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## Facing Misconceptions

Norman's Muslim community aims to change perceptions • page 11

# Red Dirt Journal



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## preserving the past, ensuring the future

Native Americans flock to Oklahoma City  
for 26th annual Red Earth cultural festival

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## Student juggles books and bats

OU softball player Erica Sampson  
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## Economy hurts teen job seekers

More than 26 percent of 16- to  
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# Passing down art through generations

## Mother, daughter craft Navajo jewelry of turquoise, silver

ANNIE STROM  
Red Dirt Journal

The ring's arc connects two silver bands from each side on the bottom of the ring. As the silver continues to circle, it wraps elegantly around a turquoise rock, twisting and curving gracefully.

To the woman whose hands shaped this ring, it represents a culture that was passed down to her from centuries ago: The artistic culture many Navajos carry on to this day.

Evelyn Begay and daughter Crystal Begay are two Navajos who are carrying on the Navajo tradition as silversmiths, working with their hands.

"My mom has always told me your hands have been given to you for things to do, not for idle," Evelyn Begay said.

Evelyn Begay and her daughter visited the University of Oklahoma on June 7 to sell some of their jewelry before heading to the 26th annual Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival.

The Begays are from Ganado, Ariz., but Crystal lives in Tempe, Ariz. As a child, Evelyn Begay was taught how to sew and design Navajo clothing by her mother. Her mother was the town's seamstress, so Begay was able to learn quickly.

But learning to make jewelry came by accident and later necessity. She taught herself how to make native jewelry by fixing her own necklaces, then got deeper into the jewelry-making business to help her children pay for college.

Her mother taught her the significance of the different stones and the different turquoise. The Navajo believe the "Creator," or God, made these stones. Begay said she was taught that as a Navajo, she should adorn herself with the stone.

"The precious stones — the turquoise — it's part of our culture, so with that in mind, there is a significant meaning to some of these stones," Begay said. "So, when we create them, then we know that whoever buys the jewelry will have some inspiration of some kind, some lesson of some kind."

As Begay grew older, her childhood crafts became a passion. And as her children got older, they also picked up the talent.



photo by Annie Strom

**NAVAJO JEWELRY:** Evelyn Begay and her daughter Crystal with their handmade Navajo jewelry. They carry on the Navajo tradition as silversmiths.

Crystal Begay, 31, started making Navajo jewelry to supplement her income in college.

Crystal has a master's degree in mass communication and journalism from Arizona State University.

After college, she worked for a public relations firm, then decided to be a freelance writer. But the desire to make jewelry never left her.

"We always kind of done craft things growing up with her," Crystal said. "But as far as actually contributing to the inventory, I would say maybe when I got into college."

While she enjoys making jewelry, she also recently started making traditional Navajo outfits for girls.

"I enjoy fashion and jewelry and all that stuff and like how to tie in our traditional jewelry and make it more contemporary," Crystal said.

Crystal eventually started working with her mom. They travel the country, often participating in juried events where they enter their jewelry and clothing into contests. They often compete against people



photo by Annie Strom

**PRECIOUS STONES:** Navajo jewelry crafted by Evelyn and Crystal Begay of Arizona. Turquoise has significant meaning in the Navajo culture.

who make high-end jewelry.

Together, they have seen the effects the economy has had on Native American artists.

"The economy is hurting silver. They've gotten very expensive. It's hard to sell stuff at a medium cost to customers without losing on your end," Evelyn said. "You have to

make some money somehow."

So they began using less silver and more stones, and sales have improved in the last couple of shows, Evelyn said.

But as Native artists, they also have to worry about those who try to duplicate Navajo jewelry.

Evelyn said big department stores with fake jewelry hurt her business, but it's up to the customers to know what's fake, what's not and to understand quality.

As long as artists are honest about the products they sell, it shouldn't be considered fake, Evelyn said. She said making authentic jewelry takes time and a lot of thought is put into it.

"I talk to it when I create it. I think about it," Evelyn said. "My mom has always said to me, 'These different stones were made by the creators.'"

With 15 to 20 years of consistent marketing of handmade jewelry, Evelyn and her daughter are examples of how Native American artists can be successful with clean consciences.



# Iowa Tribe gives eagles a second chance

## Rehab center works to mend eagles' bodies, spirits

**SAMANTHA EIGHMY**  
Red Dirt Journal

A golden eagle glides across the enclosure, lands, tilts his head and gazes at his visitors with a look that used to show desperation, but now displays appreciation.

The eagle, Dave, broke his wing in the wild and might have died if the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma had not renewed his chance for life, said Resa Bayhulle, eagle aviary assistant. Dave's rescuers carried him to the Grey Snow Eagle House in Perkins, Okla., for recovery and rehabilitation.

At the center, the staff works to mend the eagles' bodies and spirits. Some will be released. Others that are too badly hurt to be released will become permanent residents.

For now, the rescue operation only cares for bald eagles and golden eagles, but the program's goal is to include more raptors, including falcons, owls and hawks.

The eagle house was inspired by a bald eagle in need of saving and a man who was passionate about helping this bird, which is sacred to many Native American cultures, Bayhulle said.

After learning the closest rescue facility was hundreds of miles away, he decided to start the first rescue center in Oklahoma, Bayhulle said.

In January 2006, the Iowa Tribe opened the doors for injured eagles from all across North America. Grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the Iowa Tribe funded the construction, according to the Iowa Tribe website. Money to operate the center comes from donations by tribes and the public.

The organization continues to make improvements, Bayhulle said. These include a paved road and parking lot, new intensive care units, a stone gate and wheelchair accessibility.

One goal at the Grey Snow Eagle House is to release eagles to the wild.

But some can't make the full recovery to be set free. The center has 37 non-releasable eagles: 29 bald eagles and eight golden eagles. Most have wing injuries.

None of the eagles has been put down.



photo by Taelor Sanders

### AT A GLANCE

## Eagle House

**WHAT:** The Iowa Tribe's Grey Snow Eagle House provides a home to bald and golden eagles as they rehabilitate from injury.

**WHERE:** Perkins, Okla.

**INFO:** Visit [www.iowanation.org](http://www.iowanation.org) or call 405-334-7471

The eagles come from many states, including Oregon, Connecticut, Nebraska and Oklahoma.

"At first, I thought all eagles were the same," Bayhulle said. "But each one has a unique personality."

Six staff members and several volunteers accomplish much. The staff helps

the birds adapt and heal while the volunteers do a variety of chores from watering the birds to mowing the lawn.

Technology has entered the facility. Each large pen has a surveillance camera linked to the main computer in the office. Caregivers can oversee the birds, using the camera to zoom in to get a close, crisp view of each one.

Dave sits and observes the workers as they do their duties. The eagle used to be too shy to look people in the face, but he is adapting to their faces and motions, Bayhulle said.

The staff has a special mission in mind for some of the birds. They want Dave to become an "education bird" so he can go to a variety of events to teach the public about the Grey Snow Eagle House, Bayhulle said.

Another mission of the rescue facility is to educate people, not only with Dave but also with the facility.

Tours are available by appointment on Saturdays and Sundays.

### EAGLE EYE:

A symbol of America, a bald eagle gazes out his enclosure at The Iowa Tribe's Grey Snow Eagle House in Perkins, Okla. Caretakers use a surveillance camera to oversee birds. The camera can zoom in to provide a close, crisp view of each eagle. Not every bird will be released once they are healed, the aviary assistant said.



photo by Taelor Sanders

**HEALING HOME:** A golden eagle stands at the rehab aviary at the Grey Snow Eagle House in Perkins, Okla. One of the aviaries at the center is home to 10 juvenile and adult eagles.



# 'It's like rodeo for cowboys'



photos by Annie Strom

**RED EARTH:** Fancy dancers enter the powwow during the grand procession of the 26th annual Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival in June in Oklahoma City.

## Native Americans flock to OKC for cultural festival

### Event draws crowds from across the U.S.

**ANNIE STROM**  
Red Dirt Journal

Vincent Pocowatchit has been to a lot of powwows in his 71 years, but every June, he marks his calendar for the annual Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival.

"It's in my blood," he said. "It's like rodeo for cowboys."

Pocowatchit and more than 1,200 people make a point to attend the annual Red Earth powwow, one of many events at the festival.

The festival is a tradition where American Indians from around the nation come together to celebrate their heritage, share stories and represent their tribes. It's also a place where many Native Americans can reunite with their family and friends.

The festival is held June 8-10 in downtown Oklahoma City at the Cox Convention Center.

Pocowatchit is a fancy dancer, and so are five other generations of his family.

He lives in Elgin, Okla., and is a part of the Comanche tribe. At 6 years old, Pocowatchit learned how to fancy dance from his grandfather George "Woogie" Watchetaker.

Watchetaker was a five-time world champion fancy dancer. In his time as a champion dancer, he performed for some prestigious

people, including former U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Queen of England.

Pocowatchit said Watchetaker was also believed by many Native American tribes to have ended the drought in Fort Worth, Texas, after he preformed a rain dance.

In 1977, 1978 and 1979, Pocowatchit was a national fancy dance contest winner. His favorite powwows are the Ponca Powwow and the Sac & Fox Nation Powwow in Stroud, Okla.

Crystalne Curley, 26, a member of the Navajo Nation from Fish Point, Ariz., and the 2011-2012 Miss Navajo Nation, also attended the festival.

