

Panhandle

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OPSU.edu



Spring
Back-to-School



The University House is estimated to be complete this summer.

Construction Underway at University House

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

Construction has started on the beautiful piece of history nestled on the Oklahoma Panhandle State University campus known as the University House. Plans to add an additional 3,156 square feet include a meeting space for over 70 people, a storm shelter, a library and display cases that highlight the University's history.

The renovation is estimated to cost around \$600,000 and will be paid for through donations. The Panhandle State Foundation has committed to a \$250,000 matching contribution and over \$200,000 has been raised in private donations.

University President Dr. Tim Faltyn said, "I can't tell you how humbling it is to be a part of such a special project. We truly appreciate all the support as we continue to do great things here at Panhandle State. The preservation of this public house will help the University attract resources and inspire young people to do great things with their lives. In turn, their support will ensure that Panhandle State will remain a resource for Panhandle families for another century."

Thanks to generous donations by the Bank of the Panhandle and the Baggerly family, guests will enjoy the Bank of the Panhandle Library and the Baggerly Family Banquet Hall.

Bank of the Panhandle celebrated 40 years of serving the community in 2016. Located at 1223 North Main in Guymon, Okla., the Bank prides itself on taking an active

role in the community. In the past 12 months, the Bank's employees have devoted time and energy to over 50 local boards and projects.


Sally Hawkins, the Bank's Chief Financial Officer, said "We are grateful for the support the Oklahoma Panhandle has given us, and we appreciate the opportunity we have to make a difference in our community. What better way to mark our 40th Anniversary than to acknowledge the critical role OPSU plays in our local economy? Roughly thirty percent of the Bank's employees graduated from Panhandle State. Without this University, our communities would not be what they are, and this Bank would not be what it is. We owe a lot to OPSU, and the Bank is committed to supporting the University's bright future."

The Baggerly family has had a strong presence in the Oklahoma Panhandle for well over 100 years. Dorothy Baggerly and her late husband, Max, were from Beaver, Okla., and they have owned businesses in the Oklahoma Panhandle all of their lives. Max's father, Lin Baggerly, operated an International Dealership in Beaver from the early 1930's thru 1948. Max Baggerly operated the International dealership until about 1960 when he converted it to the B&B Sales store. Additional stores were added in Perryton, Texas and Guymon, Okla. in 1965 and 1966. Max and Steve Baggerly operated those stores until they sold them to employees in 1989.

Harry Beegle, Dorothy Baggerly's father, was the first pharmacist in Beaver County. He owned and operated a drug store there until his death in 1954.

In 1978, the family invested in Bank of the Panhandle, and Max's son, Steve, went to work at Bank of the Panhandle in 1989, where he still works today. The family has been long-time supporters of the University; Max and Dorothy are past Distinguished Contributors. They believe that having an educational opportunity locally is vital to the continued prosperity of our community. Becky Baggerly, wife of Steve, is an OPSU Alumnus, Distinguished Contributor and a past President of the Panhandle State Foundation. The Baggerly family is excited about the current energy surrounding the college.

When asked about the generosity of the Baggerly family and the Bank, Dr. Faltyn said, "The Baggerly family has an excellent reputation for helping others succeed. They have literally positively impacted the Panhandle Region for more than a century. Not only will the Baggerly family and the Bank of the Panhandle become a permanent part of the history of Oklahoma Panhandle State University, but they are setting an excellent example of how success breeds success. By giving back to invest in the community they love they are providing opportunities to young people to learn how they can also have a positive impact as they succeed and grow into people who help others achieve their dream. This is an investment in the future of the people who will carry on the legacy of the panhandle."

If you would like to be part of restoring this piece of historical excellence, contact the Panhandle State Foundation Office at 580.349.1392. 



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The Noble Center opened in 2003. With 52,000 square feet, the Noble Center provides many opportunities for fitness, fun, studying and socializing.

Panhandle State Fitness

By Matthew Evans



Originally from San Jon, N.M., Matthew Evans is majoring in Agricultural Education. As part of the Ag department, he helps with local stock shows and Interscholastic events. In addition, Evans works at the Noble Center and participates in intramurals activities there.

This essay was selected from a group of essays submitted by Dr. Ondyak's Freshman English classes. Students were asked to describe one of their favorite aspects of Panhandle State for an audience that has never visited the campus. The essays feature a number of different aspects on campus including the amazing people, places and events at the University.

When most students decide to go to college it seems that the physical fitness aspect of their lives has gone out the window. High school sports and other activities kept the students active before college, but now the majority do not play college sports and end up gaining the infamous freshman fifteen. So what can students do around Oklahoma Panhandle State University's campus to help keep them healthy and not take a chunk out of their wallets? The Noble Center answers this question, located on campus and free to use for all students. The Noble Center is an activity center with a pool, basketball courts, and a weight lifting section. The Noble Center's weight section is especially beneficial to everyone's health.

