Chrusciel to Join UCO as VP of Administration

Donald Chrusciel, Ph.D., will join UCO in February as the university’s new vice president of administration. Chrusciel comes to Central from Iowa State University where he has been business services director of facilities planning and management since 1999. UCO President Don Betz cited Chrusciel’s demonstrated business savvy in higher education, collaborative nature and fresh perspective as key factors in his selection. “As UCO moves forward in serving the Oklahoma City area as its metropolitan university, and in these challenging times of fiscal constraints and increased accountability, he will be a significant contributor to our executive decisions,” Betz said. “His wealth of experience, as well as his regionally and nationally recognized expertise in campus administration, financial planning, budget management, and information technology, will provide us with solid fiscal leadership as we implement our strategic plan, Vision 2020.”

Students Revive DHS Playroom

Students from UCO’s Early Childhood Association and Family Life Education program recently revived the playroom at the Department of Human Services Adult and Family Services Center in Midwest City. The redesign was a service learning project for the students’ Play, Curriculum and Program Development course, in which students learn how children’s play environments affect and shape their development and learning. The students, along with members of Central’s Early Childhood Association, donated books, paint, toys, baskets, a bookshelf, pillows, a play mat and a non-breakable mirror as part of the redesign plan which included repainting the playroom and creating a more comfortable reading area, a construction area and a space for older children to do homework.

Faculty, Staff Exceed United Way Goal

Central’s 2013 United Way Campaign raised $68,079, exceeding the university’s $60,000 goal and demonstrating a continued commitment to leadership in civic and community engagement. The 2013 fundraising total is a 13.5 percent increase over Central’s 2012 United Way Campaign. More than 40 percent of Central’s full and part-time faculty and staff contributed, and 68 percent of those donations came via payroll deduction. With the theme, “We Can Make a Difference – Just Check the Box,” the university encouraged faculty and staff to opt for payroll deductions to make donating more convenient.
ROTC Cadet Receives National Scholarship

Central ROTC cadet, battalion commander and senior nursing student Casey Strong is one of five recipients of the U.S. Army’s F. Edward Hebert Health Services Professional Scholarship for students pursuing careers as nurse practitioners. Strong will commission as a second lieutenant in May 2014 and immediately enroll in a nurse practitioner program specializing in the mental health field. The scholarship includes all tuition, as well as books, equipment, most fees and a monthly stipend. She will interview with the University of Texas at San Antonio, the University of Utah School of Medicine and Western Kentucky University School of Nursing before deciding where she will pursue her graduate degree. Upon completion of her studies, she will advance to the rank of captain.

Former US Ambassador, Iran Hostage Visits UCO

Central hosted a presentation and question-and-answer session with former U.S. ambassador John W. Limbert, Ph.D., who was one of 52 American hostages held for 444 days beginning in November 1979 in Tehran, Iran, during the country’s Islamic Revolution. Limbert’s “Iran and America: Endless Enemies?” presentation examined both the history and future of U.S.-Iran relations. “As world events and conversations continue to center on the Middle East, it is imperative that we engage with the academic and diplomatic communities that have firsthand knowledge of the complex issues and realities of the region,” said Jarrett Jobe, Ph.D., executive director of UCO’s Leadership Central, on Limbert’s visit.

Design Chair Moderates Middle East Symposium

Ruki Ravikumar, M.F.A., chair of the Department of Design at Central, advanced the global position of design by facilitating and moderating the Middle East Design Educators Association’s first symposium in Doha, Qatar, in November. The association serves as an inspirational and informational platform that enables educators and practitioners in the Middle East to internationally share ideas, methods, challenges and opportunities, ensuring they have a voice and presence in the global conversation on design education.

New Energy Economics Degree Offered

Students at Central have a new option in preparing for a career in Oklahoma’s energy industry through the Bachelor of Business Administration in Energy Economics. The program, which started in fall 2013, is offered through the university’s Department of Economics and International Business. The degree program instills the core skills all economics majors experience with an added focus on the numerous issues encountered in the oil, natural gas and electric industries. Students also learn about regulatory issues and significant quantitative analysis related to the field. The degree is a more intensive and cross-disciplinary variant of a traditional economics education, incorporating material from other disciplines, such as accounting and finance, which also deliver essential skills relevant to the energy industry.