



Chief Batton named commencement speaker

Chief Gary Batton of The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma will be the speaker at Southeastern Oklahoma State University's Spring Commencement.

Two ceremonies – at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. – will be held in the Bloomer Sullivan Arena on Saturday, May 11.

Chief Batton is the 47th Chief of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the third largest Indian tribe in the United States with more than 200,000 citizens.

After being sworn into the Office in 2014, Chief Batton set a clear direction in his inaugural address indicating a specific vision for his administration. He believes his main purpose is to create a better future for the Choctaw people.

He spends countless hours in the communities with the tribal members he serves. He works to protect their culture, provide opportunities for education, improved healthcare, employment, and ultimately, do what is best for Choctaws.

Through diversification, the Nation now has more than 70 businesses in 13 different industries, including hospitality, entertainment, agriculture, defense and more. Chief Batton has established a sound economic base for the Choctaw Nation with annual revenue exceeding \$1.5 billion.

Under Chief Batton's direction, the Choctaw Nation opened a new tribal headquarters and regional health clinic in Durant, a large expansion to its health clinic in Poteau, three new wellness centers, three Chili's franchises, three Travel Plazas, an expansion to its resort in Durant, community centers in McAlester and Talihina, three food distribution centers, two Choctaw market and three independent living communities for Choctaw elders.

Chief Batton also created several new programs to assist tribal members like the Next Step supplemen-



tal food program, Reintegration and Job for the Day. The additional facilities and programs added more than 4,000 jobs to southeastern Oklahoma during his first five years in office.

The growth continues with numerous projects in the planning and construction phases. These include another country market, head starts, independent elder housing and wellness centers just to name a few.

Chief Batton received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Southeastern in 2013.

The schedule for Saturday, May 11, will be two ceremonies in the Bloomer Sullivan Arena, as follows:

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

School of Arts & Sciences

Master of Technology

Master of Music Education

Master of Science (Native American Leadership)

John Massey School of Business

Master of Business Administration

Master of Science (Aerospace Administration and Logistics)

Master of Science (Safety)

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

School of Education & Behavioral Sciences

Master of Arts (Clinical Mental Health Counseling)

Master of Early Intervention and Child Development

Master of Education

Master of Science (Sports Administration)

Julian Construction receives Regents Partnership Award

Twenty-seven business and higher education partnerships throughout the state were recently recognized as innovative collaborations that further the education of Oklahoma’s workforce.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education’s Regents Business Partnership Excellence Award is designed to highlight successful partnerships between higher education institutions and businesses and to further cultivate the higher learning environment through State Regents’ Economic Development Grants.

Receiving the award for its partnership with Southeastern Oklahoma State University was Julian Construction of Broken Bow.

Julian Construction, owned and operated by Southeastern Oklahoma State University alumnus Tommy Julian, has been a generous supporter of Southeastern and its students for the past decade.

Formerly known as TJ Construction, the company is located in Broken Bow, Oklahoma, and is deeply involved in land development and cabin construction and rentals. Julian is an Oklahoma native who played baseball at Southeastern.

He is active in civic affairs, serving on the McCurtain County Tourism Board. Julian and his company have provided several enrichment opportunities for Southeastern students and alumni. This includes, but is not limited to, hosting a student retreat in Broken Bow and hosting students, alumni and friends



Tommy Julian accepts the Regents Business Partnership Award March 12 in Edmond. Also shown are Oklahoma Small Business Development state director Michele Campbell, Southeastern president Sean Burrage, and Southeastern vice president for university advancement Dr. Kyle Stafford.

at various recreational and entertainment events in the Oklahoma City area.

In addition, Julian Construction has lent its support to both the Durant and McCurtain County campuses. Among the activities supported are the Gold and Blue Scholarship Gala, the Presidential Golf Classic, the McCurtain County Classic, Presidential Partners, donations to the baseball field renovations and contributions to the football program.



On board

Capt. Lloyd Sauls, the new director of the Southeastern Aviation Sciences Institute, visits with aviation students during a reception on March 5. As director, Sauls, who has 44 years of aviation experience, will oversee all aspects of the aviation program, including academic programs and flight operations.

Renowned educator to speak at Brigance Lectureship on April 12

Renowned educator **Todd Whitaker** will be on the campus of Southeastern Oklahoma State University April 12 to present two sessions to teachers, administrators and the general public.



Whitaker will be speaking in conjunction with the Albert H. Brigance Endowed Lectureship and ProjectTeach program in Montgomery Auditorium.

In a 9 a.m. session, Whitaker will address such areas as the first year in the classroom, classroom management from the ground up, and what great teachers do differently.

In the 1 p.m. session, he will discuss target leadership in education. Both sessions are open to the public and there is no admission charge.

Dr. Whitaker is professor of educational leadership at the University of Missouri and professor emeritus at Indiana State University.