Seeing all of the different machines and how each one works looks like a piece of art in the sense that each piece has a purpose in physical health. I personally work out at the Noble Center and once the strain of the weight gets put on the body, it instantly makes the feeling of wanting to be healthier and stronger come alive. Every machine is designed to work out a specific group of muscles, everything from lower body to upper body. The ellipticals, stair stepper, treadmill, and bikes are for cardio and legs. The sound of the machines turning as they are being used turns into a rhythm that pushes and drives the motivation to want to keep going. The south side of the weight area has a row of machines dedicated to legs, back, and abs. The north side of the area has a row of machines that benefits strictly arms, chest, and shoulders. At the east side free weights can be used that range from one pound to seventy pounds.

Even though there are all sorts of different machines and weights to use at the Noble Center, they are all used for one purpose and that is to keep people fit and healthy. Dr. Sara Richter wrote an article about the history of the Noble Center and she said, "To offer students an opportunity to expand their cultural experiences and to pursue their physical fitness, Oklahoma Panhandle State University (OPSU) built the Noble Activity Center." Physical fitness will always be a key to anyone's life and having the capability to maintain this while attending college is fantastic. As a current student at OPSU I use the Noble Center facilities as much as possible knowing that not every college has a place like this that happens to be available to anyone. The weight section at the Noble Center will always be an asset to all OPSU students in their need for physical health. **P**



Members of the Panhandle State Wellness Committee from left: Amber Fesmire, Jared Loftis, Calandra Rose, Rantz Trayler, and Dana Collins. Not pictured: Joe Breedon, Jill Olson, and Rene Ramon



Panhandle State Named Certified Healthy Campus

By Panhandle State Campus Communications

Oklahoma Panhandle State University recently received recognition as a 2016 Certified Healthy Campus. This award recognizes businesses, campuses, communities, congregations, early childhood programs, restaurants, and schools that make a positive impact on the health of employees and patrons. Each entity works to improve the health of Oklahomans by implementing policies and programs that will help Oklahomans eat better, move more, and be tobacco free.

Certified Healthy Campus was created in 2011 to recognize both public and private post-secondary campuses and career technology centers that promote health and wellness for their faculty, staff, students, and even visitors. The program is administered by the Oklahoma Turning Point Council and the Oklahoma State Department of Health, and the Center for the Advancement of Wellness.

Human Resource Director Dana Collins said, “I’ve been the Panhandle State Wellness representative since February 28, 2008. Panhandle State’s goal has been to promote and encourage a healthy lifestyle and wellness for faculty and staff members. In 2009, we received an email about Make It Your Business for becoming an Oklahoma Certified Healthy Business. This health initiative recognized businesses that were working to improve Oklahoma health status by providing health and wellness opportunities for employees. The University received Oklahoma Certified Healthy Business/Campus awards from 2009 to 2013. Throughout the years, there have been several new criteria added to applications. One area of change I’m excited about is the addition of student representation; I’m looking forward to including the students in some of our health and wellness initiatives.”

A group of employees from Panhandle State’s Wellness Committee including Rantz Trayler, Amber Fesmire, and Rene Ramon will attend the annual Certified Healthy Oklahoma event on March 1, 2017 at the Embassy Suites Norman-Hotel and Conference Center in Norman.

Panhandle State seeks to provide a number of ways to encourage a healthy lifestyle. One approach to encourage a healthy lifestyle is providing employees and their family members with free admission to the Noble Center, a fitness center located on campus. **P**

Aggie Family



Staff
Martin Nevarez

Each semester at Oklahoma Panhandle State University there is an opportunity for the faculty and staff to send in nominations to the Staff Liaison Committee in order to select the “Employee of the Semester.”

Martin Nevarez was honored for the 2016 fall semester. Anyone who has come into contact with him would completely agree that he is one of the most helpful and caring members of our Aggie team!

Originally from Liberal, Kan., Martin Nevarez graduated from Liberal High School in 2007. He continued his education at Seward County Community College receiving an Associates of Science degree with an emphasis on Computer Information Systems. He spent one semester at Panhandle State in 2009, then returned to finish his bachelor’s degree in Sports and Exercise Management, which he will complete in May of 2017.

He has spent the past two years working in the Admissions office and is currently the Acting Director of High School and Community Relations pending Board Approval of his move to Director on March 3, 2017.

Martin has always been one of those bright faces that you love to see. He works hard to help out everyone around him, definitely proving himself to be part of the backbone of Panhandle State.

Registrar Bobby Jenkins is quoted saying, “Mr. Nevarez stepped up as a successful young professional and worked many late nights and early mornings to make sure students were successfully served at the critical step of applying to the University.”

Receiving this award has shown Martin that hard work does indeed pay off, and that working with integrity and dedication will not go unnoticed. What makes it even more special is that it is an award that must be nominated by your peers. He states, “This recognition is a reflection of all of the truly amazing people at Panhandle State that I interact with on a daily basis. There is an exciting energy in the air at Panhandle State and I cannot put into words the level of my excitement for the future. I’m extremely honored to get to be a part of this new chapter here at Panhandle.”

Martin truly enjoys his job and the people that he gets to work with and meet every single day. For him, one of the highlights is getting to work with students as they begin their journey at Panhandle State.

In his free time, he enjoys working out as well as playing basketball, ping pong, and racquetball at the Noble Center as well as hanging out with friends and family. **P**



Student
Ely Esquivel

There are many students at Oklahoma Panhandle State University that help keep the school moving in the right direction, and Ely Esquivel is one of those bright faces. Ely Esquivel is a 21 year-old senior from Guymon, Okla. She is majoring in Elementary Education with a minor in Physical Science and Business Administration.

