

NOC celebrates Dr. Evans' presidency

Northern Oklahoma College President Dr. Cheryl Evans Retirement Celebration was held last Wednesday at the Renfro Center at NOC Tonkawa.

The reception paid tribute to Dr. Evans for her 10 years of service to NOC and her 27 years of service to higher education in Oklahoma.

"I want to thank everyone for being here to celebrate this milestone," Dr. Evans said. "I want to thank you for your support. I have been so blessed to have so many people invest in me and each of you have touched my life in some way."

"I want to thank my NOC team for this special night," she added. "I have been so fortunate to have worked with the best people in higher ed with the goal to do the best for our students."

"NOC has a special place in my heart," she said. "The friendships will last forever."

"This has been the hardest decision I have ever made but you will still see me, but it'll be for the fun stuff," she joked.

"I know one thing," she concluded. "NOC has changed my life for the better."

The NOC Executive Council presented Dr. Evans with a Yatika Starr Fields original, "Beauty on the Plains."

Video presentations from Chancellor Glen D. Johnson, Jr., Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; Dr. Janet Cunningham, President

Northwestern Oklahoma State University; Linda Brown, former Regent of the NOC Board of Regents and Current Trustee to the NOC Foundation; Carl and Brenda Renfro, former Regent Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and founder of the Renfro Endowed Lectureship Program; Bert Mackie, former Regent of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and Trustee to the NOC Foundation; and Willie Spears, Professional Speaker – The Willie Spears Experience and former student of Dr. Evans.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Pam Stinson spoke for the NOC Executive Council. "Through the videos, you have heard tonight from a highly respected but small sampling of the many people who wanted to honor what Chancellor Johnson rightly called the "lasting legacy" created by President Cheryl Evans.

It is no easy task, even for people like us who do a lot of talking, to follow these other speakers, nor to put into words how much she's meant to each of us.

Dr. Cunningham, we agree, Dr. Evans was exactly the right person at the right time to lead NOC.

Over the last decade, the Executive Council has spent thousands of hours together, many of them clocked this past year in Zoom meetings during the pandemic. It's given us plenty



The NOC Executive Council commissioned "The Beauty on the Prairie" original by Yatika Fields Starr, as a farewell gift to NOC President Dr. Cheryl Evans. Pictured (L-R): Dr. Cheryl Evans, Dr. Rick Edgington, Jason Johnson, Jeremy Hise, Dr. Pam Stinson, Diana Watkins, Anita Simpson, Sheri Snyder. (photo by John Pickard/Northern Oklahoma College)

of opportunities to see who Cheryl Evans is as a leader and as a person.

We have seen a leader who recognizes that a team can accomplish much more when blending strengths and who generously gives credits

to others while humbly claiming none for herself--despite, as Linda Brown put it, the "way too many hours" she has spent each day on

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the job.

We have seen a leader who follows through with her commitments, from the community partnerships that Mr. Renfro and Mr. Mackie noted to that extra nudge students may need to expand their educational goals. Thank you to Willie Spears for sharing one such example.

And we have seen a leader with the integrity to make hard, unpopular decisions, always focused on what was best for students and NOC.

On a more personal note, all of us have also seen the wisdom and grace of a leader who knew when to say, “No, you can’t please everyone (and sometimes you’ll please no one) but we can be proud of what we accomplished.”

Former Regent Chad Dillingham also read a proclamation from the current NOC Board of Regents.

“WHEREAS, Dr. Cheryl Evans has served Northern Oklahoma College admirably as the 13th President during the years 2011 to 2021 becoming the first female president in the College’s history; and

WHEREAS, President Evans has gained the admiration and respect for her outstanding collaborative leadership, her willingness to carry through with tasks, and her approach while dealing with complex issues; and

WHEREAS, she is respected and trusted by the members of the Northern Oklahoma College Board of Regents and the NOC Executive Council with whom she has served; and

WHEREAS, Northern Oklahoma College has benefited greatly from her caring support, good judgment, and thoughtful insight; and

WHEREAS, during her 10 years of service to the College, she has shown herself to be committed to the ultimate goals of higher education, to the students, the faculty and the staff of the institution, and

WHEREAS, through her tenure, she leaves the College a tremendous legacy of academic success, innovation, and improved facilities; and

WHEREAS, President Evans’ dedication to Northern’s mission and advocacy for higher education helped promote student success and create life-changing experiences.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, on behalf of the students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of Northern Oklahoma College, I do hereby express the College’s deep and abiding appreciation to Dr. Cheryl Evans for her selfless and dedicated service to this institution, and wish her well as she retires her role as President.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, she will be sorely missed. It is our wish that Cheryl and Tom continue to lead a happy and prosperous life and that they continue in good health as friends of Northern. Issued this 16th day of June 2021.

Entertainment was provided by Dr. Edward Dixon, Brandon Haynes, and Connie Van Ausdall of the NOC Fine Arts Division.



