

APRIL 2019

# Panhandle

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**LEADING THROUGH  
EXCELLENCE**



/ CAMPUS /

# FASTEST GROWING UNIVERSITY IN THE REGION

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

## After a regional universities' enrollment reports comparison,

Oklahoma Panhandle State University can proudly announce that it is the fastest growing university in the region. Panhandle State's increase in enrollment beat out Northwestern Oklahoma State University, West Texas A&M University, Eastern New Mexico University, and New Mexico Highlands University.

Dr. Tim Faltyn, Panhandle State President, commented, "our campus-wide efforts are producing these history-making figures. It is such a blessing to be a part of this team and witness the great things happening every single day at Panhandle State."

Panhandle State reported a nine percent increase from 2017 to 2018 and a three percent increase from 2016 to 2018, giving the school the largest growth rate over one year and two years within the region.

Due to improved recruiting methods and campus-wide efforts, Panhandle State has continued to see the numbers rise. This spring, the university reported its third consecutive semester of enrollment increases. Fall of 2018 also saw success, as Panhandle State announced that it had its largest

freshman class in university history for the second record-breaking year in a row.

Director of High School and Community Relations Jade Singleton-Reich said, "it has been so encouraging to see our enrollment numbers consistently going up as we expand our recruitment methods; I happily anticipate continuing to see increases in enrollment."

Panhandle State's list of accomplishments over the past few years have been nothing short of impressive. From back to back national rodeo championships, to historic enrollment increases, to implementation of new programs and scholarships, to numerous community partnerships, to national PBL and AITP championships and more, the university has continuously added to its impressive list of accolades.

Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Julie Dinger stated, "We are a university on the move. Next year brings new programs and opportunities to grow and our team is working hard to continue the positive trend."

*"We are a university on the move. Next year brings new programs and opportunities to grow and our team is working hard to continue the positive trend."*

— Dr. Julie Dinger,  
Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs

Many new additions to the university are expected to increase enrollment even more in the future. The Panhandle Promise Scholarship will see its first semester in the fall of 2019, giving education students the opportunity to receive a college education for free. The shooting sports complex will be built soon, giving students the chance to compete on a Panhandle State rifle, pistol, and archery team. Campus is constantly being updated and renovated, drawing in even more new students each semester.

While the trend continues upwards, Panhandle State looks forward to supporting and teaching even more students in the future. **P**

/ VOLUME 5 - NUMBER 6 /

# CONTENTS

*Panhandle Magazine — April 2019*

4 — AROUND CAMPUS

10 — TUCKER NAMED DEAN OF COLLEGE OF AG, SCIENCE, AND NURSING

11 — PROGRAMMING TEAM WINS TWO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

18 — AGGIES' ALEXANDER AN ALL-AMERICAN



On the cover: Breiman Alexander, Senior  
Back Cover: Jade Taton, Sophomore



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/CAMPUS/

# AGGIE FEST

Spring 2019







/ STAFF /

## JADE SINGLETON-REICH

**Originally from Denver, Colo., Jade Singleton-Reich is the Director of High School and Community Relations at Panhandle State.**

Following graduation from Fort Hays State University in Kansas, Singleton-Reich moved to Elkhart, Kansas and worked at First National Bank of Elkhart. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership in 2016 and was eager to work someplace where she could use the knowledge and skills she learned while getting her degree. Singleton-Reich was also excited to work in an environment that would challenge her to grow as a young professional and give her the opportunity to try new things as well as embrace change and creativity. Panhandle State was the perfect fit!

Singleton-Reich accepted her current position as Director in December of 2018 after working as an Admissions Counselor in the High School and Community Relations Office.

She commented, "I love working at Panhandle and doing this job because I get to play an active role in helping students decide what their next step after high school is going to be, which is such an exciting and hopeful thing to be a part of."

She added, "The people and the community are my favorite thing about Panhandle. It really is a family here. The Panhandle community has truly welcomed me from day one, and I plan on continuing to pass that along to all the students, staff, faculty and community members I meet."

Dr. Julie Dinger, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs commented, "Jade has done so much in the last year to streamline our work in recruiting. Under her leadership, we are breaking records in enrollment, and she is always looking for new and innovative ways to reach potential students. One of the things I appreciate most about Ms. Singleton-Reich is that she brings all those she works with to a new level of excellence."

Current responsibilities for Singleton-Reich include creating a recruitment plan, traveling to speak and meet with potential students, and getting information and awareness about Panhandle State to the surrounding areas.

Singleton-Reich said, "Some goals for this year are to explore different recruitment techniques, which will allow us to expand our level of outreach; continue to develop our communication plans; help students get to Panhandle, where I know they will be able to get a quality but affordable education; and bring the positive awareness that Panhandle deserves."

As for hobbies, she has a few! She loves to cook, bake, read, and learn new things. She also enjoys traveling with her fiancé Skyler. The couple is planning an October 2019 wedding. **P**

/ STUDENT /

## JEWELL LEE

**It is only natural that 2018 NAIA Softball All-America Second Team and NFCA NAIA All-Region First Team outfielder Jewell Lee became interested in Panhandle State because of the softball program.**

A sophomore, Lee is majoring in Biology and minoring in Chemistry. She plans to attend nursing school after graduation.

Originally from Yukon, Okla., Lee has earned a collection of awards after just her freshman season at Panhandle State. The centerfielder ranked within the Top 20 of the conference standings for Fielding Percentage (.963) and was the SAC's No. 1-ranked hitter with a batting average of .456 for the season. She ranked sixth in the nation for Total Hits (88) and finished first in the conference for Triples with six.

Lee commented on her goals for the current season, "My goal is to be the best teammate I can be. Also, I have very high standards for myself and how I play. I would like to have more seasons and preferably every season like my freshmen season."