Esquivel participates in a number of clubs and organizations while balancing over 15 credit hours in courses. She is an active member of the Hispanic American Leadership Organization (HALO), Phi Beta Lambda (PBL), History Club and the English Club. She is the secretary of Student Senate and the president of Student Oklahoma Education Association (SOEA). It is evident that Esquivel has spread her knowledge and leadership throughout the entire campus.

Ely has served on the Student Conduct Committee as well as the Presidential Search Committee that has brought Dr. Faltyn to Panhandle State. The past two years, Ely has been in charge of the homecoming festivities on campus.

She has been chosen to represent Panhandle State on several occasions. She participated in the Hispanic College Quiz Bowl that was hosted by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. She competed with the PBL team at the state level and discussed legislation at the state capitol with the Oklahoma Intercollegiate Legislation (OIL) club. Ely, along with nine other students, attended Higher Education Day at the state capitol accompanied by President Faltyn. Of the ten students from Panhandle State, she was hand chosen to give speech in front of all others present.

Ely is preparing for her plans following her graduation in May of 2018. She will be student teaching before graduation next spring and then hopes to pursue a master’s degree in Speech Pathology. When she is not staying busy with all her affiliations on campus, she enjoys blogging, reading books, and watching movies.

Ely has been, and still is, a major component of helping Panhandle State progress into the future. She says her favorite thing about this university is how “caring and nice everyone is toward each other.” She also detailed where she hopes to see the university in the years to come stating, “I hope to see Panhandle State become a school that is recognized for its outstanding academic achievements.” Ms. Esquivel is adored by all who visit with her, and her genuine personality will continue to resonate even after she graduates. **P**



Faculty
Jerry Mihelic

Oklahoma Panhandle State University has a reputation for its quality educators and the impact those individuals have on the students. One professor in particular who has made an impact on our future educators is Jerry Mihelic.

Professor Mihelic and his family moved to Goodwell, Okla. from Globe, Ariz. “Our move to the Panhandle of Oklahoma was destined to be,” he explained. “My wife has family in Guymon, Oklahoma, and when our well went dry in Arizona, we knew that it was our sign to move to Goodwell.”

Jerry and his wife moved their young family to Goodwell and he remarked that his family immediately fell in love with the area. “We put all of our time and energy into the students here,” he explained with enthusiasm in his voice. “We love the community, and the people come first. My students are a big priority and I always strive to put their success first.” He transitioned to teaching at the collegiate level upon moving to Oklahoma and stated that he enjoys it more than he could have ever imagined.

The Mihelic family whole-heartedly supports and believes in the success of the campus. Mr. Mihelic is an assistant professor of education and his wife, Beth, is a dedicated employee of the Alumni Office. Both of their sons attended Panhandle State and their daughter plans on attending the university after she graduates from high school.

Mihelic serves as a co-chair with Professor Sara Green on a committee to develop a walking track on campus. He stated, “a timeline has been developed for the track and by the end of February we hope to have a design.” In March, they plan to break ground. Jerry described the project as a comprehensive effort with the community, elaborating “we are working with the student government, grounds and maintenance, members of the community and all of the Panhandle State staff to bring the plans to life.” The walking path will include a frisbee golf course, bringing the community a new source of recreation.

Mihelic is currently working on his doctorate in higher education. Amber Hall, an elementary education major, described him as “one of her most impactful instructors. He cares about his students and their success. He teaches us from personal experiences and is always up to date on what is going on in the Oklahoma educational school system. He makes class enjoyable, and as students we want to attend his classes.” **P**



Alumni
Betsy Skibyak-Ojanen

A highlight of Oklahoma Panhandle State’s alumni, Betsy Skibyak-Ojanen, a member of the Aggie Hall of Fame Class of 2015, left her mark forever on this campus.

A graduate of the class of 1980 from Las Cruces, N.M., Betsy came to Goodwell on athletic scholarships for volleyball, basketball and track her freshman year. Her sophomore, junior and senior years, she decided to focus only on volleyball and track. Betsy participated in a number of track and field events such as the shot put, discus, javelin, individual spring events and sprint relays.

Her focus did not come up short as she received All-American honors in shot put for the years of 1982 and 1983. In 1984 she also received the title of an All-American Scholar. Her achievements in track were not alone. In 1982, she was selected as the Outstanding Athlete of Panhandle State. Not only was her work ethic noticeable in the sports she participated in, but also in the classroom. She balanced being a multi-sport athlete while taking 18-21 credit hours, and graduated with three degrees in just four years. She graduated cum laude with degrees in Speech, Mass Communications, and Health and Physical Education.

Betsy was active on campus, participating in the Newman Club, working for the school paper *The Collegian*, the radio club, and Student Senate. In 1984, she was selected as an Outstanding Woman in America. This same year proved to open up so many opportunities to Ojanen, as she traveled across seas to Germany to compete at an international track meet. She continued to stay an athlete by taking up powerlifting. Her powerlifting habits brought her 12 consecutive national championships as well as 7 international championships. Her international competitions took her back-packing all over the world.

