UCO Endeavor Games Celebrate 17 Years

The 17th annual UCO Endeavor Games wrapped up June 12 in Edmond after welcoming more than 330 athletes from 40 states, Puerto Rico and Canada for the nation's largest multi-sport, multi-disability event. The 2016 games were powered by 240 volunteers and stretched across five sites with athletes ages 4 to 73 competing in archery, cycling, paratriathlon, powerlifting, sitting volleyball, shooting, swimming, table tennis, track and field, and wheelchair basketball.

Throwing for the Gold

UCO sophomore student-athlete Mariah Garcia became Central's first-ever outdoor national track and field champion this year as she captured the discus title at the NCAA Division II Outdoor National Track and Field Championships held in May in Bradenton, Florida. Garcia broke the school record for discus throws of more than 40 feet and qualified for the U.S. Olympic Trials, set for July 1-10 in Eugene, Oregon.

Top Honors at Tri-State Governor’s Cup

UCO College of Business undergraduate entrepreneurial team Heart Optic LLC took first place in the Tri-State Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup Business Plan Competition held in May in Las Vegas, bringing home a $30,000 cash prize and increasing the team's total winnings to $42,000. Heart Optic — made up of UCO junior Yusuf Shurbaji and spring 2016 graduate Clayeton Hammock — manufactures the Heart Bar™, a medical device that enables continuous CPR during image-guided procedures and ends caregiver exposure to X-ray radiation. Co-managing partner Randal Clowdus of Oklahoma City, a practicing RN with more than 40 years of medical experience, invented the device.
Operation Degree Completion a ‘Model of Excellence’

University Business magazine named UCO’s Operation Degree Completion as one of eight Spring 2016 Models of Excellence, an honor that recognizes innovative approaches to encouraging and nurturing student success on campuses across the country. The honor is one of numerous accolades awarded to the UCO program that has led to the completion of nearly 3,600 bachelor’s degrees, associate’s degrees and certificates since its founding at Central in 2009.

Bronchos Row to Historic Finish

The Broncho women took second place in the 2016 NCAA Division II Rowing Championships held in Gold River, California, in May — the best finish in program history. Led by head coach Andrew Derrick, Central’s squad has seen steady improvement over the past several seasons. In addition to the team win, co-captains Hannah Anderson and Brooke Wolford earned first-team All-America accolades from the Collegiate Rowing Coaches Association, bringing the program’s lifetime total All-America individual awards to 11.

Strides in Undergraduate Research

Central was well-represented at Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) events this spring, with a record-setting 66 students traveling to CUR’s 30th annual National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) and UCO biomedical engineering student Cody Bahavar’s selection as one of just 60 students to present cancer research at the U.S. Capitol for CUR’s 20th annual Posters on the Hill. Central’s NCUR delegation ranked fifth overall in number of presentations among 388 participating universities and was the most of any school in Oklahoma, while Central was the only Oklahoma university represented at Posters on the Hill. UCO will host NCUR in 2018.

Mathematics and Science Names New Dean

Wei R. Chen, Ph.D., UCO professor and director of the UCO Center for Interdisciplinary Biomedical Education and Research, has been named the dean of the university’s College of Mathematics and Science effective July 1. Chen, the 2008 U.S. Professor of the Year and a 2011 recipient of a Fulbright Scholar grant to teach biomedical engineering and conduct cancer treatment research in Taiwan, has served the college as interim dean since August 2015 and as an assistant dean since 2006. He joined Central as a physics lecturer in 1994.