Panhandle State Softball Coach Meghan Mulcahy said, "Jewell works hard both on the field and in the class room, and she embodies the type of student-athlete we want in our softball program at Panhandle State."

Lee collected two Aggie of the Week awards during her inaugural season and received All-Conference honors, named to the SAC First Team All-Conference Softball roster in May 2018. Her efforts helped the Aggies take their first post-season appearance in ten years and led the team to their best record (26-32) since 2002. Lee's efforts continue to propel the team forward during her current sophomore season.

Her time on the field certainly doesn't distract from her studies as she has been on both the President's and Dean's honor roll. Lee was also inducted into the athletic honor society Chi Alpha Sigma this spring.

Dr. Justin Collins, Professor of Biology, Chemistry, and EMS, commented, "Jewell is very deserving of her many honors. She works very hard academically and on the field, in addition to participating in extracurricular activities."

As for Lee's favorite thing about Panhandle State, "I really like how close knit and small it is. There's a lot of great support from surrounding hometowns."

Lee LOVES dogs and likes to play golf and basketball if she has any free time. She also added, "My family is my everything and I couldn't do what I do or be where I am without them." **P**



/ FACULTY /

## CHENG-HSIEN WU

**Associate Professor in the Department of Education**  
**Dr. Cheng-Hsien Wu is from Tainan City, Taiwan.** She is an advisor for Student Oklahoma Education Association (SOEA) and teaches Educational Psychology, Educational Technology, and Human Development for the Department of Education as well as Psychology: Personal Adjustment for the Department of Psychology.

Goodwell is a sharp contrast to her hometown. Tainan City has a population of two million and the Tainan are famous for food, adding sugar to every dish! Dr. Wu was quite an athlete in high school, playing volleyball and running the 3000m and 5000m in track.

In 1999, she earned a bachelor's degree from Nation Taitung Teachers' University. Dr. Wu taught three years before she and her husband decided to pursue graduate school in North Carolina and West Virginia. She received a master's degree in Education Psychology from West Virginia University in 2007. Wu earned her Ph.D. with a concentration of Curriculum, Literacy, and Cultural Studies at West Virginia University in the summer of 2013.

Prior to her work at Panhandle, Dr. Wu was a graduate assistant and adjunct faculty for the Benedum Five-Year Teacher Education Program at WVU from 2009 to 2014. She taught the courses of Sociology of Education for the Department of Social and Cultural Foundations and Educational Technology for the Department of Instructional Design and Technology under the Benedum Five-Year Teacher Education Program at WVU.

She spoke of how she found her way to Goodwell, "My family loves traveling and the 'Wild West' was the only region we hadn't touched down before 2014. Some of my friends used to work in this region and they told me that's the most peaceful and friendly place in the United States. With curiosity, we were eager to learn the different cultures and experience the mother nature in this area! After my OPSU campus visit, I felt like I was back to my college full of many wonderful memories so I decide to stay to create more fabulous memories with my family, students and friends at OPSU."

She enjoys the small class sizes at Panhandle and the opportunity to connect with students. As for future goals, "I focus on the research and teaching at this moment and will keep bringing my upbeat energy to campus!"

She jokes, "I wish I would have a 48-hour day so I could accomplish all my tasks." She and her family love exploring mother nature and different cultural heritages. Many probably don't know that she is a certified roller skating coach! **P**

/ ALUMNI /

## SAMSON BALACHANDER

**A 2009 graduate, Samson Balachander,** came to Panhandle State from Kodaikanal, India by what he says was "several random circumstances or the hand of God."

The people were Samson's favorite thing about Panhandle State, where he definitely feels he got a very well-rounded education that led to the position he has today.

"OPSU is such a closely knit community, I developed several close friendships that will last a life time! The time I spent at OPSU has played a major role in shaping my personal and professional life."

While Balachander is currently serving as the IT (Information Technology) Manager for Helmerich and Payne Technologies in Tulsa, Okla., he and his family will soon be relocating to Denver due to a recent promotion. Balachander utilizes his degree in Computer Information Systems (CIS)/Business Administration daily.

As for the future, he wants to focus on developing future leaders while building a strong IT infrastructure.

Current Alumni President Diane Murphey was Balachander's advisor during his time in Goodwell. She said, "I am very proud of Samson and all he has accomplished with this CIS degree from Panhandle State. His career has taken him on a global path and we are excited that it started at Panhandle."

A fun fact about Balachander, he was the only guy from India that worked at the Meat Lab during the time he was going to school in Goodwell. "I still use the skills I learned over there to process the deer I hunt."

To say Balachander was involved on campus as a student is a complete understatement! In addition to his position at the meat lab, he worked at McKee Library and the Carter Hall computer lab. Balachander was a member of the Programming team as well as the band. He competed one year for both the Aggie Cross Country team and the Golf team. In his free time, it definitely wasn't unusual to find him at the Noble Center playing racquetball.

To look back on his time as an Aggie, Balachander is thankful for the opportunities he had to grow his faith. He worked as an intern for the Methodist Student Center (MSC) and was an active part of the Baptist Student Union (BSU), now known as the Baptist Collegiate Ministries (BCM).

Other fond memories come from having the chance to attend college with his sister, Selma, who also found Goodwell to be a great fit and graduated with an Elementary Education degree from Panhandle State.

Balachander and his wife, Veronica, have one son and he is passionate about being a great husband and father. **P**



Regent Blayne Arthur

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/ CAMPUS /

## WELCOME TO REGENT BLAYNE ARTHUR

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications with contributions from The Oklahoman and Stillwater News Press*

**As President of the State Board of Agriculture**, Mrs. Blayne Arthur serves as a member of the A&M Board of Regents. She was appointed by Governor Kevin Stitt in 2019 as the At-Large Member to the State Board of Agriculture. Mrs. Arthur is the first woman to hold this post.