Following graduation, she moved back to Las Cruces, where she worked for a local newspaper and then found herself moving to Arizona where her career as a firefighter for the Phoenix Fire Department began. She served as the Fire Captain/Paramedic and worked for 24 years before retiring in 2012.

Currently Betsy lives in Scottsdale, Ariz. with her husband where they enjoy skiing, tennis, backpacking and traveling together. She enjoys cooking and reading in her spare time.

Her incredibly inspiring life continues to reflect her time spent as a college athlete from Panhandle State. **P**



Gwen (left) and Jerry Martin have dedicated many years of service to Panhandle State.

Years of Dedicated Service for Jerry and Gwen Martin

By Alexandria Trujillo

Many of those who have gone to Oklahoma Panhandle State University within the past few decades have become familiar with the wonderful and dedicated Martins. Gwen and Jerry Martin are a couple of the most involved and helpful people at this university.

They are from a little town in southeastern Oklahoma called Antlers, where they went to grade school and high school. During their senior years in high school, Jerry was the president of FFA and Gwen was the President of FHA as well as Queen of their FFA Chapter. After graduation, Jerry Martin went to Oklahoma State University for one semester before joining the Marine Corps. Jerry then proposed to Gwen and they were married on her birthday in 1953. In the meantime, Gwen worked for the Oklahoma Legislature for a session. Then she was a legal secretary until Jerry returned from the service.

Jerry earned three degrees (BS, MS, & Ph.D.) at Oklahoma State University (OSU) while Gwen worked in the Agriculture Economics Department. Upon graduation, Jerry got a job at Murray State College in 1961. Gwen also worked there in the registrar's office. Jerry was there for six years when Freeman McKee, the

president at Murray and nephew of Marvin McKee (the Panhandle State University President at the time) asked Jerry if he would like to go to OPSU with him for a new job. That was the beginning of a wonderful relationship with the university that continues to this day. Jerry was hired jointly by Animal Science and Biology Schools to teach and he conducted Beef Cattle Research in conjunction with OSU before retiring in 1994. Jerry taught biology, comparative anatomy, histology and physiology along with all the animal science courses offered at one time or another during the fall, spring and summer sessions. After taking over the OPSU Beef Bull Test Program in 1982, he only taught a biology and all the animal science courses until he retired.

They were both very supportive of the Athletic Program, Jerry ran the clock and Gwen kept the score book at all basketball games until they retired. They were also the cheerleader sponsors from 1980 until 1990. Jerry was the FAR representative for the athletic department and was also athletic director once and interim athletic director once. Gwen worked all the years prior to retirement as Chief Clerk in the Business Office, Interim Business Director twice and the president's secretary. Jerry was the first and only Dean of Agriculture from 1972 until retirement in 1994.

It was a momentous time when he took control of the Beef Bull Performance Test more commonly known as the PSU Bull Test. Conveniently enough, he had already had some experience due to having run the Bull Test at Murray State before coming to OPSU. The Bull Test is the oldest consistently running test in the nation, having started in 1952. The program gathers performance information on bulls of beef cattle producers in the area for beef cattle improvement. Dr. Dan Daniels and Dr. Milton England were Panhandle professors who worked with cooperators to develop the program, and Dr. England directed the test for 30 years. In 1982, he retired from the position, and Jerry Martin has been running it since. For 65 years, the testing station at OPSU has collected performance data on over 6,500 head of beef bulls. Partially due to the program, breeders have improved their average daily gain from 1.59 pounds per day in 1952 to 4.34 pounds per day in 2016. Jerry and Gwen, along with Diane Murphey and Troy Morris, implemented the first computerized bull test program and it has been used every since. This was a big improvement, because prior to the computerized program all the results had to be figured by hand. This year, students at Panhandle State who helped with the Bull Test, included Hannah Hammack, Cooper Hill, Nathan Johnson, J.T. Surrage, and Sidney Tigler. They are a wonderful addition to the amazing couple that directs the Beef Bull Performance test, Gwen and Jerry Martin.

We cannot thank them enough for all their hard work and dedication to OPSU over many decades. Since coming out of retirement five months after they retired, Jerry has taught Animal Nutrition and conducted the Bull Test, while Gwen is the administrative assistant for the School of Agriculture. **P**



Operation Orange Coming to Panhandle State

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

The Oklahoma Panhandle State University School of Science, Math, and Nursing is excited to announce that Operation Orange, Oklahoma State University's summer camp for high school students interested in a career in medicine, is coming to the Panhandle State campus.

Area high school students will have the opportunity to spend a day in the life of a medical student at Operation Orange. The camp features hands-on demonstrations with participants studying the human anatomy including the heart, lungs, and brain as well as performing intubations with a simulator. Additionally, participants will meet current Oklahoma State University medical students and learn about career opportunities within the healthcare field.

The camp is scheduled for June 6, 2017 at the Science and Agriculture Building. Those high school students wishing to participate must apply and be accepted. Lunch will be provided by the Oklahoma State College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dean of Science, Math, and Nursing Dr. Justin Collins commented on the camp saying, "I am just so excited about this. It is an excellent opportunity for our area high schoolers to have the chance to get a glimpse of their future in the medical field."

