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Panhandle

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OPSU.edu

RANKED TOP 6
BEST COLLEGE IN
OKLAHOMA





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RANKED TOP 6

**BEST COLLEGE IN OKLAHOMA BY
U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT**



Oklahoma Panhandle State University is ranked as one of the top 10 colleges in Oklahoma, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2024 Best Colleges List. OPSU is ranked as the No. 6 Best College in Oklahoma, No. 13 in Top Public Schools, and No. 37 in Regional Colleges in the Western Region. These recognitions highlight OPSU's dedication to its mission of progress through knowledge and the statement: "From here, you can go anywhere."

"We are incredibly proud to be recognized as one of the top colleges in Oklahoma. This achievement reflects the hard work and dedication of our faculty, staff, and students, as well as the support we receive from our community," stated University President Dr. Dinger. "As the fall semester starts and we welcome our new and returning students, I look forward to what this next year will hold."

With over 120 acres in the Oklahoma Panhandle, OPSU provides students with a serene learning environment. OPSU adheres to a semester-based academic calendar. OPSU stands out for its affordable tuition rates, with both in-state and out-of-state students paying \$8,426 for tuition and fees.

Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Theresa Billiot, stated, "This achievement validates our mission of progress through knowledge that empowers students to reach their full potential. We remain steadfast in our pursuit of academic excellence and look forward to continuing to inspire and support the success of our students."

As OPSU looks ahead to the future, it remains dedicated to maintaining and exceeding the standards that have led to this remarkable achievement. The university will continue to enhance its programs, foster a vibrant learning environment, and strengthen its ties with the local community and industry partners. **P**



AGGIE NATION

SETS A NEW STANDARD WITH RECORD IN-PERSON ENROLLMENT & HISTORIC HOMECOMING

As the fall semester begins at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, the campus is alive and active. This academic year has witnessed an incredible milestone as we proudly welcomed a record number of in-person students since prior to the pandemic. With 63% of OPSU students engaging in in-person learning, this is a 9% increase from in-person enrollment last fall. This surge in attendance laid the foundation for one of the most remarkable Homecoming celebrations in recent memory.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger, expressed her enthusiasm about this remarkable achievement, saying, "This is a testament to the exceptional quality of education we offer at OPSU. We are thrilled to see so many new faces join our community and are committed to ensuring that they have a fulfilling and successful academic journey."

The university reported a remarkable increase in Fall enrollment, reflecting the institution's unwavering commitment to providing a dynamic and engaging educational experience. The surge in headcount was especially notable for in-person attendance, underlining the university's dedication to fostering a vibrant campus community.

With all the new faces on campus joined with alumni and the community, Homecoming weekend was the perfect opportunity to celebrate where we've been and look forward to where we're going. This was never more evident than during the Homecoming football game, where the Aggie Nation flooded Anchor D Stadium in a sea of red and blue. The Aggies not only reached new heights on the field but also in the hearts of their dedicated supporters. The success of the Homecoming weekend would not have been possible without the dedication of countless individuals, including the Homecoming committee, the university's administration, and the spirited student body. Their collective efforts ensured that this year's celebration was an extraordinary display of Aggie pride.

As the fall semester unfolds, OPSU is committed to nurturing the potential of each student and providing the support they need to succeed academically, personally, and professionally. The record-breaking enrollment and the enthusiasm of our incoming students only reinforce the university's dedication to fostering a diverse and inclusive learning community.

Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Theresa Billiot, stated, "We are honored to have students back to OPSU this fall with many events for them to take part in. Together, we will work to ensure their dreams become reality and their time here is marked by achievement, discovery, and personal growth."

With the record number of in-person students and an array of exciting activities, the fall semester is off to a fantastic start. As we look forward to the adventures and accomplishments ahead, it's clear that this academic year holds great promise for all who call OPSU home. **P**



“We are thrilled to see so many new faces join our community and are committed to ensuring that they have a fulfilling and successful academic journey.”

— Dr. Julie Dinger, University President



OPSU CELEBRATES

HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS WEEK & HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Oklahoma Panhandle State University takes great pride in its designation as the first and only public Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) university in Oklahoma. National HSI Week, September 11 - 17, and Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from September 15 to October 15, is a time to honor and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Hispanic and Latino communities. The Hispanic Student Center at OPSU is at the heart of these celebrations and works year-round to foster a positive learning environment for every Aggie.

