UCO Faculty and Students Earn Prestigious DaVinci Institute Honors

UCO English professor Kevin J. Hayes and UCO students Kelly Sehon, Bobbie Gower, and Tracy Hull were recently honored by the prestigious Oklahoma DaVinci Institute for their contributions to critical thinking and creativity in higher education. Hayes, named a 2009 DaVinci Fellow, was recognized by the Institute as being one of the preeminent bibliographers in the United States and will receive $1,000 and a medal for his contributions. Sehon, a secondary English education major, was selected as a 2009 DaVinci Scholar by previous winner and UCO professor Wayne Stein for his efforts in teacher preparation. Gower, a biology education major, was also named a DaVinci Scholar for her project “The Clay of Biology: Molding Young Scientists.” In addition, Hull received DaVinci Scholar honors for her service learning proposal “Math Game Mania.” The DaVinci Scholars will receive $3,000 during their first year of teaching.

UCO Earns 2009 Regional Innovator Award for Sustainability Efforts

UCO recently received the 2009 Innovator Award from the Southern Growth Policies Board for its numerous sustainability initiatives that encourage economic opportunities involving bio-products, alternative energy and energy efficiency. Southern Growth Innovator awards are presented annually to one organization in each of Southern Growth’s member states - Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Since 2004, UCO has implemented many environmentally-friendly programs that include energy efficient lighting, computer controlled irrigation, a bicycling program for students, a campus-wide recycling program, a bio-diesel fuel program and the use of 100 percent wind energy.

UCO Winter Sports Cap Off Seasons with Big Wins

UCO’s winter athletic teams all completed successful seasons recently, highlighted by the women’s basketball team that set a school record for wins with 27. Led by head coach Guy Hardaker, the women’s team finished 27-6, won a second straight Lone Star Conference North Division championship and earned their second consecutive NCAA Division II national tournament bid. UCO’s wrestling team finished sixth in the NCAA Division II national tournament in Houston, Texas with a national runner-up finish for Dustin Finn and four other individuals earning All-America honors. The men’s basketball team, 24-6, captured their fourth Lone Star Conference North Division title in five years and also appeared in the NCAA Division II national tournament.

UCO’s Phelps Receives Distinguished PGA Horton Smith Award

Bob Phelps, director of The Professional Golfers’ Association of America (PGA) Golf Management Program in the College of Business Administration, won the Horton Smith Award for the South Central Section PGA. Phelps, a PGA member, was awarded for his outstanding contributions to professional education. This is Phelps’s third Horton Smith Award and the fourth for UCO’s PGA Golf Management Program, with staff member Wes Wilkinson receiving the award in 2008.

Tony Award-winner McKechnie Shares Experience with UCO Students

Tony Award-winner Donna McKechnie visited UCO in February to conduct master classes in both dance and voice and work with UCO’s cast of “Promises, Promises.” McKechnie was one of the three lead dancers in the original cast of “Promises, Promises” and originated the role of Cassie in “A Chorus Line” on Broadway. She continues to work in New York and London.