Central Named ‘Great College to Work For’

UCO was the only Oklahoma higher education institution to be named one of the “2013 Great Colleges to Work For” by The Chronicle of Higher Education. This is the fifth time in the past six years the university has made the list, with past recognition in 2008 and 2010-12. In the latest survey, the university ranked among the best nationally in two of the 2013 categories — in professional/career development and in teaching environment. The Chronicle ranks universities after directly surveying faculty and staff at universities and colleges nationwide.

Preliminary Fall Numbers Reported

Enrollment numbers for the fall 2013 semester remain constant at 17,220, just 19 less than Central's largest enrollment ever — 17,239 reported in 2011. Last year's enrollment was 17,211. In addition, New Broncho Orientation had about the same number of participants, 989 this year vs. 997 last year. Other reports are showing a more engaged student group. Stampede Week activities in the Nigh University Center Grand Ballroom had capacity attendance, with about 100 students turned away each night to avoid over-crowding. “Wake Up in Wantland” had the best attendance ever. Enrollment Central participation among first-time freshmen increased 5 percent, from 1,872 to 1,970.

Olympic Committee Renews UCO Contract

The U.S. Olympic Committee in July renewed its contract for Central to be a U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Site. Since 2009, Central has housed 16 national Team USA competitors from archery, taekwondo, sitting volleyball and track and field. UCO has been home to the U.S. men's and women's sitting volleyball teams since 2005. UCO resident athlete Jeremy Campbell in July received an ESPY award for Best Male Athlete with a Disability and a gold medal in the men’s discus F44 at the International Paralympic Committee’s Athletics World Championship in Lyon, France. In August, the U.S. Women’s Sitting Volleyball team that's based at UCO won the Moscow Open Cup in Russia, beating No. 1 ranked China for the first time.
Labyrinth Offers an ‘Oasis of Serenity’

Central's newly installed labyrinth officially opened Sept. 6, making UCO the only public institution of higher learning in the state to have one. Designed to give students another element of transformative learning, the labyrinth is a replica of a 13th century installation at Chartres Cathedral in France. “The process of reflection is essential to lifelong learning. It is through reflection that we find new opportunities and fresh perspectives,” President Don Betz said, noting that the labyrinth offers an “oasis of serenity amid an otherwise bustling campus.” UCO's labyrinth coordinator is Diane Rudebock, Ed.D., R.N., in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Studies.

Department of Design Opens Art Lab

Central's Department of Design has opened a letterpress and prototyping lab for use by both students and the community. Located in space near the campus, at 1020 Waterwood Parkway, the lab had a grand opening in late July with guests able to each produce a poster on an historical Vandercook Letterpress machine. The press machine is part of a collection showing the evolution of printing and giving users familiarity with the major benchmarks. The lab's color 3-D printer will give students and community workshop participants the opportunity to experience the latest in reproduction techniques. “We hope this lab creates opportunities for collaboration among UCO design students, faculty and creative professionals,” Ruki Ravikumar, M.F.A., chair of the Department of Design, said.

ACM@UCO Shares Music with Children

The Academy of Contemporary Music at UCO sponsored an interactive garage band tent at the Sept. 1 “Wiggle Out Loud” family music festival in downtown Oklahoma City. Children were given the opportunity to play instruments such as guitar, drums, keyboard and bass with the assistance and supervision of ACM@UCO students. “It was a great opportunity for our students to share their love of music with the community and to act as role models for younger kids interested in music,” Scott Booker, ACM@UCO chief executive, said. The free festival was an inaugural event aimed at getting kids engaged in physical activities to establish healthy habits in their daily lives.

UCO, Supporting America’s Veterans, Reserves

UCO recently introduced two new ways it supports American veterans pursuing college degrees or university employment. First, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has designated Central as a Yellow Ribbon School, honoring UCO's efforts to help veterans complete their degrees. Second, the university has enlisted in a Department of Defense program that encourages employers to support employee participation in the military. Central pledged to provide its managers and supervisors with the tools needed to effectively manage employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve; to appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills service members bring to the workforce; to encourage the employment of Guardsmen, Reservists and veterans; and, to recognize and support U.S. service members and their families in peace, in crisis and in war.