Hispanic Student Center Director Virginia Cruz stated, "I am honored to be able to play an active role in ensuring the goals of the Hispanic Student Center are met, with students being provided with the opportunity to learn and grow through services provided by the center."

"It's a privilege to contribute to OPSU's mission of inclusivity. Our University is dedicated to serving Hispanic students and fostering an environment where all students can thrive regardless of their background. I am proud to be a part of this journey," said Omar Lira, HSC Administrative Assistant. "OPSU encourages people to pursue a career here in the Panhandle area by being an HSI."

In 2020, OPSU received a Title V grant through the "Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program" from the United States Department of Education. This grant aims to enhance the existing curriculum with a track record of improving retention rates while introducing new academic programs to address the demands of the regional economy. Since then, the funding through the Title V Grant has expanded the advising services through the Hispanic Student Center, built a new writing center, and provided new software to help achieve institutional and Title V goals.

OPSU's newest Writing Center provides instructional support to our diverse student population to help them achieve success, especially in the general education curriculum, which serves as gateway courses. Dr. Jarrett Kaufman, Title V Project Director, said, "The Title V grant funds the writing center operations because the grant and the writing center both seek to improve student academic success at OPSU."

The Writing Center focuses on eight core benefits, including improving student writing skills, enhancing academic success, supporting diverse learners, fostering critical thinking, promoting academic integrity, encouraging collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and improving retention rates.

"We are thrilled to introduce our new writing center as a testament to our commitment to fostering diverse voices and promoting academic excellence through writing," said Martin Fulmer, Writing Center Director. "The Writing Center provides one-on-one writing consultations for students from all backgrounds so they can hone their professional writing skills while becoming astute readers of their own writing."

To help achieve OPSU's Title V outcomes, investments were made to improve the institutional infrastructure by implementing software that helps OPSU become more proactive and more data-driven. This investment included retention software where OPSU can identify students who need more academic assistance during the first week of the semester rather than waiting for mid-term grades to be reported. OPSU also adopted software that will improve course scheduling, which can help provide the right courses at the right time to help our students graduate on time. **P**



STUDENT

JALEN PARTIDA IS BLAZING TRAILS ON AND OFF THE FIELD

Jalen Partida, a Junior at Panhandle State, is making his dreams as a Hispanic collegiate athlete a reality. A native of El Paso, Texas, Partida is excelling on the football field while pursuing a degree in Biology. Partida takes pride in his Hispanic background, with his grandparents being from Mexico and the culture he grew up in. "I am proud of my Hispanic background and I am proud to have grown up with a family that instilled an immense pride in our culture," stated Partida.

Partida's football journey began at the age of 8, with his dad's unwavering support playing a pivotal role in shaping his passion for the sport. When choosing a college to continue his football journey, OPSU stood out as the ideal choice. He noted, "OPSU felt like the perfect fit for my football dreams, and having familiar faces from my hometown here made the transition much smoother."

Balancing the demands of being a student-athlete requires exceptional time management skills and dedication, which Partida continues to focus on. "Being a student-athlete is all about time management and staying ahead. Football isn't just playing on Saturdays. There are a lot of meetings and practices as well. So just in between those things is when I do my work, plus just communicating with teachers," said Partida.

Partida's growth during his three years at OPSU is evident as an athlete and leader. Learning from his senior peers, he has embraced the responsibilities of leadership and the importance of connecting with individuals from diverse backgrounds. "Football is a job where you have to be everywhere at specific times and be on time. I believe you truly have to love the lifestyle to live it."

"I love seeing that a big community supports us. I like giving people something to support on Saturdays," Partida explained. "There may be some pressure and expectations, but the best way to deal with those is to act like they aren't there. My dad always told me to play my game and not worry about doing too much."

Head Football Coach, Cory Miller stated, "OPSU takes immense pride in having Jalen Partida as part of our student-athlete community and looks forward to witnessing his continued success, both on and off the football field."

Upon completing his undergraduate studies, Partida plans to further his education in graduate school and continue to play football. He stated, "Outside of football, I want to work within the biology field and hopefully support my family the way they supported me growing up." **P**



TEACHER

PANHANDLE STATE IS SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS

Oklahoma Panhandle State University has a well-established track record for delivering top-notch teacher education and is committed to graduating a continuous stream of exceptionally qualified teachers for the state of Oklahoma.