"We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with Mrs. Arthur. She is a rising leader in the state of Oklahoma and I believe she will do an excellent job in service to higher education," said University President Dr. Tim Faltyn.

She previously served as Executive Director of the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation and is a former Deputy Commissioner of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. Mrs. Arthur is a graduate of Oklahoma State University with a degree in agricultural economics. Her term is coterminous with the Governor.

"Blayne Arthur is a deeply respected leader in Oklahoma agriculture, known for her excellence in public service, her entrepreneurial spirit, and her passion mentoring youth," said Governor Kevin Stitt.

"My prior tenure with the Department of Agriculture, I worked a lot with our agriculture commodity groups. Those will be everyone from the Oklahoma Pork Council to Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau, American Farmers and Ranchers, so I was very familiar with working with those groups as they worked to develop policy at the State Capitol," she said. "I had interacted with them on a

very regular basis and was the liaison for the agency to the Legislature, so I would provide information on the Department of Agriculture, typically from a regulatory capacity on what the function of the agency was and then as ag groups pushed forward legislation, how that would impact the agency and the work that the Department of Agriculture did."

Arthur grew up farming wheat, raising horses and cattle in Grady County. Her mother, Dr. Peggy Clark, was a veterinary medical officer for the USDA. Arthur graduated from Chickasha High School. Arthur, 36, said she wants to expand the state's agriculture processing capabilities, promote rural economic development and better recruit young Oklahomans to enter the agriculture career field.

A lifetime of showing cattle and teaching her children to do the same may have prepared Arthur for any extra attention she now receives, but she has also been developing a higher profile in the last few years. She received the Distinguished Service Award from the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association in 2016 and she has been a go-to convention speaker for agriculture groups.

Arthur and her husband manage a farm east of Stillwater, raising and selling cattle for 4-H and FFA members to exhibit. **P**





Goodwell Public Schools has provided Oklahoma Panhandle State University \$250,000 in funding.

/ CAMPUS /

## GOODWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS RECEIVE **REGENTS BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARD**

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications*

**In recognition of their partnership** with Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Goodwell Public Schools received the Regents Business Partnership Excellence Award during a special event on Tuesday, March 12 at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, Okla. The award is designed to highlight successful partnerships and to further cultivate the higher learning environment through State Regents' Economic Development Grants. Numerous business and higher education partnerships throughout the state were recently recognized as innovative collaborations that further the education of Oklahoma's workforce.

Goodwell Public Schools has provided Oklahoma Panhandle State University \$250,000 in funding, in conjunction with \$250,000 in-kind from Texas County and an undisclosed gift from Anchor D Bank, to develop a modernized, \$1.2 million artificial turf football and soccer stadium, which both the University and Goodwell Public Schools utilized for the 2018 season.

Goodwell Public Schools is also utilizing the University's basketball arena. The use of both facilities allowed Goodwell Public schools to pass their first bond issue in decades to construct a new elementary school and remodel the high school, allowing them to become a school of choice in the Panhandle region. Growth and development at both Oklahoma Panhandle State University and Goodwell Public Schools is essential to the economic development of the Panhandle economy.

The partnership between Oklahoma Panhandle State University and Goodwell Public Schools also includes an after school program, a shared faculty and counselor, a special education program, a shared farm and ranch, as well as an early college program to allow high school seniors to earn an associate's degree when they graduate. These partnerships pool financial resources so that together, services can be provided to the community that often cannot be provided in small rural communities, as well as spur economic development in the Panhandle.

Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn stated, "not only has our partnership with Goodwell Public Schools led to facilities improvements, but more importantly, it's allowed us to better support all of our students as they obtain the quality of education they deserve. I am honored to be a part of this innovative partnership between community, public schools, and higher education." **P**



Dean Shawna Tucker

*“Panhandle’s  
Agriculture program  
is a legend in itself and  
Tucker is the right fit to  
take the entire COASN  
to the next level.”*

— Dr. Tim Faltyn,  
University President

/ EDUCATION /

## TUCKER NAMED DEAN OF COLLEGE OF AG, SCIENCE, AND NURSING

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications*

**After serving eight months as the Interim Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing** at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Shawna Tucker is taking the reins as the Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing (COASN).

Tucker was selected from a strong group of three finalists following a national search. She will be the first female Dean to lead the Agriculture program.

“I couldn’t be more pleased that our search committee has chosen Shawna Tucker,” Panhandle State’s President Dr. Tim Faltyn said. “Panhandle’s Agriculture program is a legend in itself and Tucker is the right fit to take the entire COASN to the next level.”

Tucker commented, “I have grown up with deep roots in agriculture tracing back five generations; both my parents’ families have farming and ranching backgrounds. My dad, Herb Hale (PAMC class of 1970), was a farmer and rancher in the mid70s-80s, owned and managed livestock auctions in the 90s, then worked at Hitch Enterprises until retirement in 2016.”

Prior to her Interim appointment in

July of 2018, Tucker taught Mathematics at Panhandle State for 20 years and has served as the Department Chair of Mathematics and Physics for the last eight years. Raised in Texhoma, Okla., she earned a bachelor’s degree in Mathematics and a Master’s of Education degree with a Specialization in Mathematics from Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

This past fall, Panhandle State consolidated its then five academic schools into three which brought about the College of Ag, Science, and Nursing. While Tucker obviously has experience in the previous School of Math, Science, and Nursing, she is no stranger to the world of Agriculture and its rich tradition at Panhandle State.

Tucker’s husband Jim raises wheat, milo, and corn and farms in Elkhart, Kan. He also has four greenhouses, where he grows mainly hydroponic tomatoes of all varieties. He has also grown poinsettias, cucumbers, green beans, etc. The couple recently begun exploring agritourism by offering a Pumpkin Patch that is open during October.

