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Panhandle

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OPSU.edu



**GRADUATES MAKING
A DIFFERENCE**



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OVER 3000

**GRADUATES ADDED INTO
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**



On May 12, Anchor D Stadium at Oklahoma Panhandle State University was filled with excitement and accomplishment as the institution proudly

celebrated the class of 2023 at the commencement ceremony. This year's event marked a significant milestone for OPSU, as it saw over 300 students donning their caps and gowns, ready to embark on the next chapter of their lives. With an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and a supportive community, OPSU continues to empower its graduates with the knowledge and skills to shape their futures.

OPSU's commencement ceremony recognized the graduating class's diverse disciplines and academic accomplishments. Students from various academic programs, including business, agriculture, education, and more, were celebrated for their dedication and hard work throughout their academic journeys.

The commencement ceremony showcased numerous inspiring success stories that highlighted the transformative impact of an OPSU education. Alumna, Jana Wallace, was the 2023 commencement speaker and charged the graduates to live each day to the fullest. Wallace highlighted the challenges she had to overcome and the lessons she learned at OPSU that carried into her career as the CEO of PTCI.

"For many, the day of commencement is not only for themselves, but also a proud site to see for their family and friends alike," said University President Dr. Julie Dinger. "I am proud of the Aggies who worked hard and dedicated the time it took to earn this accomplishment."

As the graduates crossed the stage to receive their diplomas, they carried with them valuable knowledge and experiences gained during their time at OPSU. Equipped with a solid foundation and the skills needed for success, these newly minted alumni are poised to make a positive impact in their chosen fields and communities. **P**

EL CENTRO

STOLE CEREMONY

CELEBRATING ACADEMIC

ACHIEVEMENT AT OPSU



El Centro celebrated student achievements during their second annual graduation stole ceremony at Panhandle State. This ceremony is a poignant testament to the rich cultural diversity within its student community. With a deep commitment to inclusivity and recognizing the importance of cultural diversity, the El Centro team organized the ceremony as a meaningful way to commemorate the journey of these remarkable individuals.

El Centro Director, Virginia Cruz, stated, "Each student who wears a stole represents their dedication, hard work, and perseverance throughout their educational journey. This celebration marks the completion of their academic requirements and serves as a reminder of the immense potential and talent within the OPSU student body."

The stoles worn by students during the commencement ceremony were adorned with vibrant colors and the El Centro logo. These stoles are a visual representation of the students' identities and serve as a reminder of their roots. **P**



EDUCATION

STUDENTS SECURE JOB

PLACEMENT AFTER

GRADUATION

OPSU is proud to announce the remarkable success of its graduates in securing positions immediately after graduation, with the education program leading the way. Over the past year, 100% of education program graduates have secured employment within months of completing their degrees. This impressive statistic highlights the effectiveness of OPSU's approach to preparing teachers for the demands of today's educational landscape.

Dr. Charla Lewis, Dean of the College of Arts and Education at OPSU, expressed her delight at the program's success, saying, "We take immense pride in our graduates and their ability to make an immediate impact in the field of education. Our comprehensive curriculum, coupled with invaluable practical experience, ensures that our students are well-prepared to address the evolving needs of students in their classrooms."

Panhandle Promise Scholarship grad, Veronica Ray, has accepted a position teaching at Hardesty Public Schools. This placement is what the Panhandle Promise Scholarship was intended to do, place students within the three counties of the Oklahoma Panhandle.

An Agriculture Education student, Harlee Wiggins, accepted a position in Kremlin, Oklahoma. "The education program allowed me to gain practical experiences through hands-on learning. I feel well prepared to positively impact my students lives." **P**

TECHNOLOGY MAJOR CREATES SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS VENTURE



Jayden Valdez, a 2023 Business and Technology graduate from OPSU, dreamt of a business plan during his junior year of college that turned into a mobile coffee shop. Originally based out of Hooker, The Hub, is a Christian mission-based coffee shop that Valdez came up with alongside his business partner, Nathan Jenkins. Recently they have relocated to the Guymon area and have tripled their sales.

"I wasn't quite sure what food truck I wanted to make, but then I connected with Craig Shepherd and Nathan Jenkins out of the Nazarene Church where we had built a coffee shop inside the church for the community," stated Valdez. "It kind of grew from nowhere, really. I couldn't have told you two years ago that I would own and operate a coffee business, but here I am,"

Valdez earned a Bachelor of Business Administration majoring in Computer Information Systems. Giving credit to Professor, Kim Smith, Valdez mentioned that she planted the seed for him to get into this business. "She helped me throughout the process of what the logistics would be and what it would look like."

