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Panhandle

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**CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS OF 2022**



“We look forward to supporting her as President, and we are confident OPSU will maintain continuity and momentum under her leadership as it continues to provide an attractive higher education opportunity for the Panhandle region.

— Dr. Trudy Milner,
A & M Board Chair

/UNIVERSITY/

DR. JULIE DINGER SELECTED AS NEXT PRESIDENT OF OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE UNIVERSITY

The A&M Board of Regents has announced the appointment of Dr. Julie Dinger as the next President of Oklahoma Panhandle State University. Dr. Dinger has served as Provost and Chief Academic Officer at OPSU since 2017. During her tenure the university has undergone tremendous growth in enrollment and recognition as Oklahoma’s first and only Public Hispanic Serving Institution. Improved retention and graduation rates together with innovative programs have contributed to several programmatic national rankings and recognition by US News and World Report at the #5 Top Public College in the Regional Colleges West for 2022.

Dr. Dinger was born and raised in Oklahoma where she received her bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees in Sociology from the University of Oklahoma. She is an active member of the Higher Learning Commission Peer Corps as an Evaluator and teaches courses in Sociology during her free time.

A proud citizen of the Osage Nation, Dr. Dinger is committed to promoting access, equity, inclusion, and success in higher education, especially for those from underserved backgrounds. Prior to her service at Panhandle State, Dr. Dinger served as Vice President of Academic Affairs for Connors State College, a Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution.

Dr. Trudy Milner, A&M Board Chair commented, “The A&M Regents are pleased to present Dr. Dinger as our next OPSU President. Her leadership as Provost has contributed to the success of OPSU, as enrollment has remained steady even during the pandemic. We look forward to supporting her as President, and we are confident OPSU will maintain continuity and momentum under her leadership as it continues to provide an attractive higher education opportunity for the Panhandle region.”

Dr. Dinger will start on July 1, 2022. She succeeds Dr. Tim Faltyn who resigned from the Presidency on December 31, 2021, to accept a position with another higher education institution in Oklahoma.

The announcement follows a six-month national search by the Regents that began with the formation of a diverse search committee consisting of OPSU administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community leaders. **P**

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Dr. Julie Dinger — Provost

Liz McMurphy — Vice President of Fiscal Affairs

PANHANDLE MAGAZINE

Natasha Eidson — Director of Campus Communications

Chyanna Black — Director of Alumni Relations

PHOTOGRAPHERS

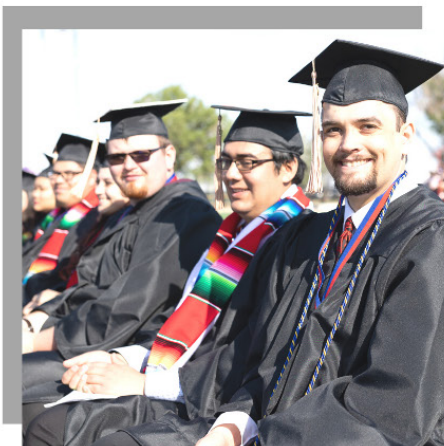
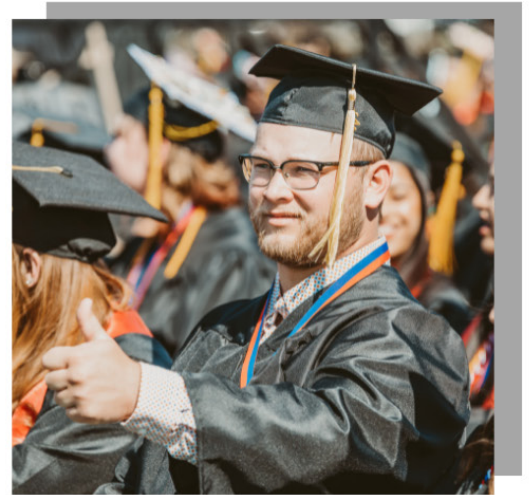
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Ray — Joshua Ngalaba — Felipe Covarrubia — Chase Davis

Congratulations



Class of 2022





/ UNIVERSITY /

THREE ACADEMIC LEADERS ANNOUNCE DEPARTURE AFTER COMBINED 42 YEARS

Three of Panhandle State's academic leaders are transitioning into new seasons in their lives. Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Jared Bates, Dean Davin Winger, and Dean Shawna Tucker announced their departures in May.

Dr. Jared Bates was named Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs in January 2022. Before this position, he served as an Assistant Professor and Department Head of Animal Science for the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing. Bates served at Panhandle State for roughly 3 years.

Although Dr. Bates's time at Panhandle State was short, he made a genuine impact on the students and the partnerships outside of the University.

Davin Winger took the reins as Dean of the College of Business and Technology in July 2017. He was an Assistant Professor teaching finance, economics, and small business management courses for ten years prior to being named Dean.