Through the Oklahoma Teacher Connection grant, the State Regents administer several initiatives designed to expand the teacher education pipeline, including the Inspired to Teach program. Inspired to Teach provides a scholarship for eligible students majoring in teacher education at an accredited Educator Preparation Program (EPP).

The Inspired to Teach scholarship amount for full-time students includes \$1,000 per year for up to three academic years and \$2,500 in the final academic year. Following graduation, Inspired to Teach participants agree to teach in an Oklahoma public school (pre-K through 12th grade) for five consecutive years, a commitment that qualifies program participants to receive a \$4,000 award for each year of satisfactory service up to five years, for a total of up to \$20,000. At OPSU, there are currently six hardworking students in the Inspired to Teach program and three graduates receiving funding.

University President, Dr. Julie Dinger stated, “We are dedicated to equipping our students with the essential tools and resources to become highly effective educators, contributing to the resolution of Oklahoma’s statewide teacher recruitment initiatives.”

OPSU’s initiative to bridge the gap for education majors continues with the Panhandle Promise Scholarship, which aims to tackle the urgent need for well-prepared educators within the public school districts of Oklahoma’s Panhandle region. It entails a two-year commitment from students who agree to teach in one of the 16 public school districts located in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

In addition to Inspired to Teach, for the second year in a row, Oklahoma Panhandle State University has been awarded the Oklahoma Teacher Connection (OTC) pre-collegiate and collegiate grant of \$8,000 by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. The grant funds are distributed from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) program that awards teacher certification acceleration programs. OPSU is well prepared to participate in the

state’s initiative for teacher recruitment and is eager to see its graduates teaching in Oklahoma.

Since 1996, collaborative efforts by OTC and teacher education programs at Oklahoma universities have led to partnerships that help address teacher recruitment, retention and placement from a campus-based perspective, and take advantage of the unique strengths of each institution. Earlier this month, collegiate grants totaling \$68,058 were approved to support 11 special programs at nine universities in 2023-24.

“Oklahoma’s education landscape is changing, and we must strengthen the teacher education pipeline,” said Chancellor Allison D. Garrett. “The Oklahoma Teacher Connection’s programs serving secondary students, college students, and new teachers help meet the critical need for more well-prepared teachers in Oklahoma classrooms.”

Dr. Charla Lewis, Dean of the College of Arts and Education, stated, “My proposal focused on band director shortages in the Oklahoma Panhandle and the need for mentoring and professional development to try and help keep and attract band directors to the Panhandle. We will be having three professional development sessions this year.” She continued, “Band director participants will receive a travel stipend of \$100 after the first session they attend and a participant stipend of \$50 for each session they attend. Whatever money is left after those sessions will be used to purchase music for the schools of the participating band directors. Last year, over \$5,000 was spent on music alone.”

Oklahoma Panhandle State University has a strong commitment to shaping the next generation of teachers. Through scholarships like the Inspired to Teach Program and the Panhandle Promise, OPSU is not only providing financial support to eligible students majoring in teacher education but also ensuring that they contribute to Oklahoma’s education system. The University’s initiatives are pivotal in transforming Oklahoma’s education landscape and ensuring a brighter future for education in the state. For more information on these valuable programs, visit <https://opsu.edu/arts-education/education/>. **P**



FOUNDATION

RECEIVES LARGEST SINGLE GIFT FROM DONOR

Thanks to a generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous, Panhandle State Foundation has received the largest single gift from an individual in its history to create a newly endowed agriculture scholarship. The new endowment will provide exceptionally generous financial support for OPSU agriculture students.

"The generosity of our donor and their desire to change the lives of OPSU students is inspiring," said University President Dr. Julie Dinger. "The impact this will have not only on our students, but our community as well, will be felt for generations."

The scholarship is anticipated to be highly competitive, and selection criteria will focus on academic achievement, community and program engagement, commitment to agriculture, and advocacy in the agricultural community. The endowment will provide one \$10,000 scholarship in its first year and up to four \$10,000 scholarships in future years. Scholarships will automatically renew each year for up to eight consecutive semesters as long as the student maintains a 3.0 GPA.