As Miss Navajo Nation, Curley serves as an ambassador for her tribe. She shares the

culture and tradition of her people as she travels.

"When you become Miss Navajo, it becomes a full-time job," Curley said.

The requirements to become Miss Navajo Nation are challenging. Miss Navajo Nation is expected to put school on hold if she hasn't already finished and quit other jobs. She also has to dress the part of a traditional Navajo woman and wear the crown no matter where she goes.

The Miss Navajo Nation contest is unlike most pageants. It is a cultural pageant where the contestants must speak fluent Navajo and English, write in both languages, perform public speeches, perform a Na-

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vajo talent and butcher a sheep.

Curley's Navajo talent was Navajo ribbon dancing and baking a Navajo corn cake underground. The corn cake is mostly used in the coming-of-age ceremony for women. The cake consists mostly of ground corn. A small pit in the ground is dug and lined with dried cornhusks. Then, the cake is baked underground under a wood fire.

Curley attended the powwow on official Miss Navajo Nation business as she took pictures and shook hands with people. She said she came to the Red Earth to represent her tribe, her people and the Navajo culture.

Curley said she likes powwows because they are a way for Native and non-native people to reunite and catch up.

"It's a way to come together and say 'Hi,'" Curley said.

Miss Navajo Nation holds her title for a year. Curley has only three more months until the next pageant.

Corbin Swift, a 3-year-old member of both the Comanche and Wichita tribes, has been coming to the Red Earth since he was a baby.

Frank Swift, Corbin's father, is passing his traditions down to his son. Frank has been dancing and competing in powwows since he was 17 years old.

Frank, along with friends and family, create Corbin's elaborate outfits. It takes about two weeks to create an outfit.

"He has been dancing since he was able to walk," Frank said of Corbin.



**FANCY DANCERS:** Dancers compete for prize money during the 2012 Red Earth powwow in OKC.



**MISS NAVAJO:** Miss Navajo Nation Crystalyne Curley in her traditional crown and dress at the 2012 Red Earth Powwow in Oklahoma City. Curley attended the powwow to represent her people, her tribe and the Navajo culture, she said.

**RED EARTH:** Vincent Pocowatchit, Comanche, watches the opening procession of the 2012 Red Earth powwow in Oklahoma City. Pocowatchit is a three-time national fancy dance contest winner — 1977, 1978 and 1979. The Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival is a tradition where Native Americans from across the nation come together to celebrate their heritage, share stories and represent their tribe.

#### MORE ONLINE

See more photos from the Red Earth festival

[reddirtjournal.ou.edu/stories](http://reddirtjournal.ou.edu/stories)



# Garden plants connection to past

## Officials hope area will add interest in cultural center

LYDIA LINDLEY  
Red Dirt Journal

Just past the gift shop, and behind the Inchokka' Village, a spiral-shaped traditional garden sits near the edge of the Chickasaw Cultural Center.

The garden is home to beans, corn, squash and other plants traditional to the Chickasaw people.

It is an effort by the Chickasaw Nation to help keep an important part of its culture and history alive, which is why Gemini Rocha, 15, decided to work in the garden.

"To learn more about my culture," Rocha said. "(To) help out, make it look good."

Rocha is one of two youth workers in the garden under a summer program. The Sulphur High School student spends eight hours a day working in the garden.

The garden includes 15 to 20 spices, six to seven different tomatoes, rivercane and wormwood plants.

The center in Sulphur, Okla., tells the stories of the Chickasaw people. It was established in 2010 but was an idea for nearly 20 years before it was built.

Valorie Walters, director of operations, said the Cultural Center hopes to inform visitors even more about the Chickasaw culture through the spiral garden.

"People always crave knowledge about other cultures," she said.

The center is also home to the Aaimpa' Café, where traditional Chickasaw food is served. At the café, visitors can enjoy grape dumplings, Indian fry bread, Indian tacos, pishofa (hominy) and many traditional foods.

The garden will be used to supply the center's café "to use the freshest ingredients possible to create the healthiest meals," she said.

Not only is the garden a teaching tool and a source for the café, it is also a sight for sore eyes.

The garden is in the shape of a spiral to represent the Chickasaw belief of the never-ending journey of life.

Steven Bond, an ethnobotanist who



photo by Katie Ford

**PLANTING:** Ecological Resource Coordinator Rhonda Sellers prepares to plant parsley in the Chickasaw Cultural Center spiral gardens in Sulphur, Okla.

studies the connection between plants and cultures, designed the garden.

The garden is expected to be completed this month. A gate and pathway will be built from the village to the garden so it is easily accessible.

A handful of people, including Rocha, another summer worker, and ecological resource coordinator Rhonda Sellers, are working to finish the garden.

Rocha said he has learned a lot about plants and enjoys learning about his culture while working in the garden.

"It feels great," Rocha said.

Sellers said the program is important

because it keeps teens busy, allows them to make money, and lets them be a part of their culture.

Walters said she hopes the newly added garden will add more interest to the already award-winning Cultural Center.

The center recently received the Red-Bud award for outstanding new attraction in Oklahoma. The award is given to an attraction that has been in existence for less than two years.

"It has helped us understand that everyone else sees us as a wonderful attraction as well, and is a huge respect and honor," Walters said.

# Chickasaw tribal dance comes to life

LYDIA LINDLEY  
Red Dirt Journal

Dressed in bright traditional Chickasaw clothing, women stomp their feet, ankles adorned with shell shakers, and men chant as they all follow the lead singer in a circle.

The dance is the Chickasaw stomp dance, and for five days a week, visitors can watch it performed at the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Okla.

The stomp dance is the most well-known because it was adopted by the majority of Southeastern tribes. It is a way for warriors to express their gratitude to the Creator upon returning from battle. A tradition that continues today for the military veterans of the tribe.

Chickasaw dances come to life at the cultural center for the public to see and participate.

In the stomp dance, performers move in a circular motion around the fire pit and are lined up alternating by gender.

The center's goal is to give visitors the opportunity to explore the culture, said Valorie Walters, director of operations.

While more experienced dancers perform for visitors at the Cultural Center, children also dance. Stomp dancing traditionally takes place late at night, but before it begins, the experienced dancers spend time teaching the children.

Traditionally, the stomp dance is performed four times a year. But to adequately share the culture of the Chickasaw, stomp dances are performed five times each week at the center.

Many elders disagreed about frequently performing the dance because it is a sacred dance and should be performed only at appropriate times.

Eddie Postoak said his grandmother is one of those elders who disagreed with the multiple performances.

Postoak said it was a tough decision to make; but to keep the tradition going, it was necessary to share the dance often.

"We had to break barriers to teach our people so we don't lose it," said Postoak, the center's director of cultural resources.



# Life on the streets: A day in the life of Jeff

## An Oklahoma man recounts his story of being homeless

ALEXA BABIN

Red Dirt Journal

Clothed in a ragged red and white plaid shirt, red-rimmed glasses sitting on his nose, a homeless man waits for the rain to stop. Smoke from the cigarette held in his swollen fingers veils his weary face.

His home of the hour is a picnic table covered in peeling red paint, conveniently located under a vibrantly green tree growing from a patch of grass next to concrete.

The man, Jeff, has no place to call home.

The 52-year-old wanderer routinely wakes up at 5 a.m. each day. He then takes his medicine for ailments that run the gamut. From heart problems to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Jeff's struggles begin earlier than the sunrise.

Fortunately for Jeff, breakfast is available at Food and Shelter, a Norman, Okla., organization that offers free food and shelter to those who are in need. After breakfast, he rides his bike to get his daily cup of black coffee at 7 a.m.

Jeff refuses to ask passersby for money but will gladly accept whatever money or food is given. Food stamps help when he is hungry. When he needs to wash his laundry, he returns to Food and Shelter to sign the laundry list and wait his turn.

As if everyday living isn't hard enough, bad weather creates a new level of difficulty. When storms come or temperatures reach extremes, the Salvation Army allows Jeff to sleep on an extra folding cot for five nights every 30 days. Otherwise, Jeff finds shelter where he can and lives off what is available.

"A lot of people see me and look off," Jeff says. He wants to find a way to end the "dagger looks" he receives from people as they walk by.

Despite his bad experiences with some people, he has had positive interactions with others. Before drunkards made a local Conoco gas station their place to hang out, Jeff loved to spend time there.

One day at the gas station, Jeff said he saw a young boy peep his smiling face



photo by Alexa Babin

**HOMELESS:** Jeff, 52, sits in front of the Salvation Army Office & Welfare Center in Norman, Okla. Jeff sleeps at the center five nights every 30 days.

from behind a propane tank as if playing hide-and-seek. Jeff and the boy exchanged greetings. The boy loved seeing Jeff. Every time the boy went with his mother to the Conoco station and saw Jeff wasn't there, the boy felt sick with worry.

A few days after the propane tank encounter, Jeff was unexpectedly tackled with a hug from the young boy. The boy's mother apologized to Jeff and said her son never acted so friendly toward strangers.

Jeff said the mother told him, "A child can tell whether someone is good or bad, and Jeff is good."

Jeff cherishes the friendship he once had with the boy but hasn't seen him lately.

Even though Jeff doesn't have much to call his own, he is always willing to help. He tells a story about the night he noticed a young couple walking by, obviously in

need of help. Jeff told them to go inside Food and Shelter and gave the name of someone helpful to talk to.