Tucker commented on the new role. “I am very honored to be named Dean of

the COASN. We are currently in a very good place, and that will only get better. We already have very strong “centers of excellence” in Ag, Science, and Nursing. We have superb faculty members who keep students at the center of all we do as well as good facilities and great leadership, both within the college and at the executive level.”

She added, “I am ready to lead this exceptional group to be the best we can. We are going to do great things!”

Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Julie Dinger said, “Mrs. Tucker has the vision and a plan to usher in a new chapter of excellence and success in Agriculture, Science, and Nursing at Panhandle State. She will empower her people and our students to do great things.”

As the COASN Dean, Tucker plans to focus on not only strengthening existing professional partnerships but also forming new ones. In addition, she would also like to see an increase in undergraduate student research experiences.

“At OPSU, our focus is on the student and their academic experience, and we believe there is no better way to learn than by hands-on activities and labs. We already do this and do it well! By utilizing a research-focused approach, coupled with real-world experiences, we can better prepare students for careers in their chosen field or graduate-level work.”

She and Jim have four kids: Emily, Macy, Evyn, and Max. Tucker enjoys reading and going to the kids’ activities.

Tucker said, “The Panhandle is home to me. I love this area because the people are salt of the earth, genuine, hard-working, and the pioneering spirit lives on in what we do and how we do things out here.” **P**



Back row (left to right): Jabrel Alexander, Sean Skipton, Jockson Bilbrey, Braxton Dain, Hayden Ukens, Steve Martin. Middle row (left to right): Cameron Branch, Jorge Rosas, Jeremy Norris, Stetson Elam, Gustavo Sanchez and Firas Ghazouani. Front row (left to right): Tanner Daniel, Lelin Liu, Melody Ethley, Madilyn Rider, Amanda Blanton, Kim Tuttle.

/ EDUCATION /

# PROGRAMMING TEAM WINS TWO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

*Submitted by Melody Ethley, Panhandle State Collegian*

**Oklahoma Panhandle State University's Programming team** traveled to Galveston Island, Texas to compete with the best and brightest Information Technology (IT) students from across the country. The U.S. Information Technology Collegiate Conference (USITCC) was held April 4-6, and hosted approximately 360 conference attendees with 38 colleges and universities being represented.

Panhandle State took sixteen students to compete in eight different competitions. To kick-off the competition on Thursday evening, three teams competed in Database Design and five teams competed in Microsoft Office Solutions. Friday afternoon, two teams competed in Business Analytics, two teams in Network Design, and three teams in Mobile Application Development. Friday evening, four teams competed in Systems Analysis & Design while nine individuals completed the PC Troubleshooting exam. Security was the last competition of the conference on Saturday morning and all sixteen students completed the Security exam. Both PC Troubleshooting and Security featured live leaderboards with knowledge based qualifying rounds. Sean Skipton advanced to the finals of PC Troubleshooting where the qualifiers are given one hour to repair a virtual machine and document the fixes. Tanner Daniel, Cameron Branch and Sean Skipton advanced to the finals for Security where it was "capture the flag" style competition showcasing their hands on security knowledge.

This year the Panhandle State Programming team brought home TWO

National Champion titles.

Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn said, "Congratulations to our Programming team and their accomplishments. We are so proud of our faculty and the exceptional leadership and mentoring they have provided to these superstar students."

Both first time attendees Amanda Blanton and Gustavo Sanchez teamed up to take home first place in Microsoft Office Solutions out of 46 teams total.

Blanton says "Nationals was both more amazing and more difficult than I ever thought it would be. The competitions were very difficult, but I learned a lot from it because I had to figure out how to do a lot in a short amount of time. It was stressful. But even before the award ceremony, I felt really proud of myself for working as hard as I did. Neither of us ever expected to get first place, but I know we are so proud of ourselves and each other for the work we put into it. I'm so happy with the entire trip, and I can't wait to compete again next year."

Sanchez also commented on the trip saying "It was a great experience to travel with AITP and bonding with everyone on the trip. Also, winning on my first time at Nationals was exciting because the competitions were tough and you are up against all the top IT students in the U.S. It was a great accomplishment to showcase what OPSU students can achieve."

Sean Skipton is no stranger to the annual national competition. In 2018, he earned his first national champion title in Application Development. Skipton finished seventh overall in Security earning an honorable mention.

He also put his skills to the test in PC Troubleshooting to claim the National Championship.

Skipton comments on his successes "It was my second time going to USITCC and my second national championship victory. I hope that I have inspired students for future regional and national competitions to be able to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to future achievements."


Firas Ghazouani competed solo in Systems Analysis & Design and received recognition as an Honorable Mention. "I am thankful that I was part of this fun group of students and advisors. I made many new friendships and memories with everyone."

In addition to the competitions, students were able to attend a career fair on Friday morning putting their networking skills to work as well as attend breakout sessions throughout the conference. The keynote addressed a relevant topic of the importance soft skills in the IT industry which the CIS Department prides itself on actively assisting students with enhancing their soft skills during their entire academic career at Panhandle State.

Prior to competing all weekend, the students visited the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Many of the students were ecstatic about touring NASA, and learning about how much computer equipment is involved in their procedures. In their spare time, students got to enjoy the sandy beaches, and gulf shores of Galveston Island.

This competition brings the Panhandle State Programming Teams National Championships up to nine total since 1998 in a variety of contests.

Advisor Kim Tuttle comments, "Panhandle State has students with superior intellect abilities. My favorite part of advising this group is providing opportunities for students to learn more about themselves and their abilities through competitive learning. The faculty on campus already know our students are the best. Competing against students from all across the nation and bringing home the gold builds confidence in our students and confirms that we as faculty are not lying to them about their abilities to do whatever they set their minds to."