Panhandle State Foundation Executive Director, Chyanna Black, stated that this will be the single largest scholarship awarded through the scholarship program each year to students at OPSU. "We are grateful for the opportunity our donor has provided us with. Over several months, we worked closely with the donor to ensure that this endowment is set up to make the biggest impact possible for our students while leaving a lasting legacy for the donor! This will be life-changing for students, and we are excited to watch it's impact unfold for years to come."

"We are very blessed to have had a large anonymous donation that will provide multiple scholarships for OPSU agricultural students," said Jim Quimby, President of the Panhandle State Foundation. "These scholarships will continue to strengthen our outstanding ag program and support new growth to our University."

"We greatly appreciate our donor and the leadership of Ms. Black and Mr. Jim Quimby for making this gift a reality," said OPSU Vice President of Advancement, Dr. Ryan Blanton. "It is a true testament to the power of our University and Foundation working together for the benefit of our students."

The new agriculture scholarship is set to award the first one in the 2024-2025 academic year. Applications will be available at <https://opsu.edu/panhandle-state-foundation/> starting December 1, 2023, and close February 15, 2024. **P**



STUDENT

AUSTIN JACOBS STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT: A LOCAL SUCCESS STORY

As President of the Student Government Association, Austin Jacobs aims to bring involvement back on campus. "I hope to bring a sense of honor and integrity to SGA and campus-wide," stated Jacobs. "I hope to show everyone what OPSU brings to the table and make sure everyone knows that we are not only the best in the region but one of the best in the country."

Jacobs was born and raised in Guymon, Oklahoma. He made history at OPSU in 2021, becoming a trailblazer in the university's inaugural pilot program for the Early College High School initiative. This innovative program allowed him to complete an Associate of Science in Agriculture from OPSU even before he walked the stage at Guymon High School to receive his high school diploma. Austin's dedication to his education and commitment to his community set him on a path toward success.

Austin is now a double major in Animal Science and Biology at OPSU, pursuing his dream of becoming a veterinarian. He is set to graduate in the spring of 2024, and his journey inspires fellow students, parents, and the community at large.

Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing, Tracy Kincannon, stated, "Austin Jacobs is a great leader on campus with many awesome ideas. His determination exemplifies the spirit of our institution and the promise of a bright future for our students."

Laura Hutchinson, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, added, "Austin has done an excellent job as SGA President. He is a great communicator in terms of listening and keeping SGA informed of all the benefits of campus leadership. I look forward to seeing what he and the rest of the executive council accomplish this year."

Jacobs' peers and faculty members have always considered him an adaptable individual who others can go to with ideas. "I have always believed in listening to other's ideas and perspectives. I believe everyone has a voice to be heard," said Jacobs. "I am encouraging all campus organizations to start back up and have a representative in SGA. It is important for every facet of OPSU to have a voice. I believe OPSU has excellent things in store, and I am so thankful to be gaining my education here." **P**



TIM ANDERSON COACHES UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BASKETBALL IN SPAIN

Panhandle State Alumni Tim Anderson, originally from Chicago Illinois, joined the University of Illinois men's basketball team as an assistant coach in 2021. He brought with him 15 years of coaching and training experience. Anderson graduated from Panhandle State in 2006 with Social Studies and Academics degrees.

Anderson started his coaching journey at OPSU under Coach Curt Connor. He returned home to coach at Malcolm X Community College in Chicago and then at the high school he had graduated from, Crane High in Chicago. After spending three years there, Anderson accepted his first division one position at the Texas Pan American (now UT Rio Grande Valley). Wanting to get closer to home, he returned to Chicago to coach at DePaul University before joining the University of Illinois.

Anderson recently represented the University of Illinois Athletics and an Aggie Alum during a trip to Spain with their men's basketball team where he stepped into the head-coaching role when they played the Madrid All-Stars.

Anderson states on his time at OPSU, "I am proud to be an Aggie. Through my journey, I was able to meet so many great and impactful people. The Panhandle taught me unity, working together, and the importance of relationships." He continued, "I knew I wanted to become a coach after the completion of my first year on campus."

Director of Alumni Relations, Shawn Joy stated, "Tim is a great example for Aggie Nation and the student-athletes today. Truly, from here you can go anywhere. At Panhandle State, you can find your path to anywhere." **P**



MAKENZIE WEBSTER SHINES IN ANIMAL SCIENCE AND AG BUSINESS

Makenzie Webster, an Animal Science and Ag Business Senior at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, had the opportunity to intern at Seaboard Foods in Plant Operations over the summer. What is unique about Webster's journey is her remarkable transformation from a student with no agricultural background to an industry enthusiast. "I do not come from an agricultural background at all, and I only had a basic understanding of agriculture when coming to school here. I sometimes felt like an imposter because I didn't have the background that other students had and sometimes doubted whether this was the right path, said Webster.