For more information contact Dr. Justin Collins at 580-349-1522 or jkcollins@opsu.edu. **P**

SAVE THE DATE

Panhandle State Commencement

May 20, 2017

Oscar Williams Field House



Science students will benefit from a recent specimen donation from Roger Wilgus, a Panhandle State graduate.

Specimen Collection

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

The Oklahoma Panhandle State University Biology Department will greatly benefit from a specimen collection recently donated by Roger Wilgus. Made up of approximately 45 years of gathering, the collection consists of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, plants, fungi, and parasites.

Wilgus is a Panhandle State graduate who taught adjunct courses for Panhandle from time to time throughout his career as a high school science teacher at Guymon High School.

Not only will the collection be a great benefit to the students, but it also holds a special significance to Dean of Science, Math, and Nursing Dr. Justin Collins. Wilgus was Collins' high school science teacher and according to Dr. Collins is "one of the reasons that I went into entomology and I have such a passion for science."

Wilgus commented on the donation saying, "I am glad they are going to a place that will use the specimens and appreciate them." **P**



Shooting facility from North facing South



Shooting facility from East looking West



Shooting facility entrance gate

Collegiate Shooting Sports Facility to Be Used by Students and Public Underway

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

When President Dr. Faltyn arrived on the Oklahoma Panhandle State University campus in June, he promised to add programs to give people reasons to attend Panhandle State and the proposed Collegiate Shooting Sports Facility is set to do just that.

Faltyn said, "Sometimes fate meets with opportunity, in August, we applied for a grant to plan, do an environmental assessment and construct a Collegiate Shooting Sports Facility. I am told shooting sports are the most requested FFA and 4-H activity. After consulting with our students and community, we determined that such a program is a perfect fit for the culture and tradition of our region. That alone makes this a great opportunity to build a stronger future for the University."

The facility is designed to house both educational and activity programs including wildlife and gun/archery related degree programs, a collegiate shotgun team, pistol team, rifle team, and an archery team. The site will play host to some of the University's summer youth

camps, community and law enforcement training, and hunter safety programs. In addition, the facility will be available to host a number of events such as 4-H, FFA, or corporate events as well as gun related clubs and association events among others.

An area suited for the shooting sports facility well within the standard for human and facility safety is located on University property. Facility plans include: trap, skeet, and five stand fields; 3-D archery range and sporting clay field; outdoor pistol ranges with covered shooting areas as well as outdoor rifle ranges including covered shooting areas; restrooms, parking, and a pavilion; and a wildlife education center.

While the facility will be home to several competitive teams, the ranges will be open to the public as well.

February 3 was a very important day for this project as Dr. Faltyn signed the Environmental Assessment Agreement, the first step in the construction process. Environmental assessment is predicted to take 12-18 months with construction to follow. Construction is scheduled to take six to eight months targeting fall of 2018 as the completion date.

The facility is being built with grants through the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife and Conservation, and other wildlife and gun related organizations as well as private and in-kind donations.

Faltyn commented, "We are extremely blessed by the overwhelmingly positive support from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife and Conservation as well as our community. Projects like this ensure that a safe and responsible gun culture as well as our outdoor way of life will continue to grow and thrive in rural America." **P**



Left: Dr. Tim Faltyn, Chancellor Glen D. Johnson, and Elida Esquivel.
 Pictured right: Panhandle State student representatives enjoy a tour of the Capitol with State Representative Casey Murdock (center) during Higher Education Day.

Students represent Panhandle State at Higher Ed Day

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

Student representatives from Oklahoma Panhandle State University joined more than 300 other students, faculty and representatives from Oklahoma’s public colleges and universities for Higher Education Day at the state Capitol on Tuesday, February 14 to promote the value and importance of higher education in the state.

Panhandle State’s Elida Esquivel was one of the four featured student speakers who spoke about higher education’s benefit and impact on their lives.

A Guymon High School graduate, Esquivel first became involved at Panhandle State through concurrent enrollment. A senior at Panhandle State, she is majoring in elementary education with minors in business and physical science. Esquivel has been very involved on campus in a number of clubs and organizations including Baptist Collegiate Ministries, (BCM), English Club, Hispanic American Leadership Organization (HALO), History Club, Oklahoma Intercollegiate Legislature (OIL), Phi Beta Lambda (PBL), Student Oklahoma Education Association, and Student Senate. Additionally, she has recently had the opportunity to represent Panhandle State at the Hispanic College Quiz Bowl and serve as a student representative on the Presidential Search Committee.

Esquivel said, “I loved the event. It was such a neat experience to be able to share my story and the reasons that higher education is so important to me.”

Esquivel will be the first person in her family to graduate from college, which she is set to do in May of 2018.

She said, “I want to use the opportunities that I have been given to help Oklahoma become a leading state in education and to pay it forward to help future generations.”

Students that attended from Panhandle State include: Sarah Brady of Marcus, Iowa; Haley Bonilla of Dimmitt, Texas; Jasmine Brown-Jutras of Hermitage, Ark.; Elida Esquivel of Guymon, Okla.; Cameron Hammett of Boyd, Texas; David Peebles of Hermitage, Ark., Sherelle Shuck of Liberal, Kan.; Sequoia Smith of Boyd, Texas; Sidney Tigler of Peru, Indiana; and MaKenze Twyman of Boise City, Okla.

