



WINTER 2013

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*In recognition of MidFirst's support, the indoor and outdoor live music venues of Central's new boathouse both will be named for MidFirst. The UCO boathouse will be unique to the area with the art gallery and performing venues that will be included.*

## MidFirst Bank Donates \$2.5 Million; Gift Completes Boathouse Funding

Thanks to a \$2.5 million gift from MidFirst Bank, Central can move forward on construction of its CHK|Central Boathouse on the Oklahoma River.

The gift completes the university's fundraising initiative for the project, a requirement Central set before construction could begin.

"Through this appreciated investment, our friends at MidFirst Bank have partnered with us to achieve this university goal," Central President Don Betz, Ph.D., said. "Our presence on the river will contribute to the thriving Boathouse District, offering athletes a place to train, and the community and visitors a new venue to experience the arts."

The boathouse design includes a live music venue, an outdoor performance area and an art gallery, different from the other area boathouses. Both the indoor and outdoor performance areas will be named for MidFirst Bank.

While \$2 million of the gift goes to the boathouse project, \$250,000 of the MidFirst funds will be used to help complete the interior renovation of Old North, the university's

iconic flagship building, while another \$250,000 will be used to establish an endowed chair.

MidFirst Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jeff Records said his company appreciates the vision of the Boathouse District. "It is already creating economic and community impact, quickly becoming a beacon for athletes from around the world and a destination for visitors to the region. We are pleased to be a part of this monumental development in Oklahoma City."

The CHK|Central Boathouse will be home to the Central Women's Rowing team, added to Central's intercollegiate athletics program in June 2007.

In May, the team made its first national rowing appearance, missing by only two seconds the chance to compete in the finals for the national title. The 2012-13 team has 15 veteran members with five freshman recruits, all of whom look forward to having a university boathouse to call their own, as well as anchor the program in the Boathouse District.



# 2012 Finishes with 3,000+ Grads

More than 1,100 graduates participated in Central's Fall Commencement, bringing the total number of degrees awarded in 2012 to more than 3,000.

Fall graduates included members of the first graduating class of Central's Professional Golfers' Association Golf Management program — all 15 of whom finished with full-time jobs within their field of study.

Housed in Central's College of Business, the Golf Management program first offered classes in 2008, shortly after the PGA chose UCO to be among 20 accredited golf management programs in the nation. Central



has the only such program in Oklahoma.

Other fall graduates and their respective colleges were:

- College of Business, 227 bachelor's and 48 master's;
- College of Education and Professional Studies, 290 bachelor's and 101 master's;
- College of Fine Arts and Design, 46 bachelor's and two master's;
- College of Liberal Arts, 191 bachelor's and 43 master's;
- College of Mathematics and Science, 126 bachelor's and nine master's; and,
- