

APRIL 2022

# Panhandle

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE UNIVERSITY

OPSU.edu



**ALL-AMERICAN  
EXCELLENCE**





## / PARTNERSHIPS /

# GUYMON INDUSTRIAL FOUNDATION RECEIVES BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARD

Oklahoma Panhandle State University and the Guymon Industrial Foundation's partnership began in 2021 when the Foundation donated 12 acres in the Guymon Industrial Park to OPSU for the Panhandle Technical Education Center. The Center is a joint collaboration with High Plains Technology Center (HPTC) and Guymon Public Schools supported by a \$1.5 million grant from the United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

On March 9th, twenty-six business and higher education partnerships throughout the state of Oklahoma were recognized as innovative collaborations that further the education of Oklahoma's workforce. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Regents Business Partnership Excellence Award is designed to highlight successful partnerships between higher education institutions and businesses and to further cultivate the higher learning environment through State Regents' Economic Development Grants.

Guymon Industrial Foundation Board Member, Kim Peterson commented, "The Partnership between OPSU and The Guymon Industrial Foundation is a great two-way street. Guymon benefits from the University and the educational opportunities they provide for businesses and industry. OPSU benefits because of the job opportunities Guymon has for their graduates. Thanks to OPSU for honoring Guymon with this recognition."

Within the partnership between OPSU and the Guymon Industrial Foundation, students can earn their welding certificate from HPTC while also taking classes at OPSU to earn credit toward an associate and bachelor's degree. This project addresses the direct need for a highly skilled, technical workforce in the panhandle region and will have a direct impact on the region's economic development and the industries' ability to expand its operations.

Interim President Dr. Ryan Blanton stated, "This partnership has been instrumental in helping us address the direct need for a highly-skilled, technical workforce in our region and this will have a direct impact on our region's economic development and our industries ability to expand their operations."

"Our colleges and universities continue to collaborate successfully with public, private and nonprofit partners to strengthen economic and workforce development across our state," said Chancellor Allison D. Garrett. "The State Regents and I are proud to celebrate the positive impact of these partnerships as we all work together to build the skilled workforce required to make Oklahoma competitive on a global stage." **P**

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/ CAMPUS /

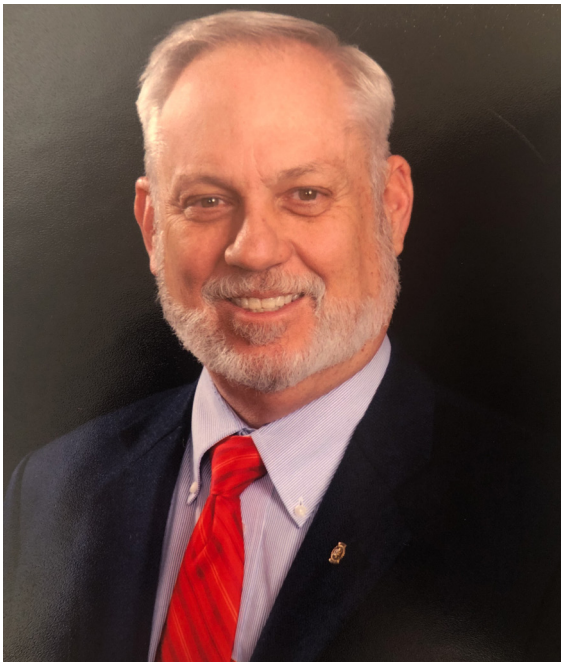
# EVENTS ON CAMPUS & IN THE COMMUNITY











“We are honored to have Judge Kincannon as the 2022 Commencement speaker. His story and leadership are things that I believe will inspire this graduating class.”

