and wildlife conservation efforts around the world to produce powerful images that confront the problem of trafficking an endangered species?

“I was watching the Daily Show one evening, and they were doing a story on the



Angered by a report that poaching was once again threatening the world’s elephant population, UCO professor Amy Johnson vowed to do something about it — and teach, along the way, what she tells students often: “Design is powerful.”

slaughter of elephants,” said Amy Johnson, M.F.A., chair of the UCO Department of Design, and originator and initiator of Design to Protect Elephants. “I just got mad. So mad. I mean we, humanity, had just dealt with ending poaching. Five years ago, elephant numbers were on the rise, and now this? Now, they are on the verge of becoming extinct?”

Johnson resorted to what she has taught students for years — the belief that design can be a vital cultural force and a vehicle for change.

“Design is powerful” is a motto often repeated by Johnson. “It can do way more than just sell things; it can inspire and motivate real change.”

Johnson has espoused this ideology her entire career, from doing pro-bono work in the private sector to pursuing the avenues of higher education.

“The profession of design, at its root, is about problem solving,” explained Johnson. “A client presents a problem, and we use visual elements to solve that problem.”

This ideology of problem solving through design and utilizing design to provoke positive change is at the base of several projects Johnson has assigned to UCO graphic design majors of the UCO student-run studios ClockTower and InkTank. Every year,

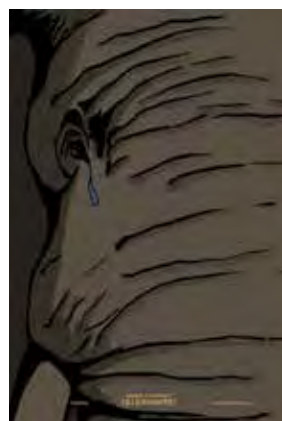
Johnson challenges her students to become social change agents by identifying a social problem of their choice and then using design and the power of partnerships to create and implement solutions. It’s an initiative that has garnered the benevolent support of the Kirkpatrick Foundation, Sappi Ideas That Matter and several on-campus Research, Creative and Scholarly Activities (RCSA) grants.

When Johnson identified the senseless slaughter of elephants for their ivory as a problem in which she could be part of the solution, she set forth to practice what she preaches. She devised a plan to utilize design to bring about a positive change to elephant trafficking. Johnson secured a generous \$10,000 grant from the Kirkpatrick Foundation for her project: Design to Protect Elephants. Central graphic design students and faculty partnered with professional design firms around the United States and the international conservation efforts of Wild Aid to create images or 20-second videos spotlighting the issue.

“All designs produced became part of our online campaign to change perceptions, raise funds and raise awareness about the issue,” said Johnson. During this process, students were working with a client, building relationships with other professional designers and implementing elements of design they had learned

*continued on page 10*





in the classroom.

The success of Design to Protect Elephants, and its spin-off “#LendAnEar,” already has invited a phase two, which includes growing its reach through partnerships with zoos. Phase Two recently garnered \$35,000 in support from the Kirkpatrick Foundation.

“Such generosity enables the message to be heard by a much larger audience and have a deeper impact,” said Johnson.

Design to Protect Elephants and the ideology of challenging design students to become social change agents not only have contributed to stopping the slaughter of endangered elephants, but also have affected Central graphic design students.

“I want to do something worthwhile,” Sarah Pinc, graphic design senior, disclosed while describing her initial reason for her career choice, which both utilizes her talents and provides personal fulfillment. “I want to feel like I’ve made an impact. I get that sensation while problem-solving through the medium of design. I got that sensation while working on Design to Protect Elephants.”

Pinc made a stop motion animation video for the elephant campaign. Even before Design to Protect Elephants, however, Pinc was no stranger to being challenged to work on social impact projects under Johnson’s tutelage.

“I’ve had four semesters in InkTank and ClockTower while at UCO,” explained Pinc. When first challenged to pick a problem and solve it using design, Pinc developed “Refuse It,” a campaign to spread awareness of plastic pollution. As a part of this campaign, Pinc designed striking reusable water bottles, coffee cups and tote bags that could replace the use of plastic sacks while shopping. She devised a plan to provide UCO students these reusables and to track if they reduced the use of plastic on campus. Pinc’s campaign was a national finalist for the competitive Sappi Ideas That Matter grant.

“The UCO Department of Design believes it is critical to build this kind of socially driven practice into student experiences,” said Johnson. “If students learn they have a social responsibility to the larger community now — while also learning the nuts and bolts of practicing design in an active studio — the likelihood of students taking this perspective into their professional practice increases exponentially.”

*Angela Morris is a grant writer for the College of Fine Arts and Design. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing and a bachelor’s in journalism, both from UCO.*

## Other Social Change Projects



**Adopt Ugly** – Produced by Central design alumnae Julie Radke with the help of Johnson.

• *The Problem:* 55% of shelters report that “ugly dogs” (those older or less traditional looking) have a harder time finding a home even if they are perfectly adoptable.

• *The Solution:* Partner with the Bella Foundation and create an event titled “Adopt Ugly,” in which less-likely-to-be-adopted dogs are placed center stage. Create all design collateral for the event in addition to an Ugly Little Kit, which features toys, shampoo and vet discounts to give to any who adopt at the event as a thank you.

• *The Success:* The event was sponsored by the Bella Foundation and a Sappi Ideas That Matter grant. Every dog at the event was adopted.



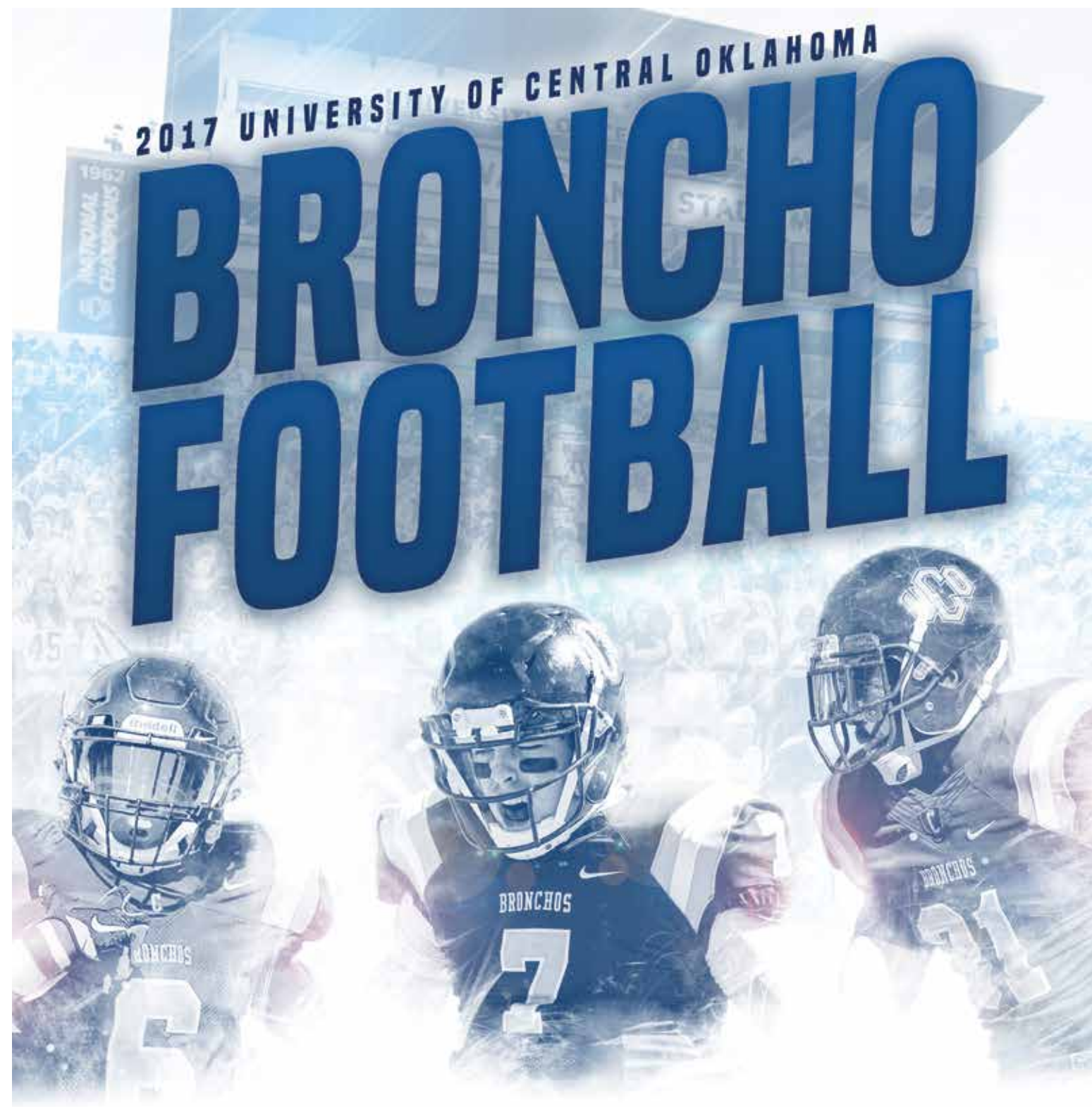
**Get Out of Your Parents’ Basement**

– Produced by then Central design student Haley Spradlin

• *The Problem:* Millennials continue to have difficulty finding work.

• *The Solution:* Create an app titled “Get Out of Your Parents’ Basement,” featuring interview techniques, job searches, etc.

• *The Success:* The campaign was funded by an on-campus RSCA grant and implemented.



**8/31 VS LINDENWOOD (H)**

**9/7 VS PITT STATE**

**9/16 VS FORT HAYS STATE (H)**

**9/23 VS MISSOURI WESTERN**

**9/30 VS EMPORIA STATE (H)**

**10/7 VS NORTHWEST MISSOURI**

**10/14 VS NEBRASKA-KEARNEY (H)**

**10/21 VS MISSOURI SOUTHERN**

**10/28 VS CENTRAL MISSOURI (H)**

**11/4 VS WASHBURN**

**11/11 VS NORTHEASTERN STATE**



B R O N C H O S P O R T S . C O M



# Documentary Focuses on Pulitzer Winner Momaday

*By Mike Easterling  
Photos by Youngsun Yun and Terrance Clifford*

Mass communication professor Jeff Palmer plans to complete in August a documentary film "N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear." The film will be included in the "American Masters" series on PBS.

The following article appeared in January in The Daily Times of Farmington, New Mexico. The piece was written by Mike Easterling, a former Oklahoma City reporter, now arts and entertainment editor for the Farmington newspaper. Thanks goes to the newspaper and Gannett news for allowing us to reprint a first-rate article about not only a UCO professor and his work as film director, but also about Oklahoma native Momaday.

Also working with Palmer on the project is Desiree Hill, a UCO mass communication instructor and the film's producer.

**N. Scott Momaday, left, and UCO's Jeff Palmer work to develop the documentary about the legendary Native American author. In the background is Palmer's father, Kiowa linguist Gus Palmer.**



FARMINGTON, New Mexico — Even in his 80s, poet and writer N. Scott Momaday remains an imposing figure. That's partly because of his impressive physical presence, but also because of his artistic accomplishments — he won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1969 for the novel "House Made of Dawn" and received the National Medal of Arts in 2007 from President George W. Bush — and, perhaps most of all, his voice.

It is that deep, booming, sonorous instrument that in many ways serves as his trademark characteristic. So when the power of that voice is combined with Momaday's own lyrical writing, the result is often a spellbinding experience for the listener.

It certainly was for director Jeff Palmer and the crew of his new documentary on the legendary Native writer and Santa Fe resident, "N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear."

"I was worried about the voice," Palmer acknowledged by phone from Oklahoma City last week as he recalled his feelings leading up to his first meeting with Momaday last spring when shooting on the project began. Palmer, a University of Central Oklahoma mass communication professor and filmmaker, was aware of Momaday's age and was concerned that the passage of time might have withered the poet's formidable voice, rendering it muted, thin or hollow.

***"There was a moment when I realized what we were hearing was greatness, on the level of Walt Whitman or Emily Dickinson. ... You realize this is truly a master of his craft."***

Palmer needn't have worried.

"It's just as powerful, just as strong as ever," he said. "I remember we did a shoot on the second day we were there (in Santa Fe), and he was reading several of his poems. There was a moment when I realized what we were hearing was greatness, on the level of Walt Whitman or Emily Dickinson. When you're hearing someone like that reading from their own work, it comes out in a much different way than it does as a text. ... You realize this is truly a master of his craft."