Valdez was also named the J.R.P. Sewell Award recipient at the 2023 Commencement ceremony. This award promotes and honors scholarship, leadership, and citizenship. Only graduated seniors who have completed all of their coursework at Panhandle State and have a 3.0 cumulative GPA are eligible. Valdez stated, "In my last two years of college, I was striving for this peak award. Working through and achieving that was a big moment announced at Graduation." **P**



AG BANQUET AWARDS CEREMONY FOR AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE, AND NURSING

The OPSU College of Agriculture, Science and Nursing hosted the first Agriculture Banquet and Awards Ceremony to honor the remarkable achievements of its students. The ceremony served as a platform to recognize outstanding athletes, club members, and students who had excelled inside and outside the classroom throughout the academic year. With approximately 220 attendees, the evening was filled with pride, celebration, and a sense of community.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger, stated, "Congratulations to the award winners and to the faculty, staff, and coaches who make the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing great."

"By recognizing and celebrating achievements, the Agriculture Banquet and Awards Ceremony encouraged students to reach for greater heights in their academic pursuits, athletics, and club involvements," stated Dean Tracy Kincannon. "It served as a reminder that their hard work and dedication would be recognized and appreciated by their peers and mentors." **P**



REMARKABLE

MILESTONE FOR GUYMON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Guymon High School students reach remarkable milestone at OPSU graduating on May 12 before receiving their high school diplomas. These outstanding individuals are part of the Early College High School Program offered by Panhandle State. The program allows motivated students to accelerate their academic journey by simultaneously pursuing college coursework alongside their high school studies.

OPSU President, Dr. Julie Dinger, stated, "The Early College High School Program at OPSU provides a unique opportunity for talented students to challenge themselves academically and unlock their full potential. With the guidance and support of dedicated faculty members and a comprehensive curriculum, these five remarkable individuals have seized the opportunity to excel beyond expectations."

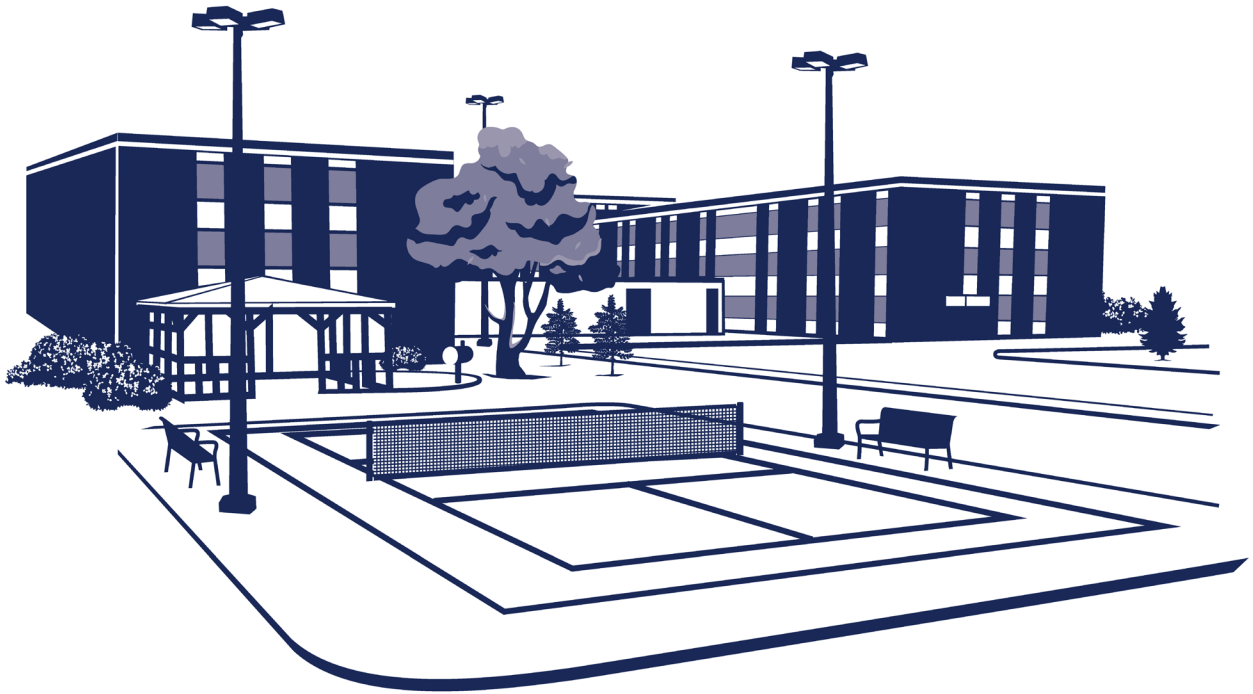
The following students have demonstrated exceptional commitment, determination, and academic progress in completing their college degrees:

