Operation Degree Completion Grows Grads

Central’s Operation Degree Completion has now assisted more than 1,350 students complete bachelor’s degrees since the program’s inception in 2009, and nearly 2,000 students have completed associate’s degrees or certificates through Operation Degree Completion’s reverse transfer partners Rose State College, Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City and Northern Oklahoma College since the program’s grant-funded expansion in 2012 — more than any other state in the U.S.

Transformative Learning Conference, March 31

Central will expand the conversation on transformative learning in higher education with world-renowned education scholars Stephen Brookfield, Ph.D., and Dee Fink, Ph.D., during its ninth annual Transformative Learning Conference set for March 31-April 1 in Oklahoma City. “Keynoter Stephen Brookfield, a longtime leader in reflective practice for teachers, will inspire; Dee Fink’s workshop about designing significant learning experiences will inform; and a range of session content and formats will provide attendees with the latest information, trends and data about doing, tracking, assessing and communicating the benefits of transformative learning,” said Jeff King, Ed.D., executive director of Central’s Center for Excellence in Transformative Teaching and Learning. Register online at www.uco.edu/TLConference.

$1 Million Gift for ‘Complete the Dream’

A former UCO football player made an anonymous $1 million donation to the UCO Athletics $15 million “Complete The Dream” athletic facilities campaign in January. It was the second major gift in less than three months to the UCO Athletic Department and third largest in program history. The campaign is the first comprehensive athletic facilities campaign in university history. Planned facilities include a north end zone complex, an indoor practice facility, a new softball stadium and major renovations to other sport facilities.
UCO Staffer Receives National Recognition

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) recently honored UCO staff member Stevie Johnson for his work on the UCO Office of Diversity and Inclusion Black Male Initiative and Fellows Program. The program, designed to improve the retention, graduation and participation rates among African-American males at Central, was the 2015-16 Bronze Award Winner in NASPA's Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Orientation, Parents, Persistence, First-Year, Other-Year and Related Category for the NASPA Excellence Awards. Johnson serves as operations director for UCO Student Affairs.

UCO a Certified Healthy Campus, Business

UCO maintained its status as a Certified Healthy Campus for the fifth consecutive year while also ranking as a Certified Healthy Business for the second year. The dual certification recognizes the university's efforts to promote health and wellness among its students, faculty and staff. A part of the “Shape Your Future” campaign driven by the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Central was awarded the highest level of certification, garnering the excellence designation. The program recognizes college campuses and vocational technical schools that make a positive impact on the health of their employees and students.

Top Alma Mater for Board Certified Teachers

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards recently recognized Central as one of the top 50 alma maters in the U.S. for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) with 444 total certifications. NBCTs are nationally recognized as being among the best teachers in the profession. Participation is voluntary and to earn the certification teachers must take written assessments, submit examples of student work and agree to an analysis of teaching practices.

Strengthening International Ties

UCO was recently honored as a 2015 International University of the Year by Indian Higher Education Review Magazine, the result of the efforts of Central's Office of Global Affairs to build strong relationships with universities and institutions of higher education in India. The award comes on the heels of Central's recognition from the Institute of International Education as a top institution of higher learning for international students. Central ranked No. 16 for international enrollment among all master's level institutions in the U.S. on the institute's 2015 Open Doors Report.