

SEPTEMBER 2019

Panhandle

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE UNIVERSITY

OPSU.edu



**FOSTERING CHAMPIONS
OF EXCELLENCE**



/ CAMPUS /

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

The faculty and staff gathered in the student union ballroom on Wednesday, August 14, as they prepared for the annual State of the University Address by university president, Dr. Tim Faltyn.

Prior to the president's speech, the room was treated to a delicious breakfast provided by Great Western Dining and sponsored by the members of Anchor D Bank. The presentation then began with a letter from Dr. Faltyn to the Oklahoma A&M Board of Regents. In the letter's opening statement was the sentence, "The people I work with are making the difference for this university." As it was read aloud, the room took a moment to let the words sink in, and Dr. Faltyn announced this declaration was the influence behind the theme of the presentation: where we were, where we are now, and where we are going.

First, Dr. Faltyn reminisced on the 2018-19 school year, and what strides forward had been made since. He spoke of the numerous facility improvements all across campus, from the newly-turfed Carl Wooten Field at Anchor D Stadium, to the student-focused refurbishments of the Academic Resource Center, to the brand new furniture each of the classrooms had been bestowed. He continued with the announcement that the university was on trend to welcome the largest freshman class for the third year in a row, and that enrollment management had been a key point of continued success for the fastest growing university in the region. The shooting sports facility was an enlivened topic, as

the room was shown a drone fly-over video of the progression of construction.

Dr. Faltyn continued by revisiting the many accomplishments over the past year, from athletics post-season appearances by every team for the first time in school history, to Beau Peterson's CNFR National Champion title, to the awarding of the Panhandle Promise scholarship to its' first five recipients. He also spoke on the broader aspects of more behind-the-scenes accomplishments as he addressed the budget, master plan, and strategic plan for the university. Then, seemingly a mistake, a photo of the Spirit Rider brandishing her flag emblazoned with the P logo, riding across Carl Wooten Field appeared on the projection screen. Dr. Faltyn commented on how great of a photo it was, then moved on to speak about the dorm renovations and the newly-approved funds for the student union building.

The presentation continued and every few slides, a photo exhibiting the P logo would appear again. Dr. Faltyn then stopped, and explained that he had hoped to really show how far the university's re-branding initiative had come, and soon enough, the slides of the presentation were splashed with the notably celebrated logo-from stickers on the back of car windows, to students donning hats and t-shirts, to various signs peppered around campus, to the numerous billboards lining the highways. The logo has become synonymous with the university,

Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Julie Dinger, (left) and University President, Dr. Tim Faltyn, (right) address the faculty and staff on August 14.

and in turn, with the great faculty, staff and students that make up Panhandle State. Further signifying this ideal, it was announced that the university had been ranked No. 28 by U.S. News and World Report in the 2019 Best Colleges, Regional Universities West division. A roaring clap echoed through the room as the news excited all the faculty and staff and fortified all their hard work. **P**

"The people I work with are making the difference for this university."

— Dr. Tim Faltyn,
University President

CONTENTS

Panhandle Magazine — SEPTEMBER 2019

4 — MOVE-IN DAY 2019

7 — ENROLLMENT INCREASE FOR FALL 2019

14 — BEAU PETERSON, 2019 CNFR NATIONAL CHAMPION

15 — OPSU DEBUTS MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SOCCER



On the cover: Beau Peterson, CNFR National Champion, Goat Tying
Back Cover: Panhandle State University was ranked as No. 26 by U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges 2019, Regional Universities West division.



OKLAHOMA
PANHANDLE STATE
UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 430 Goodwell, OK 73939
Tel: 580-349-2611 / Toll Free: 1-800-664-OPSU
Fax: 580-349-2302

/ ADMINISTRATION /
Dr. Tim Faltyn — President
Dr. Julie Dinger — Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs
Benny Dain — Vice President of Fiscal Affairs
Dr. Ryan Blanton — Vice President of Outreach

/ PANHANDLE MAGAZINE /
Alyssa Fox — Campus Communications
Dave Beyer — Sports Information Director

/ PHOTOGRAPHERS /
Alyssa Fox — Taylor Jacobsen — Lauren Lagow
Sam Ortiz — Rylee Higgins

/ CAMPUS /

MOVE-IN DAY

AUGUST 2019







The 2019 Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) Team.

