Webster Named Dean of Liberal Arts

Catherine Webster, Ph.D., has been named dean of the university’s College of Liberal Arts effective July 1. Webster has been honored with numerous distinctions in her decade at Central, including College of Liberal Arts Faculty Member of the Year, a Faculty Merit-Credit award for outstanding service, a DaVinci Fellow award and the Vanderford Distinguished Teaching award. She is currently serving in her third year as the chair of the UCO Department of Modern Languages.

Biology Professor Receives Fulbright

UCO professor of biology Chris Butler, Ph.D., has received a Fulbright award to Botswana for the 2016-17 academic year. He will be based out of the University of Botswana where he will teach courses in biometrics and geographic information systems, conduct collaborative research on the effects of climate change on birds in southern Africa, and work to develop a new course to be offered simultaneously at Central and the University of Botswana. Butler joined Central’s College of Mathematics and Science in 2005.

DaVinci Institute Honors Students, Faculty

Oklahoma’s DaVinci Institute recognized four members of the UCO community for their creative endeavors in April. Bryan Duke, Ph.D., professor and assistant dean for the College of Education and Professional Studies, and Sarah Kyle, Ph.D., associate professor of humanities and philosophy, were named 2016 DaVinci Fellows. Fall 2015 graduates Jami Mumford, an English education major, and Samantha Reed, an elementary education major, were named 2016 DaVinci Scholars. The DaVinci Institute works to improve the quality of education in Oklahoma to help Oklahomans take their creative, innovative talents to the world.
Forensic Science Institute Makes History

Central’s W. Roger Webb Forensic Science Institute is now the only university in North America with three accredited undergraduate forensic science programs — forensic molecular biology, forensic chemistry and digital forensics. The Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) announced the milestone in March. Central is the only institution in Oklahoma with undergraduate level FEPAC accreditation and joins Eastern Kentucky University as the first two universities in the nation to receive accreditation for an undergraduate digital forensics program.

Black Male Summit a Success

Central welcomed more than 300 local college and high school students at the UCO Black Male Summit in March. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion’s daylong event, now in its second year, empowers and encourages young African-American men to pursue a college degree. Attendees had opportunities for personal and professional development as well as workshops covering topics from goal-setting and financial literacy to networking and college fit.

Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence Honors Caire

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence has awarded UCO professor of biology William Caire, Ph.D., with the foundation’s 2016 Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Teaching at a Regional University or Community College. A leading authority on Oklahoma’s bat populations, Caire joined UCO’s College of Mathematics and Science in 1976. His research primarily centers on mammalian ecology and has resulted in publications with many students as coauthors in the areas of rodent and bat taxonomy, food habits, parasites, physiology, and distributional surveys of mammals in the Southwest.

UCO to Observe Indigenous Peoples Day

UCO has declared the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day, a date previously observed as Columbus Day. The change is intended to acknowledge the unique cultures and contributions of Native American communities, to commemorate the displacement and persecution of Native peoples, and to foster a more inclusive environment for all Native American students, faculty and staff at Central.

Communications, Design Students Rack Up Awards

The Oklahoma Broadcast Education Association recognized UCO professional media students with 11 awards and two scholarships in March for excellence in student-produced television and radio broadcasts, while the UCO Department of Design again dominated the student categories at the 2016 Oklahoma ADDY Awards. Central’s graphic design students won a total of 96 awards at the 50th annual competition held in February, more than any other university.