Winger was the faculty advisor for the Phi Beta Lambda business club at Panhandle State since 2009, when the club was reactivated. He and Dr. Sara Hitch helped many students see the promise of their potential by taking them to State and National Leadership conferences all across the United States.

Winger retires from Panhandle State on June 30th with 15 years of service to the University. His plan during retirement is to rest and relax.

Shawna Tucker stepped down from her position as Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing to focus on teaching. Tucker took the role of Dean in July of 2018 with the goal of helping the COASN be even more successful. Prior to Dean, Tucker taught Mathematics at Panhandle State for 20 years and had served as the Department Chair of Mathematics and Physics for eight years.

Tucker was a part of the transition to consolidate the five academic schools into three, bringing about the COASN. During her time as Dean, Tucker focused on strengthening existing professional partnerships and forming new ones. The RN to BSN is just one of the many programs that thrived tremendously under her leadership.

Tucker plans to continue as a faculty member teaching her true passion, Mathematics. She intends to enjoy her daughter's last year at home since this upcoming semester will start her senior year at Elkhart.

Interim President Dr. Ryan Blanton stated, "With over 40 years of combined experience in higher education, these three individuals have done so much for Panhandle State. We wish them the best with their future endeavors." **P**



HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



/ UNIVERSITY /

DR. DINGER SELECTED FOR THE FOURTH COHORT OF LA ACADEMIA DE LIDERAZGO OF THE HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Dr. Julie Dinger has been selected for the Fourth Cohort of La Academia de Liderazgo of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). La Academia is a one year program to prepare the next generation of culturally diverse leaders for executive and senior positions in higher education.

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities represents more than 500 colleges and universities committed to Hispanic higher education success in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Latin America, Spain and U.S. school districts. The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities fulfills its mission by promoting the development of member colleges and universities; improving access to and the quality of post-secondary educational opportunities for Hispanic students; and meeting the needs of business, industry and government through the development and sharing of resources, information and expertise.

Dr. Dinger stated, "I am honored that the Leadership Team of La Academia chose me for this opportunity, I am thankful to be allowed to learn and grow within La Academia. I look forward to continuing to build the already strong reputation of OPSU as Oklahoma's first and only public HSI at the national and international level."

La Academia is designed to increase the number of talented individuals who aspire to leadership positions of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Fellows selected for the program participate in an array of leadership development activities that will not only prepare them for leadership roles in the full spectrum of institutions of higher learning but will especially sensitize and mold them for leadership positions within HSIs.

Valentina Allen, Interim Dean of Student Services and Director of El Centro, OPSU's Hispanic Student Center, said, "I am very proud to have Dr. Dinger represent our institution and our community in this program. The HACU La Academia is always a very competitive process, in which those who show the most promise as leaders in Hispanic Serving Institutions are selected. Dr. Dinger has been instrumental the last five years in the efforts of serving our community and developing resources for our Hispanic youth. The Hispanic Student Center (El Centro) stands alongside Dr. Dinger as she continues to grow and develop as a leader for our institution. Dr. Dinger es familia, y como una familia, la vamos a soportar. We are very excited for the future!"

Dr. Dinger will participate in a holistic curriculum that emphasizes the fundamentals of leadership and current critical issues for Hispanic Serving Institutions as well as international relations. Sessions begin this fall and will culminate in the summer of 2023. **P**



/ COMMUNITY /

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING HOSTED BY PANHANDLE STATE

OPSU Police Department hosts practical tactics training for law enforcement on the OPSU campus for the next two weeks. The local law enforcement agencies that attended the first training day were Tyrone Police Department, Boise City Police Department, Hooker Police Department, Goodwell Police Department, Guymon Public Schools Police Department, and the Golden Mesa Casino Security Team.

OPSU Police Chief Andy Ramirez commented, "Better trained officers are better for our communities, and effective practical training makes officers safer, more competent, more effective, and less likely to be injured while simultaneously limiting liability and incidents where officers may be accused of excessive tactics or force. A well-trained officer feels safer and better equipped, and informed in high-stress situations. This training focuses on practical, effective tactics to ensure the safety of the officer as well as the safety and well-being of an arrested person. The officers also receive report writing and articulation training to better inform the public ensuring better communication between law enforcement and the communities they serve."

OPSU Police Chief Andy Ramirez has been a defensive tactics instructor for seven years and specializes in dynamic scenario-based training.

"Safety is absolutely critical for our community, I am grateful for the dedication of these law enforcement professionals to protecting those we serve. Chief Andy Ramirez is doing a great job connecting OPSU to our partner communities and building our relationships to promote safety and excellence," stated Provost Dr. Julie Dinger.