The students enjoyed a two-day visit to Oklahoma City complete with a tour of the Capitol as well as an informative dinner session with Senator Bryce Marlatt, State Representative Casey Murdock, and Chancellor Glen D. Johnson.

Student Affairs Director Rantz Trayler said, “It was a great opportunity for our students to attend and participate in Higher Education Day at the state capitol. The students from Panhandle represented the university beyond expectation as they orchestrated the event with charisma that left lasting impressions on those we encountered. The event was planned in hopes that the students would make connections and experience a true student oriented trip that was both educational and exciting.” **P**



Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn (left) joins the Aggie Hall of Fame Class of 2016 inductees (from left) Larry Welch, Frank Beede, Cathy Donald-Whitney, and Manny Acosta along with Aggie Men's Basketball Coach Jerry Olson (right).

Four Aggies Inducted Into Hall of Fame

Submitted by Panhandle State Sports Information

Always an entertaining event, this year's Aggie Hall of Fame induction ceremony and banquet did not disappoint. On Friday, Feb. 3 four former Panhandle State athletes entered the Aggie Hall of Fame Class of 2016: Cathy Donald-Whitney, Frank Beede, Larry Welch, and Manny Acosta.

The university ballroom was packed with family, friends, and alumni supporting and celebrating the inductees on their special night. The evening opened with a special welcome by Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn who also offered a blessing to the group prior to the buffet-style meal provided by Sodexo.

In his address after dinner, Dr. Faltyn acknowledged the importance of remembering and recognizing "the giants whose shoulders we stand upon." He also offered appreciation to Coach Jerry Olson and the rest of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee for the great work they do each year with the event. Faltyn spoke about some of the recent updates to campus, including the rebranding strategy saying, "The people who are here are

true believers." He added that with future changes in store for the university, "We will not let go of our tradition of excellence, and we will not forget where we came from. We are where we are today because of the great people who came before us."

Leading into the induction ceremony, Dr. Faltyn stated that the one thing athletics does better than anything else is "build good decision makers." He spoke to the group of inductees saying that they were all "excellent examples." Faltyn then introduced the night's emcee, Panhandle State Men's Basketball Head Coach Jerry Olson. Olson expressed his excitement for the Class of 2016 saying, "I always enjoy meeting former athletes and listening to the pride they have for this university. I just love hearing their stories and memories of their time here."

The first inductee was presented by Panhandle's Sports Information Director, Justine Gaskamp, who was proud to introduce track athlete Cathy Donald-Whitney. Whitney earned NAIA All-District and All-American honors each of the four years she competed for the Aggie Track and Field team. After speaking on the athletic and academic successes of the inductee, Gaskamp brought Whitney to the podium by adding a quote from teammate and fellow Hall of Famer Betsy Skybiak-Ojanen who said, "Cathy has embraced the education her scholarship offered her."

Whitney stated that she was "humbled and appreciative" of the honor and that Panhandle provided her with the "Synergy of pursuing both academic and athletic success." She added that "The will to win means

nothing if you don't have the will to prepare." Currently a Professor of Biology at Collin College in McKinney, Texas, Whitney not only values the education she received, but she also values the opportunity being an educator has given her to help shape the lives of others, just as her life was shaped here at Panhandle.

Frank Beede was the next honoree of the night. Presented by Coach Olson, Beede first congratulated the other inductees and went on to speak of his football background and his brief time on the field as an Aggie. He recalled getting a late start in the sport due to his size, which kept him from competing with children his own age until the ninth grade. "I was really bad at first, but I took the coaches' criticism and worked hard and got better." A three-year member of the Cal football team prior to playing for the Aggies, Beede earned All-American honors at Panhandle for his senior season in 1995. Conceding that he was "broken" upon coming to Panhandle, he went on to express his appreciation to the institution, its coaches, staff, and community members for embracing him and helping to "rebuild" him during his time in Goodwell. "When I left, I was recharged and ready to go."

Beede went on to play football at the professional level, giving five seasons to the Seattle Seahawks with the National Football League and six years with the San Jose Sabercats, an Arena League team. During all his years playing professionally, Beede was proud to post "OPSU" as his former school on the programs and player bios commenting, "I had a choice, and I chose to represent OPSU. I only hope that I have served the school as well as the school served me." Now a teacher and coach in Oakley, Calif., Beede received the NFL Teacher of the Year Award in 2010 for his work off the field. He concluded by saying, "You have to make the best of opportunities when they come your way."

The third inductee also came from the sport of football. Larry Welch, an NAIA All-District and All-American punter for the Aggies in the early 80's, was brought out by teammate and friend David Flowers. Flowers opened by saying, "It really is amazing what comes together at Panhandle State." In speaking of his friend's success, Flowers quoted John Wooden saying, "Good coaching is about leadership and instilling respect in your players. Dictators lead through fear—good coaches do not."