— Dr. Ryan Blanton,  
Interim President

/ ALUMNI /

## JUDGE RONALD KINCANNON SELECTED AS THE 2022 COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM SPEAKER

Judge Ronald Kincannon is an Oklahoma Panhandle native, graduating from Plainview High School. He then went on to graduate from Panhandle State in 1970. Kincannon received a Bachelor Science Degree in Psychology with a minor in Math and Military Science. After being commissioned as a Military Intelligence officer in the U.S. Army, he served on active duty during 1971-72 then entered The Army Reserves. While in The Army Reserve, he returned to the Panhandle and served 6-years as a certified State Peace Officer working as a Probation and Parole officer throughout the Panhandle. He transferred to Oklahoma County, after being accepted into law school at Oklahoma City University.

Upon becoming licensed to practice law in the State of Oklahoma, he and his family returned to Cimarron County. He was in private practice for 10-years before being elected to serve as the Associate District Judge in Cimarron County. During his 24-year judicial career, he served in Cimarron County, having frequent assignments in Texas County, where he served as a settlement, criminal docket, and trial judge. Before retirement, Kincannon received professional recognition from the Oklahoma Bar Association, receiving the OBA's Outstanding Pro Bono Service award in 1991 and Award for Judicial Excellence in 2018. Since retiring from the bench in December of 2018, Kincannon continues to serve as an active retired judge by appointment of the Chief Justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Throughout his career, Kincannon maintained contact with his alma matter and many of his college classmates. Along the way, he taught as an adjunct business law professor in the early 1990s, serve on the board of No Man's Land Historical Society for over 30-years, and served on the OPSU Advisory Council during the tenure of Dr. Bryant. Years after serving as a trial judge in a large class action case that was tried by a Texas County jury, Kincannon was charged with distributing a large amount of unclaimed funds resulting from that verdict. The Cy Pres award was divided between programs, one of which was OPSU's Panhandle Promise. The Panhandle Promise Scholarship program allows Education students to remove the financial barrier and offer incentive for residents to pursue classroom teacher degrees in exchange for a two-year commitment to teach in an Oklahoma panhandle public school.

As OPSU graduates, both Kincannon and his wife, Betty, continue to support youth and community programs within their community actively. Kincannon has served a stint as a Boy Scout Master, as Rotary International District Governor, as a founding member of the Cimarron County Youth Coalition, and for more than a decade served as co-chair of the Cimarron County Stock Show.

Kincannon places his highest priority upon his faith, his country, and his family, with particular emphasis on the Kincannon's 2-grandchildren: Brynna and Logan.

Interim President Dr. Ryan Blanton stated, “We are honored to have Judge Kincannon as the 2022 Commencement speaker. His story and leadership are things that I believe will inspire this graduating class.” **P**



“ECHS has opened a world of opportunities for me. Being involved with others in a college environment has pushed me as a student. I am ahead of the curve thanks to the ECHS Program.”

— Hunter Harris,  
Current ECHS Student



/ STUDENT /

## STUDENTS SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS IN EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Early College High School Program at Oklahoma Panhandle State currently has 24 students enrolled; 20 students from Guymon High and 4 from Goodwell High.

This program allows exceptionally prepared rising high school sophomore students to begin college coursework on a path to finishing an associate's degree while they complete their high school diploma.

Seven out of the 24 students will be graduating in May with not only their High School diplomas, but also Associate Degrees at Panhandle State.

The Academic Resource Center is a helping hand to these students during their time in the ECHS program if they should have any academic needs.

Sarah Green, Dean of the Academic Resource Center commented, “Those kids continually outperform their peers and are exceptional scholars. It is an exciting opportunity for area kids and we are hopeful to see it continue to grow.”

Current ECHS student Hunter Harris from Guymon High School placed at the State Leadership Conference for Panhandle State Phi Beta Lambda Collegiate Business Club. Harris placed first in Help Desk and second place in Computer Concepts. Harris is set to graduate with his Bachelor's degree in the Spring of 2024.

“ECHS has opened a world of opportunities for me. Being involved with others in a college environment has pushed me as a student. I am ahead of the curve thanks to the ECHS Program,” Harris continued, “Competing at the State Conference with PBL allowed me to display my talents with my fellow students.”

