Tribes honor Southeastern, President Minks

Friday, February 10, was a memorable day as the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and Chickasaw Nation teamed up to honor Southeastern Oklahoma State University and president Larry Minks for the school’s commitment to and support of Native American student success.

To recognize this commitment to excellence, a program and reception were held in the Glen D. Johnson Student Union on the Southeastern campus.

Representing Choctaw Chief Gregory E. Pyle and Chickasaw Gov. Bill Anoatubby to offer remarks and jointly present a plaque of appreciation to Minks were Assistant Chief Gary Batton and Administrator of Education Services Lisa John. Both tribal representatives praised Minks and the University for their leadership and commitment to Native American students.

In his comments, Minks said he was proud of the fact that this spring, 30 percent (1,164 students) of Southeastern’s enrollment is comprised of Native American students.

Minks also commended director Chris Wesberry and his staff at the Native American Center for Student Success for the contributions they make each and every day. He noted that the partnership with the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations’ education departments has created more than $4 million in federal grant monies to support Native American students.

Finally, Minks proudly stated that Southeastern has been recognized among the nation’s leaders for graduating Native American students in a number of fields. According to one national publication, Southeastern ranks sixth in the nation in awarding undergraduate degrees to Native American graduates in all disciplines combined.

“We take a great deal of pride in this (national) recognition,” Minks said. “It confirms that the initiatives and programs that we have in place are working well. The

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University hosts Economic Summit

Good news was the order of the day January 26 as state and regional officials joined area education, business, and industry leaders at the E3 Summit.

The economic summit, part of the Making Place Matter initiative from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, was sponsored by Southeastern Oklahoma State University and held on campus in the General Classroom Building. The theme of the day was E3 – Engage Our Publics. Envision the Future. Empower the Region.

“This is a time that we can celebrate in Oklahoma,” said Secretary of Commerce and Tourism Dave Lopez. “This (event) helps create an environment for growth in the economy. Where we’re at right now, Oklahoma is shining (as far as business and the unemployment rate). Last year, Oklahoma added 42,000 jobs – the pipeline is positive for Oklahoma.”

Lopez cited the state’s vibrant oil and gas industry, as well as the growing aerospace industry, as keys to the healthy economic condition.

The Secretary praised this region of the state for being “ahead of the game” in such categories as regionalism, a growing diversity of the workforce, understanding the role of infrastructure, and volunteerism and community engagement through such programs as Main Street.

Lopez also challenged the region to improve in the areas of the workforce, educational attainment (both 2-and-4-year degrees), and branding.

Other speakers included Chad R. Wilkerson, vice president, economist, and Oklahoma City Branch executive of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, and Deidre Myers, director of policy, research and economic analysis for the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

Chancellor presents Legislative agenda to group

With fall enrollment at Oklahoma’s public colleges and universities remaining at record levels for the fifth consecutive semester, Oklahoma higher education Chancellor Glen D. Johnson presented the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education’s FY 2013 legislative agenda to an audience of lawmakers, community leaders, and educators Jan. 17 at Pete’s Place Restaurant in Krebs.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University president Larry Minks served as host for the Southeastern Regional Higher Education Legislative Briefing and Luncheon. Other schools participating were Carl Albert State College, Connors State College, East Central University, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Murray State College, and Seminole State College.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education voted recently to request a 3.7 percent appropriation increase for FY13.

“Oklahoma’s system of higher education continues to cut costs and tighten its belt while enrollment is at record levels and the number of college degrees earned increases each year,” said Chancellor Johnson. “There is no better investment for our state than higher education. After three years of budget cuts, we continue to provide a top-quality educational product to our students at a very affordable cost as we produce an educated workforce to meet the demands of our global marketplace.”

A total $347.3 million of actual and projected cost savings has been identified from 2009-13. These savings come from several areas, including energy conservation and conversion, changes and elimination of positions, and reductions in supplies. Savings in technology costs amount to $40 million annually.

To continue providing an affordable, high-quality education for Oklahomans, the state’s public higher education institutions are requesting $27.8 million in operating funds to address ongoing obligations, such as increases in health insurance premiums and retirement costs. Library expenses, instructional materials, information technology replacements and scholarships are also expected to increase.

Increased financial aid funding will also be a priority for the State Regents in the upcoming legislative session in order to reduce the financial barriers that prevent students from attending college. The State Regents seek to increase funding by $1.6 million for the concurrent enrollment program, which allows high school juniors and seniors to take credit-earning college courses.

The State Regents will also propose a series of bond issues over the next five years to eliminate the $271 million backlog in the Endowed Chairs Program. Since inception of the program in 1988, the state has matched 772 total accounts at 21 institutions.

The total appropriation request for FY13 is $980 million, a $34.7 million increase.
High-flying aviation program
Southeastern celebrates expansion to Rose State with ceremony

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the partnership between the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Aviation Sciences Institute and Rose State College was held Jan. 4.

The event took place at the Tom Steed Community Learning Center at Rose State (Midwest City).

Rose State President Terry Britton said the Institute’s proximity to Tinker Air Force Base at the college would make for a natural fit for aviation education.

“We welcome Southeastern to eastern Oklahoma County. We think they will find the people they need right here, next to Tinker Air Force Base, to sustain this program and help this program grow,” Britton said. “Let’s promote and develop the aviation industry throughout Oklahoma.”