/ EDUCATION /

STUDENT SUCCESS AT 2019 PBL NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

Students of Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda, or PBL, had an excellent turnout as they competed at the 2019 National Leadership Conference over June 24-27 in San Antonio, Texas.

The four-day FBLA-PBL national conference helps students prepare for careers in business and technology by focusing on academic competitions and leadership development and also provides a great place for students to network.

Associate Professor and Department Chair of Business Administration, Dr. Sara Hitch, Dean of Business and Technology, Davin Winger, and Accounting Instructor/Department Chair of Accounting, Robyn Harris, accompanied fourteen students to the conference, and Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Julie Dinger, also made the trip to cheer them on.

"It was an absolute privilege to join our students and advisors for the Awards of Excellence Program in San Antonio," said Dr. Dinger, "I am so impressed by the work our advisors and students put in to compete effectively at the state and

national level. The OPSU PBL Chapter continues to set the bar when it comes to excellence."

Students from Panhandle State placed in the Top 10 in six different events throughout the conference. Earning 5th place in the Social Media Challenge was the team of Lupita Jimenez, Amanda Blanton and Kaley Conner. Conner also took 6th place in Business Communications. Taking 8th in the category of Network Designs was the team of Cameron Branch and Hayden Ukens. Branch also placed 10th in Networking Concepts. Jasmine Puebla took 9th place in Financial Concepts, and the team of Puebla and John Polston placed 9th in Financial Services.

Dr. Sara Hitch commented, "This was one of the younger groups we've taken to NLC. In fact, of our 14 participants, only 1 had attended NLC previously (last year). We were so incredibly proud of all of their achievements. We also are very excited for the upcoming years as most will be able to qualify again next year. **P**

"We are so incredibly proud of all of their achievements."

— Dr. Sarah Hitch,
Department Chair and
Associate Professor of
Business Administration



/ EDUCATION /

ENROLLMENT INCREASE FOR FALL 2019

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

The 2019-20 school year has begun, and Oklahoma Panhandle State University has welcomed its largest freshman class for the third year in a row.

Panhandle State has established itself as the fastest growing university in the region, with enrollment numbers continuing to trend upward for the fall of 2019 semester. For the preliminary count this fall, the university grew 2% in headcount and 4% in credit hours from Fall 2018. This is a 12% increase since 2017. Online applications have also increased markedly this semester by a solid ten percent.

“Our success has been a total team effort,” said Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Julie Dinger. She continued, “The whole Aggie family worked together to bring the class of 2023 to campus, now we are moving our focus to connecting these students to experiences and programs that will improve their success. It is an honor to serve our students with these people.”

Panhandle State University has been working hard the past three years on redeveloping an enrollment management system that is adaptive to the changing ways in which students engage with colleges and universities.

This team centered approach, focusing on individual students interacting with recruiters, faculty, staff, coaches, and Deans, has proven to be successful.

Panhandle State University’s work on enrollment management initiative, coupled with the dedicated hard work of the faculty and staff, as well as the numerous campus-wide academic and facility improvements to benefit both students has led to Panhandle State University being ranked No. 26 by U.S. News and World Report in the Best Colleges of 2020, Regional Universities West division after being unranked by more than a decade.

“We have continued our move to sustainability by being steadfast in our mission of meeting people where they are in life, helping them go where they want to go, and be who they want to be,” said University President, Dr. Tim Faltyn. “This ranking says that people are more and more interested in our story. I can’t wait to work with our team to write the next chapter of our success.” **P**

“The whole Aggie family worked together to bring the class of 2023 to campus, now we are moving our focus to connecting these students to experiences and programs that will improve their success.”

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



/ STAFF /

HANNAH HAMMACK

Hannah Hammack is a familiar face around the Panhandle State campus. She was a part of the 2019 graduating class and earned her Bachelor's degree in Animal Science and Nutrition with a minor in Chemistry. Upon her graduation, Hammack was also the recipient of the prestigious J.R.P. Sewell Award. Each year, this accolade is awarded to a graduating senior who has completed all of his or her coursework at Panhandle State, and who ranks highest in scholarship, leadership and citizenship.