Congratulations to Panhandle State Programming Team for continuing to be a center of excellence at the university! 



PBL members pose for a photo before the awards ceremony at SLC. Back row (left to right): Cameron Hammett, Aaron Hammett, Jorge Rosas, Cameron Branch, John Polston, Hayden Ukens, Firas Ghazhouani, Shalom Ngalaba. Front row (left to right): Jasmine Puebla, Jamie O’Gorman, Esmerelda Castro, Jerriena Davis, Lupita Jimenez, Amanda Blanton, Kaley Conner, Melody Ethley.

/ EDUCATION /

# PBL DOMINATES AT STATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Submitted by Melody Ethley, Panhandle State Collegian

**Panhandle State Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) members and advisors** Dr. Sara Hitch and Mr. Davin Winger departed for Oklahoma City on Friday, March 29, for the annual State Leadership Conference (SLC).

That evening, the group attended dinner at Mid-America Christian University (MACU), where the event was held, and received their awards for objective tests that were taken prior to SLC. Along with individual awards members received for their competitions, Panhandle State earned this year’s Public Relations Award. The competition awards received Friday evening are as follows:

Amanda Blanton: 1st in Programming Concepts, 2nd in Computer Applications, 3rd in Accounting Principles

Cameron Branch: 3rd in Computer Concepts, 2nd in Cyber Security

Kaley Conner: 1st in Marketing Concepts, 1st in Business Communication

Melody Ethley: 1st in Administrative Technology, 4th in Computer Concepts

Firas Ghazouani: 2nd in Personal Finance, 2nd in Statistical Analysis

Aaron Hammett: 3rd in Accounting for Professionals

Cameron Hammett: 2nd in Accounting for Professionals

Lupita Jimenez: 5th in Personal Finance, 3rd in Macroeconomics

Shalom Ngalaba: 2nd in Management Concepts

John Polston: 2nd in Financial Concepts

Jasmine Puebla: 1st in Financial Concepts, 2nd in Programming Concepts

Jorge Rosas: 1st in Cyber Security, 3rd in Marketing Concepts

Hayden Ukens: 3rd in Administrative Technology, 1st in Computer Applications

Team of Aaron and Cameron Hammett: 1st in Forensic Accounting

Saturday morning began a long day of performance events, which included several team events. While these competitions did not involve any tests beforehand, members prepared diligently during the weeks leading up to this date. Following the performance events was the final awards ceremony, in which our PBL members received the following awards:

Melody Ethley: 3rd in Public Speaking

Firas Ghazouani: 1st in Business Ethics, 3rd in Job Interview

Shalom Ngalaba: 2nd in Client Service

Jorge Rosas: 1st in Impromptu Speaking

Team of Cameron Branch and Hayden Ukens: 1st in Network Design

Team of Amanda Blanton, Kaley Conner, and Lupita Jimenez: 1st in Social Media Challenge

Team of Jerriena Davis, Shalom Ngalaba, and Jamie O’Gorman: 2nd in Accounting Analysis and Decision Making

Team of John Polston and Jasmine Puebla: 1st in Financial Services,

2nd in Financial Analysis and Decision Making

A total of 16 students competed for Panhandle State including:

Cameron Hammett of Boyd, Texas

Aaron Hammett of Boyd, Texas

Jorge Rosas of Felt, Okla.

Amanda Blanton of Kennesaw, Ga.

Hayden Ukens of Hooker, Okla.

Cameron Branch of Ulysses, Kan.

John Polston of Fort Worth, Texas

Jasmine Puebla of Albuquerque, N.M.

Melody Ethley of Arlington, Texas

Kaley Conner of Keyes, Okla.

Esmeralda Castro of Guymon, Okla.

Shalom Ngalaba of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Jerriena Davis of Hooker, Okla.

Firas Ghazouani of Tunis, Tunisia

Lupita Jimenez of Guymon, Okla.

Jamie O’Gorman of Stinnett, Texas

Melody Ethley commented on the event, “It was my first time competing with PBL. It was a very fun, and insightful weekend. I was able to get to know some of my fellow members a little better, and get that real world experience from competing in my event. I was super pleased to receive first place in Administrative Technology, and I wish that I would have been exposed to that type of environment earlier on. Nonetheless, I’m thankful for the opportunity, and encourage anyone else with the smallest bit of interest to pursue PBL!”

In total, Panhandle State PBL brought home 14 state championships, 12 second-place finishes, 7 third-place finishes, 1 fourth-place finish, and 1 fifth-place finish. All but three members were first-time competitors, and each one of them was an outstanding representative of Panhandle State. The group looks forward to National Leadership Conference this summer in San Antonio, Texas.

Dean of Business and Technology Davin Winger commented, “The State Leadership Conference is always an exciting time for our students. The conference is a great opportunity for our students to realize they are on equal footing as they compete with other state universities.” **P**



The Panhandle State Crops Judging team placed fourth at a recent contest in Curtis, Neb.

/ EDUCATION /

## KAIN EARNS HONORS AT CROPS JUDGING

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications*

**Senior John Paul Kain earned second-high individual honors** at the regional crops judging contest in Curtis, Neb. at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) on Friday, March 8, 2019. Kain led the Panhandle State Crops Judging team to a fourth place finish.

Panhandle State Crops Judging Coach and Agronomy Professor Dr. Curtis Bensch commented, “this was one of the hardest contests I have had the students compete in. The fact that John Paul finished so well was extremely impressive.”

Kain, a McCook, Neb. native, was joined by team members Ross Brown of Ulysses, Kan., Allison Jones of Ulysses, Kan., and Kierra Smart of McClave, Colo. Together the group accumulated nearly 1400 points to finish over 200 points ahead of the next closest team. A total of nine universities competed in the contest.

