

Same-sex, same rights

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Career minded

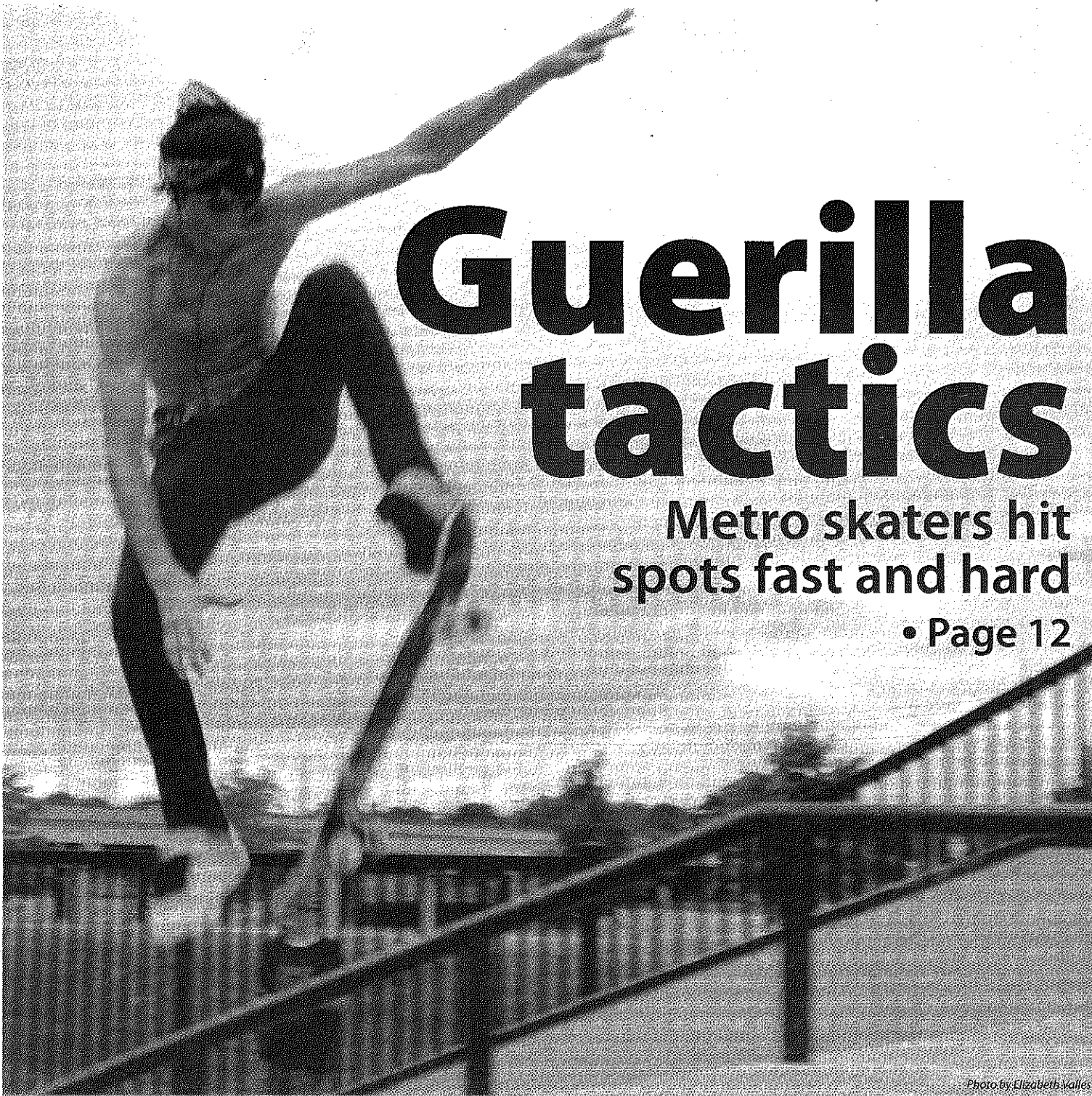
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Red Dirt Journal

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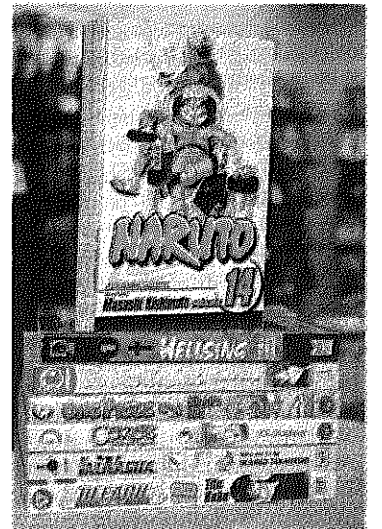


Guerilla tactics

Metro skaters hit spots fast and hard

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Photo by Elizabeth Valles



Manga craze sweeps nation

U.S. teenagers discover the appeal of Japanese forms of comics and animation. The art forms appeal to girls as well as boys, the usual readers of comics • Page 7

Autism: Often misunderstood

Children coping with Asperger's need understanding and an opportunity to succeed. Families of those with the disorder sometimes find challenges securing services for their children • Page 10

Does gaming buy education?

Tribal casinos raise billions each year, and some of that money is set aside for community purposes. The American Indian gaming industry contributes funds to student scholarships. • Page 15

More than skin deep

Physicians, patients debate pros and cons of acne medication

BY JO HAZELTON
Red Dirt Journal

Acne made Colleen Anderson feel so ugly as a teenager that she would cry.

"When I broke out, I found myself very self-conscious and depressed," Anderson recalled. "I would freak if I didn't have my makeup on."

She isn't alone. Nearly 80 percent of boys and 70 percent of girls with severe acne reported they weren't happy with their appearance, according to a 1996 study.

"There's no question that acne contributes to medical depression," social worker Rick J. Krause said. "Wounds like acne can diminish self-esteem and cause unwanted stress."

Although medications can keep acne under control and even cure it, some insurance companies refuse to pay for the treatments because they consider acne a cosmetic problem, not a medical condition.

"It's unfortunate, because if you were to examine patients and see the emotional aspect of having [acne], you would see that it can affect their self-confidence, and they can have long-term scarring that can be an issue throughout life," said Renee Grau, a dermatologist with the OU Physicians Dermatology Clinic.

The most popular and effective cure for acne comes in the form of a vitamin A derivative: Accutane (isotretinoin). Since the FDA approved the drug in 1982, 5 million people in the United States have been treated with Accutane, according to its manufacturer, Roche Pharmaceuticals.

Accutane, however, is surrounded by controversy. The FDA Web site and Roche's enclosure information sheet list potential side effects that include birth defects, liver damage, increased brain pressure, health and vision problems, decreased red and white blood cells, raised cholesterol, bone and muscle problems and blood sugar problems that can lead to diabetes.

Two highly debated side effects are anxiety and depression. Roche contends that Accutane cannot be linked to suicide.

However, parents — including a U.S. congressman — have filed lawsuits claiming that Accutane caused their children to commit suicide. Though unsuccessful, the lawsuits prompted the Food and Drug Administration in 1998 to require a label warning that Accutane "may cause depression, psychosis, and rarely ... suicide attempts and suicide."

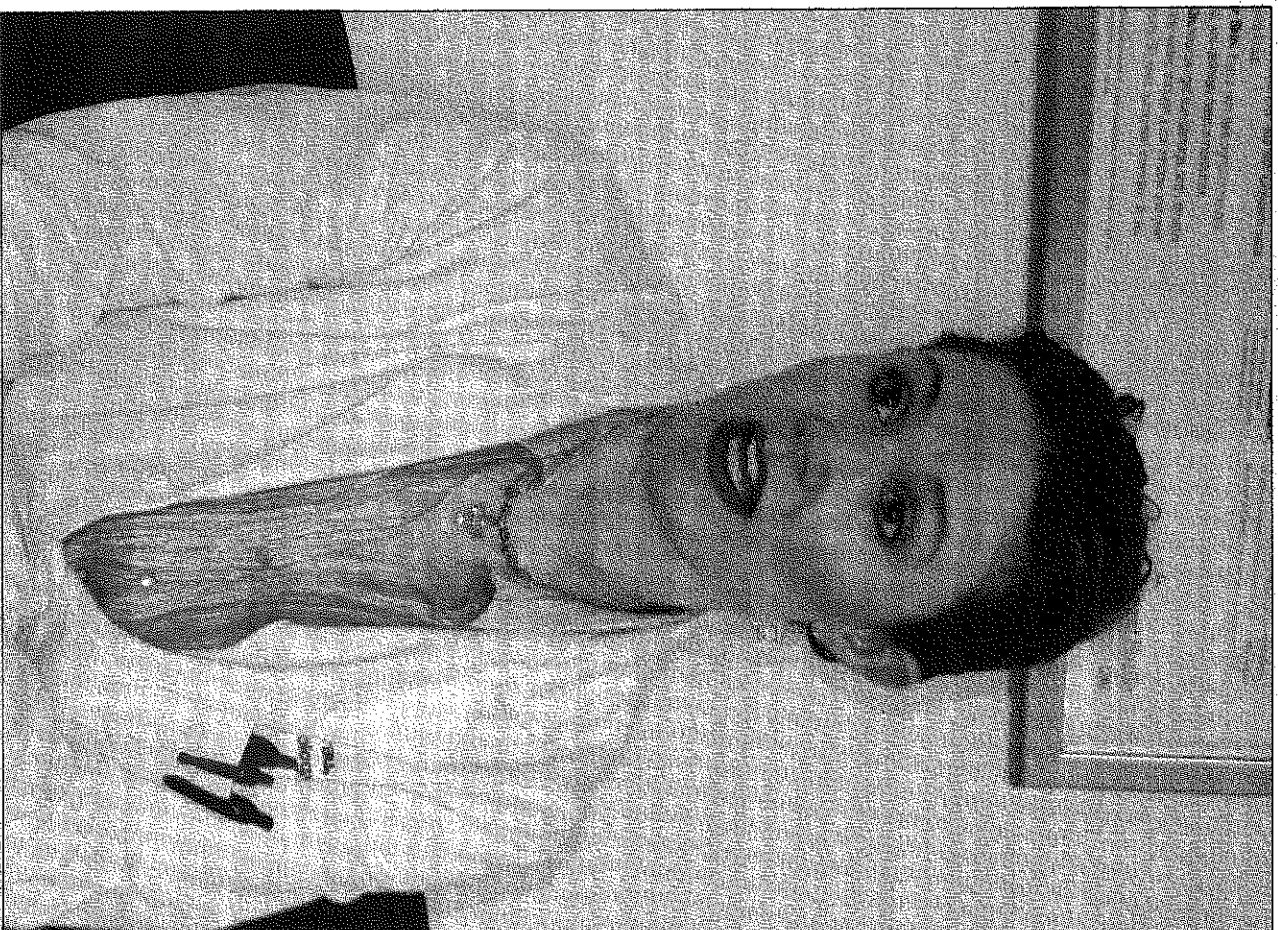


Photo by TeriChelle Jones

SERIOUS MEDICINE: Renee Grau, a dermatologist with the OU Physicians Dermatology Clinic, says medical insurance companies might find Accutane to be more cost-effective than some other anti-acne treatments for patients with severe cases.

Grau said recent studies have found Accutane made anxiety and depression worse in patients.

About 85 percent of Americans ages 12 to 24 suffer with Acne Vulgaris, according to The American Academy of Dermatology. Most students know the disease more commonly as pimples, zits and the worst thing to occur on school picture day.

"In severe cases, it really does affect the way they see themselves and the way other people see them," Grau said. "And rejection in any way, shape or form during that age can be quite detrimental."

Many medications can keep acne under control. Treatments include over-the-counter products as well as prescription

topical creams.

"Some patients are less willing to use a cream and more willing to take a pill," Oklahoma City dermatologist Susannah Collier said.

However, pills are far more costly than creams. For example, Retin-A-Micro, a prescription topical cream, costs \$50 to \$60 for a tube that would typically last up to four months. Accutane costs \$700 per month, and the generic — isotretinoin — costs \$350 per month.

Cost is an issue because, Grau said, several insurance companies won't cover acne medication.

"I think insurance companies are looking at how much these drugs cost," she said.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cystic Acne

Cystic acne is the most severe and painful form of acne. Accutane is most commonly prescribed for this skin condition.

How does cystic acne occur?

- Oil glands in hair follicles become plugged.
- Follicle wall ruptures; oil, dead surface skin cells and bacteria form an infection.
- Infected area enlarges; forms pus-filled cysts 1/4 inch or more across.

Self-help recommendations

- Do not squeeze cysts. It can cause scarring.
- Wash face twice daily with mild soap. Avoid scrubbing.
- Shampoo hair often.
- Avoid astringents and use oil-free cosmetics.

Medical recommendations

- Usually with Accutane, a prescription drug that requires careful monitoring
- Dermatologists can remedy scarring with laser and other treatments

Source: American Academy of Dermatology, University of Maryland Medical Center

"For patients taking a topical medication, it could take years, whereas with Accutane, it takes five to six months. I think that with severe cases, Accutane would be more affordable."

Anderson, 19, said she was "lucky" because her insurance paid for her isotretinoin.

"My insurance company would only cover it if my family doctor referred me to a dermatologist and only if I took the generic brand of Accutane," said the Fort Worth, Texas, native.

"I feel way more confident now that I have a clear complexion," said Anderson, a member of the Facebook group "Accutane saved/ruined my life."

Unlike Anderson, 89 percent of people with acne don't seek medical treatment, according to the American Dermatologist Association.

However, what teens may not realize is that acne could follow them into adulthood.

"Not only can [acne] affect their self-confidence, it can have long-term scarring that can be an issue throughout life," Grau said.



FROM BOYHOOD TO FATHERHOOD: Teenage fathers who commit to their roles as dads say they often face social and legal hurdles.

Photo illustration by Red Dirt Journal staff

Daddy duty

Teenage fathers seek custody, involvement in their children's lives

BY RAEANN GIFFORD
Red Dirt Journal

It takes two to make a baby — or so the saying goes — but widely held stereotypes of teen parents usually portray the young father sneaking out of town under cover of darkness to avoid a shotgun wedding, leaving the young mother and child to fend for themselves.

However, some researchers say the opposite is true, noting a recent trend of more young fathers trying to remain active in their children's lives.

"There is increasing evidence that teen fathers want to be — and are — involved with their children," wrote Colette Kimball in a 2004 report published by Joint Together, a program of the Boston University School of Public Health.

Some young fathers in Oklahoma say they can't imagine not being involved with their children. "There is no greater love than a

father and his child," said James Elba Iler, the 19-year-old father of Landon James Thompson, born May 9. "No matter what, in their eyes daddy is always right.

"He's Superman. He can do anything and will always take care of me."

Iler said that having his son changed his life in many ways.

"My life is so much better now," he said. "I mean, sometimes it's tough and all because I have to get up at all hours of the night. Sometimes, I don't sleep at all.

"I have to work all the time to make ends meet, but when I get home and hold my son, and he smiles up at me, I know that it's worth all the hard times to see that precious angel who loves you unconditionally."

Mike Jones (not his real name) is now 34; he was 17 when he became a father.

"Having this child made me grow up faster and mature faster than I would have if I would have waited," Jones said.

He and the child's mother agreed to share joint custody.

"Society doesn't influence the father. It's the father's decision (to be involved), and it's based on the way they were brought up and their moral values," he said.

The law makes no distinction between parents, experts say.

"Though many might assume the mother may have more power, Oklahoma state law says that both teen parents have equal rights in the life of the child," said E.W. Childers, a Moore attorney who specializes in family law.

However, Kimball said, a number of legal, social, and family barriers can prevent a teen father from being involved in his child's life.

Some teen fathers find these barriers difficult to surmount.

"I would enjoy being a parent if I had the chance," said John Holmes, who was 17 when his child was born. "At first, having my child made me the happiest person; then it ruined it because I

can't see him."

Now 20, he says the child's mother won't even let him see his son.

Holmes said he planned to marry the mother, but she left him as soon as she learned she was pregnant.

"It felt like all she wanted was the baby," he said. "After she got what she wanted, she left."

Childers said a mother has assumed sole custody if the father hasn't made contact in two years.

When both parents have equal qualifications, he said, the judge takes into consideration the child's best interests — and who is most likely to get custody can vary from judge to judge.

"At the birth, whatever male signs the hospital papers legally becomes the father of the child," Childers said. Both parents then have the legal responsibility to support their child financially.

Underage, teen parents have full legal control over their children, he said. Even if the teen is

still living with his or her parents, the baby's grandparents don't have any legal rights over the child. Grandparents cannot get legal guardianship unless they can prove the teen parents are unfit, Childers said.

"Age alone isn't really a sufficient basis for that," he said.

If the parents do not live together, but both want custody, the judge tries to grant joint custody in a fair arrangement, he said.

"An example would be that, during the school year, the child would live with the father and go to the mother's house every other weekend. During the summer, the child would live with the mother and go to the father's house every other weekend."

Obviously, Childers said, the best way for teenagers to avoid these legal and emotional struggles is not to have children until they are older.

However, teens in Oklahoma appear to be at higher risk than their peers nationwide when it comes to behaviors related to sexual activity and pregnancy.

According to the State of the State's Health Interim Report in 2004, when compared to the national average, Oklahoma teens were more likely to do all of the following:

Practice Unsafe Sex: 33.1 percent of Oklahoma adolescents reported using a condom during their last intercourse — less than the national average of 36 percent.

Have Multiple Partners: 15.7 percent of young Oklahomans, compared to the national average of 14.4 percent, said they had sex with at least four people.

Give Birth: Oklahoma has the eighth-highest teen birth rate in the nation for females ages 15-19. Further, the report noted, only 39 percent of teen fathers receive their high school certification by age 20, compared to 86 percent who postponed parenting.

Also contrary to popular belief, teens' parents appear to have the most influence when it comes to their children's attitudes about sex.

According to The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, teens surveyed said parents most influence their decisions about sex, whereas many parents think the teens' friends have the most influence.

Though prevention may be the best cure, 80 percent of the teens surveyed said they don't think they are getting enough information about abstinence and contraception.

Law: Protection or exclusion?

Undocumented students must promise to seek legal status

BY LESE SALASWAT
Red Dirt Journal

A new state law in Oklahoma will, among other things, prevent undocumented residents from receiving in-state college tuition, financial aid and scholarships unless they sign an affidavit promising to legalize their status.