Former NOC Regent Chad Dillingham read a Proclamation approved at the Board of Regents Meeting earlier in the day. Pictured (L-R): Regent Michael Martin, Dr. Evans, Regent Chairperson Jodi Cline. (photo by John Pickard/Northern Oklahoma College)



A nice crowd attended Dr. Evans farewell on June 16. (photo by John Pickard/Northern Oklahoma College)



Life changing.

NOC dedicates mural, exhibits bronze at Cultural Engagement Center

A 20x50 foot mural, created by Osage Artist Yatika Starr Fields was dedicated Wednesday at the Northern Oklahoma College Cultural Engagement Center in Tonkawa.

The mural at NOC is a result of a collaboration between Pickens Museum and NOC. "When Cheryl Evans said they were looking for an artist to paint a mural for the engagement center, I immediately recommended Yatika," says Hugh Pickens, Executive Director of Pickens Museum adding that Pickens Museum already has ten paintings by Fields in its permanent collection. "Yatika was delighted to have the opportunity to paint a mural that will inspire Native American students at NOC."

"We are thrilled to partner with Hugh Pickens and the Doctor Pickens Museum," said NOC president Dr. Cheryl Evans. "This mural will complete the fourth phase of the project and will enhance the Cultural Engagement Center. We are grateful for friends such as the Pickens who continue to support our college."

Fields appreciated those who attended the dedication at NOC.

"This is pretty spectacular," he said. "To see this project come to fruition is pretty amazing and I appreciate all of you that are here today to enjoy it."

"This mural truly represents the beauty of art," he said. "It can mean so many different things to people, that's what makes it special."

As Fields pointed out the different aspects of the mural and explained their significance, he also discussed the overall atmosphere of the mural.

"I see this as welcoming for students who enter this place," he said. "This is a gathering place for students and I hope they see it as a warm place where they can enjoy the art and find

their place. This is such a great opportunity for me to give back."

Fields thanked former NOC Native American Student Success Specialist Ted Moore, who brought Fields to Northern.

"Ted had a vision for my work and was instrumental in bringing my work here," he said.

Fields also thanked Hugh Pickens who has been a supporter of Fields' work.

"I appreciate Hugh so much because he wants people to see his collections," he said. "It's not about just collecting art but it's getting it out where the public can see it."

He also thanked the NOC community.

"I have been blessed to get to know the NOC community during this process," he said. "Ted and Anna (Roland, current NASNTI Title III Grant Director), Dr. Evans, Sheri Snyder, the list goes on. I have been able to leave something that is greater than me."

In describing the mural, Fields said it's a picture within so many pictures.

"There is so much symbolism in this mural," he said. "When students look, they can see so many shapes and colors that can mean different things."

Also speaking on Wednesday was sculptor John Free who displayed a bronze at the CEC entitled "Osage Warrior in the Enemy Camp." A small bronze is located in the CEC, a much larger monument version is located on the north side of the Vineyard Library.

"My father had designed the smaller version," Free said. "Hugh then commissioned the larger version."

"The piece represents the partnership between man and horse," he said. "The two blend together as if one."



Yatika Fields Starr describes his mural at the dedication on July 16. (photo by John Pickard/Northern Oklahoma College)



John Free pictured with his broze "Osage Warrior in the Enemy Camp" located just north of the Vineyard Library/Administration Building. (photo by John Pickard/Northern Oklahoma College)

Board of Regents approve budget, say goodbye to Dr. Evans

The Northern Oklahoma College Board of Regents approved the 2021-22 fiscal year budget at the June 16 meeting.

Included in that budget is a modest 2.8% increase in tuition and mandatory fees. The change will take effect in the Fall 2021 semester and will amount to an increase in resident tuition and fees of \$60.00 per semester or \$120.00 for the academic year for students on the Tonkawa and Enid campuses who complete 30 credit hours. The NOC/OSU Gateway Program will coincide with OSU rates. Those rates and cost comparisons are available at <https://www.noc.edu/stillwater/students-stillwater/future-students-stillwater/tuition/>.

I'm pleased that there is some good news with the budget this year. Although we've faced several reductions over the past years, for the coming fiscal year NOC's budget includes state appropriations of \$8.2 million, a 5.42% or \$423,891 increase from last year FY2021.

We still have a way to go as the State allocation my first year at NOC ten years ago for FY2012 was almost \$10.5 million, but we are appreciative for the increase this year. Hopefully, our allocations will continue to be restored in years to come. Even with this increase, State appropriations account for only 33.5% of NOC's overall operating budget; this number continues to be down significantly from the 70% provided by the State of Oklahoma in 2002 while our mandatory costs continue to rise.

She said the budget increase is a result of increased state allocations, the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding (HEERF), and the tuition increase. This budget is based on an estimated 8% decrease in enrollment institution-wide in the coming school year as community colleges across the nation are anticipating lower enrollments due to declining numbers in college age demographics as well as the longer-term post-pandemic effect on underrepre-

sented populations.