Team coach Dr. Curtis Bensch commented, “the skills that the students are tested on are the very skills of agronomy professionals that industry and graduate schools desire. I’m always so enthused to see how well our OPSU students perform. Industry and other universities take notice too.”

Panhandle State students Coleman Sintas, Sarah Wood, and Cassidy Tolle also traveled with the team and competed individually. Ag Instructor Daren Stephens accompanied the group as the Assistant Coach.

Both two-year colleges and four-year universities attended the event at NCTA. In the four-year division, Kansas State University won, followed by the University of Nebraska- Lincoln, and Iowa State finished third.

The team collected another fourth place finish earlier in the semester at the southern regional crops judging contest in Kansas at Hutchinson Community College on February 9th. Kain was the fourth high individual at the competition.

The crops judging competition is an intensive examination of agronomic skills and knowledge designed around the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) program. The contest consists of four sections: laboratory practical, agronomic exam, math practical and plant and seed identification. In the laboratory practical, competitors identify insects, diseases, equipment, and crop products, plus determine crop growth stages, interpret pesticide labels or seed tags, name plant structures, identify nutrient deficiencies, and evaluate various crop production problems. The agronomic exam evaluated knowledge of crop

production and management, crop physiology and breeding, soil properties, soil fertility, tillage, crop harvesting and storage, weeds, insects and diseases. The math practical included equipment calibration, pesticide application and other mathematical calculations. Seed and plant identification requires contestants to identify over 150 plant and seed specimens.

The team is set to compete at the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Judging Conference on Saturday, April 13, 2019 at Murray State University in Murray, Ky. In addition to the Crops Judging contest, the group will also compete in the Knowledge Bowl and the Precision Agriculture Contest. The trip will also allow the students the opportunity to visit Bayer (Monsanto) headquarters in St. Louis as well as work out at the Kansas State University Agronomy Lab.

Kain said, “I was very happy to participate in the regional crops judging contest at the tech school I graduated from prior to transferring to OPSU. The contest proved to be quite challenging. However, we were able to place fourth as a team and all members on the team scored above the 60th percentile. I believe we all learned a lot at this contest and look to improve our scores at the National Contest in April.” **P**



Front Row (left to right): Cheng-Hsien Wu, Aubrey Bowers, Abby Ely, Chantal Guel, Ashley Price, Alejandra Hernandez, Nancy Melendez-Trejo, Jerry Mihelic. Back Row (left to right) : Sarah Atha, Jc Deason, Kaylee Johnson, Melissa Wiman, Mariah Morigeau.

/ EDUCATION /

## SOEA RECOGNIZED AS OUTSTANDING CHAPTER

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications*

**Student Oklahoma Education Association (SOEA) advisors and members** attended the annual Spring Convention and Outreach to Teach on Friday, March 1 and Saturday, March 2 in Tulsa. Eleven students and two faculty advisors from Panhandle State attended the two-day event.

Students and advisors from institutions all across Oklahoma work together each year in the Outreach to Teach project performing school improvements and beautification at a selected elementary school. This year participants had the opportunity to work at Robertson Elementary in Tulsa. SOEA members painted murals on walls in the entrance area and conference room as well as refurbishing bathrooms and the storm shelter. Panhandle State SOEA officers, Nancy Melendez-Trejo, Mariah Morigeau, and Sarah Atha led a team of volunteers in working among four projects. This marked Panhandle State SOEA's 13th time to participate in the outreach project.

Panhandle State Advisor Dr. Wu commented, "Our SOEA members are really passionate about making a difference for students and making sure their learning community is a place that looks vibrant and feels safe and caring."

Abby Ely, an Elementary Education major added, "As a first time participant in Outreach to Teach, I found the experience to be very rewarding. It felt good to give back to a school. Also, it was exciting to meet other future educators and make connections that could be useful throughout my career."

The following day, SOEA members were busy attending sessions of professional

development and learning new information during the Spring Convention.

Panhandle State was recognized as an Outstanding Local Chapter. This marks the sixth time since 2012 that the group has been honored with this award. Nancy Melendez-Trejo and Mariah Morigeau were also recognized as state officers.

Dr. Jerry Mihelic said, "I am Panhandle proud of our students' focus on service and making a difference in the lives of children. Our students are truly transforming the world."

Students attending the conference included Sarah Atha, Nancy Melendez-Trejo, Mariah Morigeau, Ashley Price, Melissa Wiman, Kaylee Johnson, Chantal Guel, Abby Ely, Aubrey Bowers, Alejandra Hernandez, and JC Deason. Dr. Mihelic and Dr. Wu accompanied the group as faculty advisors. **P**



The annual Paul Farrell Memorial Art Auction brought in around \$50,000 this year.

/ EDUCATION /

## 19TH ANNUAL ART AUCTION SEES ACHIEVEMENT

*Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications*

**The 19th annual Paul Farrell Memorial Art Auction** happened Friday, March 1st with gusto, bringing in right around \$50,000. Oklahoma Panhandle State University Art Department hosted the event at Pickle Creek Event center, complete with a steak dinner, live music, and silent and live auctions.

Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn commented, “the community support for our art department is inspiring. The national trend is to eliminate art departments because of cost, low enrollment and low graduate production. Community support like we see with the auction helps us to justify the significant investment we make in the arts. Personally, I believe that life is made better by art. We have quite a way to go, but are moving in the right direction to make our art department sustainable; the key for us is to keep growing enrollment and graduates.”

The annual event started as a discussion among faculty and students many years ago. A local man and very talented artist named Paul Farrell had been painting, doing sculptures, and woodwork before being diagnosed with melanoma in one of his eyes. He ended up losing an eye and his wife encouraged him to take some courses at Panhandle State in an effort to regain some depth perception, a key tool for artists. He began taking classes and in his own quiet way would impart tidbits of wisdom to the students he was around. When he passed, a group of the students that had come to dearly love him gathered together and organized the Auction in his memory.