But the Oklahoma Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act of 2007 is expected to have a wider effect on all Oklahoma residents.

State Rep. Randy Terrill, R-Moore, wrote the immigration reform bill that he says will protect Oklahoma taxpayers.

"My approach is to cut off the jobs, cut off the government benefits, and empower local and state law enforcement to enforce federal immigration law," Terrill said.

However, State Rep. Shane Jett, R-Tecumseh, calls the law "bad policy."

"It encourages a lot of fear. It encourages hatred, and it causes us to have bad relations with the (immigrant) population," Jett said.

Under the new law, anyone who is not a U.S. citizen or a legal immigrant will not be allowed to apply for scholarships, financial aid or resident tuition.

The new law modifies the effect of Senate Bill 596, passed in 2003, which allowed students without lawful immigration status to enroll, pay resident tuition and apply for state financial aid under certain circumstances.

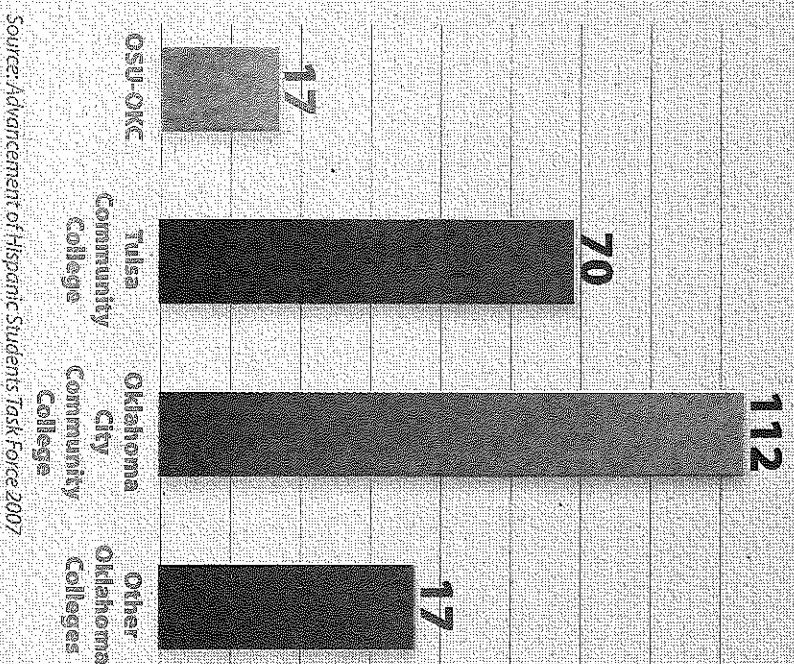
To qualify for in-state tuition and state-funded financial aid under the new law, the student will need to meet certain requirements, which include attending an Oklahoma high school for at least two years before graduating. They must also prove their intent to legalize their status.

The new statute's intent and language are indicative of the heated debate over illegal immigration. According to the statute, "Illegal immigration is causing economic hardship and lawlessness in this state."

BY THE NUMBERS

Undocumented Students in Oklahoma Colleges

More than 240 undocumented students were enrolled in Oklahoma colleges during the 2005-2006 academic year. The graph below shows the number of students enrolled at each college.



According to the Pew Research Center, 52 percent of Americans believe immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, housing and strain the economy.

On the other hand, 41 percent believe immigrants strengthen the United States with their hard work and talents.

Supporters see the new law as a way to keep illegal immigrants out of the country, out of the state and out of the community.

"Illegal aliens won't come to Oklahoma if there are no jobs waiting for them, won't stay here if there's no government subsidy, and they certainly won't come or stay here if they know if they ever encounter our state and local law enforcement people that they will be detained until they are deported," Terrill said.

Jett countered that the law is an Oklahoma-sized Band-Aid that won't fix a national problem of

porous borders.

"The effect of the bill will be profiling people with brown skin. You're asking local law enforcement to do the job of national agents," he said.

Terrill, though, insists that this law is not racially motivated, despite what his critics say.

"They have not read the bill. There is nothing in this piece of legislation about race, sexual orientation, or country of origin, so they have not read this bill."

The effect of Terrill's legislation has been to raise alarm in the immigrant community, Jett said.

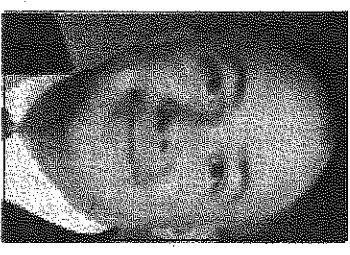
One Oklahoma City Community College student feels the fear.

Gullermo, 21, asked that his last name not be published because he's not a legal U.S. resident. He is a sophomore who hopes to graduate in 2009. But with the new statute, that doesn't seem likely, he said. Finishing



"[The law] encourages a lot of fear. It encourages hatred, and it causes us to have bad relations with the (immigrant) population."
State Rep. Shane Jett

"My approach is to cut off the jobs, cut off the government benefits, and empower local and state law enforcement to enforce federal immigration law."
State Rep. Randy Terrill



school does not seem possible, a thought he finds frightening.

"Everything I've worked for can be taken away. I can lose everything," he said.

Gullermo worries that he may be found and lose his job. He wouldn't be able to support himself and his mother, who recently had surgery. He fears they could be deported.

Some undocumented immigrants say college is not worth the risk. Maritza asked that her real name not be used because she is not a legal resident. She has been in Oklahoma for nearly 10 years and would like to attend college in the fall. She works full time at a fast food restaurant, hoping to save enough money for college.

She said the Oklahoma Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act might cause her to change her mind.

"I want to go to college. I really do, but just applying requires a lot of information, personal information, that could cause trouble for me and my family," Maritza said. "And if it came to either going to college or staying here (in America), and working here for the rest of my life, I will work. It's not worth the risk."

According to an Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Task Force report, 244 undocu-

mented immigrants were enrolled in public colleges and universities in the 2005-06 school year. They were awarded about one-tenth of 1 percent of state-appropriated financial aid.

Yet, Terrill says illegal immigrants who attend college do not become legal citizens, so he would prefer to cut off all college access for them.

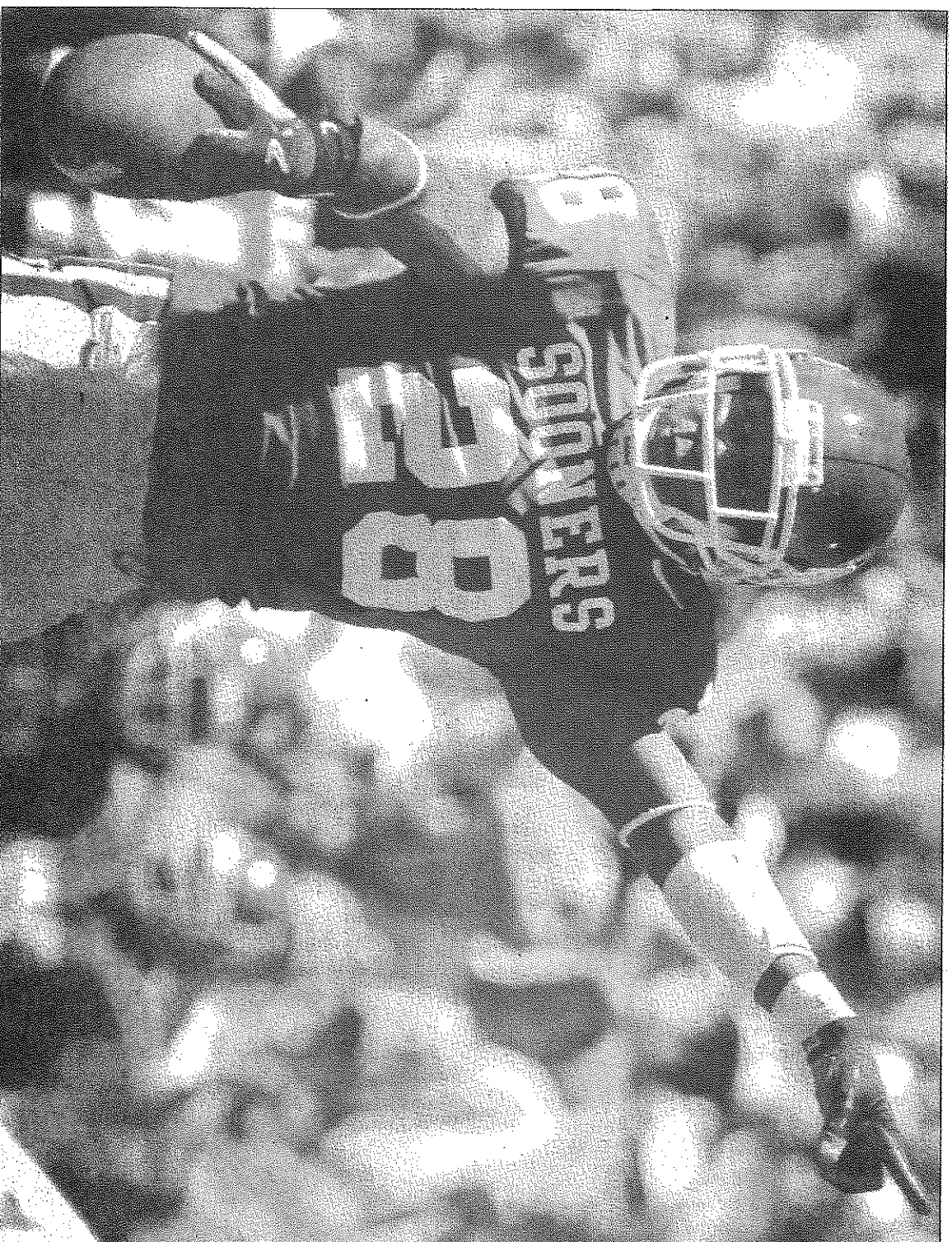
"Of the illegal aliens who have taken advantage of that in-state tuition benefit, as well as any college scholarship benefits, when we looked at this issue not a single one of them, not a single one, had ever ended up becoming a citizen," Terrill said.

Not so, said Jett, who abstained from voting on the bill.

"That is not true. I know someone who was an undocumented college student and is now a legal citizen of the United States," he said.

The plight of immigrants is a priority for him. Jett's wife is a Brazilian native who recently became a U.S. citizen. He is known for his support of the Hispanic and Latino community.

"I do not believe Randy Terrill's bill is racially motivated, but I do believe there will be a lot of racial fallout as a result of this bill," Jett said.



PREPARED FOR LIFE AFTER FOOTBALL: Antonio Perkins, a record-setting cornerback during his days as a Sooner, also earned two degrees on his way to being signed by the NFL's Indianapolis Colts. Perkins said even those few college athletes who do make it into the professional ranks need a backup plan for when their careers end.

Photo provided by the University of Oklahoma Athletic Department

Life after the limelight says two-degree OU standout

BY ANA PEREZ
Red Dirt Journal

Antonio Perkins, 25-year-old cornerback for the Indianapolis Colts, was poster material as a member of the University of Oklahoma Sooner football team for many reasons. A consensus All-American, he set a school record for career punt return yards as well as an National Collegiate Athletic Association record for returning eight punts for touchdowns in his college career.

Perkins' poster quality wasn't apparent just on the football field. He also excelled in the classroom.

The Lawton native earned a bachelor's degree in sociology in 2004 and a master's in criminology in 2006.

"I wasn't an athlete-student," the OU graduate said. "I was a student-athlete."

Graduation rates of college athletes suggest that many choose the first word order. The NCAA reports that 62 percent of those student-athletes in all sports who entered college in 1999-2000 graduated in 2006, the most recent aggregate information the organization has available. OU has its 2000-2001 rate available: 53 percent.

Those rates are not comforting

given the odds of a successful professional sports career. Richard Lapchik, director of the Center for the Study of Sports in Society, says the chance of a high school athlete becoming a professional in any sport is one in 12,000. The 2001 Report of the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate

Athletes says about 1 percent of NCAA men's basketball players and 2 percent of NCAA football players are drafted by NBA or NFL teams.

The NCAA tells college athletes that the chance of becoming a professional football player is 6,000 to one and a pro basketball player, 10,000 to one.

Even if the athlete makes it to the professional league, the average career lasts about five years,

sociologists Wilbert M. Leonard II and Jonathan E. Reymann found in a 1988 study.

Perkins said he always understood there was life after football. He was a fourth-round pick of the Cleveland Browns in the 2005 draft, but the Browns released him in 2007. Because of his education, he said, he had many job offers before signing with the Colts, including some from Oklahoma City law offices.

"I knew I had a back-up plan," he said. "With football, NFL stands for Not For Long. You have all these professional athletes who make all this money. The money comes fast, and you spend it fast.

Athletes buy four or five cars, all this jewelry and stuff. With no education you get done with football

and a lot of guys lose their houses. The cars are repossessed and the houses are foreclosed because they don't have a back-up plan."

OU senior Chason Lane ran for the track team as a sprinter his sophomore year. His main focus was staying on the team, he said. He had no clue what his career was going to be, and he rarely thought about life after OU. When a leg injury took him off the team, he lost his partial scholarship. Lane said he wishes he had put more effort into his academics, but the demands of being an athlete made it tough.

"The sport is basically like a job," he said. "If you're not doing your part for the team, you get fired."

NCAA universities provide a variety of resources to help student-athletes succeed academically. Like most NCAA schools, OU offers student-athletes one-on-one tutoring, computer labs, academic counselors and even note takers.

Family support is also important, according to Teresa Turner, assistant director of athletic academic affairs and Perkins' counselor when he was in school.

Growing up, Perkins said, he had to make all As so his mother would let him play sports. "She stayed on me about grades," he said. "She wouldn't accept a B. That was below standard to her. I wasn't from a wealthy family, so I had to use sports in order to get a head start in life."

Perkins also credits Turner with helping him succeed. Turner helps athletes choose courses and oversees their academics.

"Antonio was a very good student," she said. "I never had a problem with him. He was serious about academics, and he always did well."

Perkins said he didn't wear OU football shirts or sweat suits to class because he didn't want professors to stereotype him as an athlete.

"Some teachers hear 'student-athlete,' and they will pull for you more," he said. "Others think that if you're an athlete, you're perceived as being lazy. They might be harder on you. I didn't want either of those stereotypes. I went to class every day. I got there early. Unlike most athletes who sat in the back and talked, I sat in front and took notes."

Perkins said he wants student-athletes to hold a realistic picture of their futures.

"The only thing I can say is, professional sports are not what they seem," he said. "You can be there one day and gone the next, so education is important."

Manga's appeal grows

Comic books from Japan attract legions of dedicated American fans

BY JONATHAN T. GARNER
Red Dirt Journal

Naruto Uzumaki was laughing with his buddies by a display case full of figurines from his show.

I was sitting by himself, quietly reading his own comic. Whitney Rockbell and Nana Osaki were busy gossiping with their friends. And Xibar was showing off the gun-arrows she'd spent countless hours crafting.

Entering the scene was like stepping into an all-star meeting of various Japanese anime and manga comic book characters who had come to life just to have a good time.

This gathering was not a work of fiction, however, but a costume party held June 24 at Norman's Atomik Pop Comics.

"My friends tell me I act a lot like Winny," said 16-year-old Norman High School student Sarah Setter, who was dressed like the engineer from "Fullmetal Alchemist" who creates weapons and robotics. "It doesn't hurt that I'm blonde, too."

Costume parties like this one — where fans celebrate their favorite anime and manga characters — are occurring more frequently across the United States. With their emphasis on real-life issues, romantic storylines and adolescent characters instead of larger-than-life super heroes, the Japanese forms of comic books and cartoon animation are gaining a foothold with American teens, even those who don't usually read comics.

"It's really universal," said Jane Park, a film and media studies professor at the University of Oklahoma interested in anime. "I think that anime and manga appeal to kids because they can identify with some of the themes in the comics and the shows."

Unlike titles of American comic-book publishers such as Marvel and DC historically focused mainly on superheroes in their 20s and 30s, manga and anime



IN THEIR SHOES: Norman teens dress like their favorite anime characters at a costume party hosted by Atomik Pop Comics in Norman. Such events have become an annual function for the business that stocks a large selection of Japanese anime and manga titles, which draw both male and female readers.

Photo by Trung Le

tend to have adolescent characters dealing with issues such as acceptance, nonconformity, coming of age, personal growth, social injustice, prejudice and triumph over adversity.

"Naruto," probably the most famous title in the United States, tells the story of a teenager possessed by a nine-tailed fox demon who is training to be a ninja. He is widely regarded by his peers as a 'freak,' but he never gives up his dream of one day earning their respect.

Manga's subject matter also attracts a significant number of female readers, in contrast to that of most American comic books.

Sixty percent of manga readers are women, according to the Aug. 7 issue of Time magazine. ICv2, a Web site that tracks and reports on trends in the comic book and graphic novel industry, says that 22 percent of American females buy comics for themselves.

"I really like Shoji, or romance manga, because it speaks to my heart. It's kind of a girl thing," Setter said.

Because of the growing popularity of manga and anime among U.S. teenagers, the translation and distribution of these comics forms have grown as well.

"Manga's popularity has really increased about three times from what it once was in the last five years," said Phillip Simon, an associate editor for Dark Horse Comics, which is one of the three top publishers of manga in the United States. The publisher, who still releases American comics like "Hellboy," now publishes more than 70 manga titles.

One sign of manga's growing popularity is that many titles now regularly appear on bestsellers lists, filling spaces once held by the X-Men, Spider-Man, Batman, Punisher and Superman. "Naruto" regularly appears on

Bookscan and USA Today's best-sellers lists. The 14th volume of the "Naruto" title was ranked 19 on ICv2's May bestsellers list.

Other manga titles, such as Viz Media's "Bleach," Tokyopop's "Fruits Basket" and Dark Horse's "Berserk," also make regular appearances on bestsellers lists.

Because of the rising popularity of manga, many comic shops, like Norman's Atomik Pop, have committed to providing fans with what they want.

"We try to stock 80 percent of what comes out in English," said Rob Vollmar, Atomik Pop Comics owner and host of the June 24 manga and anime costume party.

Because Atomik Pop stocks many manga and anime titles, the shop has become a popular hangout for fans, Vollmar said.

