



Southeastern Oklahoma
State University

UPDATE
MAY 2023

Commencement features grads from 41 states, 20 countries



Bloomer Sullivan Arena served as the backdrop as two commencement ceremonies were held at Southeastern Oklahoma State University recently.

On Friday, May 5, master's degrees and certificates were conferred, while on Saturday morning, baccalaureate degrees were awarded.

This spring's graduating class included students

from 41 states and 20 countries, with 47 percent being first-generation college graduates.

Offering welcoming remarks were Southeastern president Thomas Newsom, Regent Connie Reilly, chair of the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board of Regents, and Joe Hill, president of the Southeastern Alumni Association.



Award recipients

Angie Kemp, center in photo above left, received the Distinguished Service Award, while SE president Thomas Newsom and presenter Ami Towne look on at the Faculty-Staff Recognition Celebration. In photo above right, Dr. Chris Moretti received the Faculty Senate Lifetime Achievement Award as President Newsom and Dr. Katheryn Shannon offer congratulations. For a complete list of award winners, see page 3.

SE is proud tradition for Dry family

For 114 years, family traditions have been important at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Just ask the James Dry family.

This spring, when Karson Dry walked across the stage to receive his degree, he was the fourth-generation family member to graduate from Southeastern.

It all started in the fall of 1939 – 30 years after SE was founded -- when twin brothers Ernest and Aaron Dry, fresh out of Goodland Indian Orphanage in Hugo, entered Southeastern State College on tennis scholarships. In addition, the brothers, who were originally from Yanush, Oklahoma, received financial aid from their mother Emily's sale of a cow.

After a stint in the Army, 26-year-old Ernest "Pap-py" (nicknamed because of his "advanced age") returned to Southeastern in 1946 playing and (volunteer) coaching tennis. He graduated the following year under first-year tennis coach Clarence Dyer, who would go on to great success. Ernest enjoyed a long and distinguished career as an educator, serving as teacher-coach-principal -superintendent at a number of schools, including Madill and Wagoner.

The family legacy at SE continued with Ernest's wife – Lucretia Loretta Adams Dry -- who earned a master's in counseling from Southeastern in 1968; Ernest and Lucretia's son, James Hugh Dry, a 1974 and 1976 graduate who went on to a successful career as a tennis coach at Hugo and Pauls Valley; and James' son, James Shannon Dry, who graduated

in '93 with a degree in occupational safety and health and who now serves on the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Tribal Council (District 9). He has been associated with the Nation in various capacities for more than 30 years.



Continuing the Southeastern legacy for the Dry family are Karson Dry, James Hugh Dry, and James Shannon Dry.

Which brings us to Karson -- Councilman Dry's son, James H. Dry's grandson, and the great-grandson of Ernest and Lucretia Dry. He's graduating in 2023 with a degree in Health and Human Performance and will be pursuing a career as a chiropractor.

"Number one, my family drove home the importance of getting my education," said Karson, who played basketball at Murray State College before transferring to SE. "But all along, Southeastern has been home to me."

While all three of the Drys acknowledged their interest in athletics, whether it be tennis, basketball, or football, they are quick to credit Ernest Dry for emphasizing the value of academics.

"I think we all appreciate my (late) grandfather," Councilman Dry said. "Because of him, there was an expectation for us to go to college. He instilled that in all of us."

Indeed, all seven of Ernest's children earned college degrees. (The Drys' best estimate is that 17-20 family members have attended/graduated Southeastern over the years).

"I became a teacher because of him," said his son James. "He twisted my arm to go to college. I liked sports, but I'm glad he stressed education."

Both son and grandson said they were influenced greatly at Southeastern by Dr. Don Parham (late athletic director and baseball coach) and Dr. Don Ferguson, (late physical education professor), both of whom placed an emphasis on academics as well as athletics.

And Councilman Dry also gives a nod to current SE athletic director Keith Baxter, a former head football and tennis coach.

"I really didn't know what I wanted to do until Keith Baxter showed up at Pauls Valley the summer after my senior year and offered me a (tennis) scholarship (to SE)," he said.

Councilman Dry has many fond memories of his days at Southeastern in the 1990s, including the spirit of attending basketball games in the old Bloomer Sullivan Gymnasium.

"We used to pack the Pit at basketball games," he recalled. "When we played ECU, you had to get there early to get a seat in the old gym."

The Drys – Kason, James H. and the Councilman – all expressed great pride in their family history.

"Being Native American is important to us," Councilman Dry said. "We are very proud Choctaws and proud of our history. We learned from my grandfather to always work hard, but also to always do the right thing. That's a lot to live up to."



Ernest Dry

Faculty and Staff Senate awards presented

A number of individuals were honored April 19 at South-eastern Oklahoma State University's Faculty-Staff Recognition Celebration.