The auction originally featured artwork from faculty and students at Panhandle State and has transformed into featuring the artwork of those students who graduate and want to continue to contribute to the event. Each year, a wide variety of work is submitted to a jury for the opportunity to be selected as an auction item. Pieces range

from drawing and painting to photography, sculpture, ceramics, and encaustics. This year, the auction had 55 items up for sale. Additional items were available through the silent auction, an opportunity for younger, up-and-coming artists to display their work, and for others to donate smaller pieces.

The highest selling piece “Buffalo Vessel” by Brent Shoulders was a ceramic vase with a black walnut lid and sculpted buffalo, and a steel base. The piece brought in a bid of \$2,000. The money raised at the auction is split with 50 percent going to the artists and the other 50 percent is placed in various scholarships, awards, and departmental equipment expenses.

Brent Shoulders, in his first year as the head of the art department, stated, “this year’s auction was a tremendous blessing to the art department’s ability to recruit the highest quality, most talented art students in the region. Once again, our amazing community pulled together to support our scholarship fundraising cause as well as provide some of the best experiences for our students. It is amazing to see how far the auction has come along in the past 19 years, and we look forward to having a blowout at next year’s auction, marking our 20th year! We can’t do what we do without the help, the support, and the generosity of our patrons! Thank you all for helping us change the trajectory of so many lives.”

For more information about the Paul Farrell Memorial Art Auction, find us on Facebook. To see the inner workings of the department, follow Panhandle State Art on Twitter and Instagram. **P**



Oklahoma Promise Day was April 9, 2019.

/ EDUCATION /

# STUDENTS ATTEND OKLAHOMA PROMISE DAY

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

**Oklahoma Panhandle State University students and staff joined more than 300 students, faculty, and representatives** from Oklahoma's public colleges and universities and other supporters gathered at the state Capitol on April 9, 2019 to show appreciation for the Legislature's ongoing support of the Oklahoma's Promise scholarship program and encourage legislators to continue to preserve the program's funding source.

Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn said, "Oklahoma Promise is an amazing scholarship program that has allowed numerous qualified Oklahoma students the opportunity to pursue the promise of their potential through higher education. We are so thankful for the continued support that allows these

students to overcome financial barriers."

Speakers during the Oklahoma's Promise Day at the Capitol rally included Dara Derryberry, Oklahoma Deputy Attorney General; State Regent Michael C. Turpen; Chancellor Glen D. Johnson; Sen. Jason Smalley, Oklahoma State Senate; Rep. Jadine Nollan and Rep. Cyndi Munson, Oklahoma House of Representatives; State Chamber Executive Vice President of Government and Political Affairs Mike Jackson; and Oklahoma's Promise recipient Sarah Kellogg.

Formerly known as the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP), Oklahoma's Promise was created in 1992 by the state Legislature to help more Oklahoma families send their children to college.

Nationally recognized as one of the country's best college access programs, Oklahoma's Promise is a

transformational model that combines emphasis on academic preparation and financial support for college. The scholarship program pays tuition at any Oklahoma public college or university until the student receives a bachelor's degree or for five years, whichever comes first. It will also cover a portion of tuition at an accredited Oklahoma private institution. The scholarship does not cover the cost of fees, books, or room and board.

Students completing the Oklahoma's Promise program continue to be successful academically, with high school GPAs that exceed the state average, ACT scores that exceed those of their comparable middle- and lower-income peers, and higher-than-average freshman college GPAs.

For more information about Oklahoma's Promise, visit [www.okpromise.org](http://www.okpromise.org). 





Anchor D Stadium will see the addition of men's and women's soccer in the fall of 2019.

/ATHLETICS/

## RECRUITMENT IN FULL SWING FOR SOCCER

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

**The world's most popular sport –and one of the oldest–** will be brand new to the Oklahoma Panhandle State University campus come fall of 2019. It is then that intercollegiate men's and women's soccer teams will make their debut on the Goodwell, Okla., campus, bringing the number of athletic program offerings by the Aggies to 16 teams.

"The addition of men's and women's soccer to our athletics profile goes way beyond on-field competition," Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn explained. "We have a diverse campus and community. Soccer will offer opportunities for athletes, as well as an activity that crosses many cultures already living in our region. Anytime you can both bolster our athletics program, while also serving a broad segment of our region, it's a win-win situation."

The recent upswing in popularity for soccer in the United States, along with its broad cultural appeal to both men and women alike, make it a great fit for Panhandle State's mission to provide "Progress through Knowledge," with its commitment to promoting excellence in the preparation of students for success in a global community. What can be more "global" than the opportunities offered by the addition of soccer to Panhandle State?

Currently, Panhandle State students represent a total of 20 countries, most of which would list soccer (or non-American "football") – with the exception of the United States and Canada - as its sport of choice. And why not? After all, soccer has its roots dating back around 3,000 years to Mesoamerican cultures (and when the captain of the losing team was sacrificed to the gods; and to think

*Soccer will offer opportunities for athletes, as well as an activity that crosses many cultures already living in our region.* – Dr. Tim Faltyn, University President

we thought losing a corporate endorsement after a World Cup loss was tough!). What's considered the first "official" competition between two colleges occurred in 1869 between Rutgers and Princeton.

The reins of guiding the Aggies' first-ever soccer programs have been handed to two very capable coaches. Brandon Misuraca will be leading the Panhandle men's squad and Mike Rosso will head the women's team.

Misuraca came to Panhandle after spending the previous two seasons as an assistant at the University of Houston-Victoria. During his first season at UHV, he helped lead the men's team to the Red River Athletic Conference regular season title, conference tournament championship, and appearance in the NAIA national tournament. Prior to UHV, Misuraca spent three years as the assistant men's coach at the University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg, Ky. The Patriots made three appearances in the Mid-South Conference Tournament, twice advancing to the semifinals.

