

## Col. Little speaks at NOC Veteran's Day ceremony

Col. Lekitha Little, Commander of the 71<sup>st</sup> Mission Support Group – 71<sup>st</sup> Flying Training Wing at Vance Air Force Base, spoke at the Northern Oklahoma College Veteran's Day program Thursday at the Gantz Center.

Col. Little spoke about "Service," the theme for 2023.

Little provided a historical account of women in the military culminating in the celebration of the 1948 Women's Armed Forces Integration Act. The passage of that law allowed women to serve in the military during peace time.

She cited examples from the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and both World Wars of women in the service.

"Women have always been a part of military service from the Revolutionary War through the present day," she said. "President Truman's signing of the 1948 bill allowed women to make the military a career."

Little also encouraged everyone in attendance to continue to grow, to continue to find ways to serve, expanding on the theme for 2023 National Theme.

"No matter whether you are a student or a retired person, there are always ways to serve," she said. "I always tried to leave a place better than I found it and that happens through service. You can serve in your church, organization, or community. There are always ways to serve."



**Col. Kelitha Little**

She encouraged those in attendance to find their space.

"Everyone should smile, laugh, have fun, and enjoy the space you're in," she said. "Don't live in the space of fear but live in the space of enjoyment."

Five Vietnam veterans were honored at the event, each was presented a pin commemorating their service. Five female veterans were also



**PLC Student Kim Boles places a pin on a Vietnam Veteran at Thursday's Veterans Day Ceremony at NOC Enid. (photo by Shiloh Martin/Northern Oklahoma College)**

honored for their service honoring the 1948 Women's Armed Service Integration Act.

Little was introduced by former Enid mayor and retired Air Force veteran George Pankonin.

The event was sponsored by the NOC Diver-

sity Committee, chaired by Dr. Mary Ann McCoy. Remarks were also provided by Dr. Clark Harris, NOC President, and Vice President for

(See **Veterans** on Page 2)





NOC sponsored a Veteran's Day Program Thursday in the Gantz Center. Pictured (L-R); George Pankonin, Vice President for Enid; Jeremy Hise, President; Dr. Clark Harris; Col. Keli-tha Little, Diversity Committee Chairman; Mary Ann McCoy. (photo by Shiloh Martin, Northern Oklahoma College)

# Veterans

(Continued from Page 1)

NOC Enid Jeremy Hise.

The armed forces medley was played by Cynthis Smith with veterans standing during the playing of each anthem. The ceremony ended with the playing of "Taps."

NOC Enid President's Leadership Council students served the event.

## Thanksgiving dinner served Thursday

Aladdin Food Service will be serving a traditional Thanksgiving Meal for lunch Thursday at the cafeterias in both Tonkawa and Enid.

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An Enid area veteran salutes the flag at Thursday's program at NOC Enid.



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# NOC now offering program for Micro-credential in Corrections

Northern Oklahoma College announced a partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections to offer micro-credentials and scholarships for correctional institutions state wide.

The criminal justice program at NOC is working with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections office of professional development to create customized courses allowing their correctional employees to expand on the knowledge and skills in their chosen field.

Funding for this program was provided by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education through the Upskill OK initiative. Through this funding, NOC is providing scholarships to the Oklahoma Department of Corrections for the new partnership.

NOC Criminal Justice Program Director Troy Cochran said, “I’m excited to partner with prisons all across the state in such an innovative new way to increase the knowledge of the field of corrections and provide Oklahoma Department of Correction institutions and employees beneficial and real-world education.”

“I’m very pleased with Troy Cochran’s leadership and the way the team at NOC came together to prepare to offer this micro-credential in Corrections,” said Vice President for Academic Affairs Diana Watkins. “Troy has worked closely with registration, academic affairs, finance, and scholarships to develop this

partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. Brad Griffith at the State Regents office was instrumental in guiding us through the micro-credentials process and this is the beginning of some exciting offerings to come at Northern.”

