



## Students participate in Higher Education Day activities

Students from Oklahoma’s state system institutions and members of the public higher education community across the state connected with area legislators Tuesday, March 9, during a virtual advocacy day to promote the value and importance of higher education in Oklahoma.

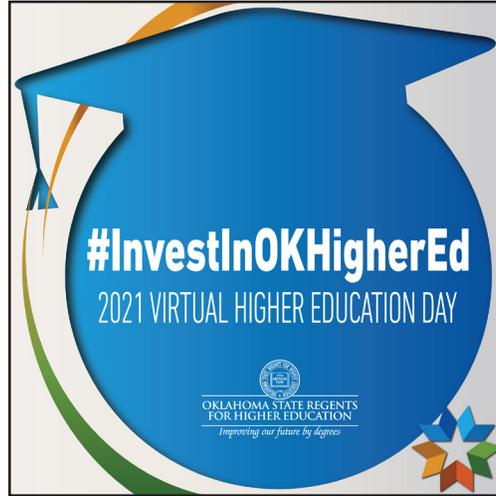
In lieu of in-person legislative office visits and a formal program at the State Capitol, state system colleges and universities sponsored a variety of virtual activities on Virtual Higher Education Day to allow students, campus personnel, and community leaders to safely engage with legislators to demonstrate the critical role of our state system of higher education in Oklahoma’s continued workforce development and economic growth.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University students participated in a number of ways, including filming testimonial videos for social media about important issues facing higher education in Oklahoma.

Those Southeastern students who contributed videos were Carli Wharton, MeKenzie Cruz, James Quarles, Reagan Benson, Anna Antuono, and Jake Popowski.

“We thank the students, faculty and staff from our public colleges and universities and the community champions across the state who support our campuses for reaching out virtually to Oklahoma House and Senate members to highlight the value of a college degree,” said Chancellor Glen D. Johnson. “We look forward to working with Governor Stitt and the Legislature during this legislative session to demonstrate that our budget request for the state system of higher education is specifically designed to strengthen our state’s economy and workforce.”

For FY 2022, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education have requested \$859.2 million, which reflects an increase of \$88.8 million or 11.5% over the FY 2021 appropriation of \$770.4 million.



The State Regents are requesting \$33.8 million for STEM workforce development initiatives, including funds to help meet engineering, nursing, and teacher education workforce needs, increase the number of physician residency slots in the state, and develop microcredentials and rapid re-employment strategies.

Requests to restore financial aid and scholarship programs (\$9.8 million), to fully fund the concurrent enrollment program for high school seniors and juniors (\$4 million), and to provide endowed chair state matching funds bond authorization and debt service (\$10.4 million) are also top priorities in the budget request.

In addition, the State Regents are requesting \$30.8 million for operational cost increases, including systemwide mandatory fixed costs, Section 13 Offset deferred maintenance for campus infrastructure improvements, and funds to support STEM Summer Academies.

Another state system priority in the upcoming legislative session will be to maintain the current law regarding weapons on higher education campuses. Oklahoma higher education supports the second amendment and gun ownership. Under current law, campus presidents have the discretion to authorize who may carry weapons on campus when the individual circumstances warrant it.

The State Regents and the presidents of all 25 state system institutions strongly believe that the current law with regard to weapons on campus is working.

The State Regents will also continue efforts to preserve the dedicated funding source for the Oklahoma’s Promise scholarship.

Recognized by the Southern Regional Education Board as one of the top college access scholarship programs in the nation, Oklahoma’s Promise is considered a national model that combines emphases on academic preparation and financial support for college. More than 95,000 students have earned college tuition scholarships through Oklahoma’s Promise since the program’s inception in 1992.



*Southeastern Student Government Association vice president James Quarles was among a group of students who made videos on issues of higher education to send to area legislators.*

## *Students, faculty represent Southeastern at virtual Oklahoma Research Day*

A number of students and faculty members from Southeastern Oklahoma State University participated in Oklahoma Research Day, held this month in a virtual format.

Oklahoma Research Day promotes cross-campus and cross-disciplinary research among all institutions of higher learning in the State of Oklahoma. The event seeks to encourage networking among researchers and interchange of ideas among those studying and researching in their respective academic disciplines.

Presenters submit research posters in various subject categories for review.

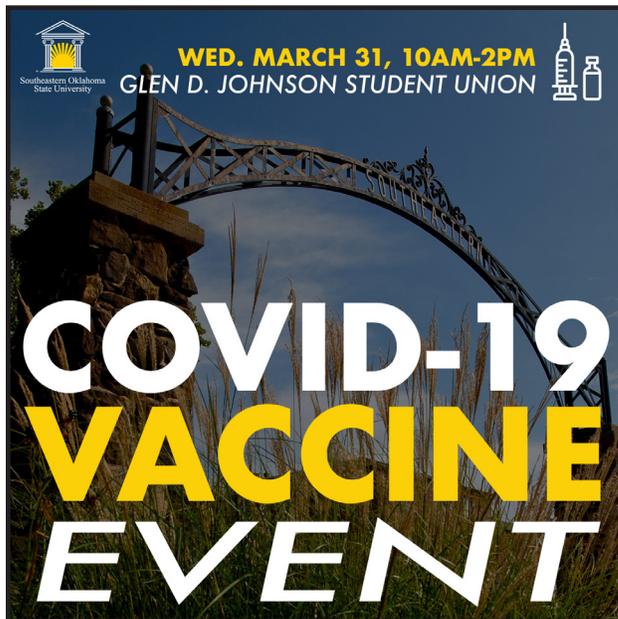
Students participating from Southeastern were Austin Roach, a December 2020 computer science graduate from Milburn, Oklahoma; Josie Frazier, a junior English Education major from Hugo; Rachael Gentges, an MBA management student from Tulsa; Mike Castaneda, an MBA student from Broken Arrow; Haley Hostetler, a junior communication media studies major from Burleson, Texas; Rylee Dunlap, a senior psychology major from Stringtown; Tammy Mullings, an MBA health care information systems student from Tulsa; Luis Concepcion, an MBA data analytics student from Chicago; and Laura Isaacson, an MBA finance student from Shenandoah, Iowa.