"You're the first one that's been concerned," Jeff said the young woman told him. She witnessed firsthand his willingness to help. Jeff has a big heart and big dreams, too.

When asked what dream job he wished to have, Jeff ran his fingers through his scruffy beard and replied, "I'd either be a criminal attorney or a doctor." He wants to help people because he knows how it feels to have no help.

The friendly Norman native has a personality that's similar to other people in this charming Oklahoma city. He proudly wears a salvation bracelet, a symbolic item that tells the story of Jesus Christ, given to him by an elderly couple. Around his neck hangs a cross necklace given to him by a longtime school friend. A red USA cap sits on his head, and his weatherworn hands are evidence of a hard life.

### AT A GLANCE

## Food and Shelter

**WHAT:** An organization that provides food, housing and emergency services to people in crisis in Norman, Okla.

**INFO:** [www.foodandshelterinc.org](http://www.foodandshelterinc.org)

### MORE ONLINE

Read about the programs provided by Food and Shelter for the homeless at [reddirtjournal.ou.edu/stories](http://reddirtjournal.ou.edu/stories)

Later that day, Jeff returned to Food and Shelter and spoke with the director of programs, Natalie Gardner, and expressed his desire to apply for housing.

The waiting list of 22 families seems long, but Jeff said he would wait his turn.



# Helping the homeless — one day at a time

## Norman shelter provides programs for the homeless

ALEXA BABIN  
Red Dirt Journal

The Great Recession has won some economic battles that claimed homes and livelihoods, but the war for financial well-being is not over.

Because of organizations such as Food and Shelter in Norman, Okla., an establishment that provides breakfast, lunch and offers temporary housing, people who are facing homelessness have hope.

Dalena Fulford is one of many who have experienced homelessness but now lives and works to tell the story of how Food and Shelter saved her family.

At age 37, Fulford became homeless after her husband lost his job and she wrecked their car, their only form of transportation. They had no source of income, and their house didn't pass the electric inspection, causing Fulford and her husband to lose their home.

Fulford had nowhere to go, so she and her husband camped in the woods, leaving her preschool-aged son, Timothy, with her sister. After a few weeks, Fulford sought help at the Salvation Army. There, she heard about Food and Shelter. She and her husband applied for housing and waited three months to get in.

"All we did was work through the program," Fulford said. "They have done so much for us. Food and Shelter has opened a lot of opportunities for me."

Fulford said she is now happily employed as a default servicing specialist at Gateway Mortgage in Norman. At Gateway Mortgage, managers want employees who have been affected by homelessness, so Fulford was a perfect fit.

Along with her job at Gateway Mortgage, Fulford works in the kitchen at Food and Shelter on Saturdays. When she works, she sees the people who are struggling to find employment and achieve self-sufficiency.

Until she experienced homelessness, she couldn't relate to the people at the shelter. "I viewed homeless people as alcoholic, drug addicts, losers," Fulford said.

She said she now understands what the homeless are experiencing but doesn't ac-



**FOOD AND SHELTER:** Chef Amy Radford prepares a roasted red pepper cheesecake in the Food and Shelter kitchen in Norman, Okla.

photo by Alexa Babin

cept many excuses from them.

"I've been where they were. They knew they couldn't tell me anything I haven't already accomplished," Fulford said about her return to the shelter to work.

"I have a different kind of love for the people at the shelter," she said.

The love Fulford has for the homeless is shared by Natalie Gardner, programs director at Food and Shelter. Under Gardner's leadership, the non-profit launched an outreach program March 31 that aims to help the homeless find and keep jobs.

The Skills, Training and Resources for Tomorrow program, also known as S.T.A.R.T., is benefitting homeless people who are ready to seek employment but do not have the skills necessary to be hired and keep a job.

Gardner wants to provide a way to "ease them into something that is a little unfamiliar." Eight students are in the first S.T.A.R.T. class, and Gardner's goal is to graduate all eight from the program in late

June, possibly early July.

S.T.A.R.T. is just one of the outreach efforts at Food and Shelter. The kitchen, recently renovated, serves an average of 169 lunches daily.

Food used for breakfast and lunch comes from the Norman Food Bank, Salvation Army, U.S. Postal Service food drive, and community donations, and is prepared by chef Amy Radford. She had worked at a homeless shelter and later was a chef at Blu Fine Wine and Food, an upscale restaurant, in Norman.

After leaving the shelter, Radford missed the day-to-day experience of working with the homeless. That desire brought her to Food and Shelter. Gardner said the charity has been able to survive by "relying on the kindness of others."

Food and Shelter also provides a laundry service, showers and temporary living arrangements. It has one-bedroom living spaces as well as four apartments with two bedrooms. A recent \$50,000 grant from

Sarkeys Foundation will be used to build four shelters.

The average length of stay at Food and Shelter is eight months. It's a cost-free, temporary refuge for people without a home while looking for employment. These people desperately need help, and Gardner understands that.

"They've got to have a tiny bit of a nest egg," she said.

Gardner understands a temporary home is often necessary for the homeless to get back on their feet. She works to help the homeless but not to make them dependent long-term.

Fulford said she agrees with Gardner that the homeless need a support system. Fulford sees the value in people, even when they don't see value in themselves.

"It bothers me that people don't think they deserve more," Fulford said. "I think being homeless was one of the best things that ever happened to us. It made us closer as a couple, as a family."



# Textually transmitted felonies

## Sexting could land teenagers in prison for up to 20 years

REBECCA WALTERS  
Red Dirt Journal

One in five teenagers is guilty of creating and distributing child pornography, a felony that can lead to 20 years in prison, according to a 2008 study commissioned by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and Cosmogirl.com.

Sexting is a felony under Oklahoma law. Sexting is the sending and receiving of sexually explicit pictures or messages, typically through text message.

In 2009, state Rep. Anastasia Pittman of Oklahoma City organized a hearing in which she warned teens and parents about the dangers of sexting.

"Sexting seems to be the newest craze for teenagers, and it is a very dangerous craze that could lead to numerous consequences," Pittman said in a press release.

"No one condones sexting, but at the same time no one wants to hang an albatross around the necks of teens and forever limit their career opportunities or where they can live in society," Pittman said. "There is a world of difference between sexting and predatory behavior."

Sexting falls under Oklahoma's Indecent Exposure and Child Pornography laws. It's punishable by up to 20 years in prison, fines and a permanent spot on the Oklahoma Sex and Violent Crime Offender Registry.

"Sexting alone will land a kid in jail," Pittman said in the hearing. "It's their future that we're trying to save."

"My fear is that if we do nothing, countless teens will see their lives shattered by receiving the brunt end of punishment that is really meant for adult predators," she said.

In 2011, Pittman proposed a bill that would have made sexting only a misdemeanor if a dating couple were younger



photo provided

**MISCHIEVOUS MESSAGES:** One in three teenagers between the ages of 14 and 24 have engaged in some form of sexting, according to a study conducted by MTV and the Associated Press.

**"We need to both educate teens on this issue, and enact legislation to appropriately address this relatively new behavior. Our youth need to realize the very real lifespan of these mistakes."**

— Rep. Anastasia Pittman of Oklahoma City

than 18 or if one was older than 18 but still within four years of the other person.

Vermont lawmakers legalized the consensual exchange of graphic images between children 13 to 18 years old. Pittman says she agrees with that change because adult punishments aren't meant to apply to these situations.

"We need to both educate teens on this issue, and enact legislation to appropriately address this relatively new behavior," Pittman said. "Our youth need to realize the very real lifespan of these mistakes."

Even so, some research reveals that the

problem may not be as widespread as originally thought. A study conducted by MTV and the Associated Press showed only 7 percent of teens had sent a sext. One in three teens between the ages of 14 and 24 had engaged in some form of sexting, with the majority receiving sexual messages and pictures, not sending them.

A study by the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire said only 1 percent of minors over the age of 10 had taken sexually explicit pictures of themselves or others.

But even with such inconsistent numbers and percentages, experts still say it's more important than ever to teach teens and children about the dangers of sexting.

"What kids don't know is that sexting can bring them failure later in life," said Steve Tanner, who oversees the Internet Crimes Against Children unit of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

Tanner said employers have started investigating job applicants on social networking sites, looking for graphic images on their Facebook profiles or Twitter accounts.

## Texting: Class act or classless?

### Faculty, students address cellphone use in classrooms

ALEXIS REESE  
Red Dirt Journal

Cellphones have crept into classrooms, but students and teachers have mixed views about the benefits and drawbacks.

"In general, technology isn't that bad," University of Oklahoma junior Ian Elkin said. "However, I refuse to use a smart phone. People in general are losing their sense of patience."

Professors say it's hard to believe students can listen and learn while texting.

"I know cellphone use has frustrated professors for years," said Ray Murray, associate professor for the Oklahoma State University School of Media & Strategic Communications.

The University of Oklahoma's assistant director of career services agrees.

"It's disturbing," David Kemp said. While some people believe having a phone is a priority, others know they will be perfectly fine without one.

"I'm so anti-cellphone, I don't have one," Murray said.

The hype of electronic devices invades classrooms because they are considered a great way to take notes. However, the issue is that they are being used for multiple purposes and are considered a distraction, especially when students are on Facebook or Twitter instead of listening during a lecture.

Students also can use their devices to cheat by looking up answers on search engines such as Google.

One-quarter of students check their cellphones every class period, according to hackcollege.com. Forty percent check their phones immediately before a test, and 13 percent of students admitted to using their cellular devices to cheat on an exam.