Prior to Panhandle State, Coach Rosso was the Head Women's Soccer Coach at Northeast Texas Community College. In his first season he led the women's team to a winning regular season record and a semifinal berth in the Region XIV conference tournament. Prior to arriving at NTCC he was the Assistant Women's Soccer Coach at Francis Marion University. He also served on the South Carolina ODP Staff as the Boys Team Head Coach. **P**

# MULCAHY REACHES COACHING MILESTONE

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information



**On February 21, 2019**, Oklahoma Panhandle State University Head Softball Coach Meghan Mulcahy hit a personal coaching milestone. In the Aggies' 2-1 victory at home over Southwestern Christian College, Mulcahy reached her 100th career coaching win.

But the Panhandle State squad had to work extra hard for the "W" ... literally.

Panhandle State trailed through 4 1/2 innings, 1-0. In the bottom of the fifth, the Aggies were able to knot matters at 1-1 by plating an unearned run. With one out, Jaylinn Reyes reached on an error by the SCU third baseman. That brought sophomore Jewell Lee to the plate, who promptly laced a double, driving home Reyes to tie it 1-1.

Still tied after regulation, in the bottom of the eighth, Abby Gregory was placed on second for the International Tiebreaker. With one out, junior Jena Konieczka slapped a single up the middle that allowed Gregory to easily score the winning run, securing Coach Mulcahy's 100th win, as well.

Somehow, the extra work that the Aggies had to put into the game seemed symbolic of what Coach Mulcahy has put into the program during her eight seasons to even reach this point. She inherited a program which had not seen a 20-win season in more than a decade, enduring a painful 7-44 record her inaugural season at the helm in 2013.

But Coach Mulcahy had – and has – a bigger plan for Aggies Softball,

knowing full well that a cultural shift in the program might include some growing pains along the way. The result of her persistence has been a methodical upward trend for Panhandle State's team.

Including the current season in progress, the Aggies have posted back-to-back 20-win campaigns and hit that mark in three of the past four years. Panhandle's 26 wins in 2018 was the most since 2002. And with a 23-17 record in 2019 – and eight games remaining as of press time – the Aggies could be looking at a winning regular season record for the first time in its history, as well as a second consecutive post-season Sooner Athletic Conference playoff berth.

Coach Mulcahy also produced the Aggies' first-ever softball All-American – current sophomore outfielder Jewell Lee – in 2018, earning second team honors, as well as first team all-region accolades. Having Panhandle players regularly appear in the national statistical rankings is once again becoming the norm.

And for Coach Mulcahy, celebrating that 100th victory back in February was nothing more than a validation. It's a stamp of approval that Panhandle State softball is still climbing to those lofty goals she has set for the program and reaping the rewards along the way. **P**



## **FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2019**

Alternate Shot Skins Game at Sunset Hills Golf Course  
Followed by **Aggie Sunset Social**: Dinner, Drinks, Live Music & Silent Auction

**at Pickle Creek Event Center in Guymon**  
*(separate tickets available for non-golfers)*

## **SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2019**

4-Man Scramble Tournament at Sunset Hills Golf Course  
CA\$H PRIZES; Side Games; Lunch Provided

**CONTACT DAVE BEYER FOR INFORMATION: 580-349-1354**



## AGGIE ATHLETES OF THE WEEK

/ATHLETICS/

### AGGIES' ALEXANDER AN ALL-AMERICAN

*Released by Panhandle State Sports Information*

If Breiman Alexander's senior season with Oklahoma Panhandle State University men's basketball were a sundae, the whipped cream and cherry were added when the Aggies' standout was announced as an NAIA All-American honorable mention by the national office.

"Bre is an All-American," OPSU Head Coach Aaron Coombs said. "He proved that this year. In my mind, he was the best player in the country."

The NAIA honor followed in a week where Alexander showcased his skills in the NAIA All-Star Game and earned recognition as the Most Valuable Player of the contest. Alexander scored 18 points by hitting 6-of-10 from the field – all from beyond the arc - to set a game record for three-point field goals made. He also tied the game record for three-point field goals attempted, with nine.

Alexander was also voted second team All-Sooner Athletic Conference, leading the SAC in four categories and ranking in the top-10 in two others. Alexander lead the circuit in scoring (23.8 ppg), total points scored (642), three-point field goals made (116) and three-point field goals made per game (4.3). He was seventh in the SAC in three-point field goal percentage (38.2%) and ninth in free-throw percentage (78.2%). He was also 12th in assists per game (2.6 apg), 16th in total assists (70) and 13th in field goal percentage (44.1%).

Alexander registered three of the top four individual scoring games in the SAC in 2018-19. He was tied for the No. 1-scoring game with 41 points versus Our Lady of the Lake. Alexander also had the numbers three and four ranked games with 40 versus Barclay and 39 against Southwestern Christian.

Alexander's offensive prowess also vaulted him to the top of the NAIA national statistics. Alexander topped the NAIA in three-point field goals made per game and total three-point field goals made. He was second in the country in points per game and seventh in total points scored. **P**



JACEE BARR  
WEEK 21: Equestrian



GERSON PADILLA  
WEEK 21: Baseball



JAYLENN REYES  
WEEK 22: Softball



TYLER BRYANT  
WEEK 22: Baseball



BRITTANY THOMAS  
WEEK 23: Softball



JJ VAUGHT  
WEEK 23: Baseball



JEWELL LEE  
WEEK 24: Softball



YESIEL VALDEZ  
WEEK 24: Baseball

A complete listing of Athlete of the Week recipients can be found at [opsuaggies.com](http://opsuaggies.com)





OKLAHOMA



STATE

UNIVERSITY

Rodeo Team