For Desiree Hill, the film's producer, the experience was no less memorable. She compared Momaday's vocal timbre and cadence to that of actor James Earl Jones, explaining that the writer had a way of changing an inflection here or adding a pause there that changed the meaning of a phrase, adding a new dimension to an already complex piece of work.

But Palmer said those won't be the only surprises for viewers of the film, which is being produced for inclusion in the Emmy-winning "American Masters" series on PBS and is due for completion in August. The behind-the-scenes happenings that led to Momaday becoming the first Native American to win the Pulitzer Prize for literature are a big part of the story, as are the writer's formative experiences living on Jemez Pueblo northwest of Albuquerque as a teenager.

For the director — who, like his subject, was born in Oklahoma

and is a member of the Kiowa Nation — the opportunity to tell Momaday's story is a tremendous career and artistic opportunity. But given their shared background, he also feels an enormous responsibility to do justice to Momaday's life.

"He really wants this story to be told," Palmer said. "He really feels the immediacy of it. And I think he has offered some commentary he didn't necessarily have to offer. But he's somebody who always feels comfortable in front of a camera, and it's been a wonderful thing working on this documentary."

Palmer was approached by PBS officials who were impressed by his most recent film, "Isabelle's Garden," a short documentary about a Choctaw girl in southeastern Oklahoma who, despite living in poverty, shares the bounty of her garden with members of her community. It wound up being named one of the top five films in the Sundance Institute Short Film Challenge in 2015 and brought Palmer a measure of success he had never experienced.

"I kind of lived in that short film space for many years, whether it was documentaries or experimental work," he said, explaining that his wife, Youngsun Yun, is also his creative partner. "So that film was really a transportation point for both of our careers. It changed the landscape for us."

Palmer was immediately enthusiastic about doing the Momaday film when "American Masters" executive director

Michael Kantor called to discuss the project with him in December 2015. Not only had Palmer grown up with Momaday's works during his youth in Oklahoma, he had a stronger, more personal connection to the writer that he hoped would pay off.

"My father (Gus Palmer) is a Kiowa linguist and an author of fiction and poetry," Palmer said. "He and Scott were close friends when he was younger."

Given the trust and understanding that already existed between the two men, Palmer opted to have his father conduct the on-camera interviews of Momaday rather than do them himself.

"I think it's a lot more comfortable for two elders to talk to each other," Palmer said. "It really eased the tension that can sometimes happen between a subject and a director on a documentary."

Hill said that decision by Palmer paid off in spades.



**From left, executive producer Michael Kantor, daughter Jill Momaday, executive producer Shirley Sneve, author N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa linguist Gus Palmer and filmmaker Jeff Palmer are at the Momaday home in Santa Fe. (Photo: Courtesy of Terrance Clifford)**

"To hear this Kiowa linguist and literary scholar speaking to a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and poet, to hear the two of them talking to one another made it even better," she said. "The interview was really a conversation between the two of them."

The elder Palmer often began a line of questioning about Momaday's work by explaining how he had interpreted it, then asking the author for clarification, she said. Momaday would respond by explaining his intention and describing the symbolism.

But every once in a while, Hill said, the film's subject would turn the tables and pose a question to the linguist, asking for a pronunciation of a Kiowa term he wasn't expressly familiar with. Those interactions illustrated the fact that, even though he was born in the heart of Kiowa country in Lawton, Oklahoma, Momaday hadn't spent much time there. He left Oklahoma at an early age with his family to relocate first to Arizona and later to New Mexico, where

he would graduate from high school and then earn his bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico.

"I think the majority of his life was spent in New Mexico," Palmer said. "It's really home to him, more than Oklahoma — Jemez Pueblo, Gallup, those are the places he grew up. He really considers himself a New Mexican."

In fact, Palmer said, it is clear that Momaday is in many ways more comfortable with the traditions, languages and cultures of the Navajo, Apache and Jemez people that he interacted with regularly as a boy than he is with those of the Kiowa.

"He has a huge connection to the Navajo people," Palmer said. "He talks a lot about ... how he saw the Navajo people riding to their Feast Days in a wagon the first time. That was a profound moment for him, because the next year, there were fewer wagons,

*continued on page 16*



and the next year, they came in cars. It was as if he had witnessed something he would never see again.”

His time on the Jemez Pueblo was important to Momaday, Palmer believes, but it was the writer’s exposure to the people of the Navajo Nation that would go on to inform much of his work.

“Jemez was a stopping point,” he said. “But it’s through the Navajo people, through their origin stories, through their ceremonies, that he pushed his work into those areas. He also knows more Navajo (language) than Kiowa — that’s how much time he spent with them.”

Palmer said he anticipates that about half the film will wind up being shot in Oklahoma, with the rest being shot in New Mexico. The film’s crew has made several trips here to conduct interviews and shoot landscapes, and Palmer has chosen to make another unusual choice for a documentary in terms of how he addresses some aspects of Momaday’s life.

“We’re doing a lot of shooting of dramatizations of his life,” he said. “It’s difficult to do documentaries of a writer’s life because they’re not performance artists — they sit and they write.”

Palmer is trying to illustrate particular episodes from Momaday’s life by using those landscapes and some readings of Momaday’s work by other well-known Native writers who were influenced by him, including Rilla Askew, Joy Harjo and Sherman Alexie.

Palmer understands that taking such an approach may open him

up to criticism from those who consider that the antithesis of making a documentary, but he maintains he’s crafting those scenes with as light a touch as possible.

“It’s dramatization, it’s not fictionalization,” he said. “I’m using his words to (recreate) these moments in his life.”

It was during a visit to Jemez Pueblo in late October that one of the film’s pivotal sequences was shot. During an interview, Momaday had revealed that when he was 17, he found himself trapped on the side of a mesa after he had gone wandering on the pueblo one day and was only able to reach safety after a precarious trip down.

“When he told this story, he said he saw something in his life that made him want to explore the aesthetic beauty of the world,” Palmer said. “He’s not a political writer, and he’s been criticized for that over the years ... But he truly lives every day of his life that way. He’s had this second chance, and he wants to show people the beauty of life.”

As the film’s producer, it has been Hill’s job to set up many of the interviews and arrange access for the crew to the places that Momaday frequented as a child. She was particularly wowed by the locations they shot on Jemez Pueblo in the fall, with the sky a crisp blue and the bosque in full color.

“The landscape is almost another character in the documentary,” she said.

Hill — one of the few non-Natives on the crew — said she

had little idea what she was getting into when Palmer asked for her help. The two are faculty members at UCO and had been looking for a project to work on together for quite some time. Hill’s background is in television news, and she had only recently begun exploring the feature documentary field, though she said she has produced many television specials.

But she is also an avid reader, and the chance to get to know Momaday and his work has been a revelation for her.

“I didn’t have a lot of familiarity with his work,” she said. “We don’t study that in traditional American literature, and that’s a travesty, because this work is as traditional as it gets. His work is overlooked in the traditional study of literature we all have growing up.” One of Hill’s more significant contributions to the film was her ability to secure the crew access to some areas of Jemez Pueblo that are normally off limits, and she credited Lynn Toledo, executive assistant to Jemez Pueblo Gov. David Yepa, for helping her navigate that.

“It was complicated, but for good reason,” she said. “They don’t let just anybody on their land.”

Hill knew how important the Jemez Pueblo footage was to the project, so she persisted.

“It took a long, long time,” Hill said. “It wasn’t a case of pick up the phone, call and do it next weekend. They operate on a tribal calendar, so they didn’t know when we could do it. We had to be patient about when this would work for them, and we had the luxury of time. We wanted to do the shoot a lot earlier than we did, but we had other things we wanted to focus and prioritize, too. ... I realized they have a different pace to their lives.”

Hill noted that Palmer made a point of hiring mostly Native crew members, and that fact likely helped facilitate much of that Jemez Pueblo access.

“It really was special to work with them and to be allowed to go into their sacred spaces,” she said.

Hill also tracked down an important



**Momaday looks over papers in his office as he participates in a photo shoot for the upcoming PBS documentary about his life and work.**

interview subject: Frances McCullough, who served as the editor for “House Made of Dawn.” She and Momaday had been graduate students together at Stanford — a time and place that also included the likes of heavyweights Larry McMurtry (author of “Lonesome Dove,” “The Last Picture Show” and “Terms of Endearment”) and Ken Kesey (“One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” and “Sometimes a Great Notion”), Hill noted — and McCullough championed the book to the publisher she was working for, Harper & Row.

Hill said McCullough’s perspectives for the film were interesting because they addressed how unusual the situation surrounding publication of the book was — a young, female editor, practically unheard of among the old-boy-dominated world of book publishing in the 1960s, working on a groundbreaking book by a Native author.

Palmer understands how important the film could be to the small but accomplished Kiowa Nation and the Native population as a whole, but he’s especially pleased that its inclusion in the “American Masters” series means that it will be exposed to a large, diverse audience. He hopes the film reinforces Momaday’s greatness and exposes his work

to younger readers who may not already be aware of him.

Of course, Palmer himself has a lot at stake personally with the documentary, explaining that not many young directors get a forum as prominent as “American Masters” through which to craft their first feature-length film. Nor are they typically afforded the opportunity to profile a personality as important as Momaday.

Fortunately, he said, he feels like he was able to quickly establish a rapport with the writer that has made the process of filming the documentary unusually smooth.

“I’m telling him exactly what I’m thinking as we’re filming, and we’ve executed it,” Palmer said. “Our relationship, I think, has been based on an understanding between two artists. This is one of the greatest things I’ve experienced as part of my career. To be able to talk with somebody on such an intimate basis about their work, I think is one of the greatest things I’ve done.”

*Mike Easterling is the A&E editor of The Daily Times in Farmington, New Mexico. He can be reached at [measterling@daily-times.com](mailto:measterling@daily-times.com).*



**The crew of “N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear” sets up a shoot on Jemez Pueblo in October.** — (Photo: Courtesy of Youngsun Yun)



# UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SPORT PERFORMANCE CENTER



SOFTBALL COMPLEX



SOUTH CENTRAL PLANT



During Central's spring forum, President Betz noted that someone could stand in the middle of campus, look in each of the cardinal directions and see the site of at least one major construction project underway or being planned.

He emphasized that each of these projects is being completed with funding from donors, partnerships and student fees.

"There is no investment by the state in these projects," he said. "We are charting our future."

STEM BUILDING



MITCHELL HALL THEATRE BACKSTAGE





# What a Deal!

## Speed selling? Sales call role-plays?

For those who haven't heard, these are national competitions — and in November, UCO's competing sales team placed sixth at the 10th Annual National Sales Challenge at William Paterson University in New Jersey.

Central's winning team members are Long Ha, an Oklahoma City marketing major and professional sales minor, and Ryan Loghry, a senior professional sales major from Glenpool, Oklahoma. The pair went against teams from 31 universities from the U.S. and Scotland, including The Citadel, Kansas State, Purdue, Baylor and Georgia Southern.

The annual competition is the largest and oldest such event.

Ha, who graduated in December, called the experience “eye-opening — we got to see how we measured up. ... I was very thankful for the opportunity.”

Some of the school teams were “almost military like,” Ha said. “Others were more work and play at the same time. I'd say we were more organic in how we prepared.



**From left, UCO student Long Ha, associate professor Manoshi Samaraweera and student Ryan Loghry — all national sales challenge veterans.**

“Both of us have worked in retail, so we knew that a cookie-cutter approach is not for everyone. We practiced going in different directions. We also focused on two key points and made sure we had all the details,” Ha said.

In the end, it was remembering how to analyze personalities and build relationships that were key. “Knowing people — the experience really reinforced what we have

been taught,” he said.

What he appreciated most? “Oklahoma is not the most diverse in the country. We got to apply what we have learned in situations different from what we might otherwise,” Ha said.

Joining students for the competition were 113 executives from 16 sponsor companies who judged the events while also interacting in networking opportunities.

In the sales role-play event, the teams were given a selling situation, then 15 minutes to make the sale to a participating business executive. In the speed-selling competition, students were given two minutes to convince someone to hire them, rotating through tables seated with company executives.

UCO has the only professional sales program in Oklahoma — first graduate in 2014 — with fewer than 200 sales programs nationwide. The program trains students for business-to-business sales.

