Tulsa businessman and Distinguished Alumnus Jerry Buchanan will be the speaker at Southeastern Oklahoma State University’s Spring Commencement.

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 12, at Paul Laird Field. A reception for the graduates, families, and guests will follow at approximately 11:30 a.m. in the Visual & Performing Arts Center.

Buchanan, who operates an enterprise investing firm in Tulsa and Oklahoma City, was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus by Southeastern in 2010. He currently serves on the board of directors for the Southeastern Alumni Association and Southeastern Foundation, and spent five years as president of the alumni group.

“There is no greater ambassador for Southeastern than Jerry Buchanan and it is an honor to have him back as our commencement speaker,” said Southeastern president Larry Minks. “He has committed his time and resources to supporting the University for many years, and his work with our alumni and foundation boards is invaluable. Jerry is a truly great example of someone who gives back to their University and community through their actions.”

Buchanan, a Durant High School graduate, pledged Sigma Tau Gamma at Southeastern and then served in the United States Army. He was second in his graduating class of 1970 at the Drill Sergeant Academy in Ft. Dix, New Jersey.

After returning to Southeastern, Buchanan became president of Sig Tau, president of the Inter-Fraternity Council, and interim president of the Student Senate. He met his future wife, Valda Merrick of Ardmore, at Southeastern.

Early in his business career, Buchanan was employed by Topper’s Menswear and became regional manager at age 26.

Then, at age 29, he founded and became Chief Executive Officer and President of J.C. and Company Menswear and G&B Enterprises.

He has served as president, vice-president, and chair on numerous national and international boards in menswear associations.

Buchanan was named the Republican Man of the Year for Tulsa County in 2007 and earned the Leadership Award in 2006.

In the event of inclement weather, commencement will be held in the Bloomer Sullivan Arena. Since seating is limited in the arena, there will be two ceremonies by degrees.

The first ceremony will be held from 10-11 a.m. for the School of Arts & Sciences, John Massey School of Business, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science (Aerospace), Master of Technology, and Master of Science (Safety).

The second ceremony will be held from 1-2 p.m. for the School of Education & Behavioral Sciences, Master of Arts (Clinical Mental Health Counseling), Master of Education, Master of Arts (Teaching), and Master of Science (Sports Studies and Athletic Administration).

The decision concerning the location will be made by noon on Friday, May 11, and posted on the Southeastern website, www.SE.edu, Blackboard (for graduates), and aired over the local radio and television stations, or call the Student Activity Line at 580-745-2888 or the Inclement Weather Line at 580-745-7272.
March was unofficially designated as “Scholarship Month” at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. During that time, the establishment of no fewer than eight scholarships was announced by the Southeastern Foundation.

The Dr. Robert McFadden Scholarship was originally established in 2009 by an initial gift from the Waples Memorial United Methodist Church in Denison, Texas, in recognition of McFadden’s 20 years of continuous service as pianist/organist. The scholarship was recently endowed by McFadden, a music professor at Southeastern. Recipients of the McFadden Scholarship will be full-time students in good standing at Southeastern. The award is established as an educational scholarship for students who have declared music performance majors, pianist preferred, as their major field of study.

The Dr. Jack L. Robinson Endowed Scholarship in Chemistry is established as an educational scholarship for students who have declared chemistry as their major field of study in preparation for a graduate degree in chemistry or a professional degree in the health sciences. Preference will be given to junior or senior students from southeastern Oklahoma who have a minimum 3.5 grade-point average. The late Dr. Robinson served the University for 42 years as a professor and administrator. He was married to Sharon Robinson, Vice President for Student Affairs at Southeastern.

The Tom and Betty Bagwell Scholarship has been created through the Southeastern Foundation and the Eastern State College Foundation to benefit students attending Southeastern’s McCurtain County Campus. The scholarship honors the late longtime Idabel civic leader Carlos Daniel Thomas “Tom” Bagwell and his wife Betty.

The Gwendolyn Eileen Minks Scholarship is a tuition scholarship for students who are juniors or seniors with a minimum 3.25 grade point average, are active in the campus community, and who exhibit leadership qualities. It is to be awarded on the basis of merit with special focus on students of high character who will positively represent the name of Gwendolyn Eileen Minks, the late mother of Southeastern president Larry Minks.

The John G. Cobb and Patricia J. Cobb Leadership Scholarship was established by the Cobb family to recognize campus leaders for their commitment to the University in and out of the classroom. The first in his family to attend college, John Cobb graduated from Southeastern in 1954 with a degree in Business Education and English. He earned his master’s in Education in 1956. The Cobbs’ daughters, Liz McCraw and Dr. Amanda Cobb-Greetham, are also Southeastern graduates.

The James O. Young Music Scholarship is an educational scholarship for students participating in Southeastern bands and specifically playing the euphonium. Students must have a minimum 2.5 grade-point average to qualify for the scholarship. Young is a Durant High School graduate who earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Southeastern in 1967.

The Lambda Psi Omega Scholarship was established as a tuition scholarship for junior or senior students who are active in the community and who have a minimum 3.0 grade-point average. It is to be awarded on the basis of merit, with special focus on individuals of high character who will positively represent the name of Lambda Psi Omega. The fraternity was founded at Southeastern State College in January 1961.