1. Khaleb Diaz-Alvarez
2. Kenna Garcia
3. Ariel Mata
4. Emma Montgomery
5. Jimmy Pham

These students have demonstrated unwavering dedication, balancing the rigors of college coursework while successfully navigating their high school responsibilities. Their extraordinary achievements are a testament to their remarkable work ethic, resilience, and commitment to their education.

The Early College High School Program at OPSU is designed to give students a head start in their academic and professional pursuits. Students gain valuable skills, experience, and college credits that can significantly impact their future educational endeavors by offering dual enrollment options and access to college-level courses.

Guymon Public Schools Superintendent, Dixie Purdy, expresses immense pride in these five extraordinary students, stating, "I am so grateful these students had this wonderful opportunity to excel in their academics through OPSU coursework. We appreciate the valuable partnership we have with the University and this wonderful program they offer our students." **P**



AGGIE SQUARE

STUDENT OUTDOOR SPACE

SUPPORT AGGIES AND OPSU THROUGH 2023 CENTURY CLUB

The Panhandle State Association of Alumni and Friends proudly announces the launch of its highly anticipated 2023 Century Club Aggie Square. This vibrant addition to the campus landscape is set to revolutionize the student experience, fostering community, engagement, and a sense of pride among students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Located on the west side of Holter Hall, Aggie Square will include a state-of-the-art pickleball court, gazebo, and grills for students and the community to utilize. This new area will have a modern fence to enhance the area and recognition for donors and supporters.

"I think it is so important to give back to a place that gives so much to the students and the community," said Alumni Association President, Katie Quebedeaux. "We have had an excellent turnout in alumni engagement in the last five years, I look forward to what we can do for this year's Century Club project."

Aggie Square will provide an area on campus for the Aggie community to enjoy each other's company, grow relationships outside the classroom or practice fields, and form lasting memories.

"Aggie Square will be a great addition to our campus. Aggie Alums are always giving back, and we can't thank them enough for supporting this project," stated Shawn Joy, Alumni Director.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger, expresses her excitement for the 2023 Century Club, stating, "We are thrilled to unveil this incredible addition to our campus, one that embodies our commitment to fostering a vibrant outdoor space for students and the community. The Aggie Square will undoubtedly become a hub on campus where our students, faculty, staff, and community can come together in recreation and fellowship." **P**

USPO

“Being nominated for the Walt Garrison is a huge honor. I cannot think of a better person than Evan Meashaw. He embodies what the Walt Garrison Award stands for. He is a huge benefit to our program.”

— Shelbie Rose, Women’s Rodeo Coach

Photograph courtesy of Aaron Witt Photography

OPRE CREATES LEGENDARY COACHES, STUDENT-ATHLETES, AND ALUMNI

Oklahoma Panhandle State University's rodeo program has consistently proven itself as a stomping ground for legends in the sport. Year after year, the program produces exceptional rodeo athletes who go on to make their mark on the rodeo world. With top-notch coaching, state-of-the-art facilities, and a supportive community, Panhandle State has created an environment that fosters the development of extraordinary talent. This was shown when the Doc Garner Memorial Rodeo was named the Rodeo of the Year for the Central Plains Region.

Head Women's Rodeo Coach, Shelbie Rose, is leading her way into the legend bracket in rodeo coaching as she once again claimed the title of Coach of the Year for the Central Plains Rodeo Region. This remarkable achievement marks the third consecutive year that Rose has received this coveted honor. With her unwavering dedication, exceptional coaching abilities, and profound impact on her athletes' success, Rose has solidified her place among the rodeo coaching elite.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger stated, "Mrs. Rose's impact as a coach extends far beyond the rodeo arena. She serves as a mentor and role model for her athletes, guiding them not only in rodeo skills but also in life lessons. Her leadership qualities and emphasis on discipline, perseverance, and sportsmanship have helped shape her team, and our university. She sets the standard for excellence." Rose's exceptional coaching skills have consistently propelled her athletes to new heights, setting them up for greatness. She has cultivated a winning culture within her team through her unwavering commitment and thorough understanding of the sport. Rose's ability to motivate and inspire her riders, combined with her profound knowledge of rodeo techniques, has played a pivotal role in their remarkable achievements.