Twelve-year-old middle-school student Colton Selores attended Atomik Pop's costume party. Selores said he likes manga better

than U.S. comics.

"The Japanese manga have better detail as far as storylines and better background, that sort of thing," said Selores, whose favorite titles are "Naruto," "Yu-Gi-Oh" and "Bleach."

"They're also longer than regular comics, so you end up wanting to know what happens next."

Fans' relationships with the genre have made costume parties like that at Atomik Pop popular. Called "cosplay," these parties give manga and anime fans an opportunity to dress as a favorite character and take on his or her personality.

Simon said cosplay is just a part of why manga and anime are becoming increasingly popular among U.S. teenagers.

"It's kind of like a club because you're a part of something unique," Simon said. "It seems that being part of that subculture is kind of a way to meet like-minded people."

Unintended consequences

Online profiles may be costly when prying eyes look on

BY WILLIE REAVES JR.
Red Dirt Journal

A young hairdresser, frustrated about work, goes home to vent her anger about her employer and co-workers. She bashes her fellow employees, talks negatively about clients and complains in general about unhappiness with her job.

If she had shared this information with family members or written it in a locked diary, no problem. Instead, she posted it on her public MySpace page, making it possible for the social networking site's more than 100 million users to read it. Her boss does.

"I would never be underhanded and try to sneak into somebody's friends' list, but it was just wide open out there," said Mel Luster, the stylist's boss and owner of Norman's Zen Salon. "It's like if you leave your diary open on the table, people are going to read it. I think it's a fair practice."

Business owners are not the only ones using social networking sites for information. Luster said the stylist claimed that the First Amendment protected her online speech. Luster agreed but said it was her right to fire those causing problems in the shop.

First Amendment rights are also an issue for Jessi Northcutt, a Durant High School graduate. Administrators removed her from the cheerleading squad because of the negative comments she made on her MySpace page about her fellow cheerleaders.

"I used my blog to write down things that I couldn't say out loud about two particular girls on the squad," Northcutt said. "The coach didn't have a valid reason for kicking me off other than having hurt some girls' feelings. They cropped me out of the cheerleading picture. It was as if I never existed on the team."

Northcutt will speak at the First Amendment Congress of Oklahoma in October. She has asked the American Civil Liberties Union for help but has not received any. Heather Spencer, intern and ca-

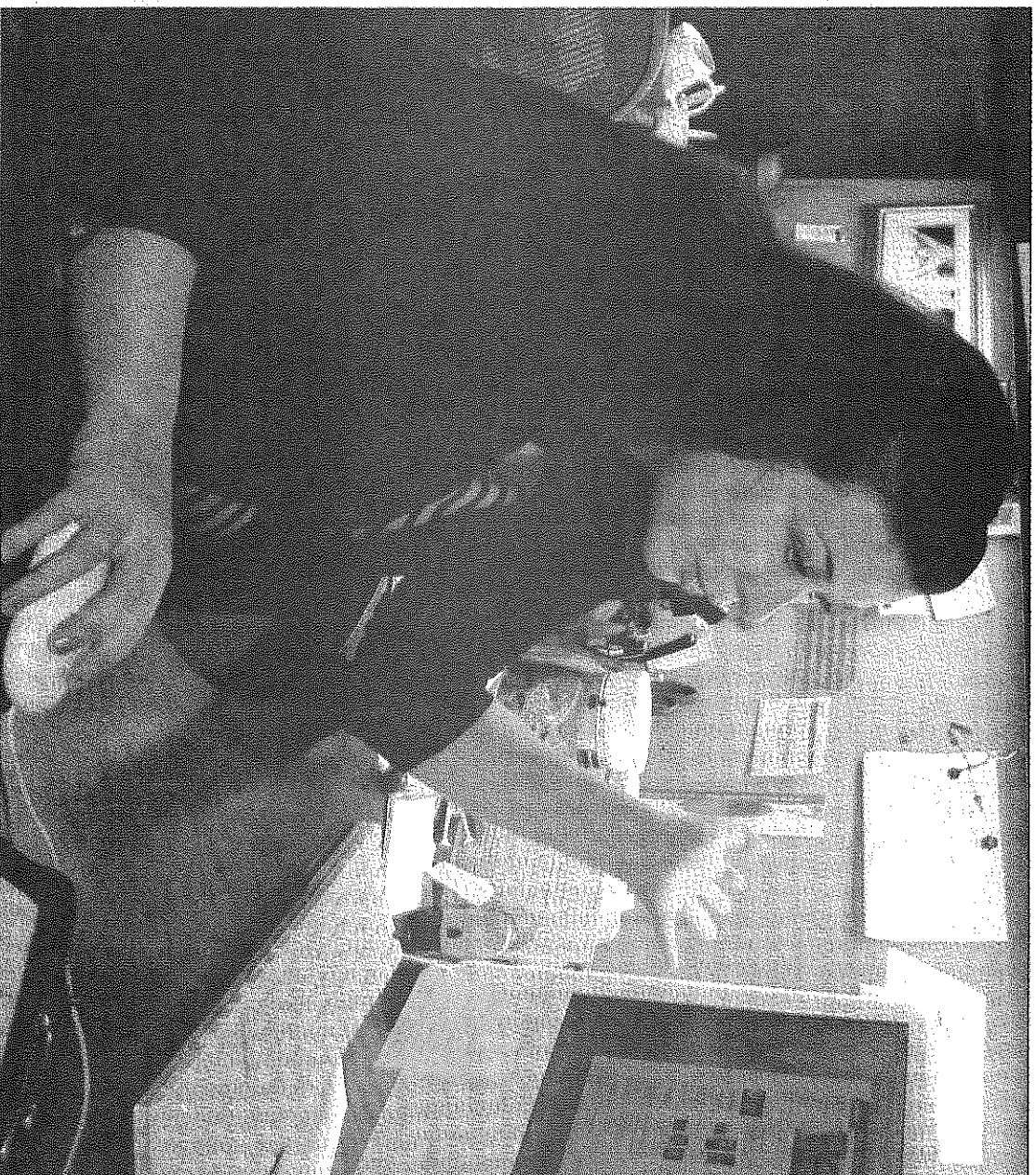


Photo by TeriChelle Jones

reer coordinator for the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, said the college has used Facebook to research students applying to be Gaylord Ambassadors. One female student was rejected.

Her application and references were excellent, but her Facebook profile created a problem.

"Some of her pictures were very inappropriate, and I was very disappointed," Spencer said. "She missed out on a great opportunity. Your profile is not private, no matter what you think it is."

Oklahoma State University sophomore Tyler Powell, intern and counselor for Youth Leadership Oklahoma Class VII in 2007, said he has seen unintended uses of social networking information.

"I've gone into interviews before and before they even said anything, they had a copy of my Facebook profile printed out," the

agribusiness and political science major said. "They were asking me stuff that might not even be on my résumé."

Online profiles, in essence, are modern reference letters, whether or not applicants know they're sending them.

Social networkers should be aware that readers of their virtual autobiographies might be seeking more than friendship. College admissions counselors, those who accept applicants into programs and organizations, professors, teachers, parents and grandparents — as well as current and potential employers — may read online profiles. MySpace and Facebook, among a host of social networking sites, are outlets of discovery about people.

Northeastern State University graduate Kiama Williams, a broadcast journalism major and former resident adviser at the Tahlequah

school, said a friend publicly posted a picture of Williams drinking alcohol in the residence halls. Her friend tagged her, which means she linked the picture with Williams' name.

"I shouldn't have been in the dorms with alcohol in the first place, but one night I was," Williams said. "A potential employer might get on Facebook, look at pictures and judge your character. If you're having fun one night, they might think you're like that all the time and will bring that attitude to work." Williams resigned as resident adviser in fear of termination.

MySpace and Facebook provide privacy settings to limit profile access; however, a 2005 MIT study of OU, Harvard, NYU and MIT students with Facebook profiles found that many were unfamiliar with the site's privacy and security policies. Of 390 survey participants, 11

percent had read the policies. Most students didn't understand that even deleting potentially compromising information doesn't mean it is erased permanently.

Universities are aware of potential problems with social networking sites. The Social Networking Sites Committee, sponsored by OU Student Affairs, launched a campaign in September to teach students responsibility about posted information.

"MySpace and Facebook were becoming the cornerstone of social life for college students," said Nicholas Key, Information Technology program coordinator and committee member. "It became obvious that students felt MySpace and Facebook were private communities, like dorm rooms."

Students should be aware and beware: Online profiles can change instantly from autobiography to expose.

**KNOW MORE,
CHOOSE BETTER:**
People who assume their MySpace and Facebook portraits are for friends only should be aware that others are watching and judging, says Heather Spencer, intern and career coordinator for the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication. She advises students that potential employers are among those who do research on job candidates by looking at social networking Web sites.

FAST FACTS
Registering to Vote

Eligibility

- at least 18 years old
- a United States citizen
- a resident of Oklahoma

How to Register

Fill out a voter registration application form. Voter registration applications are available at your County Election Board, post offices, tag agencies and libraries. The form will ask for your name, address, political affiliation, birth date, driver's license number and the last four digits of your Social Security number.

- If you will become 18 during the 60 days before an election, you may apply for voter registration between 25 and 60 days before the election.

Know the Truth

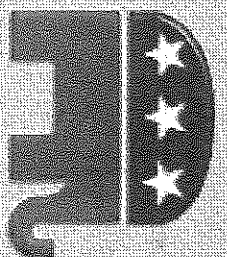
For additional information about voting in Oklahoma, contact your local county election board or the State Election Board:

- **When to Register**
You may submit your voter registration application form at any time. However, voter identification cards cannot be issued 24 days before an election.

Oklahoma State Election Board

P.O. Box 53156
Oklahoma City, OK 73152
(405) 521-2391

Source: Oklahoma State Election Board



Not rocking the vote

Fewer than half of young voters cast ballots in '04

MARIAN MCPHERSON
Red Dirt Journal

Tim Ashley has had a voter registration form since he turned 18 about five months ago but still has not sent it to his county election board.

"I just haven't gotten around to it yet," said Ashley, a recent graduate of Norman High School.

Ashley's procrastination isn't unusual. For the 2004 presidential election, more than 40 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were not registered, a U.S. Census Bureau study found.

Of those, nearly 45 percent chose not to register because they were not interested in the election or in politics. About 6 percent said they did not know how to register.

A Westmoore High School history teacher says high schools should do a better job of teaching students how to register. Schools also could use sample ballots and have mock elections, said Kim Pennington, who teaches an Advanced Placement U.S. history class at the Moore school.

Not voting means that issues of importance to Generation Next — those born between 1981 and 1988 — will be ignored by politicians. Dessie Stutson says that "because candidates know that young America doesn't care about politics," candidates won't "spend time and money on issues that won't gain any votes." The Oklahoma

City native registered to vote when she turned 18 in September.

Ashley and others not registered have until Jan. 11, the deadline to register to vote in Oklahoma's Feb. 5 presidential primary.

Because he lives in Norman, Ashley will have to submit his voter registration form to the Cleveland County Election Board. Application forms are available at county election boards, post offices, tag agencies and public libraries. Election boards must receive them no later than 25 days before an election.

For the 2004 presidential election, 81 percent of young registered voters went to the polls. Of those who didn't, 23 percent said they were too busy to vote, nearly 13 percent were out of town and 10 percent just weren't interested, according to the Census Bureau study.

Rojiana McPherson, a 19-year-old University of Georgia student, said many young voters "are students who may not have complete responsibility over their lives."

"These young voters feel like voting does not affect their life as a student; therefore, their vote is not necessary, and then they just don't make time for it," McPherson said.

Alysha Edwards said although she plans to register when she turns 18 and to vote in the November 2008 presidential election, she knows oth-

ers her age won't.

"Young voters do not vote because they do not feel as though their opinions matter and don't see the point in making time to go to the polls if no one cares," the 17-year-old senior at Claassen School of Advanced Studies said.

Only about 64 percent of all eligible Americans voted in the 2004 presidential election. That was an increase over the 60 percent who voted in the 2000 election and 58 percent who voted in 1996, according to the Census Bureau.

Common Cause, a nonprofit organization advocating good government, has proposed a number of ways to increase voter turnout. The organization advocates allowing Election Day registration, early voting and turning Election Day into a holiday.

Voter participation among young voters grew at a greater rate than that of the general population. It increased 11 percent between the 2000 and 2004 elections. But young voters had a voter turnout of 47 percent in contrast to the voting rate of 72 percent for voters over the age of 55.

"A lot of young voters don't realize that every vote counts and don't realize the freedom and right we have to vote," said Hollye Carroll, a 17-year-old senior at Oklahoma City's Bishop McGuinness High School.

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Going beyond the diagnosis

Autistic teens and their families face individual and educational challenges

BY SEAN PARKS
Red Dirt Journal

Joey Keller walked into Gaylord Hall with a gleam of hope in his eyes.

"Do you like Pokémon?" he asked the reporter interviewing him at the home of the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication on the University of Oklahoma campus in Norman.

Keller appears to be a typical 15-year-old fascinated by anything to do with video games. The 6-foot-3-inch teenager also likes pepperoni pizza and cartoons. But he has trouble showing people he likes these things. This is because Joey has been diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder, the mildest form of autism.

Autism is a complex neurological disorder that affects interaction and communication skills. People who have autism vary widely. Some are severely low functioning, while others are high functioning. Today, about one child in 150 will be diagnosed with some form of autism, a dramatic increase in just 30 years.

The families of autistic children face the complex challenge of finding the best ways to educate these youngsters.

Like Joey, people with Asperger's typically lack social and communication skills, but they normally have average to high IQs.

Joey, who agreed to talk about his disorder, sometimes lost focus and zoned out of the conversation. When this happened, his mother, Sue Keller, would gently tap him and remind him or even help answer the questions when Joey lost interest or contact.

Those with Asperger's sometimes lack nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions and eye-to-eye contact. They often cannot read nonverbal signals coming from others.

Both Joey and his mother talked about the day-to-day routine that is important to him. For the past three years, he has had a successful experience at Central Junior High in Moore. But he is about to embark on a new venture: high school.

He is excited that he will get to ride the bus to Westmore High School in the fall because this means he will not have to go to school on the handicapped bus.

Each school day, Joey was met by his own personal aide who escorted him to each class and helped with assignments that he might not understand. Joey spent his last

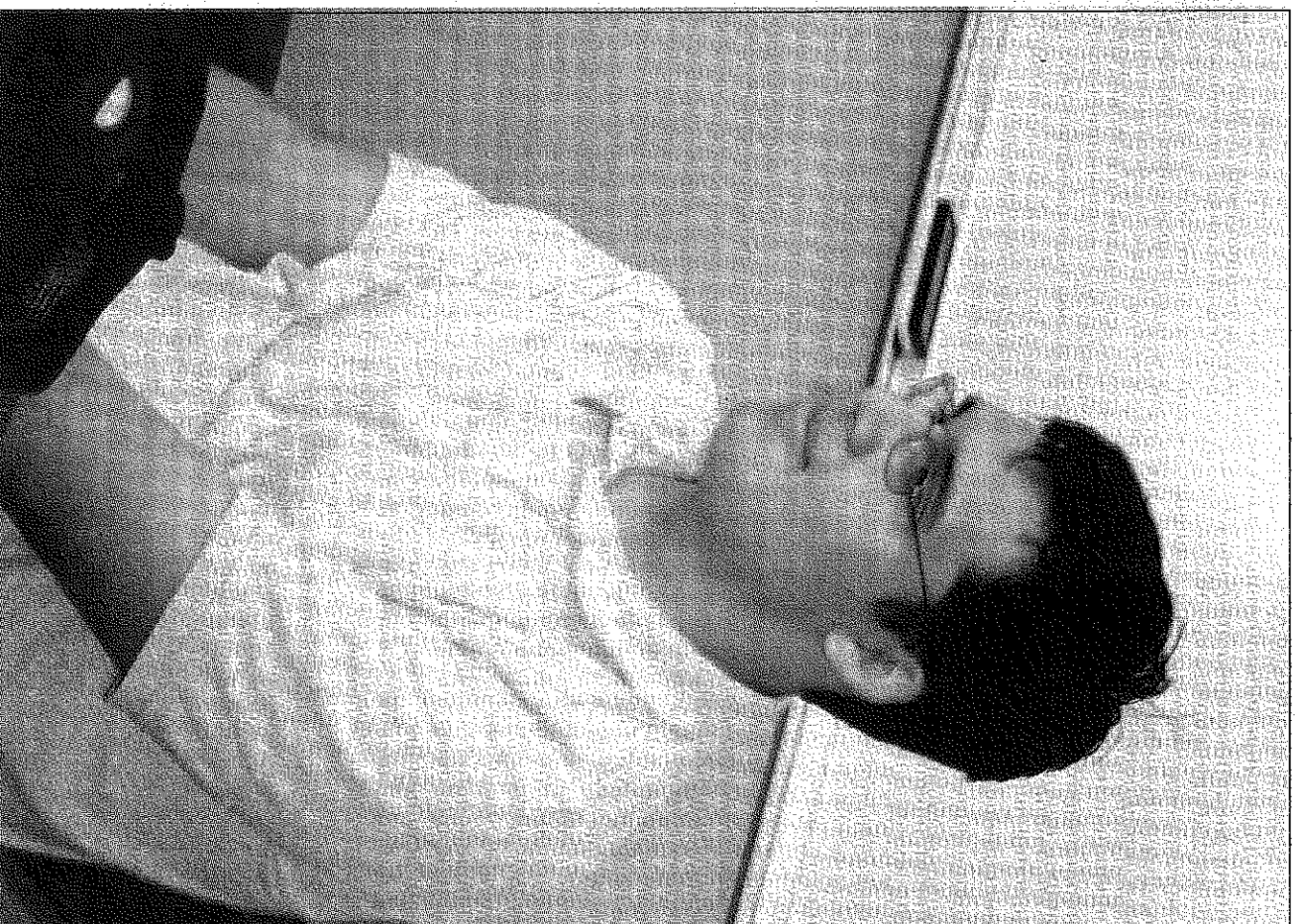


Photo by Avery Brammer

HEADED FOR HIGH SCHOOL: Joey Keller, a 15-year-old Moore resident with Asperger's Disorder, looks forward to attending Westmore High School in the fall. Joey writes fan fiction, stories about characters in his video games, and posts them on a Web site dedicated to that kind of creative writing.

period in study hall to finish all his homework because sometimes he had trouble remembering how to do the assignments.