Bob Kaiser, founder and chair of the program, said he has a list of companies wanting his graduates. “Companies are finding that students graduating from sales programs will ramp up 50 percent faster and be more loyal,” Kaiser said. “They haven't developed bad sales habits, and they're obviously committed because they got the degree.”

Kaiser had a 37-year career in sales before working with Mike Shirley, former dean of the College of Business, to develop UCO's sales program.

The program has an associate membership with the National Sales Center Alliance. A year ago, a sales lab was installed in the College of Business to give students more real-world experience.

“Most companies today do product training, not sales training,” said Kaiser, who has a master's in business administration. “Today, someone in business sales has to have a college degree. It's like a high school degree when I started in sales.”

His students are making companies money and making money themselves with average starting salaries of \$60,000 plus commissions.

Ha, however, still was looking for a job in February — but not because he hadn't been offered sales jobs. “I sound like a crazy person — usually you take your first job offered,” he said. However, sales is his minor, and his long-term dream is to own a technology company. So, he waited, landing a job with Fuel Education, an online company based in Herndon, Virginia, that offered him the experience he was seeking.

## Professor Shares Successful Sales Tips



Traveling with students to national sales competitions is a great way to learn what major companies put at the top of their ideal candidate lists, said Manoshi Samaraweera, Ph.D.

Known as Dr. Manoshi to students, she's an associate professor of marketing in UCO's College of Business and the professor who has accompanied Central's sales teams to national competitions the last two years.

Following are three of the top pieces of advice she has received from national recruiters who attend the competitions:

- Sales experience matters. Students need some selling experience, either by working a sales job or through an internship.
- Sales numbers gain attention. A resume that says the candidate sold 100 subscriptions while working at Company X means something.
- After starting a sales position, make an active effort to be nice and build relationships with those inside the company who take care of customers after the sale.

## UCO Sales Advisory Board

- Randy Chandler, vice president of commercial sales for Cox Communications
- Tom Dooner, retired chief operating officer of Ordermatic Corp.
- Martin Rizzo, president of Liquecolor Inc.
- Mike Crandell, owner of Sandler Training
- Michael Rainbolt, financial adviser with Edward Jones
- Matt Houston, managing director of Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance
- John Gladden, president of Delta Dental of Oklahoma
- Gerrie Cook, vice president for west of the Mississippi for Chamber Maps
- Cory Benton, vice president of sales and marketing for Express Personnel
- Mike Carey, vice president of commercial sales for Dell Computers
- Brad Taylor, national sales manager for Paycom.

**For more information about Central's professional sales program, visit [business.uco.edu](http://business.uco.edu).**





# 1890 Legacy Society: *A Plan with a Purpose*

Countless scholarships, professorships, research funds and program support have been funded with planned gifts. And, thanks to you and others like you, Central will continue to thrive as a leading public university far into the future.

We have partnered with a new web service that allows us to expand our planned giving options and resources. With easy-to-use calculators and guides, you can now explore what a planned gift might look like for you. We also have staff to help answer any questions you may have. Let us help plan your legacy.

405-974-2770 • ucolegacy.org

## Tragedy to Hope

By Reagan Hamlin

In August, two UCO students tragically lost their lives in separate car collisions, each hit by a driver under the influence of alcohol.

“Ryan was killed by a young man in his early 20s, who was charged with three previous DUI offenses,” said John Hamm, father of one of the students. “Substance abuse causes lives to be destroyed. In this case, my son lost his life and the offender’s life will be impacted. I imagine if this young man had experienced intervention earlier — be it treatment or tougher laws — my son would still be here today.”

Ryan Hamm, 21, died Aug. 10 in a collision two miles north of Asher, Oklahoma, on U.S. 177. He was on his way to Edmond from Texas, planning a stop in Shawnee to see his girlfriend.

His Toyota 4Runner was struck head-on by a pickup that crossed the center line. The 25-year-old driver, who suffered a head injury but survived, was listed as “intoxicated.”

Just days after that fatal wreck, UCO student Jordan DeShazer, 19, died Aug. 13 after being struck on Broadway Avenue, south of Waterloo Road, while driving home from her boyfriend’s house.

Edmond police reported she was traveling south on Broadway when a vehicle driven north veered into her lane.



Jordan DeShazer



Ryan Hamm, left, with his two younger brothers, before his death in an automobile collision in August 2016. A UCO scholarship now honors his life.

The report notes the driver, 22, fell asleep while driving and alcohol appeared to be involved.

Thinking about the loss of both of these young students, John Hamm decided to create the DeShazer and Hamm Endowed Scholarship — to help recipients advance the overall education of substance abuse, improve laws and/or improve the process of early intervention.

“Both Ryan and Jordan were remarkable citizens of Edmond and students of UCO. I had the opportunity to speak with the DeShazer family and hear about Jordan’s wonderful life and her desire to pursue a medical career helping others.

“I saw the common thread between both Jordan and Ryan. Ryan was kind and always great with children. We often talked about him going into teaching or pediatric therapy. They were both destined for great lives helping others. We want to see that same dream unfold for the recipient of this scholarship,” he said.

Ryan Hamm’s love for UCO helped his father decide to establish the scholarship, honoring the legacy of both his son and DeShazer.

“Ryan loved UCO and the many friendships he developed. He enjoyed playing soccer and spending long hours in the library. He would often tell us about the real-life advice offered by his professors in after-class discussions. He met his first serious girlfriend at UCO,” he said. “I know UCO advisers, staff and students will carry forward this scholarship, and they have my full trust and support that great things will come from it.”

For more information on the scholarship, contact the UCO Foundation at (405) 974-2770 or contribute online at [central-connection.org/deshazerandhammendowed-scholarshipfund](http://central-connection.org/deshazerandhammendowed-scholarshipfund).

*Reagan Hamlin is the UCO Foundation’s assistant vice president for development.*



# Ensuring Value

By Gypsy Hogan

Each year, Central awards about 3,000 degrees to students who have spent their time, energy and money for a piece of paper denoting their achievements.

What many may not realize is that those degrees are a two-way street.

UCO also spends time, energy and money ensuring those degrees have meaning to the world at large, that others realize their value.

The process seems simple, but think about the number of headlines today about university degrees and programs that have no value. In some cases, the students spent only money. In others, students also exerted time and energy, only to find their efforts wasted.

The bankruptcy last summer of the for-profit ITT Technical Institute left students scrambling to pay off student debt and to find ways to complete their education. When the 50-year-old ITT closed, it was under investigation by multiple agencies, including the Security and Exchange Commission, over its recruiting and job placement claims.

More recently, a group of Kansas high school journalists made national headlines in March after they checked the credentials of the

woman hired as their new head principal. The candidate claimed a master's and doctorate degrees from Corllins University, which the students later showed had zero accreditation. Worse, the students found a number of articles portraying Corllins as a diploma mill, where people can buy a degree, diploma or certificate. The job offer was withdrawn, while the school board and administrators were hard-pressed to explain why they hadn't done due diligence.

Of course, none of these scandals have involved UCO. However, scandals such as these make everyone more careful — and they have increased the amount of scrutiny and standards placed on all institutions, including Central.

"The issues of accountability and the value of a degree have become increasingly more public," said Gary Steward, UCO's associate vice president of institutional effectiveness, a title that didn't exist until 2013. "Legislators, for example, debate the utility of the degree and whether it is worth the cost. ... The central themes of accountability and increasing value seem to be driving new policy and procedures."

Accreditation organizations have become increasingly more stringent in evaluating student learning. Claims made by a university face much greater levels of accountability and scrutiny.

"We can no longer simply state that our graduates have met certain competencies apart from providing evidence to support the assertion," Steward said.

A good part of Steward's job is making sure that Central meets all the criteria of the assurance review required by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The commission is the largest regional accrediting body in the U.S. in terms of geography and number of institutions. It is UCO's overall accrediting body.

Five years ago, UCO celebrated a 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation from HLC. However, in 2013, the process changed. Now schools with the 10-year star of approval are required to file a mid-term report. Steward now is coordinating a handful of writers to produce that report, an estimated hundred pages with 700-800 artifacts to support the argument.

The accreditation process, he said, is now continuous.

"It's no longer sufficient to have goals, performance metrics and gathering data. Those things are assumed. Accreditors want to know how we are using data to improve quality. Improved quality adds value to the degree and experience," Steward said.

The accountability, however, doesn't stop there. "Our accountability is multilayered," he said. "We have two governing boards of regents — the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Regional University System of Oklahoma — as well as the legislature."

In addition to the university's Higher Learning Commission accreditation, there are a myriad of UCO programs and majors with "specialized accreditation" — about a hundred. These accreditations give students confidence their degrees will have meaning in the field they've chosen.

Sometimes, those outside Central know the value of an accreditation more than the



**Gary Steward**

campus community. Steve Hendrickson is director of government relations for The Boeing Co. He is famous among some on campus for telling a crowd in

Constitution Hall that Central's engineering programs are ABET accredited, the same as engineering programs at MIT. He was referring to the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology Inc., a non-governmental organization that accredits post-secondary education programs in applied science, computing, engineering and engineering technology. MIT is Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a private research university with an international reputation for excellence.

In a world where accreditation matters, ABET is gold for Central graduates.

For similar reasons, UCO's College of Business is putting final touches on its quest for accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), a designation achieved by fewer than 5 percent of the world's business schools.



**Mickey Hepner**

"For the last seven years, we have been striving to meet their rigorous standards, by developing and implementing our quality improvement plan," Mickey Hepner, dean of the UCO College of Business, said. "We have redesigned our curriculum, assembled the most-qualified faculty in our history, launched new international programs and made \$2.5 million of renovations to our business building.

"This designation will open new doors of opportunity for Central graduates," Hepner said.

The largest number of UCO program accreditations falls under the College of Education and Professional Studies.

Bryan Duke is an assistant dean and director of education preparation. He manages a detailed spreadsheet of certifications, as well as accreditations that the college maintains for its teacher preparation programs. Overall, accreditation is through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

*continued on page 39*



**Bryan Duke**

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education has information on its website to help parents, students and employers avoid what's called diploma mills, as well as information about valid accrediting agencies.

Employers, parents and students also can find a list of questions to ask to determine if a school being considered is valid.

"Some of the questionable institutions have names that sound very valid," UCO's Gary Steward cautions.

For example, consider Madison University — not to be confused with the University of Wisconsin-Madison or James Madison, fourth president of the United States. Madison University is a non-accredited institution with a website and a post office box in Mississippi.

Visit <http://www.okhighered.org/current-college-students/diploma-mills.shtml> for more information and links to the U.S. Department of Education that also provides information.





~~IMPOSSIBLE~~  
~~UNLIABLE~~  
~~UNSOLVABLE~~  
~~UNDOABLE~~

As befits a devotee of mathematics, UCO's Charlotte Simmons, Ph.D., calculates that the odds of her career being where it is today were less than becoming a famous actress, being struck by lightning, being killed by bee stings or being killed in a bathtub accident.

*continued next page*



# ~~Next~~ ~~Small~~ Against All Odds

by Gypsy Hogan

As UCO's 2016-17 recipient of the Women Who Inspire award, Simmons held the audience's attention as she described the incredible hard work and financial hardship that she faced as a low-income, first-generation college student from a small town in northeast Texas.

After paying her monthly bills, she had less than \$13 left for food, she told the audience. By the end of each month, she would live on a slice of bread a day — half in the morning and half at night.

A critical food shortage, however, was not the only reason Simmons titled her acceptance speech, "Against All Odds." There were so many other challenges for UCO's associate vice president of Academic Affairs and former dean of UCO's College of Mathematics and Science.

"Many people on campus see administrators and don't expect them to be someone who overcame those kind of hurdles along the way," said Darla Fent, Ed.D., a UCO professor and board member of UCO's Empowerment for Excellence, which presents the Women Who Inspire Award annually. "I've known and worked with Dr. Simmons, and I know she comes across as quiet and reserved, but she's a workhorse who chooses not to be in the limelight."

In the limelight, however, is where Simmons has found herself this year — and deservedly, so.

In addition to the Women Who Inspire award, she received a distinguished alumni award from her alma mater, East Texas State University-Commerce (now called Texas A&M – Commerce) in February.

When UCO broke ground for its new STEM Teaching and Research Center, speaker after speaker gave Simmons credit for making it happen.

No doubt, Simmons' drive to make careers happen for students seeking degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) is rooted in her own hardscrabble journey. However, the odds against her success are a more recent discovery.