Welch, another player-turned-coach, gave credit to the many wonderful influences he had while at Panhandle beginning with the university president Dr. Palmer. "He was a great man who showed me how to treat people." He included his English teacher, coaches, and the players who assisted on punt plays. "Those guys kept me safe on the field and without them doing their jobs well, I wouldn't be here today." A member of the undefeated 1981 team, Welch credited the Hall of Fame group's success to attitude, "Everyone on that team was a winner. We just refused to lose." He wrapped up by saying, "My time at Panhandle taught me how to deal with life. In life not everything goes the way you want,

but you have to look life in the eye every day and, when it knocks you down, get right back up."

The fourth inductee in the Class of 2016, and the fourth individual member of the 1981 football team to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, was defensive end Manny Acosta. Acosta's teammate Jody Iams offered the introduction saying that Acosta was the kind of person you didn't want to disappoint. "He's a leader. His work ethic, competitive spirit, and confidence drove us all to be better players and teammates. None of us wanted to let him down."

It was clear that the close-knit group of players from the early 80s still share a special bond as Acosta alluded to in his speech. "That was a very special time for me. Panhandle meant a lot and still means a lot to me. I was very much attached to my teammates, and it was just a wonderful time in my life." Coming to Panhandle from Douglas, Ariz., Acosta was one of many players on the team who came from out-of-state. He remembers being very grateful for the coaches and mentors on campus that served as "fatherly figures who provided the security we left behind when we came here." It was those same people who helped instill many of the life lessons Acosta picked up while at Panhandle. "They not only demanded that we act in a certain way; they modeled it by the way they acted." Acosta also attributes the current pride of his life to his time as an Aggie saying, "My family is the result of a person I met here at Panhandle (my wife). This place was very influential to who I am today, and my path will always be attached to Panhandle."

Each inductee was presented with a certificate and offered the option of ordering a commemorative Hall of Fame ring. At the end of the ceremony, Coach Olson introduced the members of the Class of 2017. Georgia Walton (Women's Basketball), Jerry Linton (Football), Bob Wakefield (Men's Basketball) and David Flowers (Football) will each be inducted into the Aggie Hall of Fame next year. The Hall of Fame Selection Committee members include Jerry Olson, Roger McKinnon, Russell Gaskamp, Gwen Martin, Jerry Martin, Doris Looper, Lloyd Looper, Carrol Gribble, and Eric Begley. **P**

*Congratulations to the 72
Panhandle State Aggies named
to the Heartland Conference
2016 Fall President's and
Commissioner's Honor Rolls.*





Randi Buchanan (right) won the Iron Woman title at the 2017 K-State Iron Woman in Manhattan, Kan., on February 4.

Randi Buchanan: The Iron Woman

By Alexandria Trujillo

Oklahoma Panhandle State University senior and rodeo team member, Randi Buchanan can add the title of “Iron Woman” to her long list of impressive accomplishments. An all-around cowgirl, Buchanan recently competed in and won the 2017 K-State Iron Woman event held in Manhattan, Kan. on February 4.

The Iron Woman is an all-female, timed event where women of all ages compete in barrel racing, goat tying, breakaway and team roping. To participate in this event, one must enter at least three of the four events. Participants can enter multiple times, on different horses for each event, however, you have to designate which horse will be the one you earn points on. The idea is to place at the top of the events to earn the most points.

Randi had the opportunity to compete at this event and she did not disappoint. “I was very excited, honestly, not just to win it but to have all of my horses work outstanding. That is a great feeling going into the spring season and winning a saddle always starts off the year right.”

The cowgirl explained that her main goal during this event was “to get a young horse of mine (Playa) in the arena before our college rodeo there.”

She decided to designate Playa as her horse in breakaway, her horse Kitten in barrel racing and her boyfriend’s horse Captain for goat tying.

She explained, “between the three of them they really pulled through. I ended up winning the barrels on Playa, but I was fourth on Kitten so I still managed to get the points for the barrels. Playa worked outstanding in the breakaway, placing second. Then I had a solid run in the goat tying. With all that, I ended up earning

the most points in the three events and got me a new Burns saddle.”

Randi is from Reno, Nev. and has come to Panhandle State as a rodeo competitor and biology major. She stated, “I followed a boy here, but it didn’t take long for me to fall in love with the community, OPSU has really made me the competitor that I am today.”

She adores Panhandle State, elaborating that her teachers and coaches are phenomenal. “They made this transition easy and have truly helped my dreams come true.”

Assistant rodeo coach Shelbie Weeder said, “Randi is a hard worker and a huge asset to the team. To win the ‘Iron Woman’ is great accomplishment and speaks to Randi’s ability to compete in all events. We are looking forward to the spring season with her.”

Randi was the 2015 Reserve Champion breakaway roper at the College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR) in addition to earning the third place position in the women’s all-around the same year at the CNFR.

Every year, Randi goes to the National Finals Rodeo (NFR), which she labels “the Super Bowl of Rodeos.” She loves going, and explained, “this past year was a little more special because I knew a lot for the competitors there and it’s pretty cool watching their success and cheering for them.”