One of the first graduates out of the Early College High School Program, Karson Neville, graduated in 2021 from Hooker High School. He will graduate this spring from Panhandle State with a Bachelor's of Science in Biological Science with honors.

“I wasn't sure what I wanted to do or who I wanted to be when I started the ECHS program. I just wanted to push myself academically. I never knew that one decision would open so many doors and lead me to where I am today,” Neville continued, “I'm proof that if you take advantage of the opportunities presented to you and believe in yourself, anything is possible. I'm very thankful for my family and friends and everyone else who has helped me, and above all, I thank God for everything. He has guided me every step of the way throughout my journey.”

After graduating, Karson plans to apply for Dental School. He is currently working as a Dental Assistant at Dr. Phipps office in Guymon.

From a parent's viewpoint, Heather Neville stated, “I am beyond thankful for OPSU, the ECHS program, and the encouragement Karson has received along the way. The goals Karson has achieved in such a short amount of time is more than I could of imagined.”

Dr. Julie Dinger, Provost, stated, “I am so proud of the dedication and hard work these students put into their study. They are top scholars who excel in their college and high school courses. These students are among the best and brightest in our state and I look forward to good things to come as this program continues to build pathways to college degrees now and in the future for our university and our region.” **P**





/ STAFF /

## ASHLEE BRUNER

Born and raised in Hooker, Oklahoma, Ashlee Bruner is an essential part of the Business Office at Panhandle State. She serves as the Bursar and also does jobs for the Accountant I position.

"Ashlee is hardworking, dependable, and always willing to assist our students, faculty, and staff. She has accomplished so much in her first year, and I am excited to see her grow," said Tiffany Murley, Comptroller.

Bruner graduated from Hooker High School and then pursued a major in Agribusiness at Panhandle State, graduating in the class of 2020.

When talking about what led her to Panhandle state, Bruner said she came to campus her senior year of college. She had taken a break between junior and senior year and decided she wanted to be closer to her family and finish her degree. Panhandle State seemed like the perfect fit to finish her degree as it is in Agriculture.

Bruner's favorite things about Panhandle State are that everyone is willing to help whenever you need it and that it is very family-oriented.

Most of her free time is spent hanging out with family and friends. She has three nephews and three nieces who love playing video games with her. She is known as the fun aunt who lets the kids have whatever they want. In her spare time, when she's not working or hanging with her nieces and nephews, she likes to take her two dogs, Okie and Tex, on walks and go shopping. She enjoys the beach and having movie nights. **P**



/ STUDENT /

## WHITNEY DAVIS

Senior Whitney Davis is from Johnson, Kansas, but has her eyes set on bigger places. Upon graduating from Panhandle State, Whitney will be moving to Orlando, Florida, to participate in the Disney College Program at Walt Disney World.

"Whitney is an excellent student worker in the Communications Department. Her talent excels beyond an easel and a camera. She is always willing to help with whatever I ask of her. She has been the running force behind the University Tik-Tok account and has helped with several events across campus," said Natasha Eidson, Director of Communications.

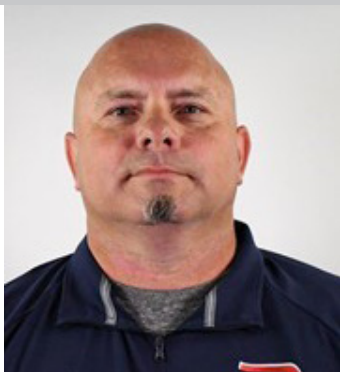
Davis will graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in Photography. She will also be graduating with honors, Magna Cum Laude. She is the Cheer Team Captain and is also Vice-President of the Images Art Club.

Being close to home is what drew Davis into coming to Panhandle State. "The art department was another reason I chose to come to Panhandle because of how great the department was and how it made this campus feel like a family," she said.

Among the many things Davis accounts for being her favorites at Panhandle State, she listed two that was top on her list. "The lifelong friendships I have made with so many people, and how everyone is so quick to lend a helping hand no matter what."