"I was quite surprised to hear in a recent talk my own odds for completing a bachelor's degree stated as 11 percent," she said, citing

the six-year college graduation rate for low-income, first generation students.

She was fortunate, she said, to choose East Texas State University-Commerce, where she was accepted in the honors program, "critical in getting and keeping me engaged as a student." Although a hundred miles from her home— while there were closer two-year colleges — she also gives kudos to her choice, now knowing that low-income, first-generation students are seven times more likely to get a bachelor's if they start at a four-year institution.

"I took 18 to 21 hours each fall and spring semester and 12 hours in the summer, not because I chose to do so, but for financial reasons. The longer my degree took to complete, the more it would cost in housing expenses," she said.

"I also remember being hungry," she said, citing her meager monthly food budget. "The first couple of weeks, I could afford bologna to go with my bread, but toward the end of the month, I was down to bread only."

Initially, she planned to major in mathematics, a subject she had "passionately loved since childhood."

Now she knows that studies show women who receive a low score on a science or math exam lose confidence in their abilities and change majors, whereas males who score poorly on an exam believe the fault lies with either the professor or the exam.

"After earning my first B in my life on a calculus exam, I promptly went to advising and changed my major to English," she said.

However, East Texas State's mathematics professor Stuart Anderson, Ph.D., became her next stroke of luck.

"He took the time to inquire why I was not a mathematics major," she said. "Because he believed in me when I had lost confidence in myself, I ultimately completed a bachelor's degree with a double major in mathematics and English, graduating with highest honors."

However, Anderson did more than that. He was her honors thesis adviser, allowing her to research the history of mathematics, a subject that fulfilled the research requirements for both majors.

"This undergraduate research experience is what inspired me and gave me the resolve to go on to graduate school," she said, her

story continuing to reflect what research now affirms. "My own experience is why I have passionately supported undergraduate research for our students throughout my career."

During her time at East Texas State — just like at Central today — finances made it difficult to offer enough upper-division courses to prepare students for graduate school.

"Just as our faculty do for our students, Dr. Anderson taught a number of independent study courses — without compensation — to make it possible for me and others to be prepared," she said, urging her peers to "always know what a difference you make in your students' lives."

Unfortunately, being female has been another odd against Simmons.

"An old joke among mathematicians is that, 'There have been only two female mathematicians. One was not a woman; the other was not a mathematician,'" she said. From her historical research, she can tell story after story of brilliant women mathematicians who were shunned, discouraged and discredited. As a young student, though, she didn't know.

"The first time I was made aware that women are rare in mathematics was during my honors thesis defense," she said. "One of the faculty members on the panel asked me why I was in mathematics when there were so few women who succeed."

For Simmons, she did not believe what she heard.

"I have always maintained a positive outlook on life, believing that nothing is impossible if one is willing to work hard enough," she said. "So, that is what I did. I kept working."

While working on her master's at the University of North Texas and her doctorate at The University of Oklahoma, she again found an excellent mentor at each. And she beat the odds.

"Based on the statistics, only 2,227 of the 222,750 low-income, first-generation students who earn bachelor's degrees in STEM will complete a doctorate," she said. "Only 54 of these will be in mathematics. Only 11 of these 54 will be women."

Beating the odds didn't stop there.

She began her teaching career at Central in 1999 as an assistant professor of mathematics and statistics, later becoming tenured and moving up to the professor level.

"Statistically, we would expect only two of the 11 female lower-income, first-generational students who complete a doctoral degree in mathematics to attain tenure," the mathematician continued. "Therefore, there was only a 2 in 2.25 million chance that I would become a tenured faculty member in mathematics as a female, low-income, first-generation student."

At Central, however, she found better odds.

"This was undoubtedly due to the strong early leadership of Mrs. Dorothea Meagher," she said, referring to the woman who began teaching mathematics at Central in 1925, later serving as

dean of women and chair of the department for a total of almost 35 years.

Simmons also credits her success to two male colleagues — Jesse Byrne, Ph.D., and John Barthell, Ph.D., now Central's provost and vice president of Academic Affairs.

"Jesse and I started working at UCO at the same time. In the early days of my time in the department, there was still a feeling among some of the now retired faculty that the males should lead the department," she said. "Jesse always made sure to invite me to the Friday afternoon gatherings where department business was often discussed and make sure that I was always included."

"Dr. Barthell has been there throughout my career at UCO, always making sure that every accomplishment is noted and celebrated," she said. After he became provost, he named Simmons an associate vice president for Academic Affairs, adding to her list of academic accomplishments that include department chair, associate dean and then dean of the College of Mathematics and Science.

Provost Barthell deflects the compliment. "Anyone who has worked with Charlotte Simmons knows that she is the first person you want on your team," he said. "Her devotion to the success of students, faculty and staff as a chair, dean and now as an associate vice president is unparalleled."

Despite her against-the-odds rise, Simmons never forgets what it's like to be a first-generation, low-income student and the things that made a difference in her life.

**"I have always maintained a positive outlook on life, believing that nothing is impossible if one is willing to work hard enough."**

– Charlotte Simmons

"When I began as department chair in 2007, only one faculty member in our department was actively engaging undergraduates in research," she said.

Within two years, 15 undergraduates were involved in research with nine of the 16 faculty members directing research projects. By the 2009 gathering of the Oklahoma-Arkansas section of the Mathematical Association of America, one-third of all undergraduate presenters were from UCO, she said.

Simmons, then-Dean Barthell and Wei Chen, Ph.D., worked to secure a grant from the National Science Foundation to provide scholarships to undergraduates. The scholarships targeted first-generation students and underrepresented groups with financial need. Although not required by the National Science Foundation, the UCO program encouraged recipients to engage in undergraduate research.

"The college saw a significant increase in enrollment, including among first-time freshmen, as well as a disproportionate increase in diversity relative to the rest of the university, during the time we had this grant and a companion grant," she said. Funding was from 2010-16.

Other changes were noted among the grant participants:

- First-to-second year retention rates increased;

*continued on page 39*





# She's Back!

“Welcome to the new Old North,” President Don Betz told those who gathered Feb. 22 for the official reopening of the iconic building. She’s defied the challenges to once again stand as a beacon of hope to those who love and seek education.

“The list of those whose beliefs and expertise, whose treasures and persistence brought us to this day, reaches through the university family and beyond to Edmond, Oklahoma City and the state,” he said. “They stretch from the 926 appreciated donors inscribed on the Old North entry hall ... to the legion of workers and support personnel who revived this house of learning so imaginatively by building a ship in a bottle.”

A ship in a bottle?

For those not familiar with the Old North saga, know that it began in 1892 when work first began on a square brick structure that would undergo additions and renovations — including toilets in 1911 and air conditioning in 1963. A structural cut here and there, decade after decade, and by 2001, the building’s structural integrity was totally compromised. Students, faculty and staff had to be relocated because of unsafe conditions.

What started as a temporary closing, however, turned into a 15-year closure as the extent of work needed grew, requiring more and more funding. Work was broken into three phases, the first being restora-

tion of the exterior, preventing the soft sandstone from crumbling away. The second phase involved construction of a 17,000-square-foot addition to house fire stairs, an elevator, restrooms and IT closets — altogether bringing a 19th century building into the 21st century. The third phase involved the ship in a bottle — taking a completely gutted building and building a steel support system for each of the four stories. A building within a building.

Total cost was \$14.4 million for what’s now approximately 44,000 square feet of space. In the end, the project required raising \$6 million in private donations to complete.

“The most powerful force in our lives is vision,” President Betz said. “What do we hold sacred? What can we create and prepare for the future, not for ourselves, but for those who will follow us?”

These are the questions answered by those in the 19th century who were challenged to build a new territory, a new state, a new society.

“They understood implicitly that you do it through the power and vitality of education,” he said. “That education is the one factor, the one sustainable asset that every community has — if you believe in it, if you fuel it and you don’t abandon it. And they didn’t.”

And neither shall we.

Welcome to the new Old North.





GRAND REOPENING CEREMONY



1

1. Richard Bernard, Ph.D., second row in tie, is not only dean of UCO's Jackson College of Graduate Studies, but one of those lucky Edmond children who attended grade school in Old North. He organized a reunion of his childhood classmates for the reopening, as shown above.
2. Distinguished Alumnus Ray Hardin (BBA '61) of Midwest City visits with President Betz during the Old North reopening.
3. Special guests at the reopening included retired UCO President W. Roger Webb and former First Lady, Jeanie Webb, president of Rose State College; retired UCO President and former Oklahoma Gov. George Nigh and former First Lady, Donna; and current First Lady Suzanne Betz.

The reopening of Old North was celebrated with an evening event honoring donors and supporters, followed the next day by an open house for the campus and community. Altogether, hundreds came through the doors of the new-old building to share memories of her past and the hope for many new memories to come.



2



3



1



2

1. Left, Chancellor Glen D. Johnson of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education joins UCO's President Betz at the reopening of Old North's evening event, that began with outdoor entertainment and a program.
2. From left, retired emeritus faculty members Joanne Necco, Bob Palmer, unidentified woman and Robert Bost visit in the entry of Old North, where donors to her completion are engraved on a wall plaque and historical photos are displayed.
3. One of the favorite photo sites of the reopened building is the clock face, with wooden hands and hand-painted numerals, that was original to Old North's clock tower.



3

**Old North Booklets Available Online**

During Old North's grand reopening, guests were offered two booklets that are now online for viewing and downloading.

"Old North, Celebrating Oklahoma Art and Commitment to Education" provides university history, as well as catalogs the wonderful artwork that is now on display in Old North. The art is from the university's Melton Art Reference Library. The booklet may be found at [library.uco.edu/r/1](http://library.uco.edu/r/1).

The second booklet commemorates the reopening and provides historical information on Old North. It's available at [library.uco.edu/r/2](http://library.uco.edu/r/2).



# Architect Shares His Favorite Features

The revival of Old North is the work of hundreds of people.

However, David Stapleton, Central's director of architectural and engineering services, has been the man ultimately tasked with getting the job done. For the last 15 years, he has watched the building be gutted and reconstructed while facing challenge after challenge, a journey that might have wearied many.

However, as the building reopened, Stapleton

was there, one of the many volunteer tour guides, happy to show and tell visitors about the grand dame that now represents thousands of hours of his life's work.



David Stapleton

For that reason, it seemed fitting to ask him for a handful of his favorite aspects of the new Old North. As always, he was happy to share.



After Old North's tower was completed in 1894, this space was the office of Richard Thatcher, the Territorial Normal School's first principal, later known as president. Notice the exposed steel columns, added for seismic protection. Also, note that the steel columns do not align with the stone exterior walls. That's because the tower was not built true and plumb. The room is now the office of Nancy Busby, executive assistant to the president.

Creative plans for Old North's interior called for allowing students, faculty and staff to enjoy the comforts of a modern structure while appreciating the building's historic notes. The first floor office of Mark Hamlin is a prime example.

The north wall has exposed rock, laid in 1894 when workman began constructing the clock tower.



Now the President's Library, this room shows the largest portion of stone, as well as brick from the original 1892 building. The seismic steel columns are also visible, along with a perimeter "knee wall" that conceals steel anchor bolts, intended to hold the wall in place during a seismic event.

Part of the original exterior brick wall may be seen in the MidFirst Bank Leadership Conference Room. In the northeast corner, there's exposed stone that became the exterior wall when the north wing was added in 1894. The room's ceilings open up into dormers, added in the 2001-02 exterior restoration. The entire center section of the roof was removed and replaced to create these two-story, interior ceilings. Some of Old North's original wood flooring now is used as wall covering above the built-in cabinets in this room.



Setting the tone for the mix of old and new is Old North's main entrance. Visitors can see the names of donors whose financial gifts helped complete the building's most recent work. Glass corners allow guests to see into the modern classrooms, while students can look out to the school seal. New "school house" light fixtures and stamped metal ceiling tiles are similar to earlier materials used in Old North.

Looking out Old North windows to the southeast, viewers see the new Chickasaw Plaza amphitheater, with its paving in a traditional Chickasaw pattern. Opposite the building stands the Great Seal of the Chickasaw Nation, flanked by the UCO standards on stone columns. Across the sidewalk area is Barnett Plaza, featuring one of the original bells from Old North's tower.







In fall 2012, Old North magazine featured an article by Mark Hamlin (MA '94), Ph.D., in which he described why the shuttered Old North building meant so much to him and others. Hamlin, chair of UCO's Psychology department, told how his mentor and former department chair Mike Knight, Ph.D., would remind his graduates that they would always be related to each other and their academic training. "We would always be a family with a home in Old North," Hamlin wrote.