After graduating from Panhandle this May, Buchanan plans to train barrel horses. She hopes to make her way to professional rodeos and maybe even compete in the NFR herself one day. **P**



Rodeo Team Auction Success

Submitted by Panhandle State Rodeo

Once again the annual Top Hand Auction hosted by the Panhandle State Rodeo Team was nothing short of amazing raising \$23,725. Saturday night, February 4, the Pickle Creek Event Center in Guymon, Okla. was full of people that the rodeo team is very thankful for. The community came together once again to support the rodeo team. On behalf of the entire rodeo team and the coaching staff, we would like to thank everyone for all of their support, not only at this year’s auction but for the support all year long. **P**

December - January Athletes of the Week



Darby Price



Jace Kerr



Hannah Whitaker



Riyadh Asad



Tevin Lytes



Johlicia Williams

Week: 14: DEC 5-12
Name: Darby Price
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Combined for 23 points and 17 rebounds for the week as the team leader in both categories.

Week: 14: DEC 5-12
Name: Jace Kerr
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Earned a double-double with ten rebounds and a game-high of 30 points against UCO.

Week: 15: DEC 13-18
Name: Hannah Whitaker
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Led at the boards with eight rebounds against Rockhurst and added six points.

Week: 15: DEC 13-18
Name: Riyadh Asad
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Scored 23 points in a win against Manhattan Christian and put up 15 against SWOSU; totaled eight rebounds and five assists on the week.

Week: 16: DEC 19-25
Name: Darby Price
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Averaged 20 points per game in two conference matchups and totaled 15 rebounds on the week.

Week: 16: DEC 19-25
Name: Tevin Lytes
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Totaled a game-high of 20 points against St. Edward's, averaging 14 points per game on the week; had five rebounds and two steals.

Week: 17: JAN 2-8
Name: Hannah Whitaker
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Finished the week with 13 points and nine rebounds over a two-game stint; she held a game-high with five blocks against UAFS.

Week: 17: JAN 2-8
Name: Riyadh Asad
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Averaged nine points per game in two conference contests; he totaled six assists on the week.

Week: 18: JAN 9-15
Name: Johlicia Williams
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Shared in team-high numbers with 14 points and five rebounds against a 12-5 Newman Jets team.

Week: 18: JAN 9-15
Name: Jace Kerr
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Put up a season-high of 33 points against the Jets to lead the game in scoring.

Week: 19: JAN 16-22
Name: Darby Price
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Notched her third double-double of the season with 11 points and ten rebounds against Lubbock Christian.

Week: 19: JAN 16-22
Name: Sita Sesay
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Grabbed a game-high of 17 points against LCU and shared the team-high in boards with five rebounds.

Week: 20: JAN 23-29
Name: Darby Price
Sport: Women's Basketball
Achievement: Totaled 33 points and 23 rebounds in two Heartland Conference games; earned her fourth double-double against St. Mary's on 14 points and 14 rebounds.

Week: 20: JAN 23-29
Name: Tevin Lytes
Sport: Men's Basketball
Achievement: Averaged 10.5 points per game over two conference contests and was a leading contributor at the boards with 12 rebounds on the week.

Athletics



The Aggie Football team signed 22 high school athletes and 13 mid-year transfers to the Class of 2017.

2017 Signing Day Brings a Special Class of Aggies

Submitted by Panhandle State Sports Information

Head Coach Russell Gaskamp used one word to describe this year's group of Aggie Football recruits, "Exciting."

Gaskamp and the rest of the coaching staff have been working hard to secure a talented and physical new class of Aggie athletes. "It's been an exciting day," Gaskamp commented. "We feel like we have addressed some specific needs at the skill positions with several mid-year signees who are on campus this spring."

With a strong list of 22 high school signees, Gaskamp was pleased to add some local talent to the team; "I'm really excited about how well we did in the Panhandle and West Texas areas. There is plenty of great talent out here and we are proud to be able to showcase those athletes."

As Panhandle State and Aggie Athletics make the transition into the NAIA, Gaskamp sees nothing but success on the horizon. "We feel like we will be able to compete at a high level and compete for a league championship right away."

The full list of signees can be found online at opsuaggies.com as well as on Twitter @OPSUathletics #NEW2THECREW; video releases from the coaches are also available on the OPSU Aggie Athletics Facebook page. *Welcome to the Aggie Family!* **P**

*NOTE: A complete listing of the Aggie Athlete of the Week recipients and their accomplishments is available at opsuaggies.com

Annual Paul Farrell Memorial

Art Auction

Tickets may be purchased
from
All Fired Up 580-338-4ART
ALL SEATS RESERVED

Ticket Prices
\$50.00 Per Person

Entertainment by
**Chuck Alexander
and the Martinis**

Hosted by the OPSU Art Department

March 3, 2017

Held at

Pickle Creek

Located behind Auto-Zone

Social Hour 6p.m.

Hor d'oeuvres

Dinner 7p.m.

Prime Rib catered by Hunny's

Auction 8p.m.

Panhandle State Association of Alumni & Friends Annual Meeting and Banquet April 8, 2017

Location: OPSU
Doors open at 5:00 pm
Dinner at 6:30 pm

Honoring Ambassador Hall of Fame Inductees:
• Jill & Jerry Olson • Jessica Lofland

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED! Contact 1-580-349-1390 or opsu.alumni.secretary@opsu.edu

*Come meet up with former classmates, friends,
faculty, staff, present and past members!*



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