NOC’s micro-credential program consist of three courses online in an 8-week self-paced academic environment.

Courses include a college level academic course in corrections, one custom tailored to Oklahoma Departments of Corrections specific training needs as an institution and institutional cross-training that provides an overall institutional benefit. Career exploration experiences allow the student to investigate specific job requirements and work environments.

Once all three courses are complete, the employee will receive a total of four digital micro-credential badges with the final badge in Detention and Correctional Officers as well as nine credit hours through Northern Oklahoma College.

Digital badges are a web-based artifact that contains metadata that documents students’ completion of a credential, such as a micro-credential, certificate or degree, and can be shared and verified electronically.

Future plans are to expand this program at the county jail level in the surrounding area.

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# Zepeda, Bassoff named permanent soccer coaches at NOC Enid

NOC Enid has named Cesar Zepeda as the head women's soccer coach for the Lady Jets.

Zepeda served as the interim head coach taking over for Michael DuRoy in August.



Cesar Zepeda

Zepeda led the Lady Jets to an 9-7-3 record in 2023.

"I am really excited to remove the interim tag and move forward with coach Zepeda," said athletic director Alan Foster. "I believe Cesar did an outstanding job considering the circumstances he was given. I feel his leadership allowed Lady Jets soccer to have a successful season and I look forward to what he can accomplish in a more stable situation."

Zepeda is excited for the opportunity at Enid.

"I am very grateful and excited on becoming the head coach for NOC women's soccer," he said. "I'd like to thank my family, friends and the institution for this opportunity."

"This season, I think we came in with high expectations from the previous season," he said. "With the amount of in-season challenges we had to face, I think the team rose above them and conquer them to say the least. Our season didn't end how we would have liked it but I know a lot of positive attributes were taken

NOC Enid has named Aron Bassoff as the head men's soccer coach for the Jets.

Bassoff served as the interim head coach taking over for Michael DuRoy in August.



Aron Bassoff

He led the Jets to an 8-5-3 record, the Jets finished in second place in NJCAA Region 2. Bassoff was named Coach of the Year.

"I am really excited to remove the Interim tag and move forward with coach Bassoff," said athletic director Alan Foster. "I feel Aron did an outstanding job considering the circumstances he was given. I feel his leadership allowed Jets soccer to have a successful season and I look forward to what he can accomplish in a more stable situation."

Bassoff is excited for the opportunity at Enid.

"I am excited to fully take over the men's soccer program NOC," he said. "When you look at the circumstances of mine and of the program at the time, you can see it was meant to be. The team deserves the credit for having the season they did it. They handled all the changes with maturity and poise which is why they accomplished what they did."

"The future is extremely bright with as many

(See Zepeda on Page 5)

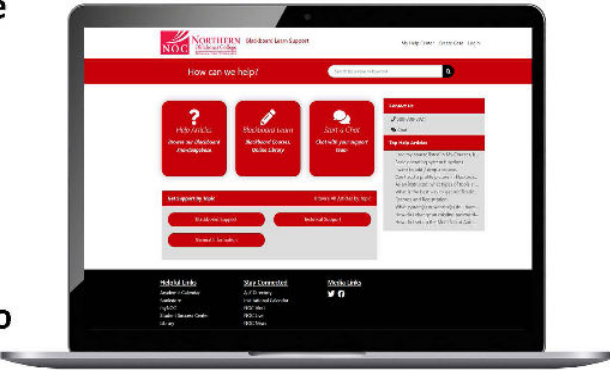
(See Bassoff on Page 5)



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# Zepeda

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from this season.”  
“Moving forward, we plan on working towards a great recruiting class that will help us achieve our individual and future goals along with having spring off-season to continue to grow and get better individually and as a team. Northern is known for its rich history in soccer and we hope to continue the tradition.”