Elkin said he considers texting in the classroom to be extremely rude.

"It has to do with focus," Elkin said.



# Student-athlete juggles books and bats

## OU softball player faces challenges of multiple demands

BRITTANY EMBREE  
Red Dirt Journal

Erica Sampson knows all about what it's like to be a freshman in college and on a Women's College World Series team.

The outfielder says a typical week during the season meant "20 hours with my trainer, 10 hours for study hall, four hours of tutoring per week, three-hour practices."

But being on the team "was a blessing," the 19-year-old said.

Schoolwork could be "stressful" and "overwhelming" but "I stay caught up in school," Sampson said the day after the OU softball team finished second nationally.

The health and exercise major is one of 578 student athletes at the University of Oklahoma. She said she will attend dental or nursing school after graduating from OU.

Playing in the Women's College World Series was the end of her nerve-wracking first year of college.

During the fall and spring semesters, Sampson had to juggle the books and softball. But she communicated with her professors and stayed on top of her schoolwork so that she would remain eligible for a season in which the Sooners won the Big 12 Conference.

Sampson took her spring semester final exams a week early because of the softball schedule.

Fortunately, school was over and Sampson could focus on softball when the Sooners made their run to the finals of the Women's College World Series in early June.

Sampson is already looking forward to the routine of being a student-athlete this fall.

She will hit the weights with her trainer every day from 6 to 7 a.m. Then it's off to class from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

"Sometimes you don't even have time to go take a shower but just have to go to class," she said.

She has practice from 1 to 4 p.m.

Sampson said the schedule is "tiring," but she has a great support system.



photo by Brittany Embree

**POP FLY:** Erica Sampson, OU freshman right fielder, chases after a pop fly ball in Game 3 of the Women's College World Series in Oklahoma City.

Her parents, Terry and Arden Sampson, are always there to give encouraging words when their daughter gets discouraged.

"Nothing comes easy to you, and if it does, then you're not doing something right," Arden Sampson said.

The Sampsons live in Tahlequah, Okla., where Erica attended high school. She was a member of the National Honor Society, was named to the superintendent's Honor Roll, lettered in softball all four years, was Muskogee Phoenix Player of The Year, and a 2010 all-state selection.

Along with high school ball, she played club softball for the OK Diamond Girls in Tulsa.

Her club coach, Jeff Allen, said Sampson demonstrated leadership, desire and determination. She was "the best player I've been around," he said.

The team had better hitters and pitchers

but Sampson was the "complete package," he said.

Sampson was offered scholarships by the University of Tulsa, the University of Kansas, Oklahoma State and OU.

But her choice wasn't difficult, she said, because she grew up in a Sooner household and Oklahoma has a great academic and softball program.

Even though Sampson played catcher in high school, she found a spot in right field for the Sooners.

Against Oklahoma State in April, Sampson hit a three-run homer in the 7-1 victory. In May, she went 2-for-3 against Iowa State. Against Tulsa in the NCAA regional, she hit a two-run single.

Sampson started in right field for all but one game in the Women's College World Series.

The Sooners knocked out South Florida with a 5-1 win, California 3-0 and then

Arizona State 5-3.

"I was actually more nervous for the Arizona game than the final game against Alabama," Sampson said.

The Sooners won the first game against Alabama 4-1 but lost the last two.

Against the Crimson Tide, Sampson was responsible for eight outs on defense. In nine times at the plate, she was walked twice.

In the second game, she hit a run-scoring groundout in the final inning that put the Sooners within 8-6. In the third game, she popped to short in the sixth inning before Oklahoma lost 5-4.

Sampson said it was a tough loss but has no regrets. She is ready to do whatever it takes to get her team back in the series and take home the championship title.

What is this soon-to-be sophomore looking for?

"Revenge," Sampson said.



# Muslims face many misconceptions

## Norman's Muslim community aims to change perceptions

MELISSA MELTON  
Red Dirt Journal

Shugofa Dastgeer may cover her hair as women are directed to do by the Qur'an, but that doesn't mean she can't think on her own.

This University of Oklahoma master's student also doesn't date, but that doesn't mean she can't carry on an intellectual argument.

These are just two of the misconceptions about Islam some Muslims say they hear from others.

Confusing the concept of respect with a lack of intelligence is just one of these misconceptions.

"They think we are not allowed to think, and discuss, or argue about specific issues because we are religious," Dastgeer said.

Many Americans in the U.S. are uncomfortable with Islam, according to a poll taken by CNN in 2011. Nearly half said they would feel uncomfortable with a mosque being built in their neighborhood, with Muslim men praying at the airport, or with a woman wearing a burqa.

In Norman, for example, a mosque has been located at 420 E. Lindsey St. since 1976. But this cluster of houses went mostly unnoticed until they were replaced by a new structure, the Masjid An-Nur, this year.

When the domed building began to actually look like a mosque, questions began to arise by some uneasy Norman neighbors. Some were uncomfortable seeing Islam in their community.

"People were not excited to see it," said 34-year-old Noman Jan, a Muslim software engineer in Norman.

Though this may surprise some residents, non-Muslims are welcome to attend any services at the mosque, just like at a Christian church, Jan said.

"It is a place of God. Who are we to stop the people? We are all God's creation," Jan said.

Jan said he wants people to learn about his Islam so they may understand it.

"This is why I brought you into the mosque; so you could see what the religion



photo by Melissa Melton

**FRIDAY PRAYERS:** A group of Muslim women gather in the prayer room at the Masjid An-Nur (mosque) near the University of Oklahoma campus in Norman.

is about," said Jan, speaking to a group of journalism students invited to tour the mosque in early June.

Other misconceptions include that all Muslims are terrorists, they hate Christianity, they reject Jesus, women can't make their own choices or even think for themselves.

"Only 5 to 6 percent of the Muslim population is violent," said Charles Kimball, presidential professor and director of religious studies at OU.

Kimball is an ordained Baptist minister who teaches courses on Islam, religion and politics in the Middle East, world religions in America, introduction to religious studies, comparative religion and conceptions of the afterlife.

Yousuf Mohammad, a doctoral student at OU, said more than a billion Muslims are not terrorists.

"I blame those Muslims who interpret Islam and Qur'an verses differently for the misconceptions that all Muslims are

terrorists," he said.

Muslims are also not all Arabs. They are from many countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Pakistan, India and Indonesia.

Muslims are less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, about 2.6 million, according to a USA Today survey in 2010.

At the mosque in Norman, some men and women in the Islamic community come together to pray at least five times a day. Although the prayers are obligatory, believers don't have to pray at the mosque, Yousuf said.

"It is more of a way of life than it is a religion. It teaches you how to behave with others, how to eat, and how to act," he said.

One misconception is that Muslims hate Christianity. But Islam accepts Christianity as another religion.

"You believe Adam was the first man. So do we," Yousuf said.

Muslims believe Jesus was a prophet, or

messenger of God. Kimball explained that Muslims do not reject Jesus as such, but they don't believe he is divine.

"Muslims revere and honor Jesus as a prophet," Kimball said.

Another misconception is that women must cover themselves with headscarves. However, Muslims say in the United States, it all boils down to a personal decision by the wearer.

All these misconceptions stem from "a lack of knowledge," Dastgeer said.

Dastgeer said for her, wearing a scarf is a statement of her freedom as a Muslim woman.

She wears a scarf to avoid attention by men.

"As a woman, you look more beautiful with your hair exposed. And you're going to be more attractive with your hair, and more guys will look at you," Dastgeer said. "Some people want to expose themselves; I don't want to expose myself. It's my decision."



# OU grad fulfills dream of reunited family

## After most her life apart, Chinh Doan moves mom to U.S.

ALEXIS REESE  
Red Dirt Journal

While most women were looking for the perfect outfit or planning their post-graduation receptions, Chinh Doan was busy trying to get her mother to America.

Doan, who graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in broadcast journalism in May, has spent most of her life trying to fulfill her dream to move her mother from Vietnam to America and having a happy family.

Two weeks before graduation, Doan was told that her mother could move to the United States in time for her graduation.

Doan said it was a dream she still can't believe came true.

"It's kind of giving back to [my parents] for all of the sacrifices they made for me," she said. "I think it's worth it."

Doan is spending the summer in New York City for a fellowship and will be working with CBS News. But her road to the Big Apple wasn't a paved one.

Doan and her father, Hoan Doan, moved to the United States from Vietnam when she was 4 years old.

In the late 1990s, her father was granted permission to move to the United States after Congress passed a bill allowing those who served for three or more years as a prisoner of war to move to America as refugees for their protection.

It seemed like a perfect chance to give their only child together a chance at a better life (both Hoan Doan and Tu Tran have children from previous marriages). But due to an accusation of marriage fraud against her mother, only Doan and her father were allowed to move to the United States.

"When my family found out that we had the opportunity to move to the United States, we were ecstatic," she said. "We were so poor and we knew there would be no future for me if we stayed in Vietnam."

So Doan and her father moved.



photo provided

**TOGETHER AGAIN:** Chinh Doan and her parents, Tu Tran and Hoan Doan, after her graduation in May from the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma.

They came to Oklahoma City because the Catholic charities who sponsored them were here. The Doans weren't familiar with the U.S. so it was chosen for them.

She said she had grown up in a house made out of banana leaves, so she and her father didn't have much to bring.

Doan had to adapt to her new community, language, culture and food.