Originally from Pueblo, Colorado, Webster's journey at OPSU has been defined by the support of dedicated instructors who view her as more than just a student. "My instructors push me out of my comfort zone and help me grow not only as a student but as an individual so that I can be a leader in the agriculture industry," stated Webster. Her decision to attend OPSU has truly been a life-changing and rewarding experience. "I could have chosen from numerous options for my education, but looking back, I wouldn't trade my time at OPSU for anything else."

"Makenzie's transformation from a non-agricultural background to a standout talent in the agriculture industry is a testament to her dedication," Dean of the College of Agriculture, Science, and Nursing Tracy Kincannon stated. "Her story solidifies the spirit of resilience and excellence we aim to instill in our students."

During her internship, Webster actively participated in yield improvement initiatives and problem-solving discussions during weekly yield meetings. Her outstanding contributions culminated in a Capstone presentation to senior management, where she shared her accomplishments and provided recommendations for the future. "This internship was an amazing opportunity to apply what I learned in my OPSU classes and gain real-world experience," Webster said. She emphasized the importance of the connections she made and the vast opportunities available in the industry.

"I want to prove that it doesn't matter where you come from. If you have enough grit and determination to reach your goals and don't let failure hold you back, you can get that door open to a world of opportunities waiting to be taken." Dr. Crystal Tolle, Department Head of Animal Science at OPSU, stated, "We are extremely proud of Makenzie and are glad she stepped out of her comfort zone to complete this internship with Seaboard Farms. She was able to apply knowledge learned in class to a hands-on internship where she excelled."

Makenzie Webster's journey from a student with limited agricultural knowledge to a promising talent in the agriculture industry exemplifies the values and mission of OPSU. Upon graduation, Makenzie aspires to continue her education by pursuing a Master's degree in Meat Science, reflecting her strong commitment to the field and her desire to contribute to the meat industry. **P**



OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT UNVEILS THE 2023-2024 AGGIEBACKER BOOSTER CLUB

The OPSU Athletics Department is proud to announce the launch of the 2023-2024 AggieBacker Booster Club, an opportunity for dedicated fans to join forces with Aggie Athletics in supporting our student-athletes and the pursuit of excellence. Each membership level grants fans a unique set of benefits, including free admission to home volleyball and Men's and Women's basketball games. But that's just the beginning. AggieBacker members can also enjoy exclusive perks such as official Aggie apparel, special event invitations, sideline passes, and more. To explore the full list of benefits for each membership level, please visit [AggieBacker Membership Benefits](#).

Victor Esparza, Athletic Director at Oklahoma Panhandle State, expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the ongoing support of AggieBackers, stating, "As we look to the future, we are filled with excitement and determination to reach even greater heights. We are committed to providing our student-athletes with the best possible resources and opportunities, and your support will remain instrumental in realizing these aspirations. Once again, on behalf of the entire OPSU family, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your incredible contributions. Together, we are shaping the leaders of tomorrow and making a lasting impact on the lives of our student-athletes."

Coaches at Panhandle State are equally grateful for the impact of AggieBackers. Charles Belt, Head Men's Basketball Coach, emphasized the significance of these boosters, saying, "Having the support of our AggieBacker boosters is huge. There's an element of pride that comes within our program knowing we are playing and competing for more than just ourselves. The financial support is what helps separate a program/department. Knowing we can provide our student-athletes with the resources needed to have a great athletics experience helps us to recruit high-caliber young men, but more importantly, retain those athletes throughout their development process! Your contributions are what will give us the opportunity to truly separate ourselves as a program and play with Aggie Pride! Thank you for all you do."

To contribute to the 2023-2024 AggieBacker Booster Club and become a vital part of the Oklahoma Panhandle State Athletics community, please visit [AggieBacker Membership](#) and select your preferred membership level.