# Bassoff

(Continued from Page 4)

returning players as we have and a more stable environment,” he added. “I believe the team is ready to move forward and tackle the challenge of being the best in the Region and fighting to make it to Nationals. I have started that process by recruiting what the team needs next fall and we will continue that process with a meaningful spring that will have us train and face good competition in scrimmages.”

## NOC Mavs, Jets basketball update

NOC Enid and Tonkawa Basketball teams are into their 2023-24 seasons this week.  
The Mavs (3-1) have wins over Cowley (KS), #7 Midland (TX), and Seward (KS) while the Lady Mavs (1-2) have a win over Cloud (KS).  
The Lady Jets (1-1) have a win over Frank Phillips (TX) while the Jets (1-2) have a win over the OKC Storm.

Both NOC women’s teams are in the Lady Jet Classic Friday and Saturday while both NOC men’s teams are in the Barton (KS) Classic in Great Bend, Kansas, Friday and Saturday.  
More information for NOC sports can be found at [www.nocjets.com](http://www.nocjets.com) and [www.nocmavs.com](http://www.nocmavs.com).

## NOC November Birthdays



Raychel Harves	Nov. 10	Elva Lora	Nov. 22
Samantha Lee	Nov. 12	Peggy Emde	Nov. 23
Kathi Shamburg	Nov. 13	Summer McClure	Nov. 24
John Kuhlmann	Nov. 20	Dee Cooper	Nov. 25
Shannon Lorg	Nov. 20	Silvia Rodriguez	Nov. 29

# NOC Calendar

Nov. 10

Final Day to Withdraw from 16-Week Courses without Evaluation  
Fine Arts Auditions, KPAC, 10 a.m., Tonkawa  
Away Jets Basketball vs. Hutchinson (KS) at Barton, 3 p.m.  
Away Lady Mavs Basketball vs. Garden City (KS), 4:30 p.m.  
Home Lady Jets Basketball vs. Butler (KS), 6:30 p.m.  
Away Mavs Basketball vs. Barton (KS), 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 11

Away Jets Basketball vs. Barton (KS), 3 p.m.  
Away Lady Mavs Basketball vs. Buter at Enid, 1 p.m.  
Home Lady Jets Basketball vs. Garden City (KS), 3 p.m.  
Away Mavs Basketball vs. Hutchinson (KS) at Great Bend (KS), 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 13

Campus Wide Hide and Go Seek, Gazebo, 8 p.m., Tonkawa

Nov. 14

Free Lunch, BCM, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Tonkawa  
Runner Girls, THS Football Field, 3:30 p.m., Tonkawa

Nov. 15

Free Lunch, Wesley House, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Tonkawa  
Free BCM Lunch, Gantz Center, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Enid  
Board of Regents Meeting, Brown Conference Room, 2 p.m., Stillwater  
Away Mavs and Lady Mavs Basketball vs. Cowley (KS), 5:30 p.m./7:30 p.m.  
The Gathering, BCM, 7 p.m., Enid

Nov. 17

Residence Halls Close, 3 p.m.

For additional information, visit the following links: NOC Calendar



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# Kansas conservation award winner assists NOC science students

Kurt Grimm, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), Public Lands Manager for Slate Creek Wetlands (Sumner County, SCW), Kaw Wildlife Area and Cowley State Fishing Lake (both in Cowley County), was named this year's recipient of the Kansas Ornithological Society's Avian Conservationist of the Year Award.

Northern Oklahoma College instructor Gene Young and Max Thompson, Southwestern College emeritus professor, nominated Grimm for the award. The award is presented to an individual for making significant contributions to bird conservation and/or education, which can include outstanding work in bird conservation, through the management or preservation of habitats, education or research.

Young said that Grimm's work provided an opportunity as a "learning tool" for NOC students. In fact, he said NOC students have been able to conduct algae, flora and fauna studies of the area, all of which is helping to develop a comprehensive understanding of the entire complex and how interactions between the north and south complex relates to the State land.