OPSU Police Department also co-hosted a patrol K-9 training today with the District 1 District Attorney Narcotics Taskforce and the Guymon Police Department.

Goodwell Police Chief Gustavo Ramirez stated, "We're glad to help out our local law enforcement partners by providing places for them to train. As a new Police Chief in a rural community, I understand the importance of building relationships with other local agencies because we rely on each other out here in the Panhandle. I'm also very thankful for OPSU's willingness to allow the use of their facilities to train. We all can benefit from well-trained and professional Police Officers."

Interim President Dr. Ryan Blanton commented, "These trainings benefit so many of our local law enforcement agencies and Panhandle State is proud to be able to host them. The safety and security of our campus and communities always will be one of our highest priorities."

Panhandle State looks forward to the continued partnerships with local law enforcement agencies. **P**



/ATHLETICS/

KAYLI GROVE NAMED 2ND TEAM NAIA ALL- AMERICAN

Panhandle State Softball's Kayli Grove was named NAIA All-American 2nd Team. This news came after a record setting season with 35 season wins.

Grove, a four-year starter, finishes her Aggie career by being named to the second team for her accomplishments in 2022. Leading the Aggies to their best record in program history while also setting new records for the Aggies for batting average, on-base percentage, OPS, SLG, triples, and total bases.

Taking stock of how she got here and how far she has come, Grove commemorates her family and the impact they had on her softball career.

"Beyond blessed to be a part of such an amazing program these past five years. Going from barely winning to breaking our win record and setting a ton of other records too. I wouldn't be where I am without my grandparents and everything I did this past season was for them."

With a record year comes record results. Head Coach Marc Benjamin says it's an exciting time for Aggie softball. "It's very exciting to see the All-America committee recognize Kayli for the awesome job she did this year. She is by far one of the best players and person to wear the Aggie uniform. This recognition is very deserving. She was a huge part of the success we had setting the school record in wins at 35. If we would have played all the games that were scheduled there is no doubt in my mind that she would have been a 1st team selection." **P**

/ATHLETICS/

HEAD VOLLEYBALL COACH, JULIE ALLEN TO WORK WITH TEAM USA

Head Volleyball Coach at Panhandle State, Julie Allen, has made impressive accomplishments in her collegiate volleyball career. Recently, breaking the record for wins per season, wins against opponents, and consecutive wins. Allen is currently the Assistant Athletic Director and Head Volleyball Coach. She will be entering her third year as head coach with a 31-18 overall record. Along with helping her student-athletes to All-Conferences, All-Region awards, NAIA All-American awards, and, All-Academic Awards, Allen has been presented the opportunity to work with the Men's and Women's Volleyball National Sitting Team.

The National Olympic Volleyball sitting team reached out to Coach Allen in early January to work with their team to assist during training camps. Allen will travel to Edmond, Oklahoma, where their training site is, and assist their four-day team camps once a month. Allen shared, "I am very thankful for this opportunity. I am excited to get in the gym and work with our current Olympic athletes, coaches, and staff." Along with her work with Team USA, Allen will continue the great work at Panhandle State as the Head Volleyball Coach and Assistant Athletic Director.

Recently, The USA Men's National Sitting Team asked Coach Allen to join the team in the Netherlands as team leader. Allen will join the team and staff for the Dutch Tournament in Stadsbroekhal Assen, Netherlands. The tournament begins on July 1st to the 3rd; Team USA will play two matches each day. Team USA will compete against Kazakhstan, Brazil, Great Britain, Germany and, Netherlands. All volleyball matches will be live streamed on YouTube, Dutch Tournament.

Athletic Director, Victor Esparza shared, "Julie's volleyball knowledge is off the charts. She not only shows an incredible commitment to her student-athlete experience and brings passion to the game. Julie will be a great asset to Team USA. I know she will bring this to the National Sitting Teams as well. I am excited for Julie, the opportunity, and the professional athletes who will be there with her."



Allen has also been offered the opportunity to lead the National Team Development Program (NTDP) for the U.S. Sitting Team. She will be the lead coach for the training camp in Edmond, Oklahoma, for upcoming Olympic athletes. The NTDP is a program that provides sitting volleyball players an increased opportunity to play with and against the best athletes across the country and learn from the best minds in the game. It is athlete-centered, focused on the overall development of each player, growth in skill, health, and well-being. The NTDP selects the athletes and coaches to train for our country.

Interim President, Dr. Ryan Blanton stated, "We are always excited for our coaches to grow professionally and could not be more proud of the work that Coach Allen has already done for the Panhandle State Volleyball team, but will continue to do alongside her responsibilities working with the USA Team. It really is true, Panhandle State is where legends are made."