Last year, Southeastern received approval to offer its aviation program at Rose State. Aviation courses will continue to be offered at Southeastern’s Durant campus, Tinker Air Force Base (Midwest City), and Oklahoma City Community College, according to Southeastern president Larry Minks.

“The aviation industry continues to grow in Oklahoma,” Minks said. “Working with Rose State College to add this delivery site will complement statewide initiatives for accessibility, affordability and contributing to the state’s economic and growth potential.”

Officials, including faculty and staff from Rose State, attended the event. Also in attendance were representatives from Tinker’s workforce development office, which is located at Rose State.

Using a pair of gold-plated scissors and flanked by well-wishers, Minks and Britton together cut a ceremonial blue ribbon stretching before the podium.

Dr. Plumb appointed to position in Ardmore

Southeastern Oklahoma State University president Larry Minks has announced two new appointments: Dr. Robin Plumb as Director of Academic Services at the Ardmore Higher Education Center, and Dr. Aaron Adair as Assistant Dean of Distance and Adult Education and Assessment Management System Coordinator at Southeastern.

Plumb will serve as Southeastern’s primary representative at AHEC, being responsible for the University’s day-to-day operations, coordinating Southeastern’s academic programming, and teaching courses as needed. She will be the faculty advisor for Professional Education students, as well as advise and assist students in other academic disciplines. She will also advise students regarding financial aid and scholarship opportunities available to them through the University.

Since 2010, Plumb has served as assistant professor of Educational Instruction and Leadership and coordinator of field experiences at Southeastern. Prior to that, she was director of academic programs for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Plumb earlier served as program coordinator for the Ardmore Higher Education Center and as academic coordinator for East Central University at AHEC. In addition to her work experience, Plumb is well versed in the workings of the AHEC, having fulfilled all the requirements for her degree in Elementary Education on-site in Ardmore.

In his position, Adair will oversee the University’s entire Distance Education program, including online, blended, and IETV courses/programs. Other areas of focus will be Adult Education, which includes the Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership and the Bachelor of General Studies programs; interfacing with Tribal Nations in cultivating and developing adult learning opportunities; and working with area industries in establishing educational partnerships. Another focus of this position is the implementation, integration, and management of assessment software.
Spring enrollment shows slight increase

Spring enrollment at Southeastern Oklahoma State University is slightly higher than a year ago, according to school officials.

Southeastern’s preliminary enrollment report for Spring 2012, submitted to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, shows a total enrollment of 3,810 students. This is a slight increase over last year’s spring enrollment of 3,805.

It is also 3.3% higher than the University’s preceding five-year spring semester average of 3,690 students. The Spring 2012 enrollment numbers are the second-highest over the past 10 years, trailing only Spring 2010, when 3,903 students were enrolled.

This spring’s freshman enrollment showed an increase of 3.8% over last spring with 1,043 freshmen compared to 1,005 last spring.

Also significant is the fact that the number of international students increased 27.5% over last spring -- 130 this year compared to 102 a year ago.

University offers two new programs

Southeastern Oklahoma State University is offering two new master degree programs this spring.

The new programs are the Master of Arts in Teaching and the Master of Science in Sports Studies and Athletic Administration.

The Master of Arts in Teaching will consist of 32 total credit hours and will be offered both online and on-campus. It is designed to prepare candidates to become more effective teachers, both in Oklahoma and north Texas. The program will provide candidates with the knowledge and skills aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

The Master of Science in Sports Studies requires 33 total credit hours. This degree program provides a strong foundation in research methodology, sports administration, management, and finances. Through quality instruction and educational experiences, graduates of this program will be able to move into positions in athletic administration, facilities management, sports event planning, and coaching.

Native American student success noted

Continued from Page 1

University’s commitment to Native American students could not be stronger, and that is only possible because of the outstanding support of the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes. Time after time, they have stepped up to partner with Southeastern to establish academic support programs, scholarships, or help fund improved facilities. It’s just a tremendous partnership and one of which we are very proud.”

Serving as master of ceremonies for the event was Rep. T.W. Shannon, Speaker Designate, from the Oklahoma House of Representatives. Also on the program were Native American students Brenner Billy, Caley Wesberry, and Jessica Gann, Chris Wesberry, and Rev. Bertram Bobb, Choctaw Elder.

The students presented Minks with a gift as well -- a gorget – an accessory worn around the neck symbolizing one who leads. The three-piece silver gorget was handmade by Eddie Postoak, Chickasaw Artist and Director of Cultural Resources of the Chickasaw Nation.

Calendar of Events

February
8
SE Live open house
11
Gold & Blue Gala, Visual & Performing Arts Center, 7 p.m
18-19
Scholarship Competition Weekend
21
Higher Education Day, State Capitol
22
TRiO Day, State Capitol
23-24
Regional University System of Oklahoma Board of Regents meeting at Southeastern

March
8
Educational Technology Fair, Bloomer Sullivan Arena, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
19-23
Spring break
29
Curriculum Contest

April
2
Tri-County Honors program, Visual & Performing Arts Center
6
Good Friday holiday
14
Aviation fish fry
23
Faculty-Staff recognition banquet
26
President’s Leadership Class orientation
30
President’s Leadership Class graduation

May
11
Last day of spring classes
12
Commencement

For a complete schedule of Southeastern athletic events, visit www.GoSoutheastern.com

Update Editor
Alan Burton
Director
University Communications

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