Her hobbies primarily include anything to do with art. "I have been an artist my whole life, and I am very excited to graduate as a first-generation student being able to pursue my passions." **P**





/ FACULTY /

BRIAN **LANKFORD**

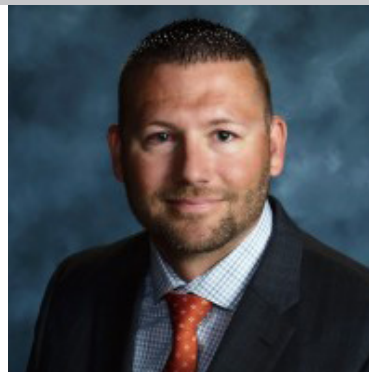
Raised in Liberal, Kansas, Brian Lankford finished his high school years in Tyrone, Oklahoma. After high school, he graduated with a Master’s in Sports Medicine in 1996. Lankford teaches first aid, care and prevention, and an internship class each semester. Lankford’s official title is the Head Athletic Trainer.

Department Head of Health and Physical Education, Stacy Nordquist commented, “Brian is a rare part-time instructor who teaches all year (fall and spring semesters and summer). His classes are in high demand and fill up fast. Brian has done an excellent job balancing his athletic training duties and teaching duties. He is an invaluable faculty member of the Health and Physical Education department.”

Lankford thanks two individuals for helping him become a full-time Aggie: Wayne Stewart and Jerry Olson. “Wayne had me teach some night classes, and Jerry had me fill in when the other trainer was away. After two years, I decided to do it full time.”

One of Lankford’s favorite things about Panhandle State is the students. He meets students from all over the world and loves getting to know them and their cultural dynamics.

Lankford enjoys watching conspiracy theories and YouTube. He learns by asking multiple questions, and he enjoys anything with comedy-related topics. If he is not working, he is more than likely exercising or is at jujitsu. Lankford has four children that he is incredibly proud of. **P**



/ ALUMNI /

ANDY **BROWN**

Originally from Keyes, Oklahoma, Andy Brown graduated from Panhandle State in 2005 with a Bachelor’s of Science degree majoring in Health and Physical Education. He credits Panhandle State for his great educational experience and for being the most affordable university in the State of Oklahoma.

“I attended Panhandle State because it was close to home and had a small college atmosphere, and those were two things I was looking for when choosing a college. I also had the opportunity to play basketball for Coach Terry and run on the cross country team,” Brown stated.

Brown is now the Athletic Director at Guymon High School. Along with his Athletic Director duties, Brown also coaches the boy’s and girl’s high school cross country teams. Under his leadership, the boy’s team won their 5th State Championship since 2015. He was also named the Oklahoma Cross Country and Track Coaches Association Coach of the Year in 2021 for the boys team.

“My favorite thing about Panhandle State was the smaller class sizes and friendly professors,” Brown continued, “OPSU has done a great job of updating facilities, recruiting future students, and promoting the college and its athletic programs.”

Brown enjoys fly fishing, hiking, and camping in the mountains with his wife and kids during his spare time. “I married my wife Claudia in 2017, and we have two amazing children. Jasmine and Zab,” he said. **P**

## Alumni Ambassador Hall of Fame Induction



Dr. Tim Faltyn



Dr. Russell Edenborough

April 23rd, 2022

Student Union Ballroom at 5pm



“We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of our alumni and supporters of Panhandle State. These inductees have done great things for the University, the Alumni Association, and the community.”

— Dr. Ryan Blanton,  
Interim President

/ ALUMNI /

# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES 2022 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

The Panhandle State Association of Alumni and Friends is excited to announce the selection of the 2022 Alumni Ambassador Hall of Fame Inductees, Dr. Russell Edenborough and Dr. Tim Faltyn. The induction ceremony will be held on April 23rd in the Student Union Ballroom.


Alumni Association President Diane Murphey said, “I am excited to be part of the Alumni Association’s recognition of the contributions of Dr. Russell Edenborough and Dr. Tim Faltyn to the legacy of Panhandle State with their induction into the Alumni Ambassador Hall of Fame.”