While attending the university, Hammack rode competitively for the equestrian team and was also highly involved in many facets of campus. She was a member of collegiate FFA- or the Future Farmers of America organization- a member of Block and Bridle, the Student Ambassador Program and Student Senate. She also served as Head RA of Holter Hall.

This year, Hammack returns to campus as an Admissions Counselor and head coach for the Panhandle State Equestrian Team. "What brought me to Panhandle State was the small rural feel to the community, along with the equestrian team," said Hammack, who comes full circle as a previous four-year member of the team now serving as coach. "My favorite thing about the university has been the Panhandle State family," Hammack continued, "I moved six hours away from home to go to school and in the end I earned a whole new family. The opportunities I have been given here are once in a lifetime experiences that have truly helped me grow into the individual I am today."

Hammack is looking forward to both of her new roles on campus. "Not only do I get to recruit students and help them to gain a higher education, but I also get to teach students how to ride a horse," expresses Hammack. "I am so excited to be able to give back to this community after all it has given me over the past four years." **P**



/ STUDENT /

SAMANTHA DAVIS

Samantha Davis didn't have to travel far to find her new home at Panhandle State. The Swink, Oklahoma native declared that she had two things in mind when seeking out a place with just the right fit to continue her education after graduating high school.

"The first thing was that I wanted to play college basketball, it had been a dream of mine since I was a little girl," said Davis. "The second was that I really wanted a university that was deeply rooted in agriculture. Panhandle State gave me both of the things I truly desired."

Davis has already continued to make both those aspects of her vision come to life as she enters into her sophomore year, currently majoring in Animal Science and Biology and sports #25 as a forward on the women's basketball team.

As generational attendee of the university, Davis is enjoying being able to further family traditions rooted in the school. "In the 1970's, some of my family members went to this college and were members of the rodeo team." She reminisced, "They used to tell me stories about the people at the university and in the community, and that even though they were so far from their homes they didn't mind because here everyone is family. It is a tradition that has never changed and our family just continued to grow."

An involved student-athlete on campus and in the classroom, Davis is also a member of Women in Ag, has graced both the President's and Dean's honor rolls, is a member of Chi Alpha Sigma and is also the Head RA at the on-campus apartments.

Davis equates her hometown to the town of Goodwell, saying, "The schools are the heart of these small towns and their communities." She continued, "I have a passion to help people and animals and I hope to continue my education by applying to Veterinary school in the near future. I am only in my third year, but I am a senior in the classroom and could graduate with two bachelor's degrees in May." In the meantime, Davis enjoys putting her skills to work at Sea World in San Antonio, TX, where she has worked over the past several years, assisting in caring for killer whales, beluga whales, dolphins, walruses, and her favorite- penguins. **P**



/ FACULTY /

SYDNEY **WILKINSON**

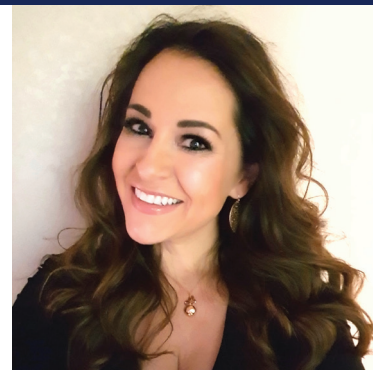
Colorado native, Sydney Wilkinson, joins the Aggie family this year as the new Instructor of Animal Science, coach of the Livestock Judging Team, and a Women in Ag sponsor. Wilkinson hails from the quaint town of Model, Colorado, where she grew up on a ranch and was able to first begin working with livestock and spark a passion she would continue to grow later in life.

She attended Hoehne High School, near Trinidad, Colorado, where she also partook in FFA, or the Future Farmers of America, a youth organization geared toward preparing young community members for careers in the business and technology of agriculture.

Wilkinson then spent her college days at Texas A&M University where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science in 2011, and received her Master's in Animal Breeding and Genetics in 2013. Following that, she set her sights on teaching at Kim High School in Colorado where she would also serve as the FFA advisor. This year, she joins the Panhandle State family in an exciting role.