His mother said losing assignments and forgetting instructions are just part of his disorder. She is willing to discuss Joey's challenges, but she also enjoys talking about all of Joey's accomplishments.

At a recent Autism Society of America meeting in a chilly, sterile room in Norman Regional Hospital, mothers of autistic children brought warmth and laughter into the group.

Joey's mother was one of them. She has three children: Joey, a 3-year-old son with communication difficulties and a 17-year-

old daughter who is gifted. Another mom, Melissa Gray, is a mother of seven children, two of whom have autism.

At the meeting, these women turned their attention to a half dozen high-school juniors, naturalism students who came to learn. Each told the story of her arduous quest to get the best education for her children. They know how much their children need and how limited funds will stop short of providing those services.

Keller said she decided to keep Joey in the public school system. Keller said Joey has had his fair share of bad teachers and aides who did not understand autism. But she chose to keep her son in the Moore dis-

trict because, she said, she felt that if she took him out, Joey would never be able to communicate with others.

Keller said they experienced especially hard times in one elementary school. She filed a legal action against the school because it was not providing services her son required.

Despite these challenges, Keller said she has had some great experiences with Fairview Elementary and Central Junior High. She said the good experiences came because great principals and special education teachers were willing to work with her son. She has her fingers crossed that the transition to Westmore High School will go smoothly.

Gray, on the other hand, has given up on public schools. She wants the best possible education for her children, she said. The Gray children attended Norman public schools for about five years. Finally, Gray reached the point at which she was tired of dealing with teachers, principals and aides who did not understand her children's disorders.

Gray decided to homeschool her children. She talked about her children's need for familiar places; they have problems going to new locations. Her family frequents the same McDonald's because the workers know when Gray's 8-year-old daughter slaps a dollar-twenty-five on the counter and yells "Fries," she actually means "I would like french fries, please."

Norman Public Schools psychologist Michael Wood said the key to helping autistic children cope in school is to start working with them as soon as they are diagnosed. Wood said schools should start teaching functional behavior in schools. They must get autistic children accustomed to their environment. He said the primary problem is the lack of money.

"School districts feel that if they take money from out of one program to put into autism funding, they are robbing Paul to pay for Peter," he said.

Joey Keller explained that living with autism has prevented him from having close friends. In a letter to his psychologist, Joey wrote, "I want to have some close friends because I'm getting more and more lonely as time goes on."

He hopes that attending Westmore will give him the chance to express his interests, especially in Pokémon games and writing. Joey has written numerous adventure stories that deal with complex situations. They have been posted on a Web site.

While he was being interviewed, Joey met another Westmore student, senior Jordan Hazelton. Joey's eyes lit up when he realized that someone was interested in meeting him. Before the end of his interview, Hazelton told him that when he sees her in the Westmore hallway, he'd better say "Hi" to her.

Diplomas and debt

Parents, students scramble for funds after OU, OSU raise tuition, fees for fall

BY NIKOLETT ANNELER
Red Dirt Journal

Tuition and fees are headed upward once again at Oklahoma's two major universities. Costs will rise at other state colleges this fall as well, leaving students and parents scrambling to locate the additional funds.

The University of Oklahoma's tuition and fees have risen an average of 11.7 percent annually for the last five years, said Cheryl Jorgenson, assistant provost and director of institutional research. Costs have grown from \$2,700 in the 2001-2002 school year to more than \$5,000 in 2006-2007. The number of students receiving federal grants has dropped each year, while the number taking out student loans has risen.

"Undergraduates are leaving school with around \$20,000 in debt," said Judi Voeller, associate director of client services in financial aid services at OU. Like Oklahomans, families all over the country are having trouble paying for college because costs are rising at three or four times the rate of inflation.

Despite these statistics, most American families can find a way to send their children to college, experts say. Students who study hard and plan ahead have the edge in the race for funding.

The burden of college loans is familiar to Heather Brunley, an OU graduate. She owed about \$13,000 when she received her bachelor's degree in journalism. After she graduated law school and passed the bar exam, this debt had increased to about \$60,000. After passing the bar exam, she knew that she'd picked the wrong profession, so she returned to the classroom — to become a teacher. Brunley is among the fortunate few in that she has an inheritance that will go toward paying her school debts.

"Without student loans, I couldn't have come to college," Brunley said. "I love college — if it was free I'd never leave."

While attending college, Brunley held several jobs; working on the yearbook, at the Oklahoma Daily student newspaper and in the dorms — all to fund her education. Working was not enough, however. Brunley had to apply for scholarships and student loans to cover costs.

Laurie Ghigliotti, a mother of nine children, has struggled to put six of them through college. Three chose private universities, three state colleges in Oklahoma.

Three have graduated, three are still earning their degrees and three are not yet col-



Photo by Elizabeth Vales
PAVING FOR SIX: Laurie Ghigliotti and her husband have managed to provide six of their children with support in their pursuits of college educations.

lege age. College expenses strain the family budget. Neither Ghigliotti nor her husband has a college degree.

"We spent 20 percent of our family budget in the 2006-2007 school year simply paying the college fees for these three children," Ghigliotti said. She considers herself an expert when it comes to finding college money.

Ghigliotti's six children all received grants and most received scholarships. All still had to take out loans to cover school costs, and the older children helped the younger financially.

"The kids know that if it's possible, they should help their younger siblings pay their college costs," Ghigliotti said. "I could spend that 20 percent because I knew that the kids were behind me and that there was a safety net."

Her advice to students is to plan ahead. "Start thinking early, probably by junior high," she said. She recommends taking

challenging courses, particularly math and English, to raise ACT scores.

"ACT scores translate to scholarships," Ghigliotti said. "The higher your ACT score, the more scholarships you can get."

The majority of families in Oklahoma earn \$50,000 or less per year, and this qualifies them for the Oklahoma Promise scholarship, said Bryce Fair, associate vice chancellor for scholarships and grants at the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Ghigliotti said that while her own children did not qualify for the scholarship, she recommends everyone investigate it.

Fair said this scholarship is available to Oklahoma students in grades eight through 10. Applicants must fulfill several requirements, including taking 17 units of required high-school courses, making a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and avoiding legal trouble during high school.

"Both the state and the students are making promises: the state to pay the tu-

ition, and the student to fulfill all the requirements needed to earn that tuition and be able to attend college," Fair said. "Upon graduation, if the student has fulfilled all of the requirements, the student is granted the scholarship. We're trying to instill the mindset that even if your parents don't have money or didn't go to school, or your parents aren't there, that you can still go to college."

The Oklahoma Promise scholarship will pay the recipient's tuition to a public Oklahoma college or university; however, it doesn't cover fees.

Perhaps the most often applied for source of funds for the incoming college student is the federal Pell Grant. Students can use these grants for any college expense and don't have to repay them. Students apply by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.

Last resort for most undergraduate and graduate students — and the only option for many middle-class families — is the federal student loan program. The students agree to repay that money once they leave college. Loans can lead to substantial debt, repayable over a period between 10 to 25 years, according to "The Guide to Federal Student Aid."

Ghigliotti's children took out loans to pay for college, but she made sure they understood that they were to use the funds for school rather than frivolities.

"My kids put themselves on a very tight budget," Ghigliotti said.

According to "The Guide to Federal Student Aid," the most common loans are Federal Stafford. These loans are granted to undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half time in a university. Subsidized loans are available to students with significant financial need, while unsubsidized loans are available to any applicant.

If a student qualifies for a subsidized loan, the government will pay all interest accrued during college, grace periods and deferment periods. Unsubsidized loans require the student to pay all interest amassed during these periods.

"Subsidized loans are all right, but when it's unsubsidized, I think you're getting into a lot of trouble," Ghigliotti said. "Some of my children's friends use unsubsidized loans for their spending money, for things that aren't necessary."

Students who take out loans and earn their degrees are in an excellent position for repayment. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, workers with bachelor's degrees earn about \$23,000 more per year than workers with a high-school diploma alone.

Ghigliotti said college is always worth what it costs and funding sources are out there if seekers know where to look.

"I think there's always a way to send kids to college," Ghigliotti said. "Sometimes it takes more sacrifice than you would expect, but there's always a way."

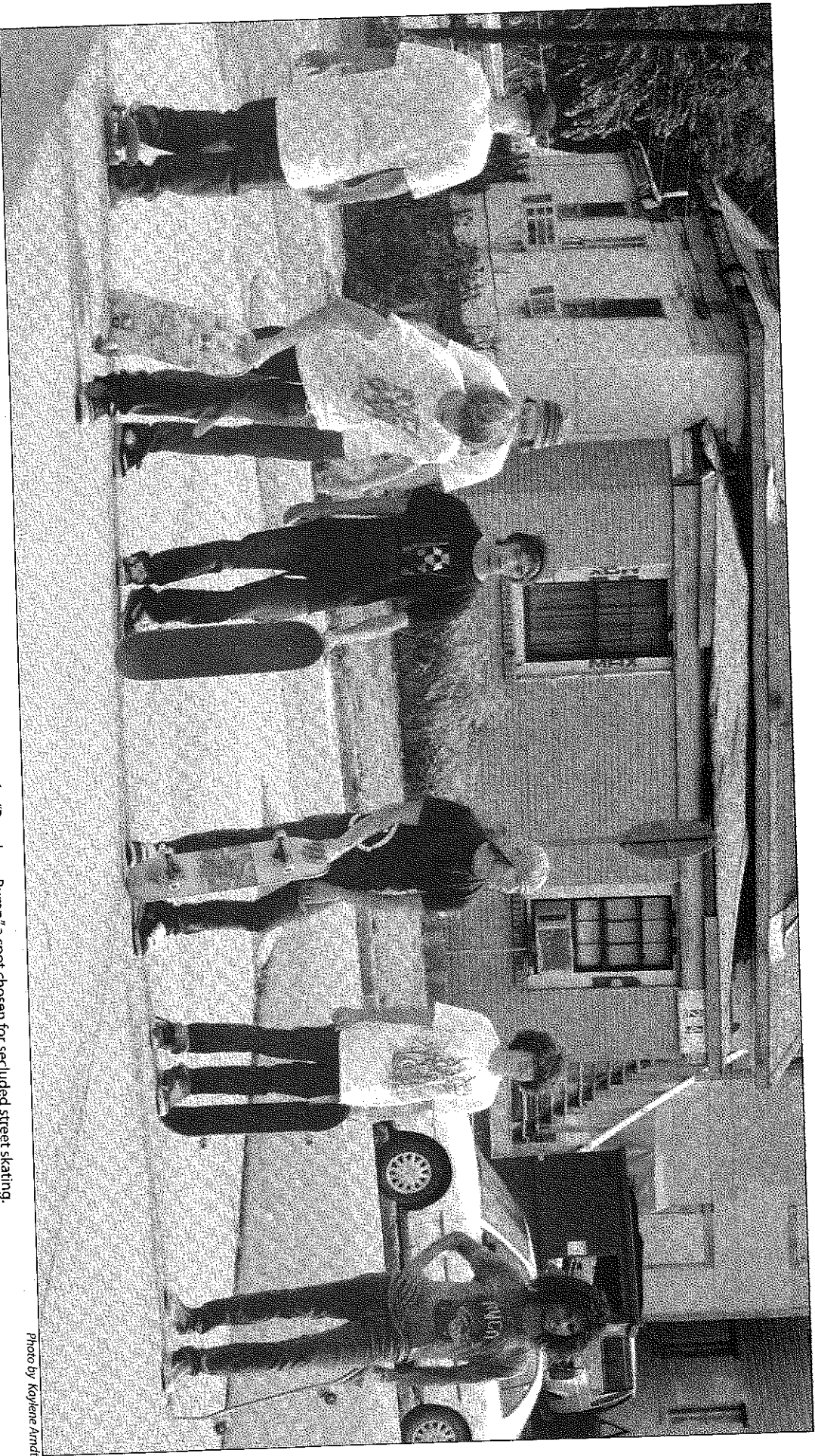


Photo by Koylene Arndt

SEARCHING FOR QUIET AIR: These Oklahoma City skateboarders celebrate Go Skateboarding Day June 21 at the "Broadway Bump," a spot chosen for secluded street skating.

Skateboarders not welcome to "grind" outside city skateparks

BY ANNA CASEY
Red Dirt Journal

Just before evening rush hour June 21, Oklahoma City motorists and pedestrians watched as a parade of skateboarders glided down Broadway Avenue's sidewalks, wheels clacking on the cracks in the pavement.

The more than three dozen boarders were "ollieing" and "grinding" curbs on their way to the "Broadway Bump," a small loading ramp in an alley behind an abandoned warehouse, to celebrate global Go Skateboarding Day.

The spot is a favorite among Oklahoma City area skaters because it has the characteristics that serious skaters look for: smooth ground, a long area along

which to gain speed and a ramped, raised ledge.

But perhaps its most important characteristic is that the "Broadway Bump" is hidden and can be skated for long periods of time without interruptions from police, security guards or angry business owners.

"We pretty much go places knowing we will get kicked out," said Payton Cheeks, who has been skating for 16 years. "If someone gives us a warning, we leave and go to some other random place."

Although skateboarding has gone mainstream, regularly appearing on ESPN, MTV and in video games, skaters say they still find it difficult to practice their sport. Skaters are often considered punks with crazy haircuts who damage property with their

stunts and cans of spray paint, they say.

Del City skaters Rod Williams, 16, and Dustin Sanders, 14, weren't even skating when a Sonic employee told them to leave one of the chain's Oklahoma City drive-ins. They were sitting at an outside picnic table. The boys said the employee was responding to their skater clothing and the boards they had with them.

"We were just eating," Williams said.

Because of the negative perceptions people have of them, skaters often have to be on the lookout for cops and security guards, said Miles Koliopoulos, a 17-year-old skater from Oklahoma City.

"Every time you go to skate somewhere, you have to hide when security comes or run and come back," Koliopoulos said. "You figure out when security is on or off."

Although skaters at the Bump weren't chased off on this year's

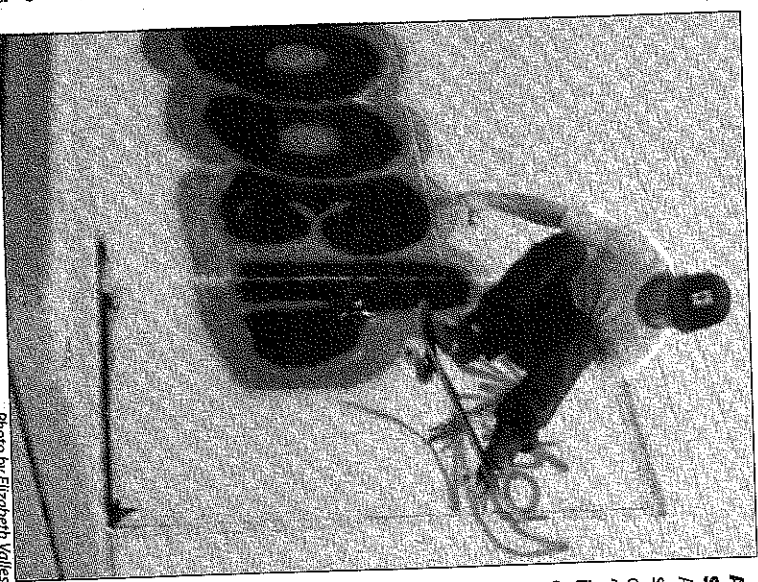


Photo by Elizabeth Vales

A GUERRILLA SKATER:

An unidentified skateboarder ollies at the "Broadway Bump" in Oklahoma City during the Go Skateboarding Day session June 21.

SKATE PARK
SLIDING: Jacob Brown, 15, of Oklahoma City rallslides at Mat Hoffman Action Sports Park of Oklahoma City.



Photo by Elizabeth Valles

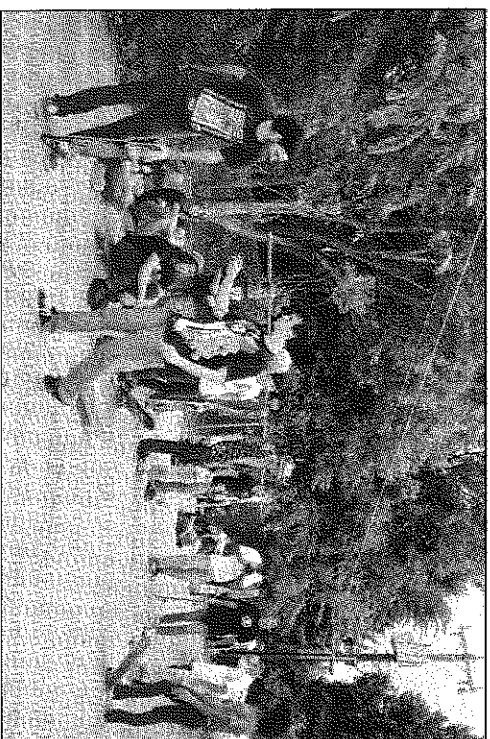


Photo by Elizabeth Valles

OKC JAM: Skateboarders take a break during the Go Skateboarding Day session June 21 near the "Broadway Bump" in Oklahoma City. Skaters weren't interrupted by police this year, unlike the 2006 session held below a downtown overpass.



Photo by Chris King

GO SKATEBOARDING DAY: An unidentified skateboarder ollies at the "Broadway Bump," a small loading ramp in an alley behind an abandoned warehouse in Oklahoma City, as part of a global celebration of the sport.

FAST FACTS
Skater Slang

AIR: The name given to the trick when the skateboard and skater leave the ground/ramp without ollieing.

GRIND: Moving along the edge or on top of an object with the axles of both trucks.

OLLIE: An air without using your hands. The basis for most skateboarding tricks.

RAILSLIDE: Sliding along an object on the skateboard deck between the trucks.

SESSION: The act of skateboarding, i.e., you can session a ramp, have a street session, etc.

TRUCK: Affixed to the board, the wheels fit to the truck. One pair per skateboard.

Source: Adrenalinepuges.com

ing in the mid-'80s was that it was underground and had an element of danger.

More importantly, the sport is inclusive and about going out to do what he loves every day, he said.

"You can be rich, poor, from any ethnic background," he said. "It's a way of life. Just get a board and do it."