The U.S. Men's Sitting team has an OPSU alumnus on the team, J. Dee Marinko. Marinko played for two years for the Aggie Football team, though it was cut short after being diagnosed with synovial sarcoma. Marinko joined the U.S. Sitting Team in the mid-2000s; his first appearance was in 2010 at the WOVD World Championships. And in 2015, Marinko was named USA Volleyball Male Sitting Player of the Year.

Allen had the opportunity to work with Marinko for the past few training camps. She stated, "I was welcomed by the Men's National Team and coaches, and Marinko was one of the first to come up and introduce himself to me. It was an honor to meet an Aggie Alum; we reminisced his time here at Panhandle State."

Allen will be visiting Edmond a few more times to work with the Women's, Men's, and Development Program Teams before August. In addition, the Aggie Volleyball Team will arrive back in the Panhandle in early August to prepare for the season.

The Aggie Volleyball Team will host the opening weekend for the Fall 2022 Season. August 19th and 20th, the Aggies will play two matches a day in Anchor D. Arena. **P**



/ATHLETICS/

OPSU RODEO SENDS 6 TO COLLEGE NATIONAL FINALS RODEO

Panhandle State's rodeo team is sending six individuals to the College National Finals Rodeo in Casper, Wyoming, June 12th-18th

Senior, Ira Dickinson, stole the show in the Saddle Bronc Riding as he fought to land a trip to the CNFR. He split the long-round win with a 73-point ride. Right behind him, senior, Ean Price, was making sure to hold onto his second position in the regional standings by splitting fourth and fifth in the long round. Freshman, Kyle Cavender, split sixth through eighth with sophomores Cade Bell and Brett Coffman split ninth and tenth to make it back in the short go. Price won the short go with a 79-point ride and Dickinson was a point behind to split second and third. Dickinson won the average while Price finished second which secured their spots to Casper. Bell placed seventh in the short go and in the average while Cavender and Coffman failed to make the whistle.

Staying at the bucking chutes, senior, Kelly Murnion, held strong in the Bareback Riding. He split fifth and sixth in the long round and made a 70-point ride in the short go to place fourth and grabbed third in the average.

At the roping chutes, freshman, Tom Simpson placed fourth in the Steer Wrestling long round with a 5.7-second run. A tough draw and a barrier penalty left him eight in the short go and the average.

In the Team Roping, Panhandle State has members from both the men's and women's teams making it back to the short go. Seniors, Wyatt Murray and Whitt Crozier set out to be fast at their last college rodeo when they placed second in the long round with an 8.8-second run. Price made his second appearance on Saturday with partner Jayln Hash of GCCC after placing fifth in the long round. Freshman, Denver McGill, and junior, Mckenna Brennan, placed seventh with a 10.3-second run. Simpson heading for senior, Beau Peterson, snuck into the short go by placing tenth in the long round. Simpson and Peterson stayed determined to get a time despite their tough draw and placed fourth in the short go and split fourth and fifth in the average. The three remaining OPSU teams had bad luck and received no times, and finished seventh, ninth, and tenth respectively.

Peterson made her last regular-season rodeo count making it back in three events: Team Roping, Breakaway, and the Goat Tying. She set out to secure her final trip to Casper in the Breakaway Roping with a blazing 2.5-second run in the long round to split fourth and fifth. Peterson made a business run in the short go placing fifth which put her fifth in the average and punched her ticket to another CNFR.

Peterson made her first and only competitive run back in the Goat Tying after a knee injury last spring cut her season short. She didn't miss a beat in the long round with an 8.6-second run to place fourth. Fellow senior, Alex Hamilton, was hot on her heels placing sixth in the round with a 9.3-second run. Hamilton stayed steady in the short go making a 9.4-second run placing fourth in the go and average. A speed jam got Peterson on Saturday afternoon, but still placed sixth in the round and the average.

Sydney Frey, a junior, was the lone Aggie in the Barrel Racing. She placed fifth in the long go in the big arena with a 17.73-second run. Frey came back faster in the short round with a 17.63-second run placing fourth in the go and fifth in the average.

Brennan won the Reserve Year End Champion in the Goat Tying and the Women's Reserve All-Around Champion which means she will also compete in the Breakaway Roping while at the CNFR. Peterson grabbed her final trip to Casper placing third overall for year-end in the Breakaway Roping. Simpson's consistently paid off as he won Reserve Year End Champion in the Tie-Down Roping. Price and Dickinson punched their tickets to the CNFR in the Saddle Bronc Riding with Price winning Reserve Year-End and Dickinson placing third. Senior, TJ Schmidt, will make another trip to Casper splitting second and third in the year-end standings in the Bull Riding. **P**



COLLEGE NATIONAL FINALS RODEO QUALIFIERS

Tom Simpson
Ira Dickinson
Beau Peterson
Mckenna Brennan
TJ Schmidt
Ean Price



CASPER, WYOMING
JUNE 12-18