Dr. Russell Edenborough graduated from Panhandle State in 1966 with a bachelor’s in Business Administration. He went on to receive his master’s in 1967 and doctorate in 1975 from Oklahoma State University. Dr. Edenborough became a certified public accountant in 1975. In that same year, he became a partner of Edenborough & Edenborough, which he still serves at in Goodwell today. Dr. Edenborough continued to give back to the university by becoming a faculty member in 1968. In his 28 years at Panhandle State, he served as professor, head of the accounting department, and Dean of Business. He was awarded the Accounting Instructor of the Year from the Oklahoma Society of CPAs in 1992.

Dr. Edenborough has been an active member of the Panhandle State Foundation Board of Directors since 1995. He has been married to Judy for 59 years, and they have two sons, Rusty and Roger. Rusty married his wife, Julie, and Roger married Shelley, and together have given Russell and Judy seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

He is joined in the 2022 Hall of Fame induction by Dr. Tim Faltyn, who served as Panhandle State’s 15th President for five years. As the fourth generation of a ranching family and first-generation college graduate, Dr. Faltyn has received degrees from Central New Mexico, the University of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, and post-doctoral training at Harvard University.

During his time as President, Dr. Faltyn helped OPSU achieve record-setting community support and external funding. While he counts his time on campus teaching American Government in the classroom among his favorite moments, he is recognized for being instrumental in helping position Panhandle State in the top 10 of multiple national rankings, most notably the U.S. News and World Report, Top 5 Public Colleges in the Western Region. Faltyn is a Carnegie US Professor of the Year Award winner and was recently inducted into the Oklahoma Higher Education Heritage Society Hall of Fame. Dr. Faltyn and his wife, Dr. Kelly Faltyn, have two sons, Max and Rex. When they are not busy working, you can find the family saddling up to ride horses or enjoying the outdoors.

OPSU Interim President, Dr. Ryan Blanton commented, “We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of our alumni and supporters of Panhandle State. These inductees have done great things for the University, the Alumni Association, and the community.” 





/ STUDENT /

## 3RD ANNUAL AGGIE CONNECTIONS EVENT IS A SUCCESS

The 3rd Annual Aggie Connections event was a great success, with 25 businesses and schools present. The Academic Records Center hosted the event on April 11th in McKee Library with 60 students who attended and were able to network.

Dean of the Academic Resource Center Sarah Green commented, "This is one of my favorite events here at OPSU. It is an opportunity for our upcoming graduates to get a chance to visit with area business professionals. They gain valuable insights, and many of them have walked away with jobs over the years. It is pretty special to get to be part of that."

Senior Kyle Babb commented, "The Aggie Connections event provided me with several huge opportunities to present my personality and my skills to employers from all across the area. It lets me practice invaluable social skills to connect with great individuals."

"I got to practice approaching business professionals in a great environment. I'm thankful OPSU gives me the opportunity to find successes before I walk the stage," said Senior Kylie Moore.

The Academic Resource Center hopes they can continue to improve the event each year. The goal is to make this a tradition that seniors, alumni, and businesses look forward to attending.

"I'm so grateful for the support from OPSU as a whole and our community businesses. We have the best students here, and I'm glad we can provide them this opportunity," stated MaKenZe Anderson, Academic Resource Center Coordinator. **P**

/ STUDENT /

## OPSU PBL DOMINATES AT STATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Oklahoma Panhandle State University Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) members participated in the State Leadership Conference (SLC) on March 26 at Mid-American Christian University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

College of Business and Technology Dean Davin Winger commented, "I am proud of our PBL students. They inspire me, and it is a blessing to teach them. I am also thankful for their advisors Mrs. Kim Smith and Dr. Sara Hitch for their dedication, as well as going the extra mile for their students, PBL, and Panhandle State."

OPSU PBL students earned twelve state championships, four second-place finishes, and one third-place finish.