Both the Faculty Senate and Staff Senate presented awards in several categories. In addition, employees were recognized for years of service and retirees were honored.

The Distinguished Service Award was presented to Angie Kemp of Catering/Food Services.

Following is the list of award recipients:

Faculty Senate Awards

Lifetime Achievement

Dr. Christopher Moretti

Professor of the Year

Dr. Douglas Wood

Adjunct Professor of the Year

Alisha Ridenour

John Massey School of Business

Dr. Eric Kennedy, Excellence in Teaching

Dr. David Whitlock, Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity

Dr. Kitty Campbell, Meritorious Service to the University and/or Profession

School of Arts & Sciences (Mathematics/Sciences)

Mr. Jory Wade, Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Nancy Paiva, Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity

Dr. Karl Frinkle, Meritorious Service to the University and/or Profession

School of Arts & Sciences (Arts & Letters)

Dr. Matthew Sparacio, Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Kyle Lincoln, Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity

Dr. Jeri Walker, Meritorious Service to the University and/or Profession



Dr. Doug Wood was honored as Professor of the Year as Dr. Kate Shannon and President Thomas Newsom offer congratulations.

School of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Mila Zhu, Excellence in Teaching

Dr. Michael Davis, Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activity

Dr. Katheryn Shannon, Meritorious Service to the University and Scholarly Activity

Staff Senate Awards

Storm Rookie of the Year – Lori Kennedy – Administrative Associate VP/Academic Affairs and Assessment Coordinator

Outstanding Non-Exempt Employee – Pamela Locke – Campus Police

Outstanding Exempt Employee – Dorothy Owens – Assistant Director – Human Resources

Service to Students – Cherrie Wilmoth -- Deputy Director of Athletics/Compliance & Internal Operations

Outstanding Outreach Site Employee – Michelle Burton – Coordinator Academic Services – SE/Grayson College

Outstanding Staff Senate Member – Jeni Maple – Director -- Online and Distance Advising Center

Retirees

Dr. C.W. Von Bergen

Professor/ John Massey Endowed Chair in Business

Alan Burton

Director of University Communications/Special Assistant to the President

Carolyn Fridley

Instructor/Coordinator English, Liberal, and Applied Studies

Dr. Jeri Walker

Professor/Donna Massey Endowed Professor in Music

Rodney Leird

Assistant Professor/Management & Marketing

Susy Haworth

Executive Director Upward Bound Programs

Calendar of Events

May

11-13 – Softball at NCAA Central 1 Regional, Edmond

29 – Memorial Day holiday

June

5-9 -- PI-Stem Academy

9 – Southeastern Golf Classic, Chickasaw Pointe

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Dr. Whitlock named Interim Dean of the School of Business

Dr. David Whitlock has been named the Interim Dean of the John Massey School of Business at



Whitlock

Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

“This appointment will allow our school of business to continue the trajectory of success that it has experienced during the last five-plus years, as well as guide us through the upcoming reaffirmation from the Association to Advance College Schools of Business (AACSB),” said Southeastern president Thomas Newsom.

“I’m honored to serve with my colleagues as we continue to build a great business school,” Whitlock said. “Our nationally recognized AACSB accredited business programs, our BCSP Academic Qualified Programs in Occupational Safety and Health, and our internationally recognized, AABI accredited Aviation Sciences Institute are quality programs with tremendous faculty. The John Massey School of Business has a strong tradition and is

well positioned for the future as we transform lives for meaningful lives, careers, and service. ”

Whitlock holds three degrees from Southeastern – a Bachelor’s in Chemistry, Master’s of Applied Science, and a Master’s of Business Administration. He received his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Oklahoma in 1995.

Whitlock returned to Southeastern in 2019 after retiring as the 15th President at Oklahoma Baptist University.

Prior to his presidency in Shawnee, he was the Dean of the College of Business and Computer Science, and Special Assistant to the President at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri.

Prior to his appointment at Southwest Baptist, he taught business at Southeastern for 14 years, serving as an instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and chair of the business information management program.

He is currently the John Massey Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship at Southeastern.

Softball qualifies for NCAA Regionals

Southeastern will celebrate its Great American Conference Softball Tournament Championship with a berth in the NCAA Central Regional Tournament where it earns the No. 8 seed and will open against top-seed and host Central Oklahoma in Edmond, Okla.

Southeastern makes its first appearance in the NCAA Regional Tournament since 2014. That season SE won the regional in Mankato, Minn., before beating Augustana in the Super Regional and advancing to the program’s only appearance in the NCAA Division II National Finals.

The 2023 selection is the program’s ninth berth in the NCAA Tournament going back to 1999.