Oklahoma Panhandle State Athletics Department extends its deepest gratitude to all supporters for their unwavering dedication. With your support, we can continue to elevate our student-athletes to new heights of success in Aggie Athletics. **P**



INSIDE THE SAC

SHAWN JOY: LEADING ON AND OFF THE FIELD

In the heart of the Oklahoma Panhandle, where the spirit of the Aggies runs deep, Oklahoma Panhandle State University (OPSU) is not just a campus; it's a thriving community that nurtures leadership, service, and excellence. At the forefront of this ethos stands an individual who embodies the true essence of an Aggie – Shawn Joy.

Shawn Joy wears many hats at OPSU, seamlessly juggling his roles as the head baseball coach, assistant athletic director, and director of alumni relations. Beyond the university's grounds, he is an active participant in two significant local organizations – the Guymon Rotary Club and the Guymon Ambassadors. Through these affiliations, Shawn's impact reaches far beyond the baseball diamond and into the lives of those he serves.

The Guymon Rotary Club holds a special place in Shawn's heart, serving as a platform for him to channel his passion for community service. With the motto "Services Above Self," the Rotary Club aligns perfectly with Shawn's commitment to making a difference. The club engages in various community service projects and donations, enhancing the quality of life for Guymon residents. One such endeavor involved fundraising for dictionaries distributed to local students, empowering them with the gift of knowledge. The club's annual BBQ during Pioneer Days is not just a feast for the community but also a source of support for those in need.

As part of the Guymon Ambassadors, Shawn plays a pivotal role in welcoming new local businesses to the fold. His presence during ribbon-cutting ceremonies signifies the university's strong connection to its neighboring enterprises. Moreover, his warm welcome for state representatives underscores the university's role as a vital cog in the broader regional network.

Shawn's dedication to community engagement is deeply embedded in his coaching philosophy as well. His leadership of the OPSU baseball team extends beyond wins and losses. Under his guidance, the team has become a powerhouse of community service. The team's accolades, including being recognized as the Main St. Guymon Organization Volunteers of the Year in 2022, underscore their commitment to giving back.

The team's involvement in various community activities is nothing short of inspiring. From reading sessions at local elementary schools to lending a hand during community clean-ups, the Aggies' baseball team is a shining example of how sports and community can harmoniously intertwine. Their active participation in the Guymon Fiesta highlights their genuine enjoyment of connecting with the locals. Shawn's dedication to his students' holistic development extends to the diamond, the classroom, and beyond. His tireless efforts were recognized when his baseball team was bestowed the SAC Character of Champions award for the 2019-20 season, a testament to their commitment to embodying the core values of sportsmanship and community engagement.

In 2022, the OPSU family celebrated Shawn's well-deserved recognition as the Employee of the Semester. His contributions to the university, both in leadership and service, reflect his unwavering dedication to creating a positive impact within the campus and the larger community. Shawn Joy's story serves as a living testament to the Aggie spirit – a commitment to excellence, integrity, and community. As OPSU continues to shine brightly within the Sooner Athletic Conference (SAC), Shawn's legacy continues to inspire us all to strive for greatness, both on and off the field. **P**



FOOTBALL

SETS TONE FOR NEW SEASON DURING HOMECOMING WIN

The OPSU Football team brought the heat in an electrifying homecoming game against Arkansas Baptist College this evening, thrilling fans with a performance that showcased their resilience and determination. The Aggies set the tone for the game by striking first with an impressive score on their very first drive. Junior quarterback Brandon Stephens led the charge, rushing for 36 yards and capping it off with a sensational touchdown. Alan Munoz completed the PAT to put OPSU on the scoreboard early.

The Aggies' defense proved equally formidable, with Khalon Slaughter making a crucial sack on the Buffaloes' quarterback, resulting in an 11-yard loss. The very next play saw Alon Woodberry intercepting the ball for the Aggies, setting the stage for an action-packed showdown. As the first quarter drew to a close, the score stood at Aggies 7, Buffaloes 0, demonstrating OPSU's dominance in the early stages of the game. The second quarter picked up where the first left off, with OPSU continuing to make waves. Brandon Stephens connected with Draylon Roberson for an impressive 16-yard touchdown reception, and Munoz's PAT was spot on. Arkansas Baptist College responded with a 20-yard touchdown run of their own, and the ensuing PAT was good, keeping the game competitive.