States, according to the May 2006 issue of Skateboarder Magazine.

To give skateboarders a place to go, many communities such as Norman, Edmond and Oklahoma City have built public skateparks.

While skaters enjoy the parks, they say the sport cannot be confined to those areas and will instead skate "guerrilla style," which involves going to several venues and trying to skate before somebody tells them to stop.

"Skateboarding is all about skating in the streets," said Travis Still, who was one of the skaters celebrating national Go Skateboarding Day at the "Broadway

Go Skateboarding Day, police interrupted last year's festivities held below a downtown overpass, said Cheeks, who manages the Arockalypse skate shop in Oklahoma City. The police broke the wooden skate ramp built for the event to keep the skaters from re-

turning.

At the University of Oklahoma, campus police prohibit stunt skateboarding everywhere on campus, allowing skateboarding on sidewalks only as a form of transportation, campus police Lt. Bruce Chan said.

The Norman police department doesn't have a specific or-

derance prohibiting skateboard- ing; however, officers will ticket skateboarders for trespassing or property damage, Norman police Capt. Leonard Judy said.

As business owners become more aware of the damage skateboarding stunts such as "grinding" can cause to curbs, ledges and rails, they are discouraging skateboarding. Companies such as Skate Block, Skate Abate and Grind Minders sell small metal bumps that can be attached to rails and concrete walls to prevent skateboarding. Companies sell nearly one million of these devices each year across the United

Missing ounce of prevention

Students say schools should offer sexual assault prevention ed

BY DEZREA DALESSANDRO
Red Dirt Journal

In 2005, Jessica Theissen, then a senior at Norman High School, developed an award-winning performance from the book "Speak" for her acting class. Her performance was part of a date rape awareness program she created.

"Some teachers asked me to do it, and we planned the whole thing," Theissen said. "Then the day came for the performance and the assistant principal was like, 'What lesson?'"

Theissen said after she reminded her, the assistant principal said the school had decided to put off the performance. "The assistant principal said the administration was worried counselors would be inundated with crying girls, so they would look for options to deal with the issue," Theissen said.

Now a junior in college, Theissen overcame the initial obstacles and continued her work.

"Eventually, I wrote a packet of statistics and information, trained the teachers on how to use it with their advisories, and worked with a counselor to get permission slips sent out to the parents," she said. "The administration never put the curriculum into action, she said.

"I think our high school had a lack of knowledge about the subject, and it scared them out of taking action towards the issue," Theissen said.

Of the 200,790 sexual assaults reported in the United States in 2004-05, 44 percent were from youths between the ages of 12 and 18.

Although this statistic suggests high schools would make sexual violence awareness and self-defense programs available, high schools in only two Oklahoma towns work with the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Schools in Illinois, Massachusetts and Virginia have adopted

FAST FACTS Sexual Assault and Rape

What is sexual assault?
Sexual assault is unwanted sexual contact that stops short of rape or attempted rape. This includes sexual touching and fondling.

What is rape?
Rape is forced sexual intercourse. Penetration may be by a body part or an object. Rape victims may be forced through threats or physical means.

By the numbers
Youths 12-17 are 2 to 3 times more likely to be assaulted than adults.
Nearly half of all offenders who sexually assaulted juveniles age 12 to 17 were acquaintances between ages 12 and 24.
80% of women are victimized by someone they know.
1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men have been victims of sexual assault.
44% of rape victims, both male and female, are under the age of 18.

How to help a friend who's been assaulted
Believe the survivor.
Don't judge or question your friend or what your friend did.
Encourage the victim to report the assault, but remember it is ultimately up to the individual to make that decision.

Know the Truth
Myth: Rape is committed only by strangers in dark alleys and parking lots.
Truth: As many as 84 percent of women are raped by someone they know, such as friends, family or an acquaintance.

Myth: If a woman is raped, then she must have deserved it, especially if she agreed to go to the man's room or wore sexy clothing.
Truth: No one deserves to be raped. Being in a man's room or wearing revealing clothing does not mean a woman has agreed to have sex.

Myth: When a woman agrees to "make out" with a man, she is implying that will have intercourse with him, too.
Truth: Everyone has the right to say "no" to sexual activity, regardless of what has preceded it, and to have that "no" respected.

Myth: Women lie about being raped, especially when they accuse men they date or other acquaintances.
Truth: Rape really happens — to people you know, by people you know.
Myth: Only women are raped.
Truth: Ten percent of rape cases involve men as a victim.

Source: www.smartsex.org, *North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network*.

two programs designed for high schools called Rape Aggression Defense and Voices for Interpersonal Violence Alternative.

However, few — if any — sexual assault education programs are offered to high school students in the Oklahoma City metro area.

Mary Allen, a recent graduate of Eisenhower High School in Oklahoma City, said her school offers a series of support groups devoted to a variety of issues such as high school parenting, divorce, abuse, suicidal thoughts and eating disorders.

"Other than that, we really don't have anything else," she said.

While support is vital to healing, those groups do not focus on prevention, Allen said.

"It's a neutral environment, and the people are like a family. The time is for bonding and support,"

she said.

The only option in many schools is to meet with a counselor after the assault, and often, those counselors do not have important information about the effects of rape and sexual assault.

Sexual assault and domestic violence are often categorized together. However, the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault defines domestic violence as behavior used to establish power and control over another person through emotional, economic or sexual abuse. Thus, domestic violence is an umbrella term that includes sexual violence. The problem is that while school administrations address domestic violence in terms of dating and at-home abuse, they rarely discuss sexual violence.

"I think that sexual assault in general is talked about more than it ever has been before, but not as much as it needs to be," said Darcy West, communications manager for the Rape, Assault and Incest National Network.

The issue is why schools do not address the problem of sexual assault among their students. Heather Simmons, an OU graduate student working at the Women's Outreach Center, said, "Part of [the problem] is that a lot of people view the policy as abstinence only, not safe-sex." Because adults teach students not to have sex, they do not think sexual violence happens among high school students, she said.

"[Prevention education] is very important, especially for students who are becoming sexually active," Simmons said.

Lenore Strebek, administrative assistant at the Women's Outreach Center, suggested encouraging awareness at a younger age.

"It's really a subject that people don't like to talk about. Just stop being afraid to talk about it," she said.

A Norman Public Schools official agreed that prevention education should begin much earlier.

"It's one of those issues that's hard to deal with, but it's something that needs to be focused on in our schools," said Sharon Healy, director of guidance and counseling for the school district.

"There has to be something engrained in our school cultures about respect for all."

She said the Women's Resource Center and the Norman Police Department have made school presentations on sexual assault prevention. However, some students do not believe high school administrators promote such programs.

"Basically, programs that teach us anything about sexual violence don't exist. The teachers in school don't teach prevention. They ignore the problem," said Joel Blackman, a recent graduate of Norman High School.

In Norman, the Women's Resource Center and the Women's Outreach Center provide services for sexual assault victims. In Oklahoma City, two YWCAs and the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault provide similar services.

Because the Women's Outreach Center is at the University of Oklahoma, it does not reach out to high school students. Strebek explained that the outreach happens only when a college student does a class project.

West said the Rape, Assault and Incest National Network also does not have outreach to teens under 18.

"At one point, we had the Before and After Program, but it was really difficult and strenuous to get into high schools," she said.

McLaughlin and Middleton emphasized that the solution lies in teenagers taking the initiative.

"Whoever wants to take the initiative can do it," said McLaughlin. "If a high school club wanted to have a speaker come in, they could contact us and ask. Whatever they would like to focus on, it could be done."

Tribal casinos ante up

Revenue from American Indian gaming funds college scholarships

BY AKILAH ROBERTS
Red Dirt Journal

The American Indian gaming industry has grown into a \$23 billion business, according to a recent National Indian Gaming Commission report.

So where is all that money going? Officials say some of it is helping Native American students go to college.

The commission reports that 20 percent of net gaming revenue nationally goes to community-building efforts including education, children and elders, culture and charity. The exact distribution varies from tribe to tribe.

The Chickasaw Nation started its gaming operations with one casino employing about 250 people. The tribe now operates 18 casinos employing more than 6,000 and provides services nationally and worldwide. Chickasaw college students are reaping the benefits.

"Last year, the tribe awarded \$3 million in scholarships made possible, in part, by gaming revenue," said Brian Campbell, CEO of Chickasaw Enterprises. "The gaming operation is a business. It goes to many things — one of which is education."

An education official for the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma said gaming "has helped a lot."

Quinton Roman Nose said his nation earmarks about \$2 million each year for trust funds and scholarships, and some revenue went into building its own school, Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribal College.

Not all 460 tribes in the U.S. participate in gaming, he said, and for those that do, some are more productive than others. Funding education depends on each tribe's gaming revenue and budget, Roman Nose said.

Jamie Trevino, an education official with the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, said its small casino in McCloud brings in \$800,000



THE EDUCATION GAME: The Chickasaw Nation's Riverwind Casino is just one of Oklahoma's more than 80 Native American gaming facilities. Tribes fund college education for their members with gaming revenue. TravelWeb site GamblingResort.com says the United States has approximately 350 Native American casinos.

Photo by Tung Le

a year. Any tribal member seeking higher education will receive roughly \$3,700 in tuition assistance, she said, including \$1,200 per semester and \$500 for living expenses.

University of Oklahoma student Melissa Truel of Moore has received scholarship funds from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

"The money students receive is variable," she said. "It depends — about \$1,500 to \$2,500 a semester."

The Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians owns the 7 Clans Paradise Casino south of Ponca City and funnels about 17 percent of its revenue into education, said Michael Gawhaga, education director of the Native American Journalists Association. The tribe gets about \$20,000 for supplemental education, he said.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act was passed to protect Indian gaming, and experts say so far it

is working. The law is intended to support tribal government, promote tribal welfare, promote economic development, make donations and fund government agencies. Since this act passed, schools are being built, roads are being paved, and safe drinking water is being provided, gaming officials said.

The National Indian Gaming Commission reports that besides the 20 percent set aside for cultural spending, including education, tribal revenue allotments average about 19 percent for economic development, 17 percent for health care, 17 percent for police and fire departments, 16 percent for infrastructure and 11 percent for housing.

In the 1960s, the only state that allowed gambling was Nevada. Today, 42 states have lotteries, 37 have either Indian or racetrack casinos and two states don't allow gaming.

FAST FACTS

Casino Gaming

All but eight of Oklahoma's 38 federally recognized American Indian entities own casinos featuring class II gaming and/or off-track betting.

Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma	Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
Cherokee Nation	Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma	Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Chickasaw Nation	Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma	Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Citizen Potawatomi Nation	Osage Tribe
Comanche Nation	Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians
Delaware Nation (Western Oklahoma)	Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma	Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma	Quapaw Tribe of Indians
Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma	Sac & Fox Nation
Kaw Nation	Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
	Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma
	Thlopthocco Tribal Town
	Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
	United Keetowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
	Wyandotte Nation

Same-sex, same rights

GLBT couples seek to obtain inheritance, other benefits of marriage

BY DANIELA MCCORMICK ROJAS
Red Dirt Journal

When Earl Meadows died, Oklahoma Sam Beaumont lost not only a partner but also his home. Beaumont met Meadows in 1977. Beaumont and his three sons from an 11-year marriage moved in with Meadows the following year.

"My partner raised those three sons," Beaumont said.

Meadows and Beaumont built a house across from Meadows' parents and both invested money to establish a home they would inhabit for 23 years. In 2000, Meadows died of cancer, leaving all his property and belongings to Beaumont. However, wills require two witnesses, and Earl's had only one. A good friend of Meadows' helped him notarize the document but was unaware of the legal requirement for two witnesses.

The courts gave Meadows' estate to his cousins after a four-year battle. Beaumont no longer had a home.

"I did get a big ol' \$15,000 taxes on the estate, . . . and we're still fighting over that," Beaumont said. "Still fighting over the taxes."

Estate inheritance is just one automatic benefit of marriage. To ensure inheritance for their partners, same-sex couples without the benefit of legal marriage must take several steps, including writing wills that conform to all legal requirements.

Oklahoma does not recognize same-sex marriage. In fact, the Oklahoma Constitution states, "Marriage in this state shall consist only of the union of one man and one woman. . ." The requirement of a will with two witnesses would not have been an issue if Beaumont and Meadows had been able to marry.

Marriage offers 1,138 federal and state rights and is recognized nationwide, according to the Human Rights Campaign, a national



FLYING A FLAG OF FREEDOM: Melissa McNeese, left, a student at Northeast Classen High School, and Leioni McBride, a student at Oklahoma City Community College, marched in the annual OKC Pride Parade Sunday afternoon. Legal rights for GLBT couples are among the issues addressed at gatherings like these around the country.

organization working for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights.

Massachusetts is the only state to offer a marriage license to same-sex couples. Seven states and the District of Columbia now offer civil unions or domestic partnerships. Two more states will join their ranks in January 2008. Civil unions offer varying degrees of benefits at the state level.

Oklahoma doesn't have civil union rights, either. In fact, no Oklahoma law addresses directly the protection of and benefits for homosexuals.

Oklahoma's sodomy law became unconstitutional in June 2003 because of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* making all such laws unconstitutional. Two gay men filed the case after they were arrested for having sex in their home in Houston. They said their right to privacy and equal protection had been violated. The decision protects the privacy rights of same-sex couples

in all states.

Melanie Adams, administrative assistant to the dean of student services in the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma, said that she and her partner want and deserve the same rights as heterosexual couples.

"Human rights is about having the right to be yourself without harming another," Adams said. "Me being gay does not harm anyone. If I'm not harming anyone, then I should have the rights."

Adams said the key word in the discussion of same-sex couples' rights is "tolerance."

"Tolerance is something that pushes boundaries; tolerance and change," said Adams, a lesbian and the mother of two daughters. "The more you can change, the more you can tolerate."

Adams, a Christian, said she believes God loves everyone regardless of sexual orientation.

The Rev. Ed Sasnett, a pastor of Norman's Northeast Baptist

church who opposes same-sex marriage, said homosexuality is a sin and, therefore, harmful.

"I say anytime a person disobeys God's word, they harm themselves and the society in which they live in, regardless of the sin," he said.

Many heterosexual teens understand what the right to marry includes and say that same-sex marriages should be legal. Two OKC Pride Parade fall into that group.

"I don't think it's right to exclude other people's rights," said Elizabeth Bradford, a 16-year-old high-school student.

Dylan Smith, 16, attends Harding Charter Prep High School in Oklahoma City. He said he would vote to allow same-sex marriage if it were on the ballot in 2008.

Piedmont High School senior Jodie Mason, 17, said she doesn't support same-sex marriage. Mason, who did not attend the parade, said that homosexuals should, however, have rights.

"I wouldn't vote for same-sex marriages, but if (voters) made it legal, (homosexuals) should have the same rights," she said. "Whether I agree or not, they deserve rights as I do."

Some gay teens are taking action to increase understanding and change the legal situation for gay and lesbian couples. Lauren Westbrook, a 17-year-old student at Westmoore High School, belongs to the Gay-Straight Alliance on campus. She said lesbians should have the right to marry if they choose to do so, as should gay men. She has strong words for a legal denial of that right.

"I think it's ridiculous," she said. "It's like an abomination. It doesn't matter who they are, what they do, what sex they are."

Westbrook and her partner have discussed their future. She said because of same-sex marriage issues, she doesn't know where the future will find her.

"We actually thought about moving out of state," she said.

Vaccine fights cervical cancer

To be effective,
Gardasil must be
given at young age

BY HUNTER JOHNSON
Red Dirt Journal

When Lori Yoder, a single mother of two in Inola, had her regular Pap test in 2006, she was surprised by an abnormal result.

"I was scared," she said. Yoder knew the test might indicate the presence of cancer or pre-cancer cells. She is thankful that it was only a harmless abnormality and that no traces of human papillomavirus infection were found.

In June 2006, Gardasil, the first vaccine developed to prevent HPV — which in turn helps prevent cervical cancer — was recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Yoder plans on getting her teenage daughter immunized with Gardasil and said she would have been vaccinated herself if it had been available when she was younger.

HPV infection is a sexually transmitted disease. In most cases the infection is cleared up by the person's immune system, but HPV can be dangerous — even deadly, according to the Centers for Disease Control. HPV infection can be extremely painful and embarrassing for anyone who develops lesions or genital warts.

HPV spreads from genital contact. The only sure way to prevent HPV is abstinence, according to the CDC. For those who are sexually active, there are ways to reduce the chances of contracting HPV by remaining mutually faithful or by limiting the number of sex partners one has.

Yet even people with only one lifetime sex partner can get HPV if their partner had contact with an infected person. Using condoms during intercourse may not avoid infection.

"It is not known how much protection condoms provide against HPV," according to the CDC Web site.

The danger of HPV comes from its link to cervical cancer, a disease that kills 3,700 women in the United States each year. Cervical cancer occurs when HPV infects a woman's cervix or the lower part of the womb. If the body's immune system does not clear the cervix of HPV or the infection is not clinically treated, the infected cells can change to pre-cancers that can lead to cancer over time.

Even though Gardasil protects against many forms of HPV, it should not build a false sense of security.