Additionally, mandatory costs, such as health-care, property, tort, ELL, and vehicle insurance premiums continue to rise, adding to the demands on the budget.

NOC utilized a portion of HEERF, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) and American Rescue Plan (ARP) one-time monies as allowed by the federal government to support this budget.

Also included in the Oklahoma State Regents' budget for a second year was funding to reimburse 100% of the cost of concurrent enrollment for high school seniors (tuition waivers only).

Also, the budget includes an average 3.22% salary increase for NOC faculty and a 3% across the board salary increase for full time staff.

Evans said, "We are grateful that the State Legislators also approved bond funding for the State Regents that will help support four faculty in STEM fields; NOC will receive a one-million-dollar match for our endowed funds currently held in the NOC Foundation."

The board also bid farewell to retiring NOC President Dr. Cheryl Evans during her final board meeting and approved a proclamation in her honor.

"It has been an honor to serve as Northern Oklahoma's President these past ten years and it has been one of the best overall experiences that I could have ever imagined," Evans said. "The team of people that I've had the privilege of working alongside to serve students have made the best of times and the worst of times all meaningful and productive. Together we have strived to be good stewards of our resources and to improve on this nationally recognized institution. I'm proud of the accomplishments NOC employees and students have achieved. I know that all of you will continue to support and grow Northern's mission and its tradition

of excellence. I am grateful to be part of the NOC family and look forward to seeing all the good things to come for Northern."

In other business, the board approved the Course Catalog, Student Handbook, and Athletic Handbooks for the 2021-22 academic year.

Regents also approved the Campus Master Plan for 2023-2030 and approved the monthly financial reports.

The board also reorganized for the new fiscal year as follows: Michael Martin, Chairman; Jami Groendyke, Vice-Chairman; Stan Brownlee, Secretary; Dale DeWitt, Member; and Jodi Cline, Member.

The Regents will meet next Wednesday, July 21 in the President's Conference Room in Tonkawa at 1 p.m.

Congratulations Dr. Evans on 10 wonderful years at NOC!!!!

Good Luck
in your retirement!!

Witherspoon named Mavs' coach

Brad Witherspoon has been named the head men's basketball coach at Northern Oklahoma College.

Witherspoon, 35, spent the previous four years as an assistant coach at Barton Community College in Great Bend, Kansas. Witherspoon also has assistant coaching experience at Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, Kilgore College in Kilgore, Texas, John Wood Community College in Quincy, Illinois, and Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri.

Witherspoon is excited for the opportunity at NOC.

"I am extremely excited to be the next head basketball coach of the Mavs," Witherspoon said. "The tradition and resources of NOC Tonkawa made this a very sought-after job and I am humbled to have been chosen to lead the program, and be a part of the NOC faculty."

"We can't wait to get to work and to bring in a new era of Maverick Basketball," he added. "I would like to thank the search committee, athletic director Alan Foster, and President Evans for trusting me to continue the great tradition of NOC Tonkawa."

NOC Athletic Director Alan Foster is excited for Witherspoon and the NOC program.

First, I would like to say that we had a very impressive pool of applicants that made this a difficult decision and the search committee's work is greatly appreciated," Foster said. "I believe the quality of the applicant pool reflects the positive position that our program at NOC Tonkawa is viewed by the coaching profession. This is certainly a result of many factors but the recent success achieved by Donnie Jackson positioned us to choose from many quality applicants."

"Throughout the process Brad's enthusiasm, energy and his knowledge of what it took to continue the successful trajectory we are on became more evident with each conversation," Foster added. "No doubt his experience work-

ing for multiple successful coaches has prepared him to be our next head coach at NOC Tonkawa. I believe Brad is going to be a great head coach and I am proud we can give him that opportunity. I look forward

to working with him and welcoming him and his wife Emily to the NOC family."

A former player for the University of Kansas, Witherspoon was a part of teams that held two Big 12 regular season titles, two Big 12 Tournament titles, one Elite 8 appearance, one Final Four appearance, and one National Championship in 2008.

In addition to his two-year letterman playing career under Bill Self at KU, Witherspoon also served as assistant director of numerous basketball camps and the intramural sports supervisor while being a champion in the classroom landing on the Dean's Honor Roll, named a Jayhawk Scholar Athlete, and was also named to the Big 12 Commissioner Academic Honor Roll.

A Humboldt, Kansas, native, Witherspoon earned his bachelor's degree in physical education from the University of Kansas in 2009, before earning his Masters of Health & Physical Education degree from Emporia State University in 2013.

Witherspoon replaces Donnie Jackson who left NOC after eight years for Cowley College in Arkansas City, Kansas.



Brad Witherspoon

Northern Oklahoma College
Annual Student Exhibit

NOW YOU SEE ME

Featuring Art Graduates

KIM BATTLES
LUIS MIRELES

Online Virtual Art Show
<https://www.noc.edu/finearts/art-exhibition/annual-student-art-exhibition-2021/>

Featuring Works in

VISUAL ARTS & DIGITAL MEDIA