As halftime approached, the Aggies had a golden opportunity to extend their lead but were held at 4th and goal due to penalties and the Buffaloes' stout defense. The halftime score stood at Aggies 14, Buffaloes 7, leaving fans eagerly anticipating the second half. The third quarter showcased scoring prowess from both teams. Arkansas Baptist College capitalized on an OPSU fumble, recovering the ball for a score, albeit missing the PAT. Brandon Stephens continued to shine, connecting with Ryan Acosta for a 13-yard touchdown catch, with Munoz's PAT extending OPSU's lead. The Buffaloes retaliated, as Anton Clayton threw a 3-yard pass to DeAvion Cullins for a touchdown, though their two-point conversion attempt was unsuccessful. The third quarter concluded with the Aggies maintaining a slender lead, with the score at 21-19.

In the fourth quarter, OPSU's offense faced stiff opposition but managed to secure victory with a 22-yard field goal courtesy of Alan Munoz. Christopher Mag then sealed the deal with a 4-yard rushing touchdown, and Munoz's successful PAT put the game out of reach.

The Aggies won the game by a score of 31-19. The Aggies are excited to return to their home turf next weekend as they take on Louisiana Christian University on Saturday, September 30th, with kickoff scheduled for 6:00 PM. This special evening will also see OPSU honoring their 2023 Athletics Hall of Fame Inductees, promising an unforgettable experience for fans and alumni alike. **P**



SCORES BIG WIN AT SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

OPSU'S Rodeo Team made the trip downstate to compete in Durant, Oklahoma at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and brought a victory home to the Panhandle. Our women's team secured 1st place, and our men's team brought home 7th. Freshman, Camree Slavin, made her presence known for all the Central Plains region, bringing home the All-Around Cowgirl title dominating in three events over the weekend. Parker McIntyre, a junior at OPSU and a recent standout at Colby College, continued her remarkable streak in Goat Tying dominating the long round. With a long-go time of 7.1 seconds and short-go time just behind at 7.9 seconds splitting the win, McIntyre secured another 1st-place win in the average.

Not too far behind her was teammate, McKenna Brennan, a senior, with an impressive 8.2-second run in the long-go placing 5th in the round and 8.9-second run in the short-go placing her at 6th in the round and in the average. Kiley Slavin secured 10th in the average with a long-go time of 8.4 seconds and a 12.6-second in the short-go.

Finishing out our Aggie Goat Tyers, Camree Slavin split 8th and 9th in the average after a solid long-go run of 8.5 seconds and a short-go run of 9.8 seconds. Slavin wasn't finished there. She went on to show her skills as an all-around cowgirl. She was the lone Aggie in the Breakaway Roping with a 2.8-second run in the long-go, and a 3.3-second run in the short round bringing home 2nd/3rd in the average. Slavin was Miss Consistent in the Barrel Racing clocking her fastest time of the weekend in the long go with a 17.11-second run placing 6th, a solid short go run put her in a split for 5th/6th, and she was 6th in the average. Cooper Slavin, a senior, showed his skill in Tie-Down roping again, returning to the Panhandle with an overall finish of 5th in the average, making a run of 11.5 seconds in the long go splitting 8th/9th and staying smart with a run of 11.8-seconds in the short to place 4th in the go.

In Saddle Bronc Riding, senior, Brett Coffman, made Aggie Nation proud. Coffman secured 2nd place in the long go with an impressive score of 71 points and with a tough horse in the short go he placed 4th, ultimately placing 4th in the average.

Jack Cornwell, a Freshman in Aggie Nation, made his mark this weekend in Steer Wrestling. Cornwell initially split 3rd and 4th place with an impressive 4.7-second run in the long go.

Riley Roderick and Cason Webb teamed up to represent OPSU in Team Roping. The duo placed 9th in the long go with an 8.3-second run. Unfortunately, tough luck left the team with no time in the short go, knocking them out of the average.

As we celebrate these athletes, we also recognize the invaluable contributions of our coaching staff and the support of the entire OPSU community. This weekend reflected individual achievements and highlighted the collective spirit and teamwork that define OPSU's Rodeo Team. Looking ahead, we remain confident that our Aggies will continue to find success as they compete, upholding OPSU's legacy of rodeo excellence. **P**

17th Annual



**CHILI
COOK-OFF**

NOVEMBER 4, 2023 | TAILGATE @ 1PM

CHILI JUDGING @ 2PM

**FOOTBALL GAME @ 4PM: OPSU VS SOUTHWESTERN
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD UNIVERSITY (TEXAS)**