So, as a tribute to the reopening of Old North, the good professor was asked to give some new thoughts about the building he has loved since being a student in Old North almost 30 years ago.



**Psychology chair Mark Hamlin in his new office in Old North. Hamlin, both a student and a professor in Old North before it closed, describes a strong bond to the building.**

## Old North, Uniting Her Loyal Supporters

*By Mark Hamlin, Ph.D.  
UCO Chair of Psychology*

As the reopening of Old North approached, 16 years of skepticism melted away as the excitement began to build.

There are so many good memories of Old North, and I was not quite prepared for the wave of nostalgic emotion as I walked into Old North, taking the stairs again, to my "new" office — just like I had done on my first day in 1994 as a new faculty member.

I am grateful to President Betz, the "Savior of Old North," who made reopening Old North a reality. If he had not, the recent earthquakes might have left us with a pile of rocks.

Instead, the building pulses again with activity, and the recent open house left a very strong impression on me. While I had loved Old North for nearly 30 years, yearning for it to be reopened, I met other people during the donor reception and the open house

who had loved Old North even longer than I. These were people who had their own cherished memories that sometimes reached back into their childhood. I was honored to shake the hand of Tim Tallchief and hear how his grade school classmate, UCO's own Dr. Richard Bernard, and others had their elementary classes in Old North. I also was very fortunate to meet Dr. Gene McPhail and his family who came to the open house to see Dr. McPhail's name on the donor plaque outside of my office. At the end of that day, I was humbled to learn of so many people and how much they loved Old North.

Now, as I again office and teach in Old North, I am mindful that current students are creating their own relationship with Old North. Those who follow will have their own impact on those who walk these halls and teach in these classrooms. They will be mentored and encouraged just as I was — because Old North is alive and well again.



## Old North, How She Won 'The War'

As visitors moved through Old North during her grand reopening, so many had stories to tell. However, one of the more intriguing came from Don Boyce, Ed.D., emeritus professor of mathematics and statistics.

"You know Old North had a hand in winning World War II?" he asked President Betz, arousing the curiosity of many.

Boyce retired from UCO in 1997, having taught since 1957. However, he was a Central student when he first came under the influence of the legendary Dorothea Meagher, chair of Central's Department of Mathematics from 1952-70 and dean of women for 12 years.

It was from her, Boyce said, that he learned about ground school training that happened in Old North during World War II. "She had taught beginning navigation."

In the history of the College of Mathematics and Science, 1890-1990, author David Hart, Ph.D., described how Central's student enrollment declined significantly during World War II. However, beginning in 1939, Central began offering Civilian Pilot Training for the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Central provided 72 class hours of ground school. The aviators then took 35 hours of flight instruction at Wiley Post Airport.

In March 1942, the program became part of the War Training Service. By spring 1943, Murdaugh and Thatcher residence halls were housing 600 soldiers. They ro-



**World War II Navy cadets at Wiley Post Airport in Oklahoma City where they took flight training after training at Central. The biplane above was called the "Yellow Peril."**

tated through the 8-week training, separate from student curriculum.

"She never knew who among them were assigned where," Boyce said. However, the two of them reasoned that some had to have been among those flying out of England in bombing raids over Germany.

"Toward the end of the war, they were flying day and night, bombing manufacturing plants that were turning out war machines for the Germans," Boyce said.

And, that, he said, is why he believes Old North helped win the war.

Sidenote: During World War I, Old

North's fourth floor housed 140 students who were given room and board, tuition, a uniform, medical services and \$30 a month, all paid for by contracts with the U.S. War Department, said Nicole Willard, director of archives for Chambers Library.

"Enlistment was voluntary, but those students who accepted were members of the Army and liable for call to active duty."

A mess tent was set up on the athletic field, east of Old North. The Student Army Training Corps was disbanded after Armistice Day, Nov. 11, 1918.



**World War II Navy cadets on the steps of Thatcher Hall. They also lived in Murdaugh while taking classes at Central.**



**World War I student soldiers were housed in the fourth floor attic of Old North.**  
*(Photos are courtesy of Chambers Archives)*



## His Tour, Well Done

By Gypsy Hogan

Hundreds visited Old North during her Feb. 23 reopening, but one visit will always hold a special place in the hearts of many.

Gene McPhail, Ph.D., a beloved professor who served Central from 1969-90, spent almost two hours in the building, his wheelchair moving from one floor to the next, one corner to another.

“That was a cool, cool day,” said McPhail’s grandson Jake Fisher. “We kept asking if he was tired, if he wanted to go, but he’d just wave us off. He wanted to see every inch.”

With walls reconfigured, he showed them where his old office once was located on the third floor. He visited the president’s new office, where President Betz greeted him and met his family. Best of all, he visited the first floor office with a plaque by the door naming it the Gene McPhail room in his honor.

“Really, it was the best day ever,” Fisher said, noting that the family had been on watch for the reopening. “We were just so hoping he’d get to see it.”

And he did.

The good professor died the next week, on March 1, just a couple months shy of his 89th birthday.

In the office named in his honor, the frail McPhail insisted on leaving his wheelchair and standing by the window, then again by the window that had been in his old office.

When he got back in his wheelchair the second time, he told the family that would be the last time ever that he would stand. It was also the last time he would leave his nursing home, Fisher said.

The Old North visit, however, seemed to invigorate McPhail as he visited old friends and looked over the building where he had earned the nickname “The Sage” from students and colleagues who valued his mentorship.



**Gene McPhail in one of his last stands, while visiting the Gene McPhail room, named in his honor. Others from left are grandson Jake Fisher, graduating from Central in May; granddaughter Jana Fisher (BS '12); and daughter, Janene Fisher (BMed '86, MEd '96). Below is a photo of McPhail while still teaching at Central, wearing the smile and mischievous look that many recall.**

“He was an incredible personality who embodied what we think this place has been about — taking a personal interest in our students,” said James Machell, Ph.D., (MEd '84), dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies and one of those who considered McPhail a mentor. “He was a fun person to be around — always this mischievous gleam in his eye and smile on his face.”

Steve McDonald (BAEd '71, MEd '74) is another who claims to have benefited from McPhail’s never-failing interest.

“I tell people that if not for Dr. McPhail, I might still be walking around up there trying to figure out how to graduate,”  
*continued on next page*



## McPhail (continued from previous page)

said McDonald. He’s now retired, but not before a career that included teaching, coaching and serving as Oklahoma’s assistant state superintendent of education. In 1995, he opened his own bond company, helping state schools finance projects.

McDonald also is the one who donated money to have an Old North room named in his mentor’s honor.

After McPhail’s death, McDonald recalled a luncheon in 2013 where he and Dean Machell met their friend to tell him about plans to create the Gene McPhail room in his honor.

“I don’t think it hit him really what we were talking about until he got back home,” McDonald said.

McPhail’s grandson, however, said his grandfather was so humble about such things. “He just took everything in stride,” Fisher said, recalling how his “Papa” never forgot that he grew up on a farm where he picked cotton as a youngster, the oldest of four boys growing up in a one-room home in southwestern Oklahoma. He would be the only one to get a college degree.

McPhail, however, returned from the luncheon and typed

## Ensuring Value (continued from page 25)

“For us, we are in really good shape with 29 of our 30 programs fully recognized through 2024,” he said. “The remaining one was approved with concerns that will be removed within the next year.”

That said, Duke believes the pendulum has swung too far in the direction of accreditation, at least in his area of teacher preparation.

“In 2013, our two national level accreditors merged. Standards were changed, and now they include what many think are punitive measures, designed to shut down the number of teacher preparation programs,” he said. “There is a belief that only the most elite students from the most elite institutions should be teachers, with

McDonald a heartfelt letter of thanks that is now one of McDonald’s treasures.

“To have an office named for me in Old North is truly an honor, and I am very thankful,” McPhail wrote. “There are many rewards that we receive in life that are very meaningful. For you to say that I was your ‘Mentor’ was such. During my years at Central, I can look back at many young professionals (who) meant so much to me then and still do today. Steve, you are one that stood out.”

Fisher, who lived with and helped care for his grandfather before he went into a nursing home, understands what an influence the man could be. He just wishes, he said, that his grandfather could have lived a little longer to see him graduate in May from Central with a degree in psychology.

Nonetheless, he said his family always will remember what a great day his grandfather had touring Old North that beautiful day in February and consider it a gift of joy for the beloved man’s final days.

zero standards to support that.”

Now it’s becoming harder and more expensive to be a teacher — all at a time when there are teacher shortages. Some states are considering their own accreditation process. Iowa has done that to short-circuit some of the expense of accreditation.

As a result, some students and parents who find a school, but can’t find its accreditation, may want to look to see if there is a state process.

Such are the many layers and complexities of accreditation in higher education.

## Simmons (continued from page 29)

- Average GPAs increased with sustained participation in research;
- Only 15 percent of the participants in research left the university, compared to 33 percent of those not doing research; and,
- Of the program graduates, 46.7 percent pursued advanced degrees.

Since becoming a university administrator, she has shifted the focus of her own research from pure mathematics back to her undergraduate passion, the history of mathematics. This was not without being told by a prominent mathematical historian at a conference “not to waste my time because no one could possibly be interested in work that began as an undergraduate.”

For that reason, she took special pleasure in seeing her research on mathematician Augustus DeMorgan featured in “Best Math

Writing of 2012.” Her earlier research on DeMorgan was a segment in her undergraduate honors thesis.

So, what does she tell students today — especially those low-income, first-generation students?

“My advice is to make the most of every opportunity. Never give up. Never assume. And always work harder than anyone else,” she said.

Then she added, taking a line from British author Walter Bagehot, “After all, the greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.”

*Gypsy Hogan (BA '74) is publications editor for UCO’s office of University Communications and editor of Old North magazine.*



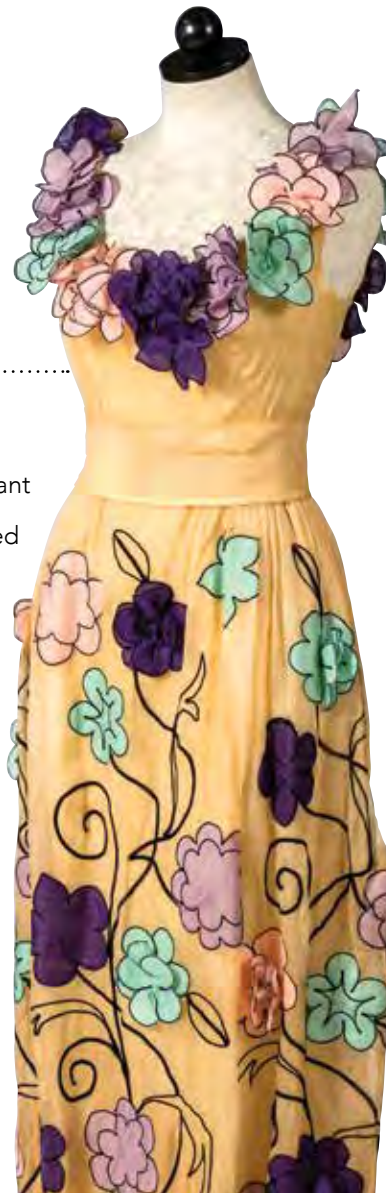
## Wrestlers Set New Record

UCO's wrestling program dates back to 1921 with no shortage of success, having claimed 15 national, 19 regional and six conference championships. However, there was never an undefeated season — until now. The big win happened Feb. 4 in a nail-biter, the team down 6-3 against Fort Hays State before coming back with six straight wins to claim the record. "We wrestled some really tough teams," said redshirt sophomore Blake Dauphin. "But we began working toward our goals over the summer — lifting, running and wrestling. Our coaches did a great job preparing us for every dual. Going undefeated took the efforts of the entire team. Everyone pushed each other to be better every day."