Alongside Rose's great accomplishment, Senior Evan

Meashaw was nominated to be the Central Plains Region nominee for the prestigious Walt Garrison Award. The award is voted on based on loyalty, determination, integrity, initiative, perseverance, commitment, and leadership that has proven to be an asset to the institution.

Head Men's Rodeo Coach, Robert Etbauer, commented, "Shelbie and Evan are both big assets to our program. They are always ready to go whenever and wherever we need them, and they are a lot of fun to be around. Whether it is showing up to help or just picking rocks up out of the arena, they will be there. These two love their sport and their community. They are both a true cowboy and cowgirl!"

Coach Rose commented, "Being nominated for the Walt Garrison is a huge honor. I cannot think of a better person than Evan Meashaw. He embodies what the Walt Garrison Award stands for. He is a huge benefit to our program."

Four Aggies will represent Panhandle State at the College National Finals Rodeo for the Central Plains Region, to compete in Casper, Wyoming in June. The four cowboys and cowgirls who qualified for the CNFR are McKenna Brennan, Tatum Hall, Parker McIntyre, and Bailey Small.

Rodeo alumni of Panhandle State are also making their mark in the industry, Beau Peterson, being the most recent graduate to set the standards high. Peterson ranked 12th in Breakaway Roping for the 2022 World Standings in the Women's Professional Rodeo Association. This ranking came after competing at the National Finals Breakaway Roping in November and ending up fourth in the average. The Panhandle State rodeo program's legacy is defined by the countless rodeo legends who have emerged from its ranks, leaving an indelible impact on the sport and inspiring future generations of riders. **P**



NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

FOR INCOMING AGGIES

Oklahoma Panhandle State University kicked off its New Student Orientation, beginning an exciting journey for incoming students. The first of four orientation sessions was held on May 22, paving the way for an engaging and informative series aimed at equipping students with the tools they need to thrive academically, socially, and personally. With three more sessions scheduled for June, July, and August, OPSU is dedicated to ensuring that every new student feels welcomed, supported, and prepared for the next chapter of their educational experience.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger, stated, "We are excited to welcome a new class of Aggies to Panhandle State. The team that has put together New Student Orientation aims to build connections among incoming students and foster community. The ultimate goal is to create a supportive network to enhance students' university experience throughout their academic journey."

The New Student Orientation offers a wide range of informative sessions and workshops designed to equip students with essential knowledge about university life. These sessions cover a variety of topics, including academic expectations, student support services, campus resources, and extracurricular activities. The event provides a platform for new students to meet their peers, engage with faculty and staff, and familiarize themselves with the campus environment.

"New Student Orientation serves as a pivotal moment in the lives of incoming students, laying the foundation for a successful academic journey," said Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Theresa Billiot. "By providing valuable information, fostering connections, and offering personalized guidance, OPSU ensures that every new student feels prepared, supported, and welcomed into the university community."

One of the highlights of OPSU's New Student Orientation is the

opportunity for incoming students to meet with academic advisors and enroll in courses for this fall semester. This personalized guidance ensures students choose the right courses that align with their academic goals and requirements. By offering individualized attention, OPSU aims to help students start their academic journey on the right foot, setting them up for success from day one.

OPSU encourages new students to get involved in campus life and discover their interests by participating in student organizations. During orientation, representatives from different clubs and organizations showcase their offerings, enabling students to explore various extracurricular opportunities.