At age 12, Doan wanted to become a journalist. Her father's first job was a custodian at the state's largest newspaper, The Oklahoman. Thinking that her father worked for the paper as a writer, she would read scraps of the paper that he brought home every day.

This was how she learned English.

When she learned that her dad wasn't a writer, Doan still was interested in the articles and publications that he brought home.

She grew up watching local television with father before going to bed every night.

"That's where my love for journal-

ism grew, from the newspaper to the TV news," Doan said.

In high school, she took part in her school's yearbook.

Doan knew she had to gain her citizenship when she turned 18 to start the process of getting her mother to the United States. She took her citizenship test, which would allow her to bring her mother to the U.S., while participating in the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism in Norman, Okla., in 2008.

But she ran into some walls that made it difficult to move her mother here.

Doan started petitioning to get her mother to the U.S. a year before her college graduation.

She was a college student working for herself, her father and her mother.

But somehow, she managed to squeeze in opportunities to advance her career as a journalist.

While at OU, Doan interned at The Today Show, the Oklahoma City Thunder, KFOR News Channel 4, Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum, Greater Grads, OU Nightly News, The Oklahoma Daily and ROOTS TV.

Bob Dickey, OU Nightly news director

and instructor, worked with Doan while she was a journalism student at OU.

"Chinh is a delightful person with a lot of energy. She's a well-rounded journalist," he said.

Few knew the responsibilities she took on for her family. She paid her and her father's bills, sent \$100 to her mother every month and saved money to bring her mother to America.

She didn't have a salary to sponsor her mother's move so she started making and selling hair accessories in boutiques and at philanthropy events.

After hearing about the financial demands it took to bring her mother over, members of her Tri Delta sorority, university officials and various organizations pitched in.

The entire process took about six months. Two months before graduation, all the documents were gathered, but the process wasn't moving fast enough.

Doan wrote to OU President David Boren, who then contacted his son, U.S. Congressman Dan Boren, who eventually moved the process along.

Doan flew to Washington, D.C., to petition officials to speed the process. After letters from her and Boren, officials agreed to move up the date of the required interview of her mother.

Doan said many obstacles came up but she never stopped pushing to bring her mother to America.

She said her attitude was: "We've got to keep pushing. We [have] to find ways."

Doan's mother arrived just a few days before graduation. Tran was terrified. She had never been out of the country. She didn't know English.

So Doan flew to Vietnam to bring her back. She had visited Vietnam five times but hadn't lived with both parents since she was just a child.

Doan was excited to see what it would be like to finally be a family.

"I still can't believe that my [dream came true]," Doan said.

The first night in the new apartment that Doan got for her parents, she saw something that she had waited so long to see — her family.

"This is the moment that I have been dreaming of all my life. I wanted to share it with everyone that had been so supportive," Doan said. "My story is something that everyone can relate to. It's about not giving up on your biggest dream."



# Teen reaches great heights at film festival

## High school grad's short film accepted to deadCENTER

LYDIA LINDLEY  
Red Dirt Journal

Most high school students are just beginning to think about their future. However, by the time he graduated from Edmond Memorial High School last month, Bune Tomlinson had already filmed eight short films, participated in more than 30 festivals and received numerous prestigious awards.

"FRIENDS," his most recent film, is among 100 selections chosen by the 2012 deadCENTER Film Festival in Oklahoma City. This is Tomlinson's third consecutive deadCENTER appearance.

"FRIENDS" is a short film about two young students who are struggling with exclusion and bullying in school. A shy fourth grader, Jacob, struggles to make friends and feels continually rejected at his school. He sees that another boy, Tommy, is struggling with the same problem.

With this film, Tomlinson said he wanted to raise awareness about bullying and bring about change.

"I want kids who see this film to find someone at their school who is secluded, or not making any friends, (and realize) that they need to go help this kid. I am encouraging kids who see this film that we need to respect each other," he said.

He said he also wants to encourage children who are struggling with bullying and exclusion to never give up. Giving up only brings disappointment.

Tomlinson, 19, came to the United States after being orphaned in Romania. Not knowing English, he had much to learn. He expresses gratitude toward his adopted parents and attributes much of his success to their help and support.

He has always had a passion for films and filmmaking.

"I was so intrigued by them and how they were made," Tomlinson said.

He said he continued to grow more and more interested in filmmaking and wanted to attend film camps.

In the eighth grade, Tomlinson was accepted into the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute in Film, a program that accepts only about 18 of the 40 to 50 applicants



photo provided

**FILMAKER:** Bune Tomlinson, 19, had his film about bullying accepted into the 2012 deadCENTER Film Festival in Oklahoma City

each year.

There, he learned about the process of filmmaking and had the opportunity to make, edit and present a short film. He also worked with directors and figures in the film industry, such as Blayne Weaver, filmmaker and director at Secret Identity Productions.

Weaver not only taught Tomlinson about film at the institute but also hired him as his production assistant on the set of his film "Favor."

Tomlinson was able to spend a week on set, learning and helping, Weaver said.

"Bune's an incredibly hard worker. He's actually a really good filmmaker, and a couple of his films are already winning awards all over the place," Weaver said. "He's creative and doesn't let anything get in his way, which I think is key to doing well in the film industry. He just goes after it with no fear and no compunction."

This month, Tomlinson will attend the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute in Film

for his fourth time.

Always pursuing his dream of filmmaking, he has also been able to land several internships, gain film experience and make connections.

He won the student division of the 24-Hour Video Race in Tulsa with his team for the third time in a row and also had two films accepted into the Kids' Fest short programs in the deadCENTER Film Festival in 2009.

Tomlinson will begin shooting his next film, "No One Knows," in August. This story portrays a girl who is molested by her father and whose neighbor is being physically abused by his father.

Tomlinson said he wants people to see there are many type of bullying that need to be addressed.

"I want to let parents know that there are kids out there struggling, and you need to help them and be there for them because you're their role model," he said.

During the next few years, Tomlinson

said he wants to continue making more connections and films, possibly even a feature film.

Award-winning "FRIENDS" has recently played in numerous festivals across the nation, such as the NFFTY festival in Seattle and the Bare Bones Film Festival in Muskogee, Okla., where he was awarded Best Director.

"That was a really cool accomplishment to get," Tomlinson said. "Making connections and movies has really got me attention and noticed, and I'm getting a lot of really great opportunities."

"FRIENDS" also recently received recognition at the Sierra Cannon Film Festival and won best U.S. narrative at the Lovett High School Film Festival in Atlanta.

Tomlinson is determined to continue filming and grow as a filmmaker.

"I know plenty of adults that don't have as much drive as Bune does. He's one of those kids where you just know that he's going to go far," Weaver said.



# Economy stymies teenage job seekers

## More than 26% of 16-,17-year-olds unemployed in May

PATIENCE WILLIAMS  
Red Dirt Journal

If the Great Recession has thrown a hand grenade on the hopes of adults seeking employment, then it has dropped an atomic bomb on the prospects for teenagers.

Nearly 25 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds nationwide were unemployed in May. That's three times the national rate, according to the Employment Policies Institute.

Sola Somade of Norman, Okla., knows how fierce the competition for jobs is. The 17-year-old was job searching in early June.

"It's hard finding a job in the summer unless you start looking in the beginning of May. Most jobs have already stopped hiring for seasonal positions," Somade said.

The national unemployment rate has slowly begun to drop from a high of 10 percent in 2009 to 8.2 percent in May, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The numbers are much worse for teenagers, who often are competing with adults for the same jobs.

More than 26 percent of the youngest working teens, ages 16 and 17, were unemployed in May, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"In high school, I feel like we aren't as reliable [as adults] because of high school events," Somade said.

When teens are looking for work, the thought of coming home smelling like ketchup and onions might turn them away from applying at fast food joints and restaurants.

"I'd rather not work with food, but it's not looking like I have many more options," Somade continued. "Also, lots of places require you to be 18. I'm only 17."

Although the bad news might seem endless, one expert said teens can find work by knowing how to look and how to dress.

Debra Krittenbrink knows the struggle of teenagers finding jobs because the students that she works with are required to have one so they can support themselves.



photo by Patience Williams

**ON THE JOB:** Refilling drinks for customers, 17-year-old Terren Zinbi landed a job at McAlister's Deli in March after three months of looking for work.

"Walk in with a résumé, even if you've never worked before. It sets you apart. They are extremely impressed with that," said Krittenbrink, executive director of Bridges, an organization that helps high school and college students who are living on their own.

The job market might be tough to enter, but that doesn't make it impossible. Sometimes teens sabotage their opportunities to get hired without realizing it.

Restaurant manager Thressa Combs said that occasionally, she has turned down teen applicants "due to the fact that they cannot pass a drug test."

Many jobs ask for experience on the applications, which can create a problem for teenagers.

"I don't have enough experience working, but I have to start somewhere," said

17-year-old Matt Phillips of Lake Forest High School in Illinois.

Amanda Staples, 17, of Oklahoma City, said a lack of experience is stopping her from being hired.

"I still continue to put on my applications all of my good characteristics and all of the benefits I could bring to the job, but I don't know if it is helping any," Staples said. "I think following up with the applications and letting the boss know I am really interested would make it easier to get a job."

A possible key for landing a job is to keep trying, and when one position gets filled, apply for another. Terren Zinbi, 17 and a graduate of Norman High, kept her head up for three months while she was seeking employment last winter. She got a job at McAlister's Deli in March.