Haylee Behne took first place in Business Decision Making and second place in Business Communication. Hunter Harris took first place in Help Desk and second place in Computer Concepts. Julie Johnson took first place in Computer Concepts and first place in Programming Concepts. Jayden Valdez took first place in Cyber Security. Loren Breon took third place in Cyber Security, first place in Information Management, and first place in Public Speaking. Shalom Ngalaba took first place in Global Analysis & Decision Making, first place in Client Service, and first place in Business Ethics. Catarina Tum Garcia took second place in Microeconomics. Manuel Medina took second place in Networking Concepts. Jesus Mesta took first place in Impromptu Speaking. The team of Loren Breon and Jayden Valdez took first place in Network Design.

Hunter Harris reflected, "Competing at the State Conference with PBL allowed me to display my talents with my fellow students."

Manuel Medina, OPSU PBL Treasurer commented, "I am proud to represent OPSU PBL at State Leadership Conference. It was an awesome event full of fun, competitions, networking, leadership workshops, and more. The competition results are proof that Success Starts with OPSU PBL, and with the faculty from OPSU's College of Business and Technology. We are successful because of the lessons they teach us, and because of the work we do to learn from them. I cannot wait to see what happens at Nationals!"

Nine students qualified for the National Leadership Conference and National Competitions set for Chicago, Illinois in June 2022. **P**



/ATHLETICS/

## PANHANDLE STATE SOFTBALL CLOSES IN ON TOP 25

Oklahoma Panhandle State softball inches closer to being among the top-25 softball teams in the NAIA. Receiving 8 votes in the third NAIA Coaches Poll of the season.

Head Coach Marc Benjamin is proud of the atmosphere the team has built and all the hard work they've put in on the season. "It's always good to see all the hard work the team has put in to be appreciated. Day in and day out these girls give it their all for this team and I couldn't ask for anything more. Handing #2 Oklahoma City their only loss of the season really lit a fire under the team and reaching the top 25 is definitely within our grasp."

The 2022 Aggie softball team came out red-hot to start the season. Winning eight of their first ten games of the season. Not shying away against ranked teams so far, as they have beaten both the 2nd nationally ranked Oklahoma City Stars and the sixth ranked Columbia College (Mo.) Cougars.

The Aggies are poised for a record-setting year in the Sooner Athletic Conference, sitting at 20-7 nearly halfway through the season. As a team, the Aggies are on pace to pass the most wins in a season by any Aggie team (30) set in 2019. Panhandle State has become one of the top-five production teams in the conference. Ranking second in team batting average (.339), fifth in team ERA (3.71), and second in fielding percentage (.959).

A significant part of the Aggies' success has come from the consistency they have built under Head Coach Marc Benjamin and Assistant Coach Jackie Sanchez. A starting lineup that boasts eight upperclassmen and a single freshman. Seniors Kayli Grove and Kinzie Jones have been offensive leaders for the Aggies since the start of the season. Freshman Haley Saur has been a welcomed addition to the Aggie lineup as she makes her case for freshman of the year.

Despite the Aggie offense making use of eight upperclassman experience, the pitching staff has been exceptional with only one. Junior Sarah Conley has been lights out on the mound, striking out the second-most in the Sooner Athletic Conference (85) so far in the 2022 season. Although sophomore Kenley Yocom does not make as much use of the strikeout in her outings she has been just as effective. Throwing two complete-game shutouts so far this season. Freshman Rylin Baker and Isabel Ray have also been instrumental in the Aggies' success. Baker currently holds the team-leading ERA (2.15) and win percentage (100%). **P**





/ATHLETICS/

## LIAM PRITCHARD NAMED NAIA ALL-AMERICAN

Oklahoma Panhandle State's own men's soccer freshman of the year and first-team All-SAC Liam Pritchard has been named a 2021 NAIA Men's Soccer All-American Honorable Mention. Being one of five players from the Sooner Athletic Conference to make the list. All-Americans are chosen from the NAIA All-America committee consisting of the NAIA Men's Soccer Coaches Association Executive Committee, the National Championship Games Committee, and four men's soccer coaches.

Men's Soccer Coach Bailey Guffin commented, "We're so proud of Liam and what he was able to accomplish this Fall. A newcomer making this type of impact has made the whole University excited for what he can do in the future. Liam not only does a great job on the field, but he plays a huge role in our team culture as well. Liam constantly challenges the people around him and has shown us we can push boundaries as a soccer program in such a competitive conference. He's been the complete student athlete for Men's soccer which makes him fully deserving of this honor."

Pritchard proved to be the crux for the Aggies throughout the season as they finished with a 10-3-3 record. The best record since soccer started at Oklahoma Panhandle State in 2019. Pritchard's play proved him to be not only one of the top players in the conference but also a top player in the nation for NAIA. Finishing the season with nine goals, nine assists, and twenty-seven points. Ranking 6th in the conference for points and tied for fourth in game-winning goals. When compared to national players, Pritchard ranks 33rd in assists, 71st in points, and 121st in total goals.

Liam stated, "I came to the US without really knowing how it would be for me in terms of school and soccer as it can be explained to you, but it's different to experience it. I came here in hopes to achieve a degree and also play soccer to my best ability. A lot of my success is due to my preparation before coming here, but when you get here the facilities and coaches are the reason you have the opportunity to succeed; for me it was the best season I've had in terms of soccer. I was unsure of how I had done until my conference awards came through and then of course the shock to me was the All-American honorable mention and for me, that boosted my confidence to another level as I knew my hard work had payed off. It is a status which runs highly in the US and so for me I had achieved the best I could for my first season." **P**



/ATHLETICS/

## AGGIES FINISH JO MEAKER CLASSIC

Aggie track and field are steadily improving their marks as the season continues. The men's and women's track teams traveled to West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas to compete in the Joe Meaker Classic. Both days started off with a tension as Quentin Fankhouser began to compete in the Aggies first decathlon.

In Friday's half of the decathlon competition, 9 decathletes took on 5 events including the 100m dash, long jump, shot put, high jump, and 400m dash. After a strenuous day Quentin collect 2,700 points to go into day 2 on Saturday. Saturday started with the decathlon again as Fankhouser competed in the 110 hurdles, discus, pole vault, javelin, and 1500m run where the Aggie decathlete set many PRs and finished his first decathlon. Although this was Quentin's first decathlon, he finished just shy of the top 15 NAIA men in the nation.

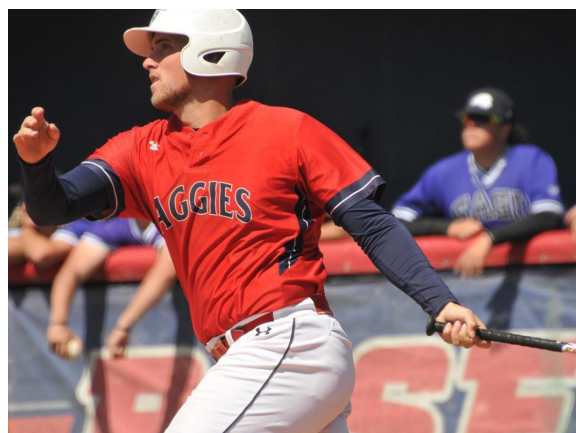
This was not the only Aggie to cut time and make an appearance at West Texas this weekend, Wille McCline set two PRs on Saturday in the 100m and 200m dashes.

Four young men that had never run relays, to four successful runners competing at the highest level every weekend for a chance to make a name for themselves.

Aggie track and field keeps gaining momentum and making strides to be top competitors every weekend. **P**

/ATHLETICS/

## AGGIE BASEBALL WIN SECOND CONFERENCE SERIES



The Oklahoma Panhandle State baseball team secured their second conference series win on the road against the Central Christian Tigers.