"After teaching high school for three years, this position felt like it was almost written for me," said Wilkinson. "Being able to teach students about livestock at the collegiate level is truly a dream." She expanded, "I am also excited about the opportunity to re-energize the Livestock Judging Team and help with the various herds at the farm."

On her experience at Panhandle State so far, Wilkinson says she especially loves the family-feel. "From the administration to the students, you can tell each and every person cares about the university and the success of its' students," she expressed. Wilkinson is excited at the prospect of new ventures with the farm and the livestock team, saying, "There is an incredible opportunity to build them both into great things. It isn't often that you're presented with an opportunity like this one, and I'm just so impressed at the university's passion for constant improvement and success." **P**



/ ALUMNI /

AMADA **ALVIDREZ**

Panhandle State University alum Amada Alvidrez has called the communities of Goodwell and Guymon home, though her true roots lie in her home country of Mexico.

"I consider Guymon to be my hometown," said Alvidrez. "I graduated from Guymon High School and I wanted to stay close to home." Alvidrez graduated from GHS with a 4.0 grade point average and took the stage as Valedictorian of her class. She made the natural choice to attend Panhandle State and graduated magna cum laude in 2000 with a Bachelor's degree in English Education and minors in Spanish and Computer Information Systems.

"My favorite thing about Panhandle State was the fact that they have an amazing faculty," expressed Alvidrez. "I could not have gotten a better education!" Alvidrez has chosen to remain local, taking up permanent residence in Guymon, where she is currently the Market President for Equity Bank. In 2016, Alvidrez became the first Panhandle resident, as well as the first Hispanic member, to serve on the Government Relations Council for the Oklahoma Bankers Association.

She also remains avid in staying up to date with alumni events on and around campus. Panhandle has always taken great Pride in producing graduates who feel a sense a famliy to the University and who welcome the opportunitiy to remain involved as alumni, and Alvidrez is a true example of those ideals. Alumni Relations Director, Natasha Edison, revealed that Alvidrez is the first-ever Platinum Aggie Alumni Members, which is the highest Panhandle Alumni membership currently available.

As an alumna, if she were to offer any advice to current or future Panhandle State students, Alvidrez said, "Get involved! Panhandle State has so many amazing activities going on, I still wish I could have participated in more!" **P**

Dr. Tim Faltyn, the Goodwell Public School Board, and OSSBA are presented with the 2019 Barbara Lynch Community Partner Award for Oklahoma Panhandle State University's and Goodwell Public School's partnership.



/ EDUCATION /

PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE WITH GOODWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Submitted by Panhandle State Campus Communications

Panhandle State has always been an advocate for community partnerships, and over the past several years, the university has partnered with Goodwell Public Schools to create a union with amazing benefits for both.

One of the main partnerships is the Panhandle Future afterschool care program. The main goal of Panhandle Future is to provide excellent afterschool care and an exceptional learning experience for the children of Goodwell Public Schools. Panhandle State Elementary Education students, supervised by a certified employee of Goodwell Public School run the program at the OPSU campus, providing quality afterschool care for the community.

Another goal of the partnership is to collaborate to create a Special Education Program for the Pre-K to 12th Grade students of Goodwell Public Schools. The program would also allow for the training of Special Education individuals through the University, as well as the sharing of a certified Special Education teacher at both schools.

With both schools deeply rooted in agriculture, the University saw the value in offering to house, free of charge, the Goodwell students' FFA and 4H show animals, such as cattle, sheep, hogs and goats.

The animal housing space is at a central location, and allows the students opportunities to work with and exercise their animals.

The most visible partnership is in athletics, with the building of a shared multiuse turf field for football and soccer at Anchor D Stadium. Anchor D Arena also serves as host to the Goodwell basketball teams for both practice and home games, and the athletic programs and physical education classes make ready use of the Noble Center on campus.

The most beneficial part of the partnerships is the Early College High School Dual Credit program. This program gives high school students the opportunity to begin college-level coursework as a high school sophomore. The student still gain the complete high school experience while being able to work toward graduating with an Associate of Science degree in General Studies with a focus in Education, STEM or Business.

"I am very proud of the partnership between Panhandle State and Goodwell Public Schools," said OPSU President, Dr. Tim Faltyn. "Our people have worked very hard to build and sustain these programs. We truly are stronger together than we could ever be apart."