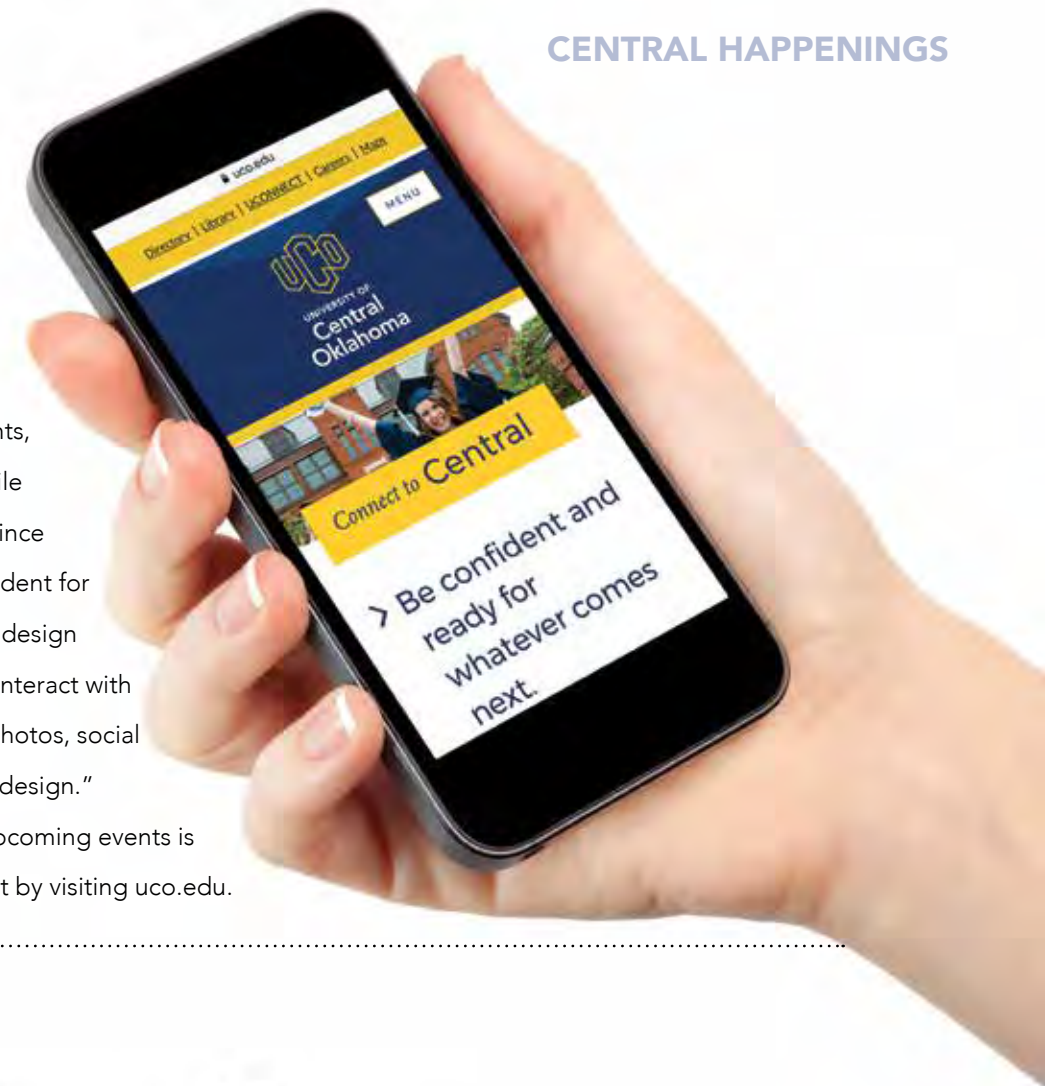
## Getting In Style

Central is getting a little more fashionable, thanks to a recent \$6,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The funds will be used to preserve UCO's historic fashion collection, containing more than a thousand pieces of clothing, hats, shoes and accessories dating from the 1890s to the 1970s. "This grant helps ensure that our pieces will get the very best treatment going forward," said project director Mary Huffman, coordinator of grants and contracts for UCO's College of Education and Professional Studies. "The collection eventually will be available digitally, as well as open to the public for research and study." With the funding, a textile conservator will perform a preservation assessment, as well as hold campus workshops on the care and preservation of textiles.



## On the Go

Sleek ... modern ... mobile responsive — those words describe UCO's new website, launched in February. Now compatible with all smartphones and mobile browsers, the new design allows future and current students, as well as parents, to access the website while on the go. "This is our first major redesign since 2009," Adrienne Nobles, assistant vice president for University Communications, said. "The new design and navigation reflect how people use and interact with technology today — clean graphics, great photos, social media integration and a mobile-responsive design." Keeping everyone better informed about upcoming events is another goal of the new design. Check it out by visiting [uco.edu](http://uco.edu).



## uDefy, Countering Extremism

Five UCO students took second place in the recent global competition, sponsored by Facebook and the U.S. Department of State, that challenged students to counter online violent extremism. Central students Yusuf Shurbaji, Ashley Neese, Tommy Johnson, Kaitlyn Britschgi and Laura Goehler developed a campaign called uDefy to enlist, educate, engage and motivate young citizens. uDefy received more than 1 million impressions in 84 countries. As one of four national finalists, the students presented their uDefy project to government, military and private sector officials in Washington, D.C., bringing home a \$3,000 award for the UCO Mass Communication department. For more about their project, visit [udefyproject.com](http://udefyproject.com).

— Central Happenings by Aspen Loard, University Communications intern





# SPLASH BASH!



## SPLASH BASH IS BACK!

7-9 p.m.  
 Thursday, July 27  
 Andy Alligator's Water Park  
 3300 Market Place, Norman, OK


Join us for a complimentary night of family fun as we take over Andy Alligator's Water Park!

### ALUMNI NOTES

#### 1970's

**John Cointepas** (BS '75), PA-C has joined St. Anthony Physicians Gastroenterology. He was an assistant professor at OU Health Science Center Cardiorespiratory Science program until 1981. He then began working as a physician assistant specializing in gastroenterology with the Oklahoma Foundation for Digestive Research.

#### 1980's

 **Jeff Clymer** (MBA '80) has joined Oklahoma City insurance firm Sterling Management Group LLC as an executive producer. He is a certified insurance counselor and a member of the Independent Insurance Agents organizations of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and America. **Jeanine Gully** (BMed '80, MME '95) was recently elected to serve as president-elect of the Oklahoma Music Educators Association. During the six-year term, she will serve two years as president-elect, two years as president and two years as past president. She is in her 36th year as a choral director in Oklahoma. This is her fifth year at Edmond Santa Fe High School. **Karen Clark** (MEd '86) was inducted posthumously into the African-American Educators Hall of Fame on Sept. 30. She was an associate professor of communications at Langston University, where she also served as a department chair. A print and photo journalist, she was honored by many organizations, including the National Association of Black Journalists. **Mark Codner** (BA '88) has been named editor of the Edmond Sun.

Most recently, he and his wife were owners and publishers of The Madill Record. He was previously the associate editor of the East Community section of the Tulsa World.

#### 1990's

**Cristi Twenter** (BA '96) serves as the executive director for Edmond Mobile Meals. She joined the staff in 2013 as assistant director and became executive director in May 2016.

#### 2000's

**Rebekah Gossett** (BA '02) was recently named as a 2016 Great 100 Nurses of Oklahoma honoree and also was nominated for the March of Dimes Nurse of the Year in Oklahoma in the public health category. She works as a population care management supervisor at the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. **Thomas Rossiter** (BS '03) has been named vice president, commercial relationship manager for First Fidelity Bank. He brings nearly 15 years of banking experience to this role. **Wanda Gatlin** (MEd '04) was named teacher of the year for Jarman Elementary at Union Public Schools. She has been named site teacher of the year two times previously.

#### 2010's

**Chris Hutchison** (MBA '10) has joined Magnum Hunter as manager of marketing and midstream. Prior, he worked as a lead marketing representative at Chesapeake

Energy. **Kory Atcuson** (BS '13, MPA '16) serves as the Edmond city clerk. He previously worked as a teaching assistant and instructor for the Department of Political



Science at Central. **Lauren Nelson** (BA '11) is the new co-host of "Discover Oklahoma." She joins as co-host after serving as a reporter for the show. She

previously worked as an anchor for KWTW News 9, and served as Miss Oklahoma in 2006, then Miss America in 2007.

### Faculty/Staff

**Josh Smith** of UCO's Veteran Student Support Office was recently recognized by the City of Mesquite, Texas, for his accomplishments as a native of Mesquite. In addition to serving overseas, he competed in the 2016 Paralympics. **Kathy Black, Ed.D.**, professor emeritus, was



inducted into the 2016 University of Science and Arts Oklahoma Alumni Hall of Fame. The award is given in recognition

of professional achievement, service to society and for bringing honor and distinction to the university. She retired from Central in 2001 after 35 years of service.

#### Old North Staff

**UCO President** Don Betz  
**Vice President, University Communications**  
 Charles Johnson  
**Editor** Gypsy Hogan (BA '74)  
**Art Director** Craig Beuchaw (BA '92)  
**Photographic Services** Daniel Smith (BA '77, MEd '93)  
**Alumni Records** Wendy Lackmeyer

Old North (USPS 098-220) is published twice a year by the University of Central Oklahoma, University Relations and the Alumni Association, 100 North University Drive, Edmond, OK 73034-5209.  
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Old North, Alumni Association of the University of Central Oklahoma, 100 North University Drive, Edmond, OK 73034-5209. Periodicals postage paid at Edmond (ISSN number 1063-6447).  
 In compliance with Title VI and Title VII of The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of The Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, The Civil Rights Act of 1991, and other Federal Laws and Regulations, University of Central Oklahoma does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, handicap, disability, status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures; this includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.  
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## Pink Named College President in Michigan



Bill Pink (MEd '95), Ph.D., is now president of Grand Rapids Community College in Michigan. Pink was one of 66 applicants to replace retiring President Steven Ender. Since March 2015, Pink served the college as vice president and dean of workforce development. He is the first black president in the school's 100-year history.

Pink was an associate dean in UCO's College of Education and Professional Studies from 2007-11. He left Central to become vice president of academic affairs for Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City.

Pink has been an educator for more than 25 years and taught or coached in Oklahoma, Nebraska and Oregon.

He also was inducted last fall into the York College Athletic Hall of Fame in Nebraska. He received an associate's degree from York, a bachelor's from Oklahoma Christian University, a master's from Central and a doctorate from The University of Oklahoma.

## UCO Alumnus Takes Top Air Force Award



Jason Mathis (BBA '15) recently was named the "Outstanding Air Force Civilian Employee of the Year" in the civilian program specialist category. The honor came from the Air Force Material Command of the Air Force Association.

Mathis is currently a KC-10 logistics management specialist at Tinker Air Force Base.

Each year, the Air Force Association recognizes four Air Force civilian employees for outstanding achievement.

Nominations are evaluated for achievement, development of techniques or procedures that significantly increase mission effectiveness and breadth of impact.

"The UCO College of Business introduced me to the Palace Acquire Program for recent graduates at Tinker, and I can honestly say that what I acquired from UCO laid the foundation for my success," Mathis said. "Teamwork, accountability and, most of all, the operations and supply chain courses helped me introduce new ideas and gain a better understanding of my job, which ultimately led me to receiving this award."



Marilyn Luper Hildreth

## Clara Luper Room, Nigh University Center

The Clara Luper Room was dedicated during a gathering Feb. 24 that honored the late civil rights activist and educator with a designated room in the Nigh University Center.

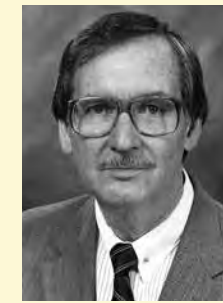
From 1958 to 1964, Luper mentored the members of the Oklahoma City NAACP Youth Council during its campaign to end the segregation of public accommodations, through sit-ins, protests and boycotts. The group's Katz Drug Store sit-in was the first and the longest of the Civil Rights Movement.

Marilyn Luper Hildreth, Clara Luper's daughter, spoke at UCO's dedication event. Central's Myron Pope, Ed.D., vice president for student affairs, said it was a privilege for the university to honor such a trailblazer at a university that is dedicated to celebrating diversity.

## Coleman Smith's Music Archived

Hundreds of original compositions and musical arrangements of the late Central music professor Coleman Smith, D.M.E., were delivered Sept. 15 to the university's Chambers Library Archives.

"My dad spent his life creating so much beautiful music. Our family appreciates all the effort that has gone into preserving it," his daughter, Cathie Denton (BMEd '81) of Edmond, said.



Coleman Smith

Smith's musical arrangements will now be cataloged and made available so that others may study and use them for future musical performances.

Smith retired in 1987 after teaching 26 years at Central and 12 years in public schools. After retiring, he continued to be active in music as an adjudicator, composer and arranger.