"You should still get your annual Pap screening," said Maggie Pool, a registered nurse and health promotion coordinator

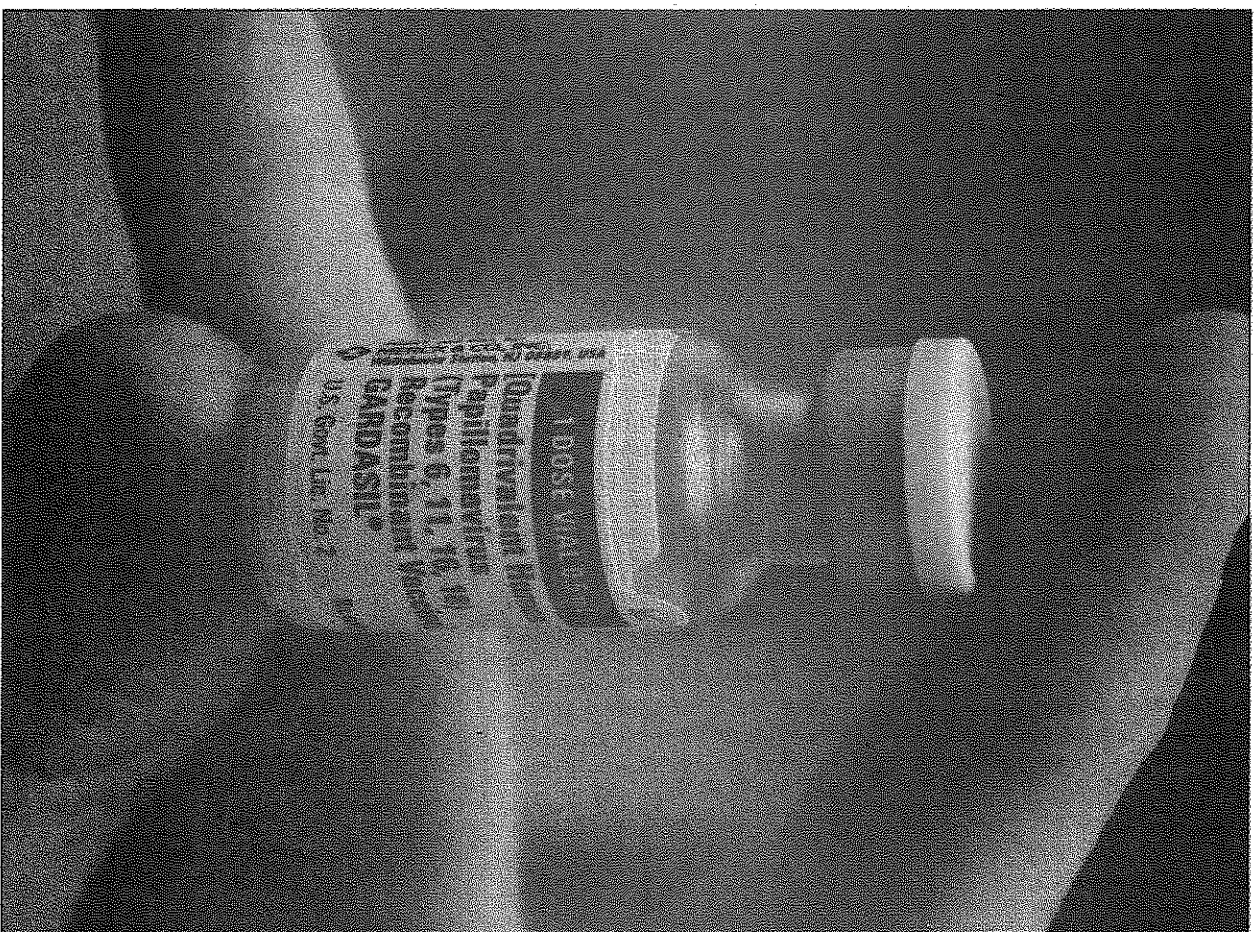


Photo by Hunter Johnson

CONTROVERSIAL VACCINE: Most doctors recommend early vaccination against the human papilloma virus. HPV infection can lead to cervical cancer, but many parents resist the recommendation.

at the University of Oklahoma Goddard Health Center.

Dr. Abby Bova, a cancer specialist with Cancer Care, said regular Pap tests are the best defense against cervical cancer.

"We have seen a significant decline in cervical cancer in the USA due to routine Pap smears, which are designed to detect precancerous lesions," Bova said. Women should start getting annual Pap screenings three years after starting sexual intercourse but no later than 21 years of age.

Gardasil does not stop cancer, nor does it cure HPV. The vaccine does protect against HPV if it is administered before a woman is ever exposed to the virus. This is why Gardasil is recommended for girls as young as

9, according to the Food and Drug Administration. The vaccine requires three shots over a six-month period with a price tag of \$120 per shot.

Most insurance companies do cover Gardasil, according to the FDA. Some federal health programs, such as Vaccines for Children, provide free vaccines for people under 19 who are uninsured, Medicaid eligible, American Indian or Alaskan Native.

Gardasil does have its limits. If a person has been exposed to one of the four HPV types that Gardasil prevents, Gardasil can only prevent that person from getting the other three types.

This is why most doctors recommend getting the vaccine long before a young woman

FAST FACTS

What is HPV?

- HPV is the most common STD in the U.S. and is spread through genital contact.
- About 6.2 million Americans get a new genital HPV infection every year.
- No HPV tests are available for men
- 20 million people are currently infected with HPV.
- 50% of sexually active people get a genital HPV infection.
- By age 50 around 80% of women will have acquired a genital HPV infection.

What is Gardasil?

- Gardasil is the first vaccine created to prevent HPV, which in turn helps prevent cervical cancer.
- It prevents only 70% of cervical cancer.
- Prevents HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18 (the four most common types. HPV types 16 and 18 cause 70% of cervical cancer cases and HPV types 6 and 11 cause 90% of genital warts cases).
- Does not treat existing HPV infections.
- Does not fight genital warts or cervical cancer.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov)

is sexually active.

Also there are rare types of HPV that Gardasil cannot protect against.

The long-term effects of Gardasil have not been studied yet.

"There haven't been any negative side effects," Bova said. "Most are mild side effects like any other vaccine." Most commonly reported side effects of Gardasil include fever, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, fainting, with pain, itching, swelling, and redness at the injection site.

Some mothers question the safety of Gardasil and whether it promotes promiscuity in their daughters.

Dr. Joan L. Walker, an HPV expert from the University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, advised mothers to err on the safe side and get the vaccine for their youngsters.

"How would you feel if you did not vaccinate her and she died of cervical cancer unnecessarily?"

United, divided by language

Opponents of English-only laws claim action would harm nation

BY JOSE GARCIA
Red Dirt Journal

English-only laws would hinder students transitioning to English from another language, said a member of Gov. Brad Henry's Advisory Council on Latin American and Hispanic Affairs.

"Their education would suffer because unless they are allowed to learn in their native language and to learn their native language well, they will not be able to transfer language skills to the second language," said Teri Mora, who also is director of Hispanic Student Services at Oklahoma Panhandle State University.

In Texas County, where Mora taught high-school Spanish, more than a quarter of the population speak a language other than English at home, according to U.S. Census Bureau data for 2000. In 2003, however, Texas County commissioners passed a resolution requiring all county offices to conduct business in English. Mora called the law "a token resolution, just like all English-only legislation is."

An Oklahoma Supreme Court ruling makes it unlikely that any English-only laws in the state would bar governments from communicating in other languages. The court in 2002 said such a law violated the state Constitution's free-speech clause because it would have prevented Oklahomans with limited English skills from effectively communicating with government officials and accessing "vital information necessary for a self-governing society."

The court's decision would allow symbolic legislation establishing English as Oklahoma's official language. Thirty other states have by either statutes or constitutional amendments established English as their official language, according to U.S. English Inc., a national group advocating such legislation.

Oklahoma legislators recently considered a bill that would have required all official state business be conducted in English. It contained eight exemptions, including allowing the use of other languages when needed to "protect the health, safety,

or liberty of any citizen, teach or study other languages" or "protect the rights of criminal defendants and victims." The bill failed to make it out of a House committee.

In Washington, D.C., Republican Sen. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma has pushed legislation declaring English the official language of the federal government. Inhofe's recent amendment to an immigration bill would not have prohibited the use of other languages, but it would have eliminated any "entitlement" to government services and materials in any language other than English.

For the past two years, Inhofe has tried to reverse an executive order signed by former President Bill Clinton that requires federal services be provided in different languages for people with limited proficiency in English. The Senate approved Inhofe's amendment in early June but also approved a separate one preserving Clinton's executive order. Both amendments died when the immigration bill was withdrawn in mid-June.

In late June, a Rogers County commissioner floated a proposal to make English the official language of that county. The

item was withdrawn from the commission's weekly agenda after Native Americans objected.

Oklahomans in general have voiced strong support for making English the official language, but not necessarily for requiring that all government documents be in English only. In 2003, for example, an Oklahoma/OU poll found that 83 percent of Oklahomans favored an English-only law, but they were roughly split on whether government forms should be available only in English.

Supporters of English-only laws say they will save taxpayer money. Inhofe, for example, said his amendment would save the \$1 billion to \$2 billion the federal government spends annually to provide forms and services in other languages.

Opponents, however, often view such legislation as thinly disguised racism. Mora said English-only requirements also would be a blow to Hispanic youth.

"It would be detrimental to their self-esteem and their emotional development to be told that their native language is 'not allowed' or 'against the law,'" Mora said. "How can you take away something they have been taught since birth and that is a vital part of who they

are?"

The number of Hispanic youths in Oklahoma has increased by more than 32 percent since 2000, according to a recent Tulsa World analysis of Census Bureau data. The newspaper concluded that if the pace continues, at least a quarter of Oklahoma children would be Hispanic by the year 2020.

Hispanics accounted for 6.6 percent of the state's population in 2005, according to the Census Bureau. More than 7 percent of Oklahomans reported speaking a language other than English at home.

The general manager of a Spanish-language newspaper in Oklahoma City said that Hispanics should learn English but calls English-only legislation "non-common sense law targeting people who don't know English."

"We live in an age where we need to be bilingual and open to different cultures and languages," Nuestra Comunidad's David Cevallos said.

Pat Fennell, executive director of the Latino Community Development Agency in Oklahoma City, said English-only laws are "terrible, totally unnecessary laws" that "imply that languages

other than English are bad."

Objections to English-only legislation don't come just from the Hispanic community. Native Americans fear such laws would endanger tribal languages.

"The Native communities have fought over the years to bring back the language to our people," said Lindy Waters, director of American Indian Student Life at the University of Oklahoma.

He said an English-only statute "would be a travesty. It would be a big step back in time."

Oklahoma is home to 37 federally recognized tribes, many of which were settled here before Oklahoma's largest minority, accounting for 8.1 percent of the state's population in 2005.

In reaction to the English-only bill considered by Oklahoma legislators, the Cherokee Nation Council passed a resolution opposing "any efforts to limit Native languages or any measure that would degrade Native languages." Noting the importance of language in preserving tribal culture, the Council said the law "would be contrary to the development and preservation of the Cherokee language and all Native American languages."

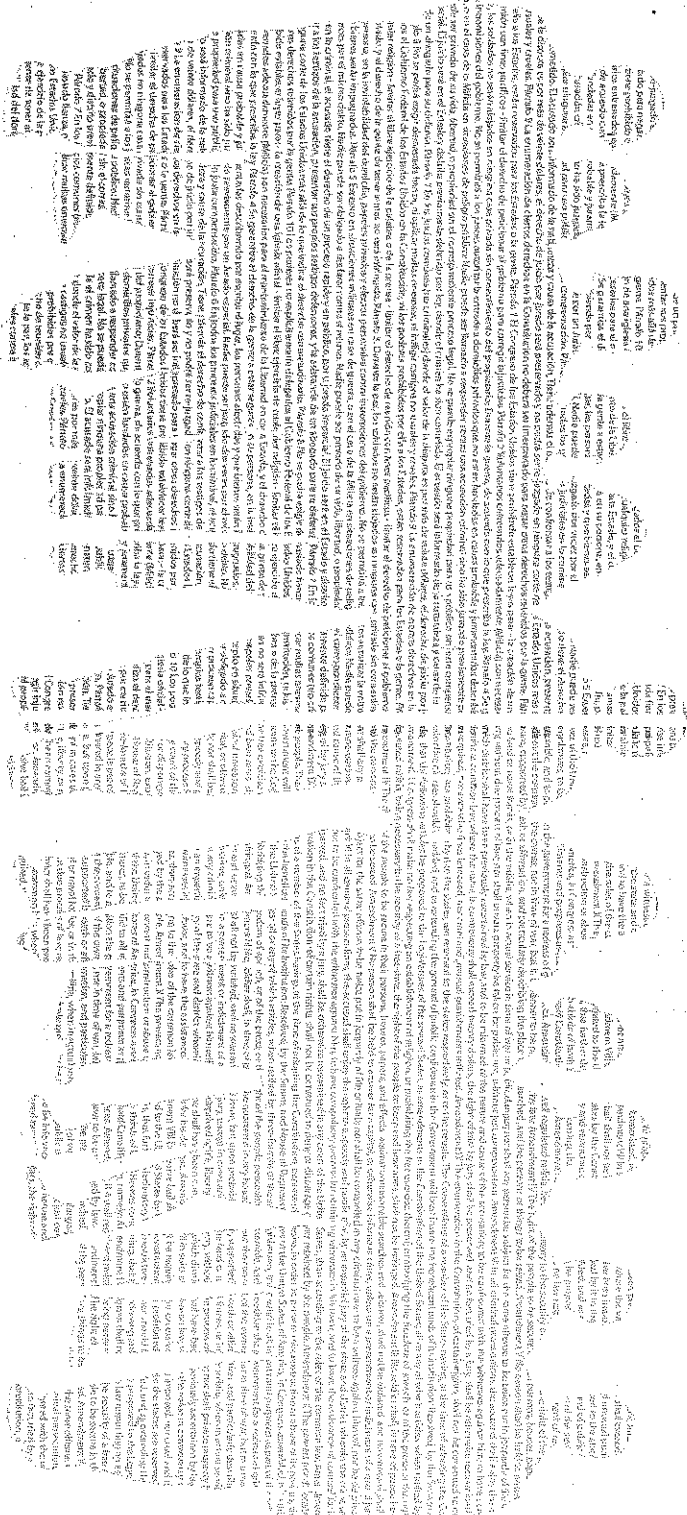


Photo illustration by Red Dirt Journal staff

Perilous peer-to-peer piracy

Music industry to file-sharers: Pay \$3k now or risk more later

BY LAUREN JOHNS
Red Dirt Journal

When something sounds too good to be true, it usually is — and this spring, some 4,000 people across the country found out the hard way that free music is one of those things.

Charles Cox, Oklahoma State University faculty member, was among the computer users the Recording Industry Association of America notified by letter of two choices: pay the RIAA \$3,000 or defend their actions in court in Denver.

Thinking she was opening an internship offer from a law firm, University of Kansas student Charli Johnson found herself reading a similar letter:

Like most of those on the receiving end of the RIAA action, both chose to pay the out-of-court settlement — and neither feels safe downloading music again.

"I did contact their lawyer and tried to schedule an opportunity to teach some sort of educational program or help spread the word, and they weren't even willing to consider that," said Cox, an OSU

agricultural education, communications and leadership department faculty member for more than 17 years. "So it was either pay the 3,000 bucks or go to federal court. From that perspective, I thought, 'Hm. Well.' They weren't very cooperative."

Johnson's parents paid for her out-of-court settlement.

Federal law makes it illegal to distribute a copyrighted product without permission. The RIAA says that illegal file sharing of its members' music has cost the industry jobs and made it harder to finance new artists. After closing down Napster — former king of peer-to-peer file sharing services — several years ago, the association is going after individual file sharers, mostly at colleges and universities where high-speed Internet access has created an ideal pipeline.

The RIAA says these users are

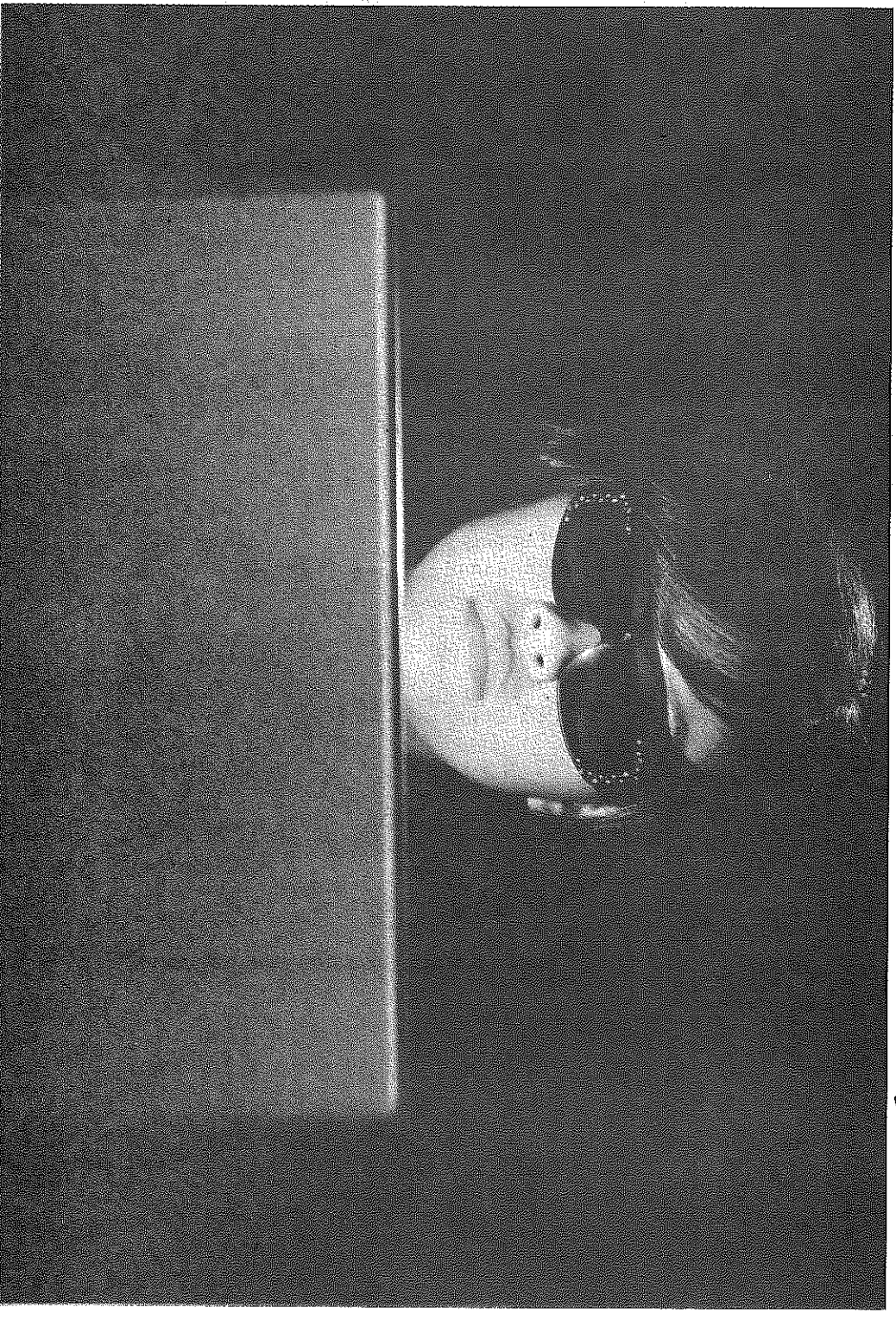


Photo by Tung Le

DOWNLOAD AT YOUR OWN RISK: The Recording Industry Association of America continues to pursue those who are using peer-to-peer software to download music without paying. The RIAA has been sending letters to illegal downloaders telling them they must pay \$3,000 restitution or face legal action.

breaking federal law not only by downloading copyrighted files but also by then sharing or distributing them. A file downloaded from a peer-to-peer site such as Limewire is not downloaded directly from the program server but from another user, usually through a shared folder.