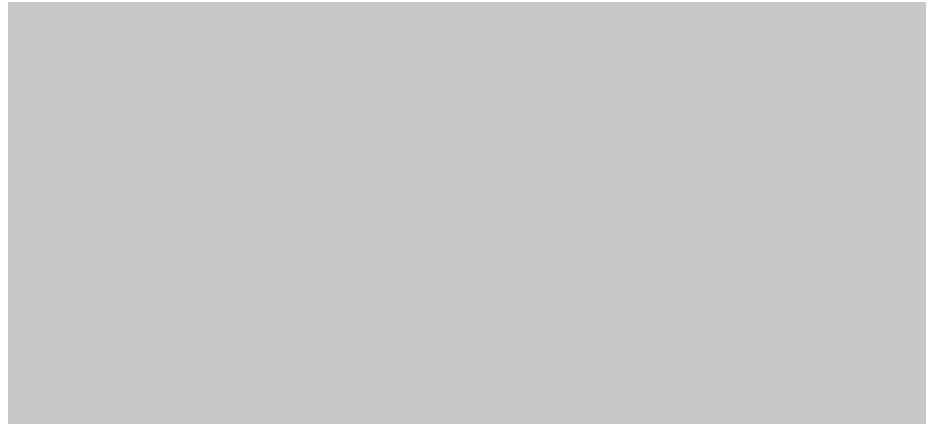
For those who missed the first orientation session, OPSU has three additional dates to accommodate incoming students. The upcoming sessions are as follows:

Monday, June 26: 9 am – 2 pm

Monday, July 24: 9 am – 2 pm

Monday, August 7: 9 am – 2 pm

As the remaining orientation sessions approach, OPSU continues to demonstrate its commitment to creating an inclusive and thriving campus environment, setting the stage for an unforgettable college experience. **P**



“We are excited to welcome a new class of Aggies to Panhandle State. The team that has put together New Student Orientation aims to build connections among incoming students and foster community.”

— Dr. Julie Dinger, University President

FOUR-MAN
TEAMS

SUPPORT
the AGGIES!



*Side Games
Prizes*

*Lunch & Dinner
on Saturday*

JULY 7/8-9

FRIDAY - 5:30 PM

SKINS GAME : \$25 PER PERSON

SUNDAY

8:00 AM - TEE TIME

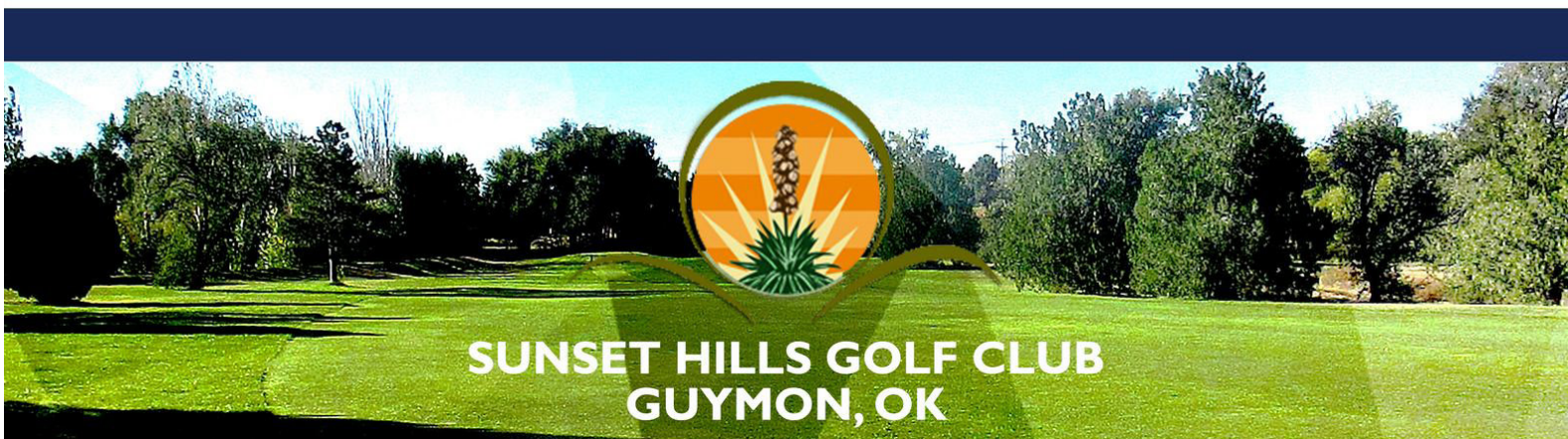
SATURDAY - 4 PERSON SCRAMBLE

\$125 PER PERSON

11:00 AM - SHOTGUN

6:00 PM - DINNER

Contact Victor Esparza to register: 505-603-2963/coachvic@opsu.edu



**SUNSET HILLS GOLF CLUB
GUYMON, OK**