He died March 30, 2012, leaving file cabinets full of his musical works.

"Coleman Smith was one of those rare people who often did 'custom arrangements' of songs to better fit his students' skills or talents. It was not uncommon for all of his performing groups to do entire programs of his own arrangements. And what wonderful arrangements they were," said former student Michael Plunkett (BMEd '80, MMEd '88), who previously taught at Carl Albert High School and is now the fine arts administrator for the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association.

Smith did arrangements for Central's Men's Glee Club, the Concert Choir, Women's Glee Club and for the entertainment group the "Tunesmiths." In addition, he wrote music for the weekly services at his church.

After his death, his daughter contacted Plunkett to help her decide what to do with all the files.

"Many of us think these arrangements are like gold to music educators," Plunkett said in support of placing the work in the Chambers archive collection. "Dr. Smith was a unique educator,



Officially donating the original compositions and arrangements of the late Central music professor Coleman Smith are, from left, his daughter, Cathie Denton; former student Michael Plunkett; and UCO Director of Archives Nicole Willard.

and these arrangements and compositions represent a time in our life that was very special. He was a mentor to so many music teachers in Oklahoma and the entire country."

Terry Attebery (BMEd '72, MMEd '79), another former student and previously a vocal music teacher at Edmond Memorial High School, added, "Usually after graduation, a student just goes on their way to teach and never looks back. Dr. Smith was my constant guide my first few years of teaching. My students sang many of his arrangements, and we were lucky that he was close enough to come to our school and work with the students on those compositions. I still see that twinkle in his eye, that huge smile on his face and that leg bouncing up and down as he made the piano 'sing.' He simply was my music hero."

UCO honored Smith by inducting him in 2016 into the inaugural class of the "Luminary Society," honoring those whose service and contributions have brought distinction to the university.



### Journalism Hall of Fame Honors UCO Leaders

Several Central alumni were among those honored by the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame at its 47th annual induction ceremony April 27 at UCO.

Inductees included Gene Triplett (BA '75), The Oklahoman's retired city editor and entertainment editor; retired UCO professor Paul R. Lehman (BAEd '69, MEd '71), Ph.D., first African-American newsperson on Oklahoma City television; and Ralph Schaefer (BAEd '70), veteran newsman for suburban Tulsa newspapers.

In other news, UCO alumnus Joe Hight (BA '80) has been named the new director of the Journalism Hall of Fame. He follows retiring director Terry Clark, Ed.D., who has served 20 years at the organization's helm. He's also retiring from 27 years of teaching at UCO.

Hight, a veteran newsman and member of the Journalism Hall of Fame, serves as the Edith Kinney Gaylord Chair of Journalism Ethics for the UCO Department of Mass Communication.

Also honored were three UCO journalism students, recipients of the Brian J. Walke ethics scholarship (Manuelle Arias and Addam "Suave" Francisco) and the Oklahoma Press Association Award for outstanding promise in newspaper journalism (Kateleigh Mills, The Vista editor in chief).

The Hall of Fame was founded in 1971 by Central's former Department of Journalism chair Ray Tassin, Ph.D. This year's inductees make 418 total members, all listed on the organization's website.



Joe Hight



Gene Triplett



Terry Clark



Paul R. Lehman



Ralph Schaefer

### Two UCO Guys Find One Carolina Hallway

Three UCO alumni are settling into Raleigh, North Carolina — **Marco Bauer Rodriguez** (BBA '06, MEd '08) who is the new director of Meredith College's MBA program; **Nathan Woolard** (BS'07), Ed.D., who is in his first year as an assistant professor of management/entrepreneurship at the college; and **Lauren (Caple) Woolard** (BBA '13), who relocated with her husband and her online clothing store, Wooden Arrow Boutique (woodenarrowboutique.com).

"Marco and I have offices right down the hallway from each other," Nathan Woolard said, who added that in his spare time, his wife puts him to work helping with her online business and, most of all, the couple's new baby girl, Andie.

Nathan Woolard was previously at Emporia State University in a similar teaching position. Rodriguez moved to Raleigh from UCO where he was assistant director of the university's Office of Global Affairs.



Marco Bauer Rodriguez, left, Nathan Woolard, competing mugs.

### Adding Historical Native American Context to Oklahoma Land Runs

Retired UCO professor **Bob Palmer**, M.F.A., Ed.D., recently collaborated with Choctaw educator Linda Skinner to teach a program entitled, "Before the Land Runs: History in Context."

They targeted third graders in Edmond's Cross Timbers and Heritage elementary schools.

Skinner has taught for 45 years, a self-described "product of a Choctaw father and an Oklahoma farm girl" who has been known to cringe at the Oklahoma elementary school tradition of exclusively celebrating the state's land runs.

"I don't want anyone to give up their roots, but to be who you are and celebrate it," she said, noting that the land runs were a time that further disenfranchised Native Americans. "This is the world that we share."

To give students a better idea of the complexity of that history, she developed her program with the help of a UCO Multicultural Institute grant and local Indian education scholars and artists.

However, as the time neared for the program to start, Skinner found that her art supplies hadn't arrived. "I barely knew Dr. Palmer, but I emailed him to see if he could help us. He ended up helping us create the most beautiful projects."

Palmer painted eagle canvases for both elementary schools. Each student then painted a "Blessing Feather" to



UCO's emeritus art professor Bob Palmer and Edmond educator Linda Skinner with one of two paintings Palmer did, surrounded by third-graders' "blessing feathers."

honor what they had learned.

"I teach gifted and talented students, but the project was for every single third grader because that is the grade where Oklahoma history is emphasized," Skinner said. "Now the students understand that our history is much more

complex than a race for land. They have become critical thinkers with a deep understanding of the dynamics of this period in history."

For more information about the program, contact Skinner at linda.skinner@edmondschools.net.

### Program Connects Children, Older Adults



**Glee Bertram** (MA '83), Ph.D., a UCO professor in human environmental sciences, is leading an ongoing project that connects children at the First Christian Church's Child Care Center with older adults. The project includes students from UCO's family life education, nutrition, dance and kinesiology programs.

"What we are learning is that programs of this nature provide a venue for older adults to remain productive and be valued as contributing members of society, thus enhancing our community," Bertram said.

Other UCO faculty in the project are LaDonna Atkins, Ed.D.; Brandon Burr, Ph.D.; Tawni Holmes, Ph.D.; Tina Kambour; Melissa Powers, Ph.D.; and Kaye Sears, Ed.D.



# IN MEMORY

## 1940s

**Martha Rodrigues** (BSEd '46) died Jan. 1, 2017, in Ponca City. She worked for the United States Air Force during World War II and then began a long career in education. She taught in Blackwell and Ponca City. Her final years of teaching were at Northern Oklahoma College in



Tonkawa. **Robert "Stan" Robinette** (BSEd '49) died Feb. 25, 2017. He served in World War II and played football at The University of Oklahoma before

attending Central. He taught and coached for 32 years, including 23 years at Dinuba High School in California, retiring in 1981.

## 1950s

**Milford Parker** (BS '54) died Nov. 11, 2016. He was a successful auto parts store owner, drywall contractor and homebuilder. He enjoyed coaching his sons' sports teams and vacationing in Colorado. **Joan Reed** (BSEd '57) died Nov. 28, 2016. An educator for more than 40 years, she retired in 1994 from Truman Elementary. She was honored as the 1980 Norman and Cleveland County Teacher of the Year, and served as president for two years of the Norman chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma International Society for Key Women Teachers.



**Ivan "Joe" Webb** (BSEd '58) died Dec. 21, 2016. He played football for Central and upon graduation was named head football coach at Edmond High

School. Later, he moved to Dallas and began a successful career in the life insurance industry. He enjoyed supporting UCO's athletic programs. **James "Jim" Turner** (BS '58) died Aug. 14, 2016, in Norman. He served the U.S. Navy in air traffic control for two years. After an honorable discharge, he moved to Shidler, Oklahoma, where he taught high school English and drama and coached football. He later worked as a drilling mud engineer with Magcobar Drilling Co. He earned his Doctorate of Medicine from The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and practiced in Edmond and Thomas, Oklahoma. He was also a clinical instructor at the Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and trained medical students at his private clinic. **Jack Everhart** (BSEd '58)



died Nov. 30, 2016. He served the U.S. Army for two years as a high-speed radio operator in Alaska. Active in his community, he was a teacher and coach who began

his career in Dale, Oklahoma, later teaching in Oklahoma City and Midwest City, Oklahoma, and in Odessa, Texas. He and his wife later served as missionaries in India and South Korea for 25 years.

## 1960s



**Paul Pugh** (BAEd '62) of Oklahoma City died Jan. 8, 2017. He was a member of the U.S. Navy, serving two tours, including duty in Vietnam.

He worked for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation as an appraiser. He later became head of the agency's land acquisition department before retirement.

He later retired as a lieutenant colonel from the Army Reserves. **Henry Pearce** (BS '63) died Dec. 25, 2016. He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Berlin airlift. He graduated from The University of Oklahoma School of Medicine in 1965. In 1969, he completed his surgical residence. He then started his career in general and vascular surgery and practiced until age 81. He was involved in developing one of the first medical centers in Edmond. **Curtis Van Horn** (BA '64, MEd '69) died July



25, 2016. He served in the U.S. Army for several years before becoming an educator. He retired from the Crooked Oak School District after 23 years of

service in various positions. He also served as an adjunct professor at Oklahoma City University and the University of Southern Mississippi, Gulf Coast campus. He later worked for the U.S. Department of Education as a regional team leader, retiring in 1997. **Doris McPherson** (BS '64)



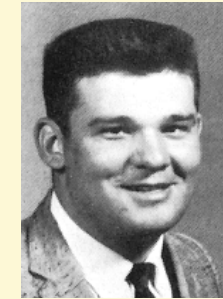
died Oct. 4, 2016, in Oklahoma City. She worked for Putnam City Schools for two years. As her family relocated to New



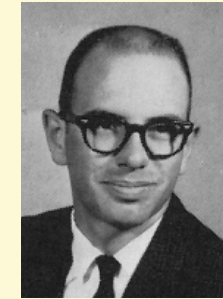
*Kaitlyn Henry writes Alumni Notes and In Memory. She is a marketing assistant for UCO's Office of University Communications. Please send*

*notes to UCO, University Communications, 100 North University, Box 201, Edmond, OK 73034, or email ucomm@uco.edu with "Alumni Note" in the subject line.*

England and Minnesota, she taught Bible study classes. Upon returning to Oklahoma, she taught smoking cessation classes for Presbyterian Hospital. **Robert Dunlap** (BS '64) died Nov. 1, 2016. He spent most of his career teaching high school, two years in Ardmore, Oklahoma, and 26 years at Northwest Classen High School



in Oklahoma City. He also taught night school at Oklahoma City Community



College. **James Wheelbarger** (BSEd '65) of Kingfisher died Dec. 28, 2016. He began his career teaching at Crooked Oak, but chose early retirement to pursue

his love of farming. He was a member of the Cashion Fire Department for more than 25 years, serving as an EMT and fire chief in the Oklahoma community. **Karmaleta Hempel** (BSEd '66) of Choctaw died Aug. 17, 2016. She was an elementary school teacher in Oklahoma for 33 years and retired from Mid-Del schools in 1999. She was a longtime member of Del City Church of Christ, where she attended for more than 45 years. **Timothy Hedrick** (BA '69) died February 20, 2017. He was a sergeant in the U.S. Army and served during the Vietnam War. He owned and operated American Suburban Heat and Air in Edmond.

**Kenneth Elledge** (BS '69, MEd '72) of Del City died Oct. 6, 2016. A graduate of Edmond High School, he served in the U.S. Army and loved to travel.

## 1970s

**Ernest Freshour** (BBA '70) died Sept. 18, 2016, in Oklahoma City. He worked for

## Ida "B" Blackburn



Ida "B" Blackburn (BA '52), 87, died Dec. 10, 2016, in Oklahoma City. A pioneer in early television, she first studied music at Central. She taught music in public schools until 1958 when she auditioned for the role of "Miss Ida," becoming the local host of a syndicated children's show, Romper Room, on KOCO-TV. With a knack for connecting with viewers, she remained on the air until 1975 with shows such as At Home with Ida B, The

Ida B Show and Dateline Hollywood. On the national stage, she was a pioneer in the coverage of movies and television shows with interviews captured around the world and in Los Angeles. Her career also including being a top sales person at KOCO-TV, a choir director at several Methodist churches, record-breaking promotions of concerts, modeling, singing, acting and the creation of the Ida B Agency, one of the first public relations and advertising firms in Oklahoma owned by a woman. In 2013, she was named to the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame. She asked that donations be made in her memory to the Oklahoma Historical Society, where her son, Bob Blackburn, is executive director.