The Barbara Lynch Community Partner award was presented to Panhandle State University for their amazing work on this partnership.

The award recognizes ongoing, collaborative processes to build understanding, guidance and active involvement in the education of children in the community, and is named in honor of Barbara Lynch, who served on the Tulsa Technology Center Board of Education as well as the Oklahoma State Schools Boards Association Board of Directors, and was avidly involved in community service and engagement. **P**

"We truly are stronger together than we could ever be apart."

— Dr. Tim Faltyn,
University President

CAMPUS CLASSROOMS SEE STUDENT-DRIVEN RENOVATIONS

Released by Panhandle State Campus Communications

As an institution that prides itself on continuously making strides forward, Panhandle State University has recently undergone a vast series of campus-wide renovations to improve its' environment for faculty, staff and students alike. Once the project is completed, funding will have allowed for \$900,000 worth of new furniture. This cost is split between \$600,000 of classroom furniture with a better functionality for students, and \$300,000 worth of co-curricular furniture.

Panhandle State Comptroller, Liz McMurphy, has been instrumental in the renovations, citing a multitude of revamps all across campus.

All classrooms now come equipped with chairs and tables with USB power capabilities, as well as a lectern for faculty use. Areas of classroom buildings and the library have now been re-designed as designated lounge spaces fit with sofas, chairs and coffee tables to help provide an inviting atmosphere.

The art labs were overhauled with new drafting tables, stools and storage furniture like lockers and shelving cubbies. "We have needed an update, and the new classroom furniture, lockers, and additional storage are amazing," said Brent Shoulders, Associate Professor of Art and Chair of the Art Department.

The athletics building also saw refurbishments in the form of a team meeting room furnished with theater-style seating.

In addition, campus dorm rooms have also been undergoing renovations, with 82 rooms completed thus far, with new furniture.

As part of the 2019 'Best Colleges to Work For' survey, Panhandle State took the initiative on revamping the furniture and classroom spaces to excel in the category of 'Teaching Environment,' as the university continues to work toward its' goal of making the national list of recognized institutions. **P**

Classroom desks are now equipped with built in USB plug-ins, and new tables and chairs have been added to the library.



Before (left) and after (right) of the newly refurbished classroom furniture in Hamilton Hall.



Freshman Beau Peterson competes in the Goat Tying event at the 2019 CNFR (left) and poses with her championship belt buckle after the win (below).



/ATHLETICS/

BEAU PETERSON TAKES NATIONAL TITLE IN 2019 CNFR

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

Oklahoma Panhandle State University freshman Beau Peterson (Council Grove, Kan.) etched her name in the Aggies' Rodeo history book by winning the Goat Tying national championship at the 2019 College National Finals Rodeo at the Casper Events Center. In all, OPSU had four team members competing in Saturday's finale of the week-long competition.

"It's a great feeling," Peterson said after finishing as the co-champ at the CNFR finale. "Just to have my hard work pay off! I've had so many people support me, it just made it more special."

In Saturday's short round in the finale of the CNFR, Peterson entered the round in third place overall, one full second behind the leader in the average. Needing a great effort to overcome the deficit, Peterson provided just that. Her time of 5.9 seconds matched her best round of the competition and vaulted her to the top of the leaderboard with a 25.1 average with two cowgirls still to compete.

The very next competitor, Mia Manzanares from NCAA I McNeese State, posted what ended up being the low time of the short round – 5.8 seconds – to place her in a deadlock with Peterson. Weber State's Emma Hodson, the leader entering Saturday's final, posted a time of 6.3 and

that left Peterson and Manzanares, a senior and defending national champion in Goat Tying, as co-national champions in 2019.

"Watching Beau achieve her goal of becoming a National Champion was something I will never forget," said Shelbie Rose, Assistant Women's Rodeo Coach. "Beau is a great competitor and she plays a vital role in this program. I can't wait to see what the rest of her career has to hold."

In the final team standings, the Aggie men finished seventh. The OPSU women were 10th. Peterson is OPSU's 19th individual CNFR event champion in the program's history. Peterson's title is also the first-ever in Goat Tying in the long and storied history of Panhandle State Rodeo.

