Celebrating the CHK|Central Boathouse

UCO celebrated the ongoing construction of the CHK|Central Boathouse on the Oklahoma River with a “beam signing” and reception in March. Those who signed the beam will now be a permanent part of the newest presence on the thriving Oklahoma River. President Don Betz called the construction of the CHK|Central Boathouse the next step in a fulfillment of a dream and a demonstration of the power of common vision, collaboration and generosity. “This is a very special day for us,” Betz said. “Rising just to the north of us is this amazing phenomenon that’s called the metropolitan area – Oklahoma City. Now, 1.6 million people are looking to its future. I cannot tell you how proud and excited we are to be part of that story.”

Gov. Mary Fallin Honored

UCO’s Nigh University Center (NUC) now includes a room that bears the name of Gov. Mary Fallin. The naming of the room honors Fallin, a UCO alumna, who has been a strong supporter of higher education in Oklahoma. The university has a long tradition of honoring Oklahoma public servants with room dedications in the NUC, including Oklahoma Govs. and U.S. Sens. Robert S. Kerr and Henry Bellmon, and Congressman Carl Albert. The governor called the experience a humbling one. “I have very fond memories of my years here, so this is very, very special,” Fallin said. “I was a young girl, paying for my own college, but I was also trying to support myself. What I found was that UCO not only offered a great education with great professors, and I certainly learned a lot, but it was affordable to me.”

Former First Lady Donna Nigh Honored

UCO’s Department of Advanced Professional and Special Services now bears the name of Donna Nigh, who served as the first lady of both the state of Oklahoma and the university. Nigh’s husband, former Oklahoma Gov. George Nigh, served as UCO president from 1992-1997. “For decades, Mrs. Nigh has been a champion for those whose special needs are sometimes overlooked or unmet,” said James Machell, Ph.D., dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies. Many of the academic programs within the department that now bears Nigh’s name prepare special educators, speech-language pathologists, reading specialists, library media specialists, school counselors and school principals.
Student Named DaVinci Scholar

Laura Borkenhagen, an alumna of UCO and current early childhood education graduate student, has been named a 2014 DaVinci Institute of Oklahoma Scholar. The award honors pre-service teachers whose academic accomplishments and service to the university are notable. Nominees demonstrate the ability to integrate content into relevant applications through a service-learning proposal exemplifying scholarship, creativity, inventiveness, sound teaching techniques and a keen sense of responsibility. Borkenhagen, whose service-learning project focused on bullying, will receive a $1,000 check in October of her first year of teaching in an Oklahoma school.

KCSC 90.1 FM Now KUCO

Classical Radio KCSC 90.1 FM has adopted new call letters, KUCO, to better reflect the partnership between the radio station and the university. KCSC was named for Central State College, the university's official name when the station was created. “We have always felt that the radio station represented an important outreach to the community, and we are truly pleased that the call letter change will tie the station even more closely to UCO,” said Pam Washington, Ph.D., dean of UCO’s College of Fine Arts and Design, which includes the station under its umbrella. Broadcasting from UCO's campus since 1966, KUCO 90.1 FM is the only locally programmed classical music station in the state of Oklahoma.

Cash Recognized for Orientation Work

Caleb Cash, coordinator of Parent and Family programs for the Office of Campus Activities at UCO, recently received the Association for Orientation, Transition, and Retention in Higher Education’s 2014 Region IV New Professional Award. Cash works with Parent and Family Orientation at Central and annually helps more than 600 parents transition their children into college. He also advises Central’s student orientation leaders, helping them to create new student programs. Post-orientation, Cash is a liaison between family members and the university through his management of Central’s Parent and Family Association. “I work to create memorable programs for both students and family members throughout the academic year. I also have the privilege to work with many student organizations as an adviser and see the growth and excitement students have when creating new and different events,” Cash said.

UCO Dominates ADDY Awards

UCO’s Department of Design once again dominated the student categories at the 2014 Oklahoma City ADDY Awards, with 31 graphic design students winning a total of 90 awards, more than any other university in the competition. Of those awards, 24 were gold, 34 were silver and 30 were bronze. “The Department of Design is so proud of every single one of our student winners,” said Amy Johnson, M.F.A., chair of the Department of Design. “This spectacular feat is really a testament to the education our design students gain at Central.” The ADDY Awards are the advertising industry’s largest and most representative competition, attracting more than 50,000 entries every year in the local competitions throughout the nation. In addition to the 90 ADDY Awards won by students, UCO took home three professional gold and two professional silver awards, bringing the grand total to 95 awards won by Central.