Southeastern faculty members participating were Dr. Ming-Shan Su and Dr. Shannon McCraw.

Cameron University served as host for the event, while the Oklahoma Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (OK EPSCoR) was the sponsor.



## COVID-19 vaccine to be offered on campus March 31



Southeastern Oklahoma State University is partnering with the Oklahoma State Department of Health to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to all SE faculty, staff and students.

The Southeastern COVID-19 Vaccination event is scheduled for Wednesday, March 31, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Glen D. Johnson Student Union.

Those persons receiving the vaccine (Pfizer) should bring their SE ID card and driver's license to the event. The Pfizer age limit is 16 and up – those individuals under 18 should be accompanied by a parent.

To register, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0445A4AC29A7FE3-covid>

“We appreciate the Oklahoma State Department of Health working with us to make the vaccine available in a convenient manner on our campus,” Southeastern president Thomas Newsom said. “And we encourage everyone in the campus community who is interested in receiving the vaccine to take advantage of this opportunity.”

The second Pfizer shot will be administered on April 28.

To learn more about the Pfizer vaccine, visit <https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/covid19/documents/vaccine/vaccine-fact-sheets/Fact%20Sheet%20-%20Pfizer%20-%20Recipients.pdf>

The vaccine event is open to all SE students, faculty, and staff from all campus locations.

There is no charge for the vaccine.

## Revisions made to outdoor sports attendance policy

Southeastern has announced a revision to its outdoor sports attendance policy and will now be permitting fans for the sports of baseball, softball, men's and women's tennis, and football with venue specific guidelines in place for student-athlete and fan protection.

The new policy points are listed as follows:

- Fan attendance is permitted at outdoor sports venues due to the nature of outdoor competition and the enhanced ability to safely socially distance.
- Fans in attendance must adhere to Southeastern Campus, Great American Conference, state and federal guidelines, which specify the wearing of facial coverings (masks) at all times and social distancing.
- Attendance is free for all fans, with seating on a first come, first served basis limited by the capacity of venue seating.
- Fans may sit in bleachers where socially distanced is marked or may sit in self-provided chairs as long as socially distanced 6 feet from the fences surrounding the playing area.
- Fans will not be permitted to gather behind home plate/backstop/sidelines/field/courts areas nor team areas (dugouts, benches, etc.).
- Fans are asked to refrain from interacting with players on either team at the site of competition prior to, during and following the games.
- Fans will be asked to register their attendance.
- Signage will be posted around the venues and announcements made to remind attendees to wear masks and properly distance themselves from anyone outside of their household unit or family cluster.
- No concessions will be available at SE home outdoor events.
- Fans are encouraged to follow standard COVID-19 safety guidelines and self-evaluation practices, such as washing and sanitizing hands frequently.
- If you are ill or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please do not attend the games in person. Links to the live stats and live video (when available) will be available on the schedule pages for each sport at [www.gosoutheastern.com](http://www.gosoutheastern.com) so you can watch from home.



### **Championship play**

*Southeastern's Kamryn Cantwell goes up to defend a shot by Payton Jones of Southern Nazarene during the Great American Conference Women's Conference Tournament championship game on March 7. Southern Nazarene hit two late free throws to edge the defending champion Savage Storm, 58-56, at Bloomer Sullivan Arena.*

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### **Back in action**

*Savage Storm wide receiver Christian McGee grabs a pass during a scrimmage with Northeastern State on March 6 at Paul Laird Field. Southeastern held a scrimmage earlier against Midwestern in Wichita Falls, Texas. Southeastern's 2020 football season was cancelled due to COVID-19.*



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## ***Rodeo returns to town***

*The Southeastern Stampede was held March 18-20 at the Durant Riding Club Arena at the Bryan County Fairgrounds. Pictured is Southeastern Oklahoma State University Rodeo team member Laramie Warren, a senior from Adair, Oklahoma.*

## **Planning continues for outdoor commencement**

Earlier this month, Southeastern Oklahoma State University announced plans to move forward in planning for an in-person commencement this spring.

The University is continuing to develop a plan to host several in-person graduation ceremonies the weekend of May 7 -- May 9 at Paul Laird Field on the campus in Durant. These ceremonies will celebrate the commencement of 2020 graduates and May 2021 graduates.

For those students graduating in the Summer of 2021, the University will hold a ceremony at the end of the 2021 Summer semester. The commencement plans will balance the tradition of the ceremony with safety concerns for graduates, guests, and staff with respect to public health and safety.

Tickets will be required for graduates and their guests, and the number of guests may be limited.

All ceremonies will be held outdoors at Paul Laird Field. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be delayed until later the same day. If the weather does not allow for that to happen, the ceremony will be canceled as the University does not have the ability to safely move the ceremonies indoors at this time.

In addition, all ceremonies will be live streamed and an online-only ceremony will be available for viewing for those who are unable to attend or do not wish to attend in person. All participants, graduates, guests, and staff will be required to wear a face mask and maintain social distancing during the event.