"Beau has had a tremendous year," said Oklahoma Panhandle State University President, Dr. Tim Faltyn. "Her competitive spirit and talent earned her this National Championship, but it is her composure, teamwork, and positive attitude she had inside and outside the arena that I am proudest of."

Beau is currently entering into her sophomore year at Panhandle State and is working toward earning her degree in Biology. **P**

"I've had so many people support me, it just made it more special."

— Beau Peterson,
2019 CNFR National
Champion



Junior defender Marybel Garcia plays in the inaugural Panhandle State soccer game on August 24 at Anchor D Stadium.

/ATHLETICS/

OPSU DEBUTS MEN'S AND WOMEN'S 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 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 OPSU 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 OPSU, 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.

"Expectations are the seeds to success and I have high expectations for both these men because I believe they are going to do great things." He continued, "We've done a lot in the last 36 months to give people reasons to choose and support this university...this will give people reasons not just to come here, but to be a part of this family now, in the future and for generations to come... we are going to give them the best experience they ever had." Both teams will play their first home games on Saturday, August 24 (women- 6 p.m./men- 8 p.m.) versus Texas College. That will be the first official competition for the Aggies' men, while the women's squad has its first official match at Adams State (Colo.) University on August 18.

OPSU's teams will play their games on the turf of beautiful Carl Wooten Field at Anchor D Stadium, also home of the Aggies' football team. Community engagement was a major factor in the decision to bring both women's and men's soccer to OPSU. **P**

Freshman midfielder Francisco Ramirez helps his team notch the first win in the record books on August 27.





/ ATHLETICS /

MULCAHY PROMOTED TO FULL-TIME ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

Oklahoma Panhandle State University is proud to announce the promotion of Meghan Mulcahy as the university's full-time Athletic Director. Previously, Mulcahy had served as both the Athletic Director and the head softball coach.

University President, Dr. Tim Faltyn, announced Mulcahy's new role, commenting, "I am pleased to now have Meghan leading our athletics program on full-time basis." He continued, "Since taking the reins as the interim Athletic Director in April of 2017, she has demonstrated a vision and leadership ability that will continue to take Panhandle State athletics to new heights."

Mulcahy has exhibited her expertise in many facets of athletics, including guiding the program through its transition into the NAIA and Sooner Athletic Conference. Under her leadership as director, in the classroom, nine of the Panhandle State teams were recognized with SAC Scholar Team awards, accruing a 3.0 team GPA in conference-sponsored sports. In all, 196 student-athletes have earned a spot on the SAC Commissioner's Honor Roll (3.0 GPA or better) in the last two years.

Furthering her hand in team success, OPSU has seen big strides in achievement

In 2018-19, every NAIA-sponsored team for the Aggies either played in a Sooner Athletic post-season competition or played in a game to decide the SAC title.

As she steps into the full-time role of Athletic Director, the university will begin a search for a new head softball coach to continue the standard of success Mulcahy has already put into place. Mulcahy took over the softball program in 2012 and lead OPSU to its first-ever winning season in 2019, and garnered her 100th career-coaching win during this campaign. Her Aggies also reached the SAC tournament in both 2018 and 2019, producing Panhandle's first-ever NFCA All-American in 2018 (Jewell Lee) in the process. "There is no doubt that filling Meghan's shoes as a softball coach is a big task," said Dr. Faltyn. "But I have complete confidence that we will find a coach on the diamond that maintains the high bar she has set for our program."

Mulcahy commented, "I would like to thank Dr. Faltyn for this opportunity. Since day one it has been my goal to put Aggie Athletics on the map and now I am able to spend even more time carrying out that mission for Panhandle State." **P**



/ ATHLETICS /

BARTLEY TO HEAD VOLLEYBALL

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

Oklahoma Panhandle State University Athletics has announced that Shelby Bartley – the Aggies' assistant volleyball coach in 2018 – has been named as the interim head volleyball coach for the upcoming season.