A nominee may be any professional, volunteer, educator or other person that has accomplished significant contributions in any of the areas listed. The accomplishment should reflect a long-time commitment to bird conservation and/or education within the State of Kansas. This award was started in 2005, and is presented during the fall annual meeting.

Grimm came to the area in 2004, and has implemented a holistic conservation management plan that has focused on developing wetlands critical to migratory shorebirds along with many other wading birds and waterfowl; maintaining important vegetative communities;

providing nesting and habitat for wetland, upland, and riparian avian species; and providing abundance of small mammal, and amphibian and reptile habitat.

He's been instrumental in procuring funds to enhance existing wetlands, and develop new wetlands in what was formerly used as crop fields. Tree removal and burning has become a frequent tool to open up wetlands that were being infiltrated by native (woody) and invasive species of vegetation. He's controlled cattail populations, and is currently fighting constantly to keep up with a *Phragmites* infestation, an invasive plant species that can reduce open water habitat.

"Prior to Kurt's arrival, SCW had three main complexes, a south and north complex, both privately owned by hunting clubs, and the mid-section operated by KDWP," Young said. "The original 667 acres has increased to 947 acres with additional acquisition. From an avian perspective, SCW is known for extensive shorebird and waterfowl migration, with enough shorebirds to qualify as a site of regional importance for shorebird migration, with a minimal annual 20,000 shorebirds per year. In addition, herons and egrets, rails, and terns frequent the area. The passerine migration, especially sparrows and warblers are also common place in the area. The State land, was an ideal site for the passerines, and has become a frequent location to find Nelson's Sparrow, Le Conte's Sparrow, and both Marsh and Sedge Wrens. But, it had minimal habitat for the aquatic species, unless it was flooded. There was basically, one large pool/mudflat area where shorebirds and waterfowl could be found in large numbers. New wetland development prior to Kurt's arrival focused on deeper pool development without the ability to control water levels. Thus,

the utilization by shorebirds was minimal, but waterfowl use increased. Upon Kurt's arrival, and with his implementation of a holistic approach, he's developed a wetland complex that now has the ability to control water levels, thus allowing drawdown for shorebird migration, extensive water for hunting seasons, and vast winter and breeding habitats...of course when mother-nature cooperates. The result, has been an increasing use of shorebirds, herons, and other wetland dependent species of birds, such that the greatest concentrations are now found as often within the State land as they are in the other larger pools associated with the private lands in the north and south complexes."

Young added, "Kurt has constantly reached out concerning development of the area. He preserved habitat for a species of plant only known in Kansas from SCW (wooly cotton-flower, *Gossypianthus lanuginosus*), and asked me to map the habitat prior to wetland development activities." Young utilized NOC students to survey the area to produce the maps. Students that have been to SCW "love it...it allows them to experience field work in a unique setting. These excursions for both majors and non-majors are life-long learning experiences," Young stated.

He added, students get to see how collaboration and conservation beyond state boundaries can benefit flora and fauna from a regional perspective.

The Kansas Ornithological Society was formed in 1949, and is the only statewide organization in Kansas devoted specifically to the study, conservation, and enjoyment of birds. Collectively, the KOS has unrivaled knowledge about the status, distribution, ecology, and identification of the state's avifauna (<https://ksbirds.org/kos/KOSindex.html>).



(Pictured L-R): Billie Jervis, Sam Bernal, Ty Scherman, and Mattie Horn from NOC Instructor Gene Young's Introduction to Wildlife class (S22), visiting Slate Creek Wetlands, Sumner County, KS. After a hard day's work tromping through the mud erecting Tree Swallow nesting boxes, the class is standing next to a plaque that acknowledged NOC for its contribution to Slate Creek Wetland Restoration Project from work in previous years. Kurt Grimm has been instrumental in allowing NOC students to undergo experiential learning in one of the most diverse ecosystems in the region.



Life changing.



# NOC float at the Veterans' Day Parade in Ponca City