Head Coach Shawn Joy knows the importance of not only winning but winning on the road. "Winning a series is always the goal and we accomplished that. Going forward we need to play better baseball if we want to accomplish our goals."

After the weather threatened their series, the Aggies and Tigers hit the diamond for a late afternoon double-header. The series opener had all the characteristics of the games the Aggies struggled in. Sloppy play at the plate and on the field doomed the chances for an Aggie comeback in the 13-9 loss.

The last game of the double-header saw a more focused and detail-oriented Aggie team between the lines. Outhitting and outscoring themselves from game one. Three Aggies would have at least two hits in the game and eight of the nine starters would see the basepaths.

A historic season so far for numerous Aggies. Ethan Hunt has tied the Panhandle State program record for single-season home runs (11) that was previously set in 11972 by Tom Ward. Red hot Manrique Mora is also inching closer to history as he has now reached safely in eighteen consecutive games. One game away from tying the record and two away from setting a new one.

The series finale posed a challenge for the Aggies as the pitching rotation had been disrupted early on in the week. However, they would rise to the occasion and secure their second conference series victory in a seven-inning run-rule, 15-5. **P**



/COMMUNITY/

## OPSU ATHLETICS CELEBRATES SPRING FLING GALA



The Oklahoma Panhandle State University Aggie Athletic Department hosted the first annual Spring Fling Gala on March 26th at Anchor D. Arena. The evening was an opportunity for the athletic department to thank all the supporters. Guests were greeted by student-athletes, enjoyed the live band, and catered dinner.

Athletic Director Victor Esparza shared, "We are more than thankful that our Aggie supporters attended our first annual Spring Fling Gala. We are grateful that so many of you so generously support us in many ways. Each makes a difference in our Aggie Student-Athletes' lives; we are looking forward to growing this impact in the months to come."

The OPSU Spring Fling featured the Big G and the Trade winds, a jazz band based in Amarillo, Texas. Desperados Catering served the Aggie guests, also based in Amarillo, Texas. Lastly, the Pub on the Bricks from Guymon, Oklahoma, served the beverages to over 125 guests.

The night was full of great music, a delicious meal, and drinks. In addition, the guests had the opportunity to win door prizes such as Panhandle State gear and multiple 50" flat-screen televisions and more.

Interim President Dr. Ryan Blanton commented, "The Athletics Department has shown us time and time again how successful they can be not only on the court or in the field, but also with our donors and within the community. I am proud of Victor Esparza and his team for putting on such a great event." **P**



/ATHLETICS/

## OPSU RODEO CONTINUES TO BRING THE HEAT

Panhandle State brought the heat at Southwestern Oklahoma State University's rodeo winning both Men's and Women's All-Around titles, winning the women's team and men's team finishing third.

Mckenna Brennan, junior, has been on fire this spring making every run count. She won the Women's All-Around for the weekend winning the Goat Tying average and placing second overall in the Breakaway.

Ean Price, a senior, grabbed the Men's All-Around title for placing in the Saddle Bronc Riding and Steer Wrestling. In the Saddle Bronc Riding, the Aggies came to win for the weekend. Senior, Ira Dickinson won the long round marking a 76-point ride, and junior, Cade Bell, a point behind him placed second. Price and senior, Kelly Murnion, placed seventh and eighth respectively while Kody Cavender snuck into tenth for a second horse. Price marked the highest of the weekend with 82-points to win the short go while Dickinson made a solid ride to place third. Dickinson won the average with Price placing second overall. Bell hung on to make the whistle to place sixth in the round and fifth in the average while Murnion fell short of the buzzer to get no score.

Senior, TJ Schmidt, kept on his roll from this spring winning the long round of the Bull Riding with an 80-point ride. He failed to make the whistle in the short go which left him fourth in the average.

As the season starts rounding out, the cowboys and cowgirls continue to push forward with hopes of going to Casper, Wyoming in June for the College National Finals Rodeo. **P**



# 2022 COMMENCEMENT

**MAY 13, 2022  
9:00 AM  
ANCHOR D STADIUM**

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