Even if the RIAA doesn't have other evidence, having an accessible shared folder is enough for the organization to claim that someone plans to commit or already has committed piracy.

In its letter, the RIAA threatened to press charges regardless of whether defendants knew they were breaking the law. If convicted, a pirate faces up to five years in prison and \$250,000 in fines for a first-time offense. Civil penalties begin at a minimum of \$750 per song.

Cox's letter accused him of downloading nine songs from

Limewire on his office computer. He says a student downloaded the songs without his permission.

Johnson's letter accused her of illegally downloading 592 songs — which could have cost her at least \$444,000 on the losing end of a civil suit.

The RIAA identified unsuspecting Internet music lovers by their unique Internet Service Provider addresses after sending letters to their universities asking for individual user names. Though some institutions initially balked, nearly all complied.

The RIAA says it has targeted only users who illegally share its members' creative projects. The association is composed mostly of media giants, including the world's biggest record labels. It maintains a comprehensive list of member labels on the "Who we are" section of its Web site (riaa.com/aboutus.php), as well as a list

of the thousands of individual artists — ranging from Blink 182 to Buddy Holly to Babyface — signed under them on RIAA Radar (riaaadar.com).

To avoid trouble with the RIAA, downloaders should seek legal sources of online music such as the Ruckus Network, Napster, and iTunes.

Ruckus is free to university students with an edu e-mail address, but it has only about three million songs available and is not compatible with Linux or Mac operating systems or products such as iTunes and iPods. Students can only download for free. They must pay \$20 per month to transfer music to an mp3 player. University faculty and staff must pay a fee to use any of the service.

Napster, now legal, offers a catalog of three million songs compatible only with Windows XP. For \$9.95 a month, members can

download an unlimited number of songs, with options to pay per song or per album. Unique to Napster is that anyone can listen to tracks on the Napster Web site for free (Napster.com) but can repeat one individual track only three times before being asked to subscribe.

iTunes has more than four million songs available and charges 99 cents per song. It does not have songs by some popular artists, such as the Beatles. iTunes also doesn't allow music purchased through its software to be moved onto a non-Apple mp3 player or to be stored anywhere besides iTunes. However, users can burn CDs and store music from them somewhere else.

Like most everything else, music does not come without a cost. Those who download free music illegally using peer-to-peer software might eventually have to pay a pretty high price.

Taking back the music

New artists decry 'irresponsible' portrayal of women in rap lyrics

BY BAILEY PERKINS
Red Dirt Journal

Lawton native Chris Chapman, aka Flyboy, has taken the path he hopes will lead him to a successful rap career.

He has launched his own record label, Bombthreat Enterprises; he has self-released two albums; and he has opened for artists such as Jagged Edge, Mystikal and T.I.

However, Flyboy stepped out in a new direction on his soon-to-be-released album, "The Message," by avoiding lyrics most hip-hop artists use to make it big: He decided to be responsible in how he portrays women in his music.

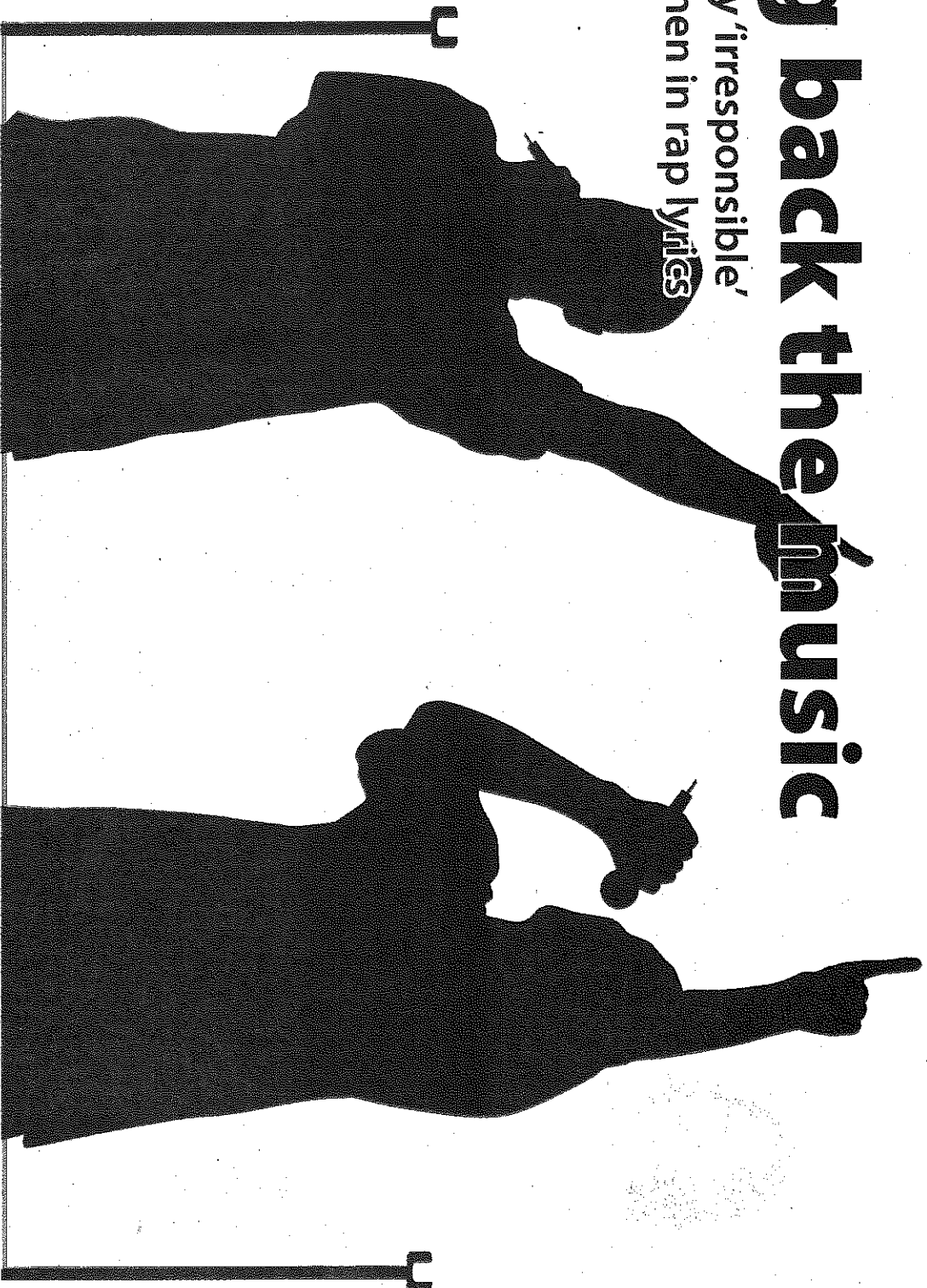
"There are a lot of artists that are very irresponsible with what they're saying [about women] and the way they're portraying things and things they put across in their music," said Flyboy, who admitted that he's been guilty of using stereotypes about women in the past.

In the wake of talk-show host Don Imus' firing for his comments about the Rutgers women's basketball team and the subsequent discussion of the issue in the hip-hop community, Flyboy and other up-and-coming area artists are thinking harder about how their lyrics portray women. Realizing listeners may be modeling behavior after their own, many artists say rappers need to take responsibility for what they say.

While hip-hop has gained both mainstream popularity and critical acclaim over the past 25 years, many still criticize its use of profanity, references to drugs and violence and, especially, negative portrayals of women. Many rap videos feature half-dressed women and lyrics regularly contain references to "hos."

Following Don Imus' firing for referring to the Rutgers women's basketball team as "nappy-headed hos," the debate over how women are portrayed in rap lyrics hit the national stage.

Ebony magazine pulled rapper Ludacris from its June cover, and Verizon dropped rap/R&B singer Akon after a video surfaced of the singer simulating sex with an underage girl. In a story according



to a May 11 Associated Press story, Al Sharpton—a well-known minister and political, civil rights and social activist—sponsored a soap drive in May symbolizing the effort to do away with sexist and sexual rap lyrics.

"I think it's important to encourage people to think critically about what they're seeing," said Cynthia Gordy, assistant news editor for Essence magazine. Essence has sponsored an online campaign against exploitation of women and African Americans called "Take Back The Music" since 2005. "We shouldn't just accept [the portrayal of women and African Americans] blindly like we have been and that's all we're doing, just trying to raise the conversation and trying to raise the standard."

"Raising the conversation" has met with mixed responses.

Lawton Eisenhower High School senior Jacobi Isham, better known as T-Fresh, said rap artists' references to women are sometimes offensive. However, he said, the women they refer to in their lyrics are the women that act the way they're being described.

"They don't be talking about women in general," said T-Fresh, who has one self-released album

called "Trendsettin'" to his credit. "They just talk about girls that put themselves out there like that, like the video vixens. They put themselves out there like that, that's their problem."

However, T-Fresh said artists should be more specific when referring to those women so it's clear that all women are not being grouped together.

Texas native Sherwin Evans, who received his name "Curse" because he doesn't, said artists shouldn't feel they have to use stereotypes to succeed because whether they rap about women or not does not determine whether they will be signed to a label.

"People don't get signed for saying the "B" word, or not," he said. "They get signed for talent."

Tulsa native Millard Latimer, CEO of the Norman-based Silver Smith Entertainment and former freestylist, said the business side of the music industry—specifically the audience's purchasing power—is what keeps negative portrayals of women in hip-hop lyrics.

"Exploitation of women is what sells; somebody is still buying the album," he said. "I don't agree with it, but I understand where they are coming from."

Educating artists about the

influences these portrayals can have is one way that could lead to a change, said Latimer, who once used stereotypes about women in his lyrics but, he said, no longer depicts women in that manner.

Terry Monday, vice president of programming for Oklahoma City-based Perry Publishing and Broadcasting, said the next up-and-coming women artists—and their fans will be the ones who could make the change.

"It's going to be young sisters making [their] mark and making a difference," Monday said. "It's what the new players in the game can bring to the table and whether you want to shed light to this negative artist doing negative things with negative lyrics or you shed light to a positive female or a positive male rapper or R&B artist."

Kevin Perry, vice president and chief operating officer for Perry Publishing and Broadcasting, said the portrayal of women should be discussed, but people still have their First Amendment rights.

"Right, wrong or indifferent, you don't have to agree or disagree with everything that you hear, read or see but that's where [Don] Imus comes in," Perry said. "He

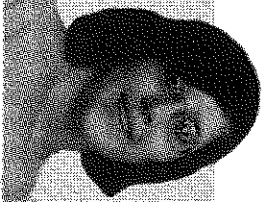
had a right to say what he wanted to say. At the end of the day, it's freedom of speech."

To stop rappers from negatively portraying women, those who disagree with certain songs and their depictions need to stop buying those artists' albums, Perry said.

"Everyone has the right to read what they want, write what they want, listen to what they want," Perry said. "It's up to us to turn the radio off if it's playing a song that we don't like. It's up to us to not pick up the paper or magazine that we don't care for."

Although Perry said he believes change in the depiction of women starts with the listeners, Flyboy said he believes the change will begin when successful rappers who portray women negatively stop doing it and spread why they decided to do so around the rap community.

"It's going to take responsible artists to come out and be successful doing it the way that is socially responsible and then not only doing it, but telling the rest of the world it can be done, promoting that it can be done and networking with other artists that share the same [belief]," Flyboy said.



NIKOLETT ANNELER

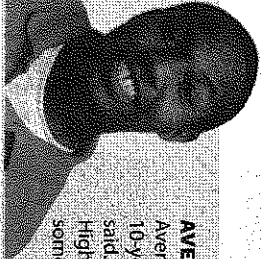
Nikolett Anneler, 18, of Minnehkah is making a big transition this fall. After being home-schooled for her entire education, she will attend the University of Oklahoma to pursue a career in journalism. The honors student enjoys writing and teaching about animals. "I see everything in word form," she said. Anneler is a big wildlife fan who owns many animals such as cockatiels, cats, dogs and livestock. Anneler has come to the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism workshop to gain insight on college life. "That's one of the reasons I came here, to get the experience of living on my own without parental influence before I start college and have to dive in head first to sink or swim," Anneler said.

—Keenan Johnson

KAYLENE ARNDT

The steady beat of the ceremonial drum, which symbolizes the rapid heartbeat, soothes Kaylene Fayth Arndt the most. Arndt's Caddo Indian culture has been a major contributor to her upbringing. Arndt said that her family's weekend powwows have influenced her love of music and dance. Arndt is 17 and a graduate of Moore High School. It has always been a dream of hers to attend the University of Oklahoma. She remembers the numerous football games she attended with her father, which increased her passion for a dynamic student life. Gamma Delta Phi, also known as the Native American sorority, interests Arndt because she wants to enhance her knowledge of Indian culture. She plans to major in mass media at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication because she wants to become a music video producer and capture the beauty of her native music.

—Sean Parks



AVERY BRANNON

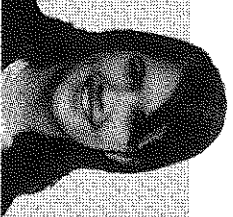
Avery Brannon, a 17-year-old senior, says that soul and rhythm & blues music soothes him after a hectic day. "R & B can heal the soul," he said. Brannon lives with his mother and 10-year-old brother, Aurie. Although Aurie, according to his big brother, is "hyperactive and mischievous," he listens to his older brother. "He really seems to admire me," Brannon said. His younger brother's admiration pushes Brannon to do well in school. Brannon, 5 feet 6 inches tall, plays point guard on the varsity basketball team at Frederick Douglass High School in Oklahoma City. With a 3.7 grade point average, he hopes to attend the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University or Auburn University in Alabama, where some of his family lives.

—Leese Soldswor

ANNA CASEY

Anna Casey, 17, is a rising senior at Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa graduating in 2008. Soccer has always been Casey's favorite sport since she was 4 years old. With a passion for the game, she played soccer for her high school. Anna enjoys traveling and loves to smile in fact, she has been to all six of Oklahoma's neighboring states. "My value in life is to be able to find humor in all kinds of situations," said Anna. She is earning an International Baccalaureate diploma and is also a writer for the Tulsa World Satellite, which publishes every Friday for high school students.

—Tring Le



SUSAN COSTA

Susan Costa, a sophomore at Pascal High School in Fort Worth, Texas, was born in Atlanta. She moved to Texas at age 6 and claims to love Georgia and Texas equally for the Southern, down-home feel that both states share. Her interests include volleyball (witnessing her first match at the 1996 Olympic Games), singing show tunes (her favorite Broadway show is "Chorus Line"), and watching the film "The labyrinth," in which her favorite singer, David Bowie, plays a leading role. Costa dreams of making it on Broadway, though claims she doesn't have the singing voice, as well as writing for Vanity Fair. Costa came to OJD because of her love for writing. "I like seeing my thoughts on paper," Costa said.

—Lauren Johns

DEZREA DALESSANDRO

Dezrea Dalessandro wants to make a difference with her life. "I want to go back to my roots and become powerful through unity," she said. She is a women's rights activist, championing many causes. At Norman High School, in Norman, she participated in the Dreamers Art Studio, color guard and tolerance club. She marched against sexual violence and raised money for women with breast cancer. Dalessandro smiled when asked if she's a fanatic for women's rights and said, "No, I'm just verging on the edge and backing down as I get older." Dalessandro will attend the University of Central Oklahoma this fall and eventually transfer to another university to become a psychologist. Dalessandro sees herself living in Pennsylvania, New York or Oregon after college. With her great attitude and bright outlook on life, Dalessandro will make a difference for the people she helps.

—Hunter Johnson



JOSE GARCIA

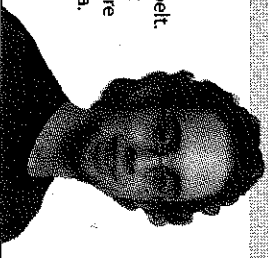
Jose Garcia, at 16 seems shy, but he has much to say. He discovered his love for writing during the last five minutes of an eighth-grade poetry assignment. Now, the Capitol Hill Junior writes about world events for his school newspaper in Oklahoma City. "What I can't say in words, I can say in writing," he said. Garcia understands the power of language. When his parents emigrated from Mexico to Los Angeles, they could not speak English. When Garcia was 3 years old, his family moved to Oklahoma City. Growing up bilingual, Garcia understands how difficult it is for people who speak only Spanish in an English-speaking country. "I think that any immigrant from any country, not just Mexico, should learn English to succeed in having the American dream," Garcia said. "But they shouldn't lose their culture or their native tongue."

—Marian McPherson

JONATHAN GARNER

Jonathan Garner, a junior at Yukon High School, has been learning hung gar shaolin kung fu for one year. He is still a white belt, but he is almost ready to move on to a yellow belt. He will have to pass a physical and mental test in order to do this. The first part of the test is to hold five-pound weights while reciting history for about six minutes and the last part is to review over everything he has learned from day one. "I will be able to take the test in about two weeks from returning home," he said. "Well I guess I wanted to be more fit. I wanted to learn an art form that will help me physically and mentally." Jonathan moved to Yukon from his hometown of Rockford, Ill. He has also lived in Florida and Indiana.

—RaeAnn Gifford





RAE ANN GIFFORD

Rae Ann Gifford, an avid musician who plays piano, bass and drums, says she can usually be found jamming on her RT Ibanez guitar. Although she loves her Ibanez, Gifford hopes to trade it in for a Fender Stratocaster one day. "The Stratocaster that I want plays smoother than my Ibanez does," Gifford said. The 15-year-old sophomore at Pathways Middle College High School also hopes one day to turn her passion for music toward a journalistic career. "My love for music overcomes my love of journalism, but I'll never stop writing," Gifford said. "So, I'm still undecided." Though Gifford's career plan is still unclear, her decision to attend the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism workshop wasn't. Gifford said the workshop is helping her to sort out her plans for the future.