"I am impressed with Coach Bartley's confidence and character as she steps up the head coach position," OPSU President Dr. Tim Faltyn said. "I'm told she was a major part of the leadership that made history last season and I am so grateful that she is committed to our current players, our recruits and the Panhandle State Family. The future is bright for volleyball at Panhandle. I'm looking forward to joining our fans, boosters and alumni as we support this program of

excellence." Bartley helped the Panhandle squad to its first-ever conference post-season play on record in 2018. The team ended their regular season with an overall record of 9-20 and going 7-13 in conference, accruing the most wins in a season as far back as records date.

Bartley reflected, "I look forward in continuing the building process of this program and compete to represent Panhandle Volleyball with pride and confidence."

Mulcahy commented, "Our main focus is providing our student-athletes and program with the best possible environment for success this season. With Shelby guiding the program, I think we have accomplished that." **P**



/ ATHLETICS /

KERR TO GUIDE AGGIE SOFTBALL

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

Oklahoma Panhandle State University has announced that veteran softball coach Chad Kerr has been named as the University's new Head Softball Coach.

Kerr replaces Meghan Mulcahy - who had served as the softball head coach since 2012 and Athletics Director since 2017 - before stepping aside from her coaching duties after the 2019 season to serve full-time as the A.D. in guiding the Aggies' intercollegiate programs.

"We welcome Coach Kerr to the Aggie Family," Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn said. "I look forward to him building on the great foundation for success established by Coach Mulcahy in the softball program. His philosophy of 'academics first' and creating a great experience for our student-athletes is what we want as core values for our athletic program."

Kerr brings seven seasons as a head college coach with him to OPSU, as well as an additional 12 years of various softball coaching positions to his credit. Most recently, Kerr was the head coach at NCAA Division II Lincoln (Mo.) University from 2016-18, taking 2019 off from college coaching to give private softball instruction.

Additionally, Kerr coached the 2015 season at NCAA Division II Alderson Broaddus (WV) University, leading the team to its first winning campaign in five years. From 2011-14, he was the head coach for OPSU's current Sooner Athletic Conference mates Central Christian University, moving the needle by taking a program with single-digit win totals to 16 wins in 2014 and amassing 17 all-conference players along the way.

"I am excited to have Coach Kerr take

over our softball program," Mulcahy stated. "He is going to be a person who fits the upward trend of all of our programs, but especially for softball. He is highly-organized and knowledgeable, while also having strong philosophies and values which will help our ladies grow as both players and individuals."

"I'm thrilled to have been chosen as the next leader of the OPSU Softball program and to carry on and build upon the terrific work Coach Mulcahy has done," Kerr explained. "Special thanks to Athletic Director Meghan Mulcahy, Assistant A.D. Vic Esparza, the rest of the search committee, along with OPSU President Dr. Tim Faltyn, for giving me this opportunity. I knew immediately during my on campus interview - meeting the other coaches and some of the players - this was the place for me." **P**



/ ATHLETICS /

LAIRD LEADS MENS BASKETBALL

Released by Panhandle State Sports Information

Oklahoma Panhandle State University Athletics is pleased to announce that veteran collegiate coach Mark Laird will be the Aggies' next Head Men's Basketball Coach. Laird brings a total of 14 years of college coaching expertise to Panhandle State, the most recent of which has been the past two seasons at fellow Sooner Athletic Conference-member Southwestern Christian University.

Laird has coached at every four-year collegiate affiliation - NAIA, NCAA I, II and III and spent three years at the high school level, as well, during his career.

"I am pleased to welcome Coach Laird to the Aggie Family," Panhandle State President Dr. Tim Faltyn said. "While we had several highly-qualified candidates to guide our men's basketball program, Coach Laird rose to the top due to his extensive coaching background and a career commitment to the student-athletes' academic and personal success. I believe those factors will ensure the tradition of excellence and continued upward direction of our program."

Laird said. "I want to thank Dr. Faltyn for the tremendous example of leadership and having a clear vision and direction for this campus and community. I would also like to thank Director of Athletics Meghan Mulcahy and Assistant A.D. Victor Esparza for believing in me enough to invite me to join this family. As a visitor, I have experienced the growing sense of excitement and pride that there is surrounding the entire athletic department here in recent years."

"We will be tough...we will be fun to watch...we will hold a high standard of excellence in everything we do." **P**

RANKED
#26

**BEST
COLLEGES**

& WORLD REPORT
U.S. News

REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES
WEST
2020