"[Having a job] is exciting because I don't have to ask my parents for money," Zinbi said.

Krittenbrink said the job search shouldn't stop with completing the application.

"Don't wait for 'We'll call you.' Call them back," Krittenbrink said.

Among the businesses that hire youngsters are restaurants such as Schlotzsky's in Norman, Okla., where Combs works. She said more adults have been applying lately, but that does not stop her from hiring teenagers.

"We hire 16 and above, and I can tell if they are mature by their demeanor," Combs said.

She recommended that applicants pull up their baggy pants and cover any tattoos.



# Freshman 15 no myth, dietician says

## All students can experience weight struggles in college

MEISHA MCDANIEL  
Red Dirt Journal

Kayla Kawalec said she knows the Freshman 15 is no myth, so she'll work hard to avoid gaining weight as a University of Florida freshman this fall.

"I definitely think it is something that affects college freshmen. It's because they're adjusting to being alone, so they eat a lot," Kawalec said.

As the common story goes, students entering college as freshmen are expected to gain 15 pounds while adjusting to college life. Loneliness, stress and the easy availability of junk food are all considered major factors in packing on the pounds.

Some 20 to 30 percent of students gain weight during their first year of college, according to "Hold the Freshmen 15" by Annie Calhoun.

A balanced diet and exercise would help students avoid the weight gain and stay healthy, experts say.

Some high school students worry about the Freshman 15 before they get to college.

Yeraldin Barrera, 16, said she expects to change her diet when she gets to college.

"I do feel as though I'll have to make some changes because when you are in college you're always in a hurry and don't really eat at home," Barrera said. "There are so many fast food restaurants, so what do you do?"

Ashley Smith, a soon-to-be junior at the University of Indiana, said the Freshman 15 is true but it didn't affect her.

"There is unlimited food on the campus for free, so I took advantage of those opportunities," Smith said.

Adapting habits of unhealthy dieting can continue after students' freshman year and sometimes continue well after the first year of college.

A Norman, Okla., dietician said she agrees that the Freshman 15 doesn't exclusively apply to new college students.

"Weight gain is an issue for all students whether or not they are a freshman. Plus, students are experiencing a lot of stress between classes and may not be getting enough sleep," said Heather Kirkes, registered and licensed dietician.

Slacking off when maintaining a diet is not unusual. Students may consistently eat in a way that threatens their health.

"The Freshmen 15 is a combination of all the stress of being away from home for the first time," Smith said.



photo by Meisha McDaniel

**STAY ACTIVE:** Brittany Robinson, an OU marketing senior, said she didn't gain the Freshman 15 until her junior year. She said she now works out regularly. The university provides an exercise center, health education classes and more for its students to stay healthy and to lose weight while they are at school.

College students are confronted with a variety of foods at any hour of the day.

Sacrificing a burger for a salad isn't always the tastiest way to go, but it would dismiss a few calories from your metabolic system.

"The majority of options are not healthy, and a lot of people are choosing the unhealthy choices," Kirkes said. "Fast food is a really bad choice unless you choose the healthy options."

Kirkes works with Healthy Sooners at the University of Oklahoma, a program

that encourages mental and physical well-being.

Students also can exercise at the Houston Huffman Fitness Center on campus.

"We do offer health education classes as well as health management classes," said Malinda Williams, assistant director for fitness and recreation at OU.

"Find physically fun activities to do with your friends instead of going out to eat all the time. Try to get out of the habit of staying in one setting, just keep moving," Williams said.

# Grammy-winning artist to headline music festival

## Volunteers key to event's success, organizer says

KATIE FORD  
Red Dirt Journal

Critically acclaimed saxophonist David Sanborn will perform during the 29th annual Jazz in June festival at Andrews Park in Norman, Okla., because of the hard work of volunteers.

During the festival, the volunteers do practically everything. Some people will do anything from booking to support while the others will get out of the office, set up

the stage and clean up after the crowd has left.

"I'm amazed at how a group of folks, who have their own lives to live, come down and help," said Mark Mitchell, stage manager and webmaster for the festival.

For three days a year, jazz performers from across the world will come to Norman for the festival.

"I work on a committee with people who decide the performers, provide some way of transportation, manage the booking of rooms at hotels here in Norman, take part in the recording and look after the equipment," said Jim Johnson, program committee chair.

The planning must start early, sometimes two years in advance, so organizers know everything is ordered, visas aren't

### AT A GLANCE

## Jazz in June 2012

**WHEN:** June 21-23

**WHERE:** Andrews Park, 201 W. Daws St., Norman, OK

**PRICE:** Free

**INFO:** jazzinjune.org

messed up and all the entertainment has a backup, Johnson said.

Sanborn, this year's headliner, is a Grammy-award winning musician whose

24 albums have gone gold and platinum.

Other musicians include Carolyn Wonderland, The Bert Dalton Brazil Project and the Norman High School Jazz Combo.

Booking bands can take up to two years. Many people, including Mitchell, must do what everyone dreads: cleaning up after the entire festival is over and smelling like beer afterward because of it.

"Year after year, people come in and volunteer for the festival," Johnson said. "Those who get stuck with the job of cleaning up the site always seem to come back."

Mitchell said planning meetings start in early July.

"It goes on monthly until the month of June, then it goes on weekly," he said.

"I just hope next year, we can top David Sanborn," he said.



# High heels: Painfully in style

## High heels could be damaging to feet, podiatrist says

**TAELO SANDERS**  
Red Dirt Journal

Women today find themselves having foot problems due to fashion trends in shoes: high heels to be specific.

Seventy-five percent of the “hot summer styles” are heels with sizes ranging from 3 to 5 inches tall, according to Designer Shoe Warehouse.

Style follower Ashley Baker, 17, from Moore, Okla., rises above the pain of wearing heels.

“I’ve had the experiences of twisted ankles, numb feet in pumps and when sandal wedges become too tight where my feet are cramped,” Baker said.

Women just don’t see that their style decisions can cause lasting damage to their feet.

Young women wear heels to look and feel sexy and confident. Gabby Turck, 17, from Lake Forest, Ill., agrees.

“Heels can make you feel confident,” Turck said. “Every girl wants to feel like a super model.”

The effects of high heels can range from simple blisters to the possibility of a structural deformity that may require a surgical procedure, experts say.

Despite the pain of high heels, some women do what they need to do to look pleasing. “As long as I look cute, I’ll deal with pain,” Baker said.

At a threatening height of 5 feet 1 inch tall, Cori Baumgardner, a 17-year-old from Honolulu, wears heels with a platform to add a few inches to her height.

“They are all-around easier to walk in. It gives more ground with a flat balance,” Baumgardner said.

Another student, Sara Berry-Lee, 15, from Moore, Okla., likes the highest of them all.

“I prefer stilettos because they make me feel unstoppable,” Berry-Lee said.

Podiatrist William Smith Jr. said he gets several visits each week from young women experiencing foot pain. And most of the time, it’s from improper footwear such as high heels.

“It is a very common problem,” said



photo provided

**HIGH PAIN:** Wearing high heels can result in anything from blisters to a structural deformity, experts say.

**“I do worry sometimes. I know the dangers of pointed heels. My mom used to wear them all the time and her toes started deforming and curving in. So I don’t wear pointed heels.”**

— Briana Young, 15

Smith of Affiliated Foot & Ankle Clinic in Shawnee, Okla.

What seems to be the high fashion trend is also setting women up for problems later in life.

“If she continues to wear them for a long period of her life, the consequences that follow could be chronic foot problems like inflammation of the nerve in the intermetatarsal spaces, arthritis, and could also cause the Achilles tendon to shorten,” Smith said.

Briana Young, 15, from Bartlesville,

Okla., said she sometimes wonders what dangers heels might cause.

“I do worry sometimes. I know the dangers of pointed heels. My mom used to wear them all the time and her toes started deforming and curving in. So I don’t wear pointed heels,” Young said.

Can the damage be reversed?

“Some conditions can be treated conservatively and will become asymptomatic,” Smith said. “Some conditions will continue to be painful and may require surgical correction.

“I would advise girls to wear a good supportive shoe, closed toe and closed heel. Preferably with an arch support,” Smith said.

Regardless of what experts say, the opinions of fashionistas stand tall and the facts of reality fall silent.

“I like heels,” Baumgardner said. “A lot of things can cause long-term damage like skin cancer, but that doesn’t mean I’m going to stop going outside.”

# Remedial math not adding up

**MICAHLEAH BURGER**  
Red Dirt Journal

Yvonne Oberly had to take three remedial math courses in 2007 before she could enroll in a college-level math course at Oklahoma City Community College.

“Getting a higher education made me a better person and remedial classes is where it all started,” said Oberly, now a graduate student in human resources at the University of Oklahoma.

Unfortunately, research shows that remedial courses nationwide lead only to more student loan debt, not academic degrees for those taking the classes.

In Oklahoma, 32 percent of incoming college freshmen just out of high school in 2010 needed to take remedial math courses and 15 percent needed remedial English, according to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

“Math is the biggest issue,” said Ben Hardcastle, director of communications for the OSRHE.

Hardcastle said many high school graduates do not have what they need when they enroll in college.

But the problem doesn’t start in college. “These students have graduated from our high schools,” Hardcastle said.

Colleges will work with high schools to address the problem, he said.