—Jonathan T. Garner

JORDAN "JO" HAZELTON

Jordan "Jo" Hazelton has a varied list of things that she'd like to become: fashion photographer for Vogue magazine, International Red Cross member, inspiring reporter, renowned choreographer, a magazine editor or even an advocate for international humanitarian law. When she's not being ambitious, Hazelton's presiding over an innovative program she founded at her high school. She started the Gay-Straight Alliance to create a supportive network that would help gay students with problems such as stress and discrimination. The 17-year-old Westmoore High School senior's 3.8 GPA earned her a membership in her school's National Honor Society. Although the Moore resident is allergic to artificial cinnamon, Hazelton is not allergic to hard work. She juggles school, work, dance, teaching, writing and volunteering. Hazelton said journalism is a great way to serve humanity. "I believe one person or article could have a profound effect on the world," she said. Although she is uncertain of her career decision, Hazelton is adamant about being that person or writing that article that changes the world.

—TaChelle Jones



LAUREN JOHNS

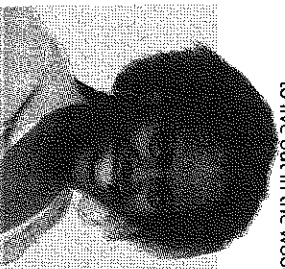
Seventeen-year-old music buff Lauren Johns moved from Mansfield, Texas, to Tahlequah one year ago. Although she is the only child at home, she has eight siblings. At Tahlequah High School next year, she will be assistant editor of her school newspaper. She started studying journalism when she was a sophomore, finding her talent in editorial and news writing. She is even more interested, however, in the world of live music than she is in journalism. She dreams of one day being a music technician who helps tune instruments and prepare musicians for live performances. Johns plays the electric bass in her spare time. "Everybody plays guitar, and it's more unique to play the bass," she said. Johns enjoys hardcore 80s groups, like Misfits and Bad Brains. She said she hopes to attend the University of Chicago. Johns hasn't decided on a college major.

—Susan Costa

HUNTER JOHNSON

Hunter Johnson, a 17-year-old senior from Inola High School in Inola runs cross-country, works on the newspaper staff and serves on the student council. After high school, Johnson plans to attend the University of Oklahoma. Although he has his senior year to decide what to study, he plans on pursuing journalism. "I chose journalism because I want to travel the world, and the cheapest way is probably to be a writer," he said. In addition to travel, Johnson's interests include nature, politics and reading. His favorite book is "Meditations" by Marcus Aurelius. "It gives you a deeper look on the inside of life," he said. In his spare time, Johnson boxes, rides dirt bikes, watches movies and hunts. "I want to live out in the woods for the rest of my life," he said.

—Dezrea Dalssandro



TA CHELLE JONES

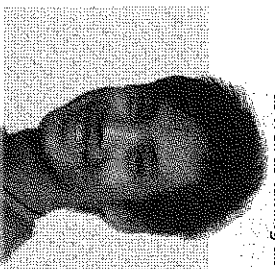
Northeast High School senior TaChelle Jones is quite an independent and self-driven individual. Rather than moving to Texas with her mother and younger sister two years ago, she stayed in Oklahoma City with her grandparents. Having worked on a school yearbook since the seventh grade, TaChelle was named editor for her junior and senior years. The 17-year-old plans to major in journalism at Oklahoma City University. Her realistic dream is to create a magazine that will focus on ordinary people with extraordinary traits. "The focus will be on our next door neighbors and not celebrities," TaChelle said. Her wildest dream is to become a major recording artist. In her spare time, she does community service through the National Honor Society and plays clarinet in the marching band.

—Jo Hazelton

KEENAN JOHNSON

If there is one thing Keenan Johnson likes as much as playing sports, it's talking about them. This 17-year-old senior from Sapulpa has been involved in sports for 10 years and has no intention of stopping any time soon. When Johnson isn't playing baseball for Sapulpa High School, he's playing with his family. "I play with my little cousins all the time," Johnson said. After high school, he plans to attend the University of Oklahoma, Langston University or Oral Roberts University where he will major in broadcast journalism. Johnson hopes to become a sports broadcaster. "I've always wanted a job that would be dealing with sports," Johnson said. He looks forward to the day when he can take his love of sports — as well as talking about them — and share it with the world.

—Nikolett Anneler



TRUNG LE

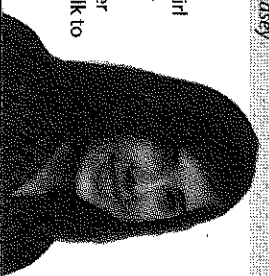
Sixteen-year-old Trung Le has had a passion for soccer since he began playing in the sixth grade, two years after his family moved to Oklahoma in 2000 from South Vietnam. Now a starting forward at Santa Fe South High School in Oklahoma City, Le says he wants to play for Oklahoma City University after graduation but would first like to win a state championship. Although he loves soccer, Le says he knows the importance of education. Le is interested in earning a business administration degree, and after a few days at the Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism workshop, Le is considering a career in broadcast journalism. "You need an education to live your life right," Le said. "It's the key to a good life."

—Anna Casey

DANIELA MCCORMICK ROJAS

Sixteen-year-old Piedmont High School junior and National Honor Society scholar Daniela McCormick Rojas has put on a dance benefit to pay funeral expenses for a young girl with terminal cancer, spoken publicly at an immigration rally in support of undocumented immigrants, and worked with a non-profit organization as a public relations representative for underrepresented individuals. "Helping people gives me an adrenaline rush," she said. "It makes me feel good about myself because I am making a difference in someone's life." Her high school schedule is filled with not only classes but also with myriad clubs and organizations, including Students Against Destructive Decisions and her high school newspaper, The Pawzette. She also is a flamenco dancer. No matter how busy she is, however, she reads her Bible and prays frequently. "It feels awkward not to talk to God at least twice a day," she said.

—Willie T. Reeves Jr.





MARIAN MCPHERSON

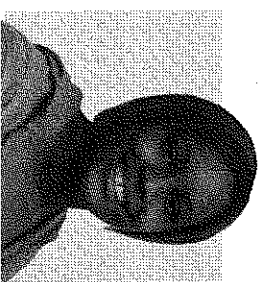
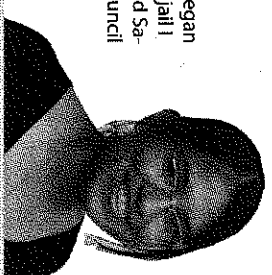
Marian McPherson, 17, has chosen a career in journalism because she likes writing and telling people's stories. "Reading stories in journalism made me realize how big the world is and the different ways people view life. It also makes me realize how small the world is and how much we have in common," said the senior from Classen School of Advanced Studies. McPherson is in the school's International Baccalaureate program. "Being an IB taught me to be a better learner. Before then, I thought I knew everything," she said. Volunteering since the 10th grade, McPherson has worked on World AIDS Day and Saturday Night Alive, a program to feed the homeless. "To me, one of the most important things someone can do is be in service to someone else," she said. Other than volunteering, she loves karaoke but doesn't like milk on cereal.

—Jose Garcia

ANA KAREN PEREZ

Ana Karen Perez calls herself a "shy person," and describes writing as a way to express herself. Still, there is another reason she loves the written word. From the age of 8 she began writing to her brother, who was in jail for a variety of offenses. "Whenever I was at school I never had to write anything that expressed how I felt, but when my brother was in jail I wanted him to know everything that was happening. It was our way of communicating because we couldn't talk on the phone," Perez said. The 18-year-old student graduated Satorion from Santa Fe South High School in Oklahoma City with a 4.10 GPA. She also received certificates from the National Association for Hispanic Journalists and the Council of Guatemala for volunteer work.

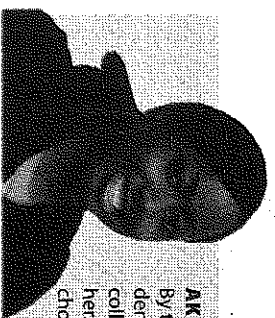
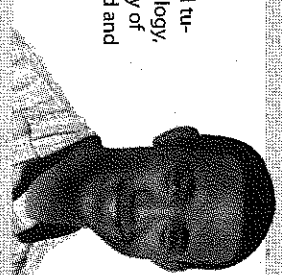
—Akliah Roberts



WILLIE REAVES JR.

Willie Reaves, 16, is a senior at Muskogee High School in Muskogee. He is a member of the National Forensics League in debate, mixes music for school pep assemblies and tutors after school in math and foreign language. Willie enjoys building computers. "I re-define computer nerd. Bill Gates has nothing on me," he said. He owns Action Technology, a company that repairs computers and printers and services MP3 players. Working with computers is a reliable source of income and teaches him how to deal with a variety of people, he said. Willie will pursue a career in law, using his bilingual skills to become a lawyer to represent Latinos who can't speak English. "Hispanics are underrepresented and that needs to change because everyone needs equal representation in the law," he said. Willie plans to major in psychology and linguistics at Emory University in Atlanta.

—Daniela McCormick Rojas



AKLIAH ROBERTS

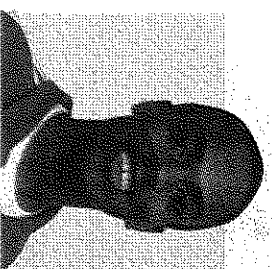
By the time she finished her junior year, Northeast High School's Akliah Roberts, 17, had also completed a semester's worth of college courses. By the time the Oklahoma City resident graduates in May 2008, she'll be a college sophomore with more than 30 credit hours of courses, such as Biology, English Comp I, and American Federal Government. "Taking college classes helped me get better prepared," Roberts said. Roberts plans to pursue a career in either pharmacy or broadcasting. Singing rhythm & blues also is important to her. "For the longest time, I wanted to be a singer," she said. "Living in Oklahoma makes it difficult because it isn't really known for R&B singing." Roberts is not currently taking any choir classes because of her packed academic schedule but said she hopes to in the future. "I have to make college my first priority," she said.

—Ana Perez

LESE SALASWAT

Leese Salaswat embodies the word advocate. "I'm kind of the girl with the picket sign protesting," said Salaswat, who at 17 is an incoming senior at Westmoore High School in Moore. She has a mission to get into Evergreen Liberal Arts College, located in Olympia, Wash. After graduation she wants to develop into an analytical journalist, who fights for third-world countries and the concept of world peace. "I am an advocate at heart," she said. Salaswat is involved in many student programs, one of them, the Gay-Straight Alliance. Understanding the differences between heterosexuals and homosexuals, she provides guidance and empowerment in the relations of the two. Despite all her activities, she maintains a 3.0 GPA. Salaswat said, "I want the world to be a better place, and by me I can improve it."

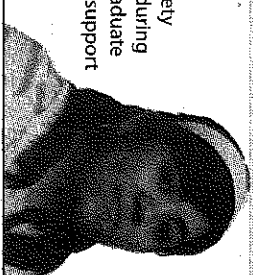
—Avery Brannon



SEAN PARKS

Sean Parks, a 17-year-old senior at Union High School in Tulsa, considers himself to be a "people person." He welcomes anyone with open arms and a big smile. Parks wants to attend the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication and hopes to someday be an entertainment reporter because he believes in focusing more on the lighter side of news. Parks said he wants to fill a void and be a positive role model for disadvantaged children of color. Parks' parents grew up in the inner city of Dayton, Ohio, but they have made a better life for themselves and their family. "I want to be a positive role model for kids, just like my parents were positive role models for me," Parks said.

—Kaylene Arndt



ELIZABETH VALLES

Elizabeth Valles attributes her current and future academic success to her parents. Valles is Pathways Middle College High School yearbook editor and National Honor Society president. She will have earned 32 college credit hours when she graduates in May 2008. The 17-year-old senior was born in Mexico and learned to speak English fluently during her eighth-grade year. She hopes to be the valedictorian of her graduating class. Continuing her education, Valles plans to study graphic design and be the first college graduate in her family, an achievement that would be a gift to her family. "When I graduate, it will be as if it were their graduation," Valles said. "I believe that's the reason my parents support me, because they want me to have what they did not."

—Bailey Perkins



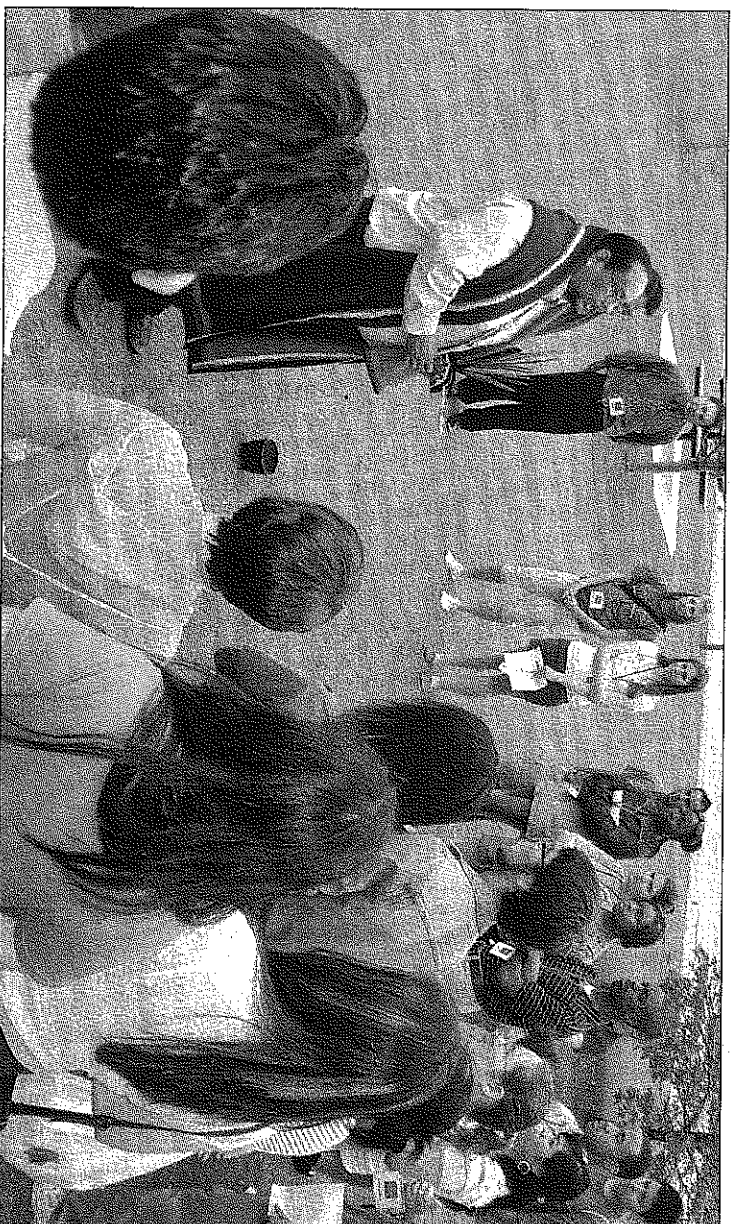


Photo by Car Dark

OPENING BLESSING: Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism students began their two-week workshop with a traditional Navajo blessing by Homer George (Dine).

Journalism jumpstart

High-school students train as journalists and explore issues of diversity in American mass media during two-week, intensive workshop at Gaylord College

BY TACHELLE JONES
Red Dirt Journal

Among a legion of gymnasts, basketball players, dancers and cheerleaders attending summer camps on OU's campus, 24 high school students were reporting and writing rather than vaulting, dribbling, twirling or jumping.

The Oklahoma and Texas students were attending the fourth annual Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism workshop at the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication. They arrived June 17 to begin two-weeks' training as journalists.

College professors and media professionals taught students to follow leads, conduct interviews, write stories, operate video and take photos. Workshop fellows then created the workshop's annual newspaper, the Red Dirt Journal.

Students worked 12-hour days to meet their deadlines but also broke for fun. They saw and discussed "Freedom Writers" and "A Mighty Heart." The Oklahoma Gazette took them to dinner to talk about alternative journalism. The Norman Transcript treated them to dinner, as

well. Students shadowed reporters at The Oklahoman and toured Channel 5 KOCO.

To relax, students attended a Red-hawks' game and stretched their bodies instead of their minds with yoga.

ODJ Director Ray Chavez, associate professor of journalism in Gaylord College, added broadcasting to the program this year.

"We are building on the success of the previous three workshops by expanding beyond production of our traditional newspaper," he said.

The team leader said broadcasting was an important component.

"Young people today get their information from many different sources," said Rick Allen Lippert, adjunct instructor of broadcasting in Gaylord College.

Broadcast students created online video packages about the workshop. Keenan Johnson, Sapulpa High School senior, plans to major in journalism or broadcast journalism at OU.

"It's given me experience that I can use in college," Johnson said.

The workshop introduced students to Web pages, graphics, Web videos and slide shows.

"By getting into other media areas, we are recognizing the changing media landscape and the increasing demands of various skills for future journalists," Chavez said.

The workshop included Native American, African American, Asian American, Hispanic and Caucasian students who represented different religions, sexual orientations and socio-economic groups. Student interests range from athletics to hip-hop to feminism.

As students go through the journalism process, they learn to craft a quality story and convey a message effectively.

"The workshop presents a realistic — not romantic — view of journalism," said Kathryn Jensen White, assistant professor of journalism in the Gaylord College. White said the realistic picture helps students decide whether mass media is the field for them.

Although students are tired at the end of the intense 13 days, most say they enjoy the experience.

"It's been pretty difficult because everything was brand new to me, but I'm glad I got to learn it all," said Marian McPherson, Classen School of Advanced Studies senior.

Red Dirt Journal

Oklahoma Institute for Diversity in Journalism • 2007

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Volunteers
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• Ralph Bellevue, University of Oklahoma • Cylie Burnyan, The Oklahoman • Michael Gawhega, Native American Journalists Association • Joe Hight, The Oklahoman • Russell LaCour, Tulsa World
• Diana Miller, El Nacional • S.E. Ruckman, Tulsa World • Heather Spencer, University of Oklahoma • Yvette Walker, The Oklahoman

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