Athletics announces efforts to enhance facilities

Southeastern Oklahoma State University Athletics is proud to announce “Strong Together” -- a facility project that includes the renovation of existing space inside Bloomer Sullivan Gymnasium for a strength and conditioning facility as well as enhancements to the volleyball venue.



ment will benefit all 11 NCAA sports at the University, as well as men and women’s rodeo, allowing them to train more efficiently in a first-class environment. It will also assist in the scheduling of teams in the facility, the overall student-athlete experience, and the recruiting process for coaches and the University.

The majority of funding for the project will be through external/private dollars.

The renovations inside the facility will be the first in 25 years. The Health & Physical Education Building was originally built in 1956. In 1975, it was renamed Bloomer Sullivan Gymnasium and athletic administrative offices were added. Then in 1994 a new floor and bleachers were installed inside the gymnasium.

“I appreciate President Burrage and the University for supporting this important initiative for our student-athletes,” said Director of Athletics Keith Baxter. “This project will greatly enhance the student-athlete experience and give our teams the necessary space and equipment to train and develop their skills efficiently. It also communicates a strong message to our future recruits that we are committed to fully developing our athletes and preventing injuries. We named this initiative “Strong Together” as it unites everyone from coaches, student-athletes, the University, alumni, and our fans to come together as one for the benefit of all. We are very excited to get this project started and expect it to be completed by the fall.”

The new strength and conditioning facility will more than double the space of the current facility. This enhance-

The renovations will also enhance the current volleyball venue, with updates unique to the volleyball program including court graphics, scoreboards and lighting.

The estimated total cost is \$400,000, with Southeastern Athletics offering various levels to contribute to the “Strong Together” project:

Strength & Conditioning Facility

- Naming rights to facility
- Equipment
- Flooring
- Graphics/Branding
- Sound System

Volleyball Facility

- Naming rights for court
- Scoreboard
- Graphics/Branding

To learn more about naming rights and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Keith Baxter - Director of Athletics at 580-745-2250 or Blake Allen - Associate Athletic Director for External Operations at 580-745-3386.

Men’s basketball advances to NCAA regional

It was a banner season for the Southeastern Savage Storm men’s basketball team.

Seeded seventh in the NCAA Division II Central Regional in Maryville, Mo., the Storm knocked off No. 2 seed Northern State 115-103 in the quarterfinals.

Southeastern then saw its postseason run end on March 17 with a 92-83 loss to sixth-seeded Missouri Southern State in the semifinals.

The Savage Storm wrapped up the 2018-19 season with a 23-8 record, winning 14 of their last 17 games, and posting the most wins in a season since the 2006-07 team went 27-5.

Coach Kelly Green’s Savage Storm squad was the runner-up in the Great American

Conference Tournament, but still earned a berth in the NCAA regional.

Forward Kevin Buckingham, a 6-6 junior from Keller, Texas, received a number of awards and honors for his play this season. Buckingham was named to the first team all region (Central) by the National Association of Basketball Coaches. He becomes Southeastern’s first All-Region selection since Eric Babers earned the honor in 2007.

This selection comes on the heels of Buckingham being the first Southeastern men’s basketball player since joining the NCAA to earn Academic All-American honors.



Kevin Buckingham had a banner season, receiving a number of awards.

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Update Calendar

April

- 6 Dedication ceremony to name The Ballpark in Durant in honor of Mike Metheny
- 12 Albert Brigrance Endowed Lectureship and Project Teach present speaker Todd Whitaker, Montgomery Auditorium
- 12-13 Aviation Fish Fry & Reunion Holiday
- 19 Presidential Partners banquet, VPAC, 6:30 p.m.
- 27 John Massey School of Business Awards Banquet, Ballroom, 5:30 p.m.
- 30 Tri-County Honors, 5:30 p.m.

May

- 11 Commencement, Bloomer Sullivan Arena, 10 a.m. & 2 p.m.
- 27 Memorial Day holiday

June

- 14 Presidential Golf Classic, Chickasaw Pointe

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Promoting occupational safety & health

Stefan Kells, left, Southeastern Coordinator of Academic Services at Grayson College, and Dr. Chris W. Bradshaw, Chair of the Department of Occupational Safety and Health at Southeastern, recently attended the Texas Instruments Safety and Health Fair in Sherman. The two-day event brought in multiple vendors to showcase safety and health in the workplace. Southeastern utilized the event to highlight its safety program and the educational opportunities available to students. Southeastern offers both a bachelor's and master's degree in occupational safety and health. It also partners with Grayson College so that students can complete an associate's degree at Grayson and then seamlessly transfer to Southeastern for a bachelor's degree. Some 80 individuals stopped by the booth to learn more about careers in occupational safety and health.

Savage Storm finish with 23 wins

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Buckingham was also named the Great American Conference Player of the Year, was a first team all-conference selection, and followed that by earning all-tournament team honors at the GAC Tournament. Joining him on the GAC all-conference team were teammates Jett Jobe (second team) Kellen Manek and Adam Dworksy (honorable mention).

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