The George R. Clark Memorial Scholarship has been established to honor George Clark Sr. by his son, George Clark Jr., and daughter Aja Clark. The scholarship is available to students who have declared aviation-professional pilot as their major field of study and who have a minimum 3.25 grade-point average. Preference will be given to students graduating from Durant High School. Clark, Sr., attended Southeastern one year before being drafted into the U.S. Army Air Corps. In 1946, he founded Clark’s Furniture in Madill, Oklahoma. He opened a second store in Durant in 1961.

Gathering at the Tom and Betty Bagwell Scholarship ceremony were, left to right, Southeastern president Larry Minks, Bagwell Scholarship Trustee Ramona Goolsby, Betty Bagwell, and Eastern State president Steve Smith. Not pictured, Bagwell Scholarship Trustee Brad Raney.
Southeastern recognized for its community service

The Corporation for National and Community Service and the U.S. Department of Education recently honored the nation’s leading colleges and universities, students, faculty members, and staff for their commitment to bettering their communities through community service and service learning.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University was selected to the 2012 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for its extensive involvement in community service.

During the 2010-2011 academic year, more than 760 individuals from Southeastern (students-faculty-staff) completed, collectively, approximately 30,000 hours of community service activity.

Dr. Bryon Clark, who in his role as assistant vice president for academic affairs and instruction tracks Southeastern’s civic engagement, points to another significant number – 28,495. That’s the estimated number of individuals who were served through the University’s involvement.

Southeastern president Larry Minks said such volunteerism is just one trait that makes the University unique.

“This is a significant honor and one that we are most proud to accept,” Minks said. “At Southeastern, we emphasize to our students the responsibility they have to be productive citizens. This includes being an active participant both on and off campus and contributing to the betterment of society. We are most fortunate to have a culture among our students, faculty, and staff that fosters assistance to those in need. Our campus community understands that they can make a difference in the lives of others, and this is reflected by their willingness to volunteer their time and effort in meaningful ways.”

In the past, assistance has been provided by the Southeastern family in times of disaster -- tornadoes, fires, etc. -- but there are also ongoing efforts such as blood drives, the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, volunteer income tax assistance program, theatrical workshops, tutoring, and Special Olympics, to name just a few.

Another well-known program that Southeastern has been involved with in Durant is Families Feeding Families.

Carrie Williamson named Newman Civic Fellow

Carrie Williamson of Southeastern Oklahoma State University is one of 162 students from 32 states honored as 2012 Newman Civic Fellows by Campus Compact. The awards recognize inspirational college student leaders who have worked to find solutions for challenges facing their communities.

Campus Compact’s member college and university presidents from across the country nominated these outstanding students.

Williamson is a junior Occupational Safety and Health major who also works full-time in the Office of Academic Affairs as the Administrative Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the School of Graduate and University Studies. She volunteers her time on a regular basis to serve others.

“I enjoy giving back to my community and encourage others to join me,” Williamson said. “I have volunteered for various events as long as I can remember and I’m fortunate that Southeastern encourages its employees to be involved.”

The Bennington (Oklahoma) High School graduate is a proud parent and grandparent.

“Carrie is most deserving of the Newman recognition,” said Southeastern president Larry Minks. “She exemplifies the type of person we want representing the University and is an outstanding role model for others.”

Williamson currently serves as the University’s Students in Service Campus Coordinator, in which she has helped place 34 student volunteers in the Students in Service Program.

Other volunteer activities include 4-H leader for two years; Relay for Life team member for six years (team captain two years and executive committee as Southeastern’s community contact for one year); disaster relief volunteer after the Tushka, Oklahoma, tornado; Families Feeding Families food bank; camp counselor at Falls Creek; contributor to Bryan County Humane Society; coach for Upward Sports; host family for international exchange students; and event worker for Special Olympics.

In addition to her impressive record of volunteerism, Williamson is an outstanding student and holds membership in the Alpha Chi Honor Society. Following graduation in December 2012, Williamson plans to use her education to pursue a career in the safety field as well as to educate others, especially children, about safety-related issues.
Southeastern participates in Research Day at the Capitol

Andrew Williams of Madill represented Southeastern Oklahoma State University at Research Day at the Capitol, held recently in Oklahoma City.

Twenty-four undergraduate students representing 17 Oklahoma colleges and universities presented competitive research posters to the State Legislature and the public during this annual event, which is sponsored by Oklahoma EPSCoR, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and the National Science Foundation.

This event is designed to bring about awareness of the outstanding research taking place in Oklahoma’s colleges and universities.

Williams’ research project was titled, “Changes in Stream Characteristics after an Episode of Extreme Drought.” He is a senior majoring in occupational safety & health, with a minor in environmental science. Williams’ mentor is Dr. Margaret Avard, professor of earth and environmental sciences.

“We were thrilled to have the opportunity to participate in Research Day at the Capitol this year,” Avard said. “It is a great experience for students as they are able to share their research, network with students and faculty from other institutions of higher education, and interact with state legislators.”