Melissa White, executive director of counseling for the OSRHE, suggested high schools should make sure college-bound students are taking Achieving Classroom Excellence, or ACE.

The ACE curriculum includes four units of English and three units each of math, laboratory science and history.

Classrooms, it seems, are one solution to the problem. College preparation within the classroom, as well as following the ACE curriculum, could potentially lower the number of unprepared graduates.

Fortunately, state regents and public schools have a plan. They are working together and pouring resources into studying why the math remediation rates are so high.

“The key is that higher education and secondary schools need to collaborate, are collaborating,” Hardcastle said.



# Benefits of energy drinks questioned

## Drinks could pose health risks to some, experts say

JAMAI HARRIS

Red Dirt Journal

Like many young Americans, 21-year-old Darlene Parnell has a pretty hectic schedule. Sometimes, she just runs out of energy. “Juggling both school and work full time, I need something to keep me up,” Parnell said.

She’s not alone.

Energy drinks have been gaining popularity since 1997, when Red Bull was introduced to the American market, according to information provided by that company. Worldwide, consumers bought about 4.6 billion Red Bulls in 2011, an increase of 11.4 percent over the previous year.

A sudden boost of energy at the right time might be convenient, but it might also boost the risk of health problems later.

“I don’t drink energy drinks too often, but once in a while, when I’m studying for exams or have some big project coming up,” said Tara Buehner, who is scrambling to finish her doctoral dissertation at the University of Oklahoma before August.

David Estell, a U.S. Navy Seal, finds himself drinking a Nos about three times a week.

“They just wake me up,” he said.

The U.S. military supplies free energy drinks to the troops when deployed and they need to stay awake. A drink called Rip It is available to them in 6-ounce bottles, so they normally have more than one at a time, one officer said.

U.S. Army Capt. Adrian Sayers said he favors Red Bull, even though it’s the most expensive.

“It’s probably most expensive for a reason,” he said, adding that he doesn’t see a problem with drinking these along with other sources of caffeine.

“I’m pretty tolerant to caffeine. I drink a lot of soda, too,” he said.

Meanwhile, Noah Westerfield, a high school student, said he drinks Monster and Red Bull about twice a month just because they taste good.

“I heard they were bad for me, but they never made me feel funny so I still drink



photo provided

**BOOST:** Energy drinks have become more popular, but experts say they do more harm than good.

them,” Westerfield said.

Some health officials are concerned that these benefits may carry a hidden cost.

Brandi Gray, a family nurse practitioner, said energy drinks do more harm than help, in her experience. For one thing, she has noticed that people who have a long history of drinking energy drinks often have heart arrhythmias.

“It acts as a stimulant,” Gray said. “It in-

creases the adrenaline and heart rate, causing an irregular heart beat.”

Because of this, people who are at risk for high blood pressure should not consume energy drinks, she said.

“If the heart is beating irregularly, then there is a limited amount of blood the heart can pump out in a beat. That can lead to high blood pressure,” Gray said.

Buehner said she isn’t a fan of the way en-

**“Anything that can give you a five-hour energy boost or make you stay awake for hours and hours — that’s just too much caffeine or sugar for me.”**

— Brandon Thompson, U.S. Army captain

ergy drinks make her feel.

“They keep me awake; but at the same time, they make my heart kind of flutter, almost palpitate,” she said.

Emmit Jack, a student at the University of Texas at Arlington, said he feels “really hyper” after drinking a Monster.

And, though Red Bull helps Parnell get through her long days, she says it does make her feel hungry, even if she has just eaten.

No matter what other aftereffects consumers experience, those interviewed for this article said they eventually crash, or suddenly feel tired, about an hour after the energy boost.

The only way to avoid the crash, and the potential health risks, is to avoid these energy drinks altogether. Some suggested several tasty and healthy alternatives.

“I don’t really think those things are healthy,” said U.S. Army Capt. Brandon Thompson. “I’m just a really big water drinker.”

“Anything that can give you a five-hour energy boost or make you stay awake for hours and hours — that’s just too much caffeine or sugar for me,” he said.

Thompson said he sees a lot of his fellow troops drinking nothing but energy drinks, and this has a lot to do with them being out of shape and overweight.

“They don’t want to admit it, but if that’s all you drink, and I never see you drink water, that’s going to have a lot to do with your fitness levels,” he said.

Nija Brown, a college student, said she sticks to coffee for an energy boost after she started hearing about the possible harm done by energy drinks.

“A quick boost of energy is not worth risking my health, especially since I’ll eventually crash,” she said.

Steve Ferguson, a Starbucks customer, said he’d rather get his caffeine from coffee because “if you just do coffee with half and half or skim milk you don’t get all of the artificial stuff.”



## Participant profiles



### ALEXA BABIN

Even with the help of OIDJ, Alexa Babin doesn't know what she will do after she graduates from C.E. Byrd High School in Shreveport, La. "I'm just not one of those people who plans out their life," the 17-year-old said. "I don't really have a dream job, but it would be really cool if it were in the journalistic field." The last time the 5-foot-10-inch senior was on a journalism staff she was in eighth grade. Outside of journalism, Babin likes to swim. She started when she was 5 years old and now swims competitively for her school. But she doesn't plan on carrying it into college. She said she is not sure where she would like to go to college but is considering the University of Oklahoma. "I want to do something that involves writing, maybe not journalism specifically, but writing for sure," she said.

— by Katie Ford

### MICAHLEAH BURGER

OIDJ veteran and Sooner-to-be Leah Burger has cared for her 6-year-old sister since her birth. "She is my world," said Burger, who doesn't trust the task to anyone else. But she'll have to leave young Aryana this fall to pursue her dream of journalism at the University of Oklahoma. That brings a tear to Burger's eye. "Everything I do, I do for her," said the 18-year-old. "I want her to know that she can do them, too." Burger's other passions are writing and rowing. As a senior, Burger was a co-editor of the school newspaper at Santa Fe South in Oklahoma City. She also was the coxswain on her high school's rowing team. "It is my job to steer the boat away from everything," she said. "I guess the one thing I always wanted people to do is listen. For the boat to be safe, the rowers have to listen for me."

— by Rebecca Walters



### SAMANTHA EIGHMY

Sammy Eighmy, 14, isn't just the bubbly, creative person she seems to be. The Bartlesville Mid-High School sophomore is determined to be an example of ethical living. That includes treating other people with respect. "I've had many people treat me with disrespect because of my background in the way that the economy has hit my family," Eighmy said. She wants to put those ethical values into practice as a journalist. "It feels good to give information to people that need it so they don't start rumors," she said. Eighmy is the assistant editor and social media editor for her school newspaper, The Paladin. She said she decided to take part in OIDJ to gain reporting experience and to prepare for a college major in journalism. Eighmy said her favorite part of journalism is the feeling of teamwork in a newsroom. She wants to report for an online publication after college.

— by Alexis Reese

### BRITTANY EMBREE

Brittany Embree learned at OIDJ that sports journalism is not all fun and games when a newspaper photographer insulted her while covering the Women's College World Series. Even though that experience upset her, Embree still wants to pursue sports journalism in college. "I have been going to OU football games with my father since I was a baby," she said. A native of Moore, Okla., the 17-year-old is a senior at Westmoore High School. Embree is the editor of the school's newspaper and the manager of her school's football team. Embree loves eating pizza in the middle of the night with her friends on the school football field. As an only child, she would play with Barbie dolls and dress up with her cat, Tiger. As she grew up, she realized that playing with dolls was not her calling and is exploring her options in journalism.

— by Annie Strom



### KATIE FORD

An avid reader and Bartlesville, Okla., native, Katie Ford wants to cover crime for a major daily newspaper after she graduates from the University of Oklahoma. But as a sophomore at Bartlesville Mid-High School this fall, she'll settle for reporting on health and school trends. The 14-year-old reporter for The Paladin aspires to understand the minds of criminals so she will be able to explain it to the public. As a 10-year-old, she fell in love with writing while reading a book with depressing characters. Ford decided she could do better. Perfecting her initial idea, she used the characters to create her own children's book with a more positive spin and was praised for the finished product. Her family farm has also played a huge role in shaping her personality. "Being able to spend time with the animals makes me feel special," Ford said.

— by Alexa Babin

### JAMAI HARRIS

Sugar and spice and everything nice can be used to describe 16-year-old Jamai Lindsey Harris. "Once you get past the sour, I'm actually really sweet," Harris said. "I'm like a Sour Patch kid." Harris lives in Frisco, Texas, but was born and raised in New Orleans. She lived in the "boot" state for 10 years before relocating to Texas for her father's job. Since seventh grade, Harris has found a love for broadcasting by always being around a video camera. She will be the senior producer in her broadcasting class at the Career and Technical Education Center. "I like the big-girl cameras," Harris said. "Not the baby ones." Besides preparing for her dream to be a television news anchor, Harris spends her time shopping, dancing, working at a snow cone stand and listening to Beyoncé. Her love for broadcast comes from her desire to reach a broad audience in a way that everyone can understand.

— by Taelor Sanders



### LYDIA LINDLEY

A native of Frisco, Texas, 17-year-old Lydia Lindley is a journalist at heart. "Ever since I was young, I've always written, and I want to write my own novel," Lindley said. "This is something I've always enjoyed and writing is a part of me." She will be a senior at Prestonwood Christian Academy in Plano, Texas, and the editor-in-chief for her school newspaper, Pride Press. Lindley stays on top of her writing but also participates in other school organizations such as Future Problem Solvers, Lion Scholar Program, Great Books and Student Leadership Institute. She said she came to OIDJ to get hands-on experience inside the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communications to see if the school is right for her. "I really wanted to see firsthand and to broaden my knowledge about the different fields of journalism," Lindley said.