Western Electric and Drilling Mud Inc. He enjoyed fishing, attending sporting events and spending time with family. **Jeffrey Ohmann** (BA '71) died Oct. 27, 2016. He had a long career as an account executive at AT&T. He spent many years sailing and living on his boat at Waikiki Beach Club in Honolulu. **George Hardy** (BBA '71) of Bethany, died Jan. 16, 2017. He served as a radio repairman in the U.S. Air Force. While at Central, he worked at Western Electric, and after completing his degree, he continued there as an accountant for 36 years. He enjoyed traveling in his RV, eventually visiting all 50 states. **Shelby Davis** (MEd '72) died July 24, 2016. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War and earned four decorations. An educator, he began his career in Commerce, Oklahoma; he then moved to Oklahoma City to teach woodshop and coach swimming

at Northeast High School. He later taught vocational education at Putnam City High School until he retired in 1986. He was also a dedicated swimmer, swimming at the National Senior Olympics. **Cecilia Hopkins** (BAEd '72) died Dec. 24, 2016, in Oklahoma City. She worked as a flight attendant for American Airlines for 30 years. **Don Gross** (BBA '72) died Nov. 29, 2016. Of Edmond, he worked as a landman in the oil and gas industry and retired from Continental Land Resources in 2015. He was a member of Quail Springs United Methodist Church where he volunteered with the children's mentor program. **Joe Kerby** (BBA '72) of Grove died Oct. 27, 2016. He was a member of the Canterbury Choral Society of Oklahoma City and performed in productions at many theaters. He served as the music minister for several churches throughout Oklahoma, most recently First



Baptist Church of Grove. **Robert Wilson** (BA '74) of Oklahoma City, died Dec. 16, 2016. He worked for Core Laboratories as a quality assurance/training supervisor. His passion was photography, especially of national parks. **John Hutchinson Jr.** (BA '74), of Edmond, died Dec. 4, 2016. While at Central, he became a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity. In 2015, he retired after 22 years of operating an Edmond area postal business with his brother. **R.G. Parker** (BS '75) of Oklahoma City died Feb. 8, 2017. He had a successful 35-year career with Halliburton Services. He later retired in Oklahoma City and enjoyed spending time at his cabin at Lake Eufaula,



### Joe Poindexter



Joe Poindexter (BSEd '64), 76, of Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, died Dec. 4, 2016.

He was a starting guard on Central's 1962 national championship football team, which played for the title in the Camellia Bowl. In 2015, he was inducted into UCO's Athletic Hall of Fame as part of the 1962 team.

He served 43 years in education as a teacher, counselor, coach, administrator and adjunct professor. A lifelong learner, after getting his bachelor's at Central, he later received a master's in school administration and counseling from Northeastern State University and in 1994 another bachelor's, in history.

He was the founder and president of the Hot Springs Village Civil War Roundtable and spoke at clubs, organizations and schools. He was a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and an officer of the Poindexter Descendants Association. In addition, he was a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Barcelona Road Baptist Church and a chaplain with Samaritan Ministries in Hot Springs.

He was also an author whose works include "A Divided State," "Blue," and "The Darkest Night," all about the Civil War and available on Amazon books.

Oklahoma. **Jimmie Fulton** (BBA '75) died Sept. 27, 2016, in Oklahoma City. He served in the U.S. Army before he began working in the Oklahoma oilfields. While working full time, he attended night classes at Central to obtain his degree. **Mignon Denyer** (BSEd '76, MEd '88) died Nov. 26, 2016, in Edmond. She served as a first lieutenant in the United States Air Force for two years. She worked as director of nurses at Convalescent Hospital in Merced, California, and later worked as an instructor for the division of practical nursing and as director for the Mid-Del Lewis Eubanks Area Vo-Tech School. **Verlan Raines** (BS '78), of Edmond, died Dec. 15, 2016. He worked in Spain for Firestone for three years, then moved to Oklahoma City and worked with his wife for 24 years as owners of Administration Service Corporation.

## 1980s

**Mary Bohr** (MEd '81) of Oklahoma City died Dec. 22, 2016. An educator, she taught at Piedmont Elementary, Oklahoma City Community College and St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School in Oklahoma City. After retirement, she taught as an adjunct professor at Francis Tuttle Technology Center. **Rosemary Stafford** (BSEd '80, BS '83) died Dec. 8, 2016. She worked as a nurse at Mercy Hospital, then became an at-home mother of three. She also worked at The Village library for 16 years. **Mary Lynne Webb** (BA '81) of Edmond died Dec. 2, 2016. She had a successful career at OG&E and North American Aviation. She retired after more than two decades at Wilson Foods as director of human resources. **Jay Mitchell** (BA '83) died Jan. 28, 2017, in Sulphur, Oklahoma. An Eagle Scout since 1971, he was a life member of the National Eagle Scout Association. Throughout his career, he held various positions for Gov. George Nigh. He also served in the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office and at the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division of the state health department. He worked as a regional EMS coordinator until his retirement in 2010. **Mary Ryan** (MS '83) died Sept. 28, 2016, in Oklahoma City. A former junior high English teacher, she served as a board member for multiple organizations. She was a longtime member and past president of the Oklahoma City Orchestra League and also served on the volunteer council of the American Symphony Orchestra League. **Rodger Harris** (MA '84) of Oklahoma City died Feb. 14, 2017. He was in the Army's 95th Division Reserves and worked as the oral historian and archivist for the Oklahoma Historical Society for 20 years. Recently, he served as an adjunct professor teaching

history for local colleges and universities. **Adam Barber** (BS '85, MBA '98) died Aug. 16, 2016, in Edmond. He worked for the State of Oklahoma at the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Commerce. **John Stiltner** (BBA '85) died Oct. 19, 2016, in Ellijay, Georgia. After graduating from Central, he received his MBA from Mercer University. **Venita Clifton** (BA '86) of Oklahoma City died Dec. 22, 2016. She worked as an intensive care unit nurse at Mercy Hospital, as well as a home health nurse and a hospice nurse.



**Deborah McCoy** (BA '88, MEd '91) died Feb. 18, 2017. She worked for the Oklahoma State Department of Health in child guidance

as a psychology clinician and a licensed professional counselor. She was a longtime member of Crossings Community Church. A memorial service for **Ron Metheny** (BS '89) was held Feb. 20, 2017. He served as a

### Mathew Evans



Mathew Evans, adjunct instructor in the School of Music died Saturday, Dec. 3, at age 37. He served Central just under three years.

He was an accomplished hornist, pedagogue and arranger. He and his wife, Dawn Lindblade, D.M.A., had just married in October, and he was pursuing a doctorate in horn performance from The University of Oklahoma.

member of the Oklahoma Army National Guard, 45th Infantry Division, and the U.S. Corps of Engineers for more than 35 years, retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1990. For more than 40 years, he owned and operated a shoe repair business in Edmond. **James "Jimmy" Hefner** (BS '89) died Oct. 6, 2016, in Oklahoma City. He was the owner of Metro Pinball and Video and repaired pinball machines and video games across Oklahoma.

## 1990s

**Susie Beasley** (BS '91) died Aug. 8, 2016. She began her career as an audio/video technician for the military dependent school system at Yokota Air Force Base, Japan. Upon returning to Oklahoma City, she worked for the Metropolitan Library System, retiring as assistant librarian for the Choctaw Public Library in 2016. **Mary Gosney** (BBA '91, BSEd '93) died Feb. 18, 2017. She was an instructor at the Federal Aviation Administration and retired from Francis Tuttle Technology Center. Previously, she spent time in teaching positions at the YMCA and as a sewing instructor. **Timothy Parker** (MEd '92) died Aug. 16, 2016, in Midwest City. He worked for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services for more than 25 years before retiring. **Jeffrey "Mark" Felton** (MEd '94) died Nov. 20, 2016. As an orthodontist, he maintained a private practice in Edmond and Oklahoma City. He was a clinical professor at The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry. **Lu Ann Tuttle** (BA '98) died Aug. 19, in Edmond. She spent her life dedicated to her family and friends.

## 2000s

**Sylvia Gilmour** (BS '01) of Kingfisher died Feb. 4, 2017. She worked as an office manager and accountant for many years. She also served as a board member of the

Kingfisher Educational Foundation and the Kingfisher Regional Hospital. **James Pearson** (BBA '03) died Sept. 20, 2016, in Edmond. Throughout her career, she held various accounting positions. She enjoyed exploring new cities and spending time at Lake Eufala. **Lance Miller** (BA '05) died Jan. 1, 2017, in Oklahoma City. He worked in quality control at Lucent Technologies for more than 17 years. He later worked at Farmers Insurance as a claims representative. For 30 years, he was a member of the St. Patrick's Day committee, serving as co-organizer of the parade. **Gregory Chilton** (MEd '04) died Feb. 11, 2017. He began his career in education in Carter, Oklahoma, as a teacher and coach. He was currently in his 16th year at Chickasha Public Schools.

## 2010s

**Michael Reid** (MEd '10) of Tulsa died Jan. 3, 2017. He spent most of his career teaching and coaching in Muskogee, but held numerous administrative positions throughout Oklahoma. Recently, he served as the accountability director for Sapulpa Public Schools. **Dustin Buckner** died Oct. 3, 2016. He was a student at Central pursuing a degree in kinesiology. He was a first class boy scout and a veteran of the U.S. Marines, having achieved corporal status.

## Faculty/Staff



**Barbara England** died Nov. 29, 2016. She served as a teacher and principal in Missouri and Oklahoma prior to becoming an instructor and the

director of the Reading Clinic at Central. **Sherri McCann** of Guthrie died March 17, 2017. She served UCO administration



from 1993-2015 in housing, travel and payroll services.



**Jerry Hill, Ph.D.**, died Dec. 15, 2016 in Fairview, Texas. She was a professor in the UCO College of Education and Professional Studies

from 1974-1999, earning tenure in 1985. **Gene McPhail, Ed.D.**, died March 1, 2017. At the beginning of his teaching career, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, serving as an officer in counterintelligence. An educator throughout Oklahoma, he began teaching at Central in 1969. He taught teacher education, administrator school law

and school finance until retiring in 1990. He was a member of the Crescent School Board, Lion's Club, American Legion and Gideons International. An office suite was named for him in the newly remodeled Old North.



**John Purdy Jr.** died Sept. 15, 2016, in Agra. He worked as a librarian at Central, retiring after 35 years. Previously he was a professor at California State University-San

Diego. **Jill Scott** died Jan. 3, 2017. She taught for six years in Central's psychology department before pursuing private family counseling in Edmond. **William "Bill"**



**Jenkins** died July 20, 2016, in Edmond. He was formerly the director of the data processing department at Central. He also worked for Oklahoma City Public Schools.



**Mildred Lyon** died March 13, 2017, in Tahlequah. She was chair of the Foreign Language department at Central for 40 years. She earned her doctorate at The University of Oklahoma.



### Missing History?

When Old North first opened, its front doors aligned with the dirt street connecting the normal school with downtown Edmond to the west.

As UCO recently prepared for Old North's reopening, the parking lot to the west of Old North was reconfigured so that those doors and Campbell Street would once again be in alignment.

So, inquiring minds wondered, "Who was Campbell and why was the street leading to Old North named that?"

It seems to be a question, however, that stumped earlier school historian Stan Hoig, Ph.D., and continues to defy researchers today in Chambers Archives, the Edmond Historical Society and the Oklahoma State Historical Society. That's not to say the answer's not there, just that it hasn't been found.

If anyone thinks they may have some clues — or even the answer — might you please contact Old North magazine editor Gypsy Hogan at 405-974-2106 or ghogan@uco.edu?

As always, she loves hearing from Old North readers.



**Two-Time National Champs** — The UCO Hockey team took its second national championship in three years, defeating Ohio University in the 2017 American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA) Men's Division 1 National Championship Finals on March 14. Central's hockey team began in 2006 with volunteer coach Craig McAlister leading the sport club to seven national championship tournament appearances in 10 seasons. See [ucohockey.com](http://ucohockey.com) for more information.





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