— by Meisha McDaniel



**MEISHA MCDANIEL**

Most high school students are eagerly awaiting the next high school football game or prom. But Tulsa, Okla., native Meisha McDaniel is busy planning for her future. The 16-year-old junior at Webster Broadcasting and Digital Media Magnet High School writes for the school newspaper, Webster Weekly, and is at the top of her class. She wants to attend college, followed by sniper school, and then become an agent in the CIA, where she can use both her writing and criminal justice skills with investigations. "I think investigation is heavily involved in both. I personally enjoy the more critical investigation involved in criminal justice," McDaniel said. McDaniel has taken journalism classes but hopes her skills continue to improve. "In any field I go into, I'm always going to incorporate journalism because I enjoy captivating people, investigating and revealing truth in situations through my writing," she said.

— by Lydia Lindley

**MELISSA MELTON**

Melissa Melton already has made a difference as a reporter for her high school newspaper in Clinton, Okla. Melton, 17, developed an interest in journalism when she took a newspaper class. "The teacher inspired me to do this, and she gave me a way to broadcast my opinions," Melton said. Last year, as a staff member of the school newspaper, Tornado Talks, Melton experienced how much journalism can affect a community. "I once did a story on sexting, and it revealed how many teens weren't educated about sex," Melton said. "Because of our article, we will have a sex-education program in the fall." Along with journalism, singing is a strong passion of hers. She is in advanced choir and occasionally tries out for honor choirs. "I like out-singing people with my big, booming alto voice," Melton said. She likes to be heard.

— by Patience Williams

**ALEXIS REESE**

Alexis Reese might be the only quiet social butterfly anyone could meet. But when she gets comfortable with her surroundings, she blossoms into a monarch of conversation. That might one day include hosting a TV show. But for now, the 17-year-old is a senior at Liberty High School in Frisco, Texas. College is in her plans, but where is still up in the air. Her favorites are the University of Central Arkansas, University of Oklahoma and Sam Houston State in Texas. Reese is considering majoring in mass communications with a minor in psychology. Her interests range from journalism to cheerleading. She has been cheering for 13 years and hopes to possibly cheer in college. She also likes to cook, watch movies, and follow fashion trends but with her own touch.

— by Samantha Eighmy

**TAELOK SANDERS**

A large tattoo of an antique camera adorns the left shoulder of Taelor Kristine Sanders. It reflects her love of photography, a hobby that allows her to show her individuality through each picture. "No two photographs are exactly the same," Sanders said. "Each one is one-of-a-kind, just like me." The Oklahoma native is the senior yearbook editor at Westmoore High School in Moore, Okla., a suburb just south of Oklahoma City. Despite her passion for photography, the 16-year-old aspires to be a respiratory therapist. She has a genuine interest in the anatomy and physiology of the lungs. After she lost her grandfather to lung cancer, she decided to enter the medical field to help people suffering from respiratory problems. "I just really want to help people," said Sanders, who is shy around strangers but warms up quickly. "Making people smile brings a smile to my face."

— by Jamai Harris

**ANNIE STROM**

Annie Strom aspires to be a great storyteller, just like Ed Bloom, the main character of her favorite movie, "Big Fish." Like Bloom, she cares about helping people. Strom volunteers at an equestrian therapy program with her best friend. Strom is free spirited and plans on sky diving when she graduates high school. In her hometown of Lake Forest, Ill., 17-year-old Strom enjoys jumping off piers with her friends into 50-degree water, hula hooping, interior decorating and rocking out to Blake Shelton. She is not sure what she wants to major in, but she does plan on attending the University of Oklahoma. Strom mentioned that her college of choice should have four things: be in the South, great football, nice weather conditions and sororities. She claims Oklahoma's hot weather will give her a break from her "ice-cube of a town."

— by Brittany Embree

**REBECCA WALTERS**

Rebecca Walters, or Becca to her friends, is a people person. She is a sincere listener who seems absorbed in what a person is saying. This is one reason Walters said she has an interest in journalism, but she admitted she is unsure of what she wants to be when she grows up. The 16-year-old said she has considered being an archaeologist or fashion designer but feels most like herself when she can express her ideas in journalism or English classes. The junior is editor of the newspaper at Bartlesville High School in northeastern Oklahoma. Walters has lived in four cities, including Cincinnati and St. Louis, but likes Bartlesville the most. She considers it her home. Walters is a lifeguard at the YMCA, where she started as a swim instructor. She plans to attend college but hasn't chosen one. She respects her mother and her father, who lives in Houston for his job.

— by Micahleah Burger

**PATIENCE WILLIAMS**

Doctors thought Patience Williams would be born with Down syndrome, so her parents named her for the patience they would need to deal with the disorder. The doctors were wrong, but the name stuck. And her personality reflects her name. The 17-year-old senior at Putnam City High School in Oklahoma City has been in yearbook for two years and newspaper for one. This year, she will be copy editor for the yearbook and co-editor of the school newspaper. Williams said she loves the power she wields as a writer. "My words can go beyond the classroom for all of the school, faculty and community to see," Williams said. Williams decided to attend OIDJ in hopes that she could advance her journalism career. "I would love to work for TIME Magazine as a columnist one day. The writers often present stories in unique ways," she said.

— by Melissa Melton







photo by Bryan Pollard

**JOURNALISTS:** Students from Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas attended the 2012 Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism.

# Journalists in the making

## 14 high school students from four states attend weeklong workshop

**ALEXA BABIN**

Red Dirt Journal

This year, 14 students from Oklahoma, Texas, Illinois and Louisiana participated in the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism.

The class, which consisted of all girls, spent eight days learning about the many aspects of journalism.

OIDJ strives to educate high school students about the importance of diversity in journalism and give the participants hands-on experience using different forms of media.

The workshop always hosts excellent students, said Sue Hinton, journalism professor at Oklahoma City Community College.

"It gives me a lot of respect for high school students," Hinton said. "I love what I learn from the stories that the students write here."

Each year, the workshop exceeds the expectations of the staff. The students are pleasantly surprised, too.

"I kind of expected it to be more structured," said Becca Walters, 16, of Bartlesville, Okla. "It's not like someone is there over your shoulder

the whole time."

Students agreed that the experience helped them grow as reporters.

"I have grown as a journalist by getting a taste of what the journalist's world is actually like. Not everything is sugar-coated," said 17-year-old Patience Williams of Oklahoma City.

Personal, hands-on experience is how the OIDJ students learned. They gathered information, took photos, created videos and wrote stories.

The weeklong workshop wasn't entirely work and journalism, though. Students took fun breaks as rewards for working hard to meet their deadlines. Even while having fun, students learned about diversity and culture, which is the emphasis of OIDJ.

On June 5, the students visited the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Okla. They participated in a demonstration dance and ate Chickasaw-inspired food.

The students also enjoyed a refreshing break from their work at a pool party hosted by Andy Reiger, ex-

ecutive editor of The Norman Transcript. They later went to a Norman mosque.

Yousuf Mohammad, a doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma who helped with OIDJ, said he agreed that the week was phenomenal.

"I've never worked for such a workshop before," he said. "This looks completely like a newsroom. I didn't expect it to be this good."

OIDJ students are the cream of the crop, said Ray Chavez, director of the program and professor at OU.

"We know we're picking the best. It's very rewarding because the people we select are pretty special," Chavez said.

In addition to selecting the participants, Chavez handpicked a top-notch team of mentors to guide the young journalists.

The workshop was eventful, educational and culturally stimulating. The students eagerly took the opportunity to improve their skills and prepare for college.

OIDJ has a history of producing successful journalists and shows no sign of breaking the trend with this class.

"Working with students at OIDJ will only give you faith in the future," Hinton said.

### OIDJ Participants

Alexa Babin  
Alexis Reese  
Annie Strom  
Brittany Embree  
Jamai Lindsey Harris  
Katie Ford  
Lydia Lindley

Meisha McDaniel  
Melissa Melton  
Micahleah Burger  
Patience Williams  
Rebecca Walters  
Samantha Eighmy  
Taelor Sanders

### Administrators

Ray Chávez, OIDJ director  
Sue Hinton, OIDJ co-director  
Anna Holloway, administrative assistant  
Julian Skinker, administrative assistant

### Faculty & Staff

Sarah Cavanah  
Sunnie Clahchischiligi  
Laney Ellisor  
Christopher Krug  
Jeremy Hessman  
Mick Hinton  
Melodie Lettkeman  
Chris Lusk  
Yousuf Mohammad  
Bryan Pollard

Joey Senat  
Phil Todd  
James Tyree  
Elizabeth Valles

### Contributors

Chickasaw Cultural Center  
Dow Jones News Fund  
Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation  
Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication  
Native American Journalists Association  
The Cherokee Phoenix  
The Norman Transcript  
The Oklahoman

### About OIDJ

The annual high school journalism workshop is scheduled every June on the OU campus (specific dates will vary). Students wishing to be considered for participation should notify the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism. Updated application forms and information on the 2013 workshop will be available during the spring 2013 semester. However, contact the director so you can be placed on the OIDJ mailing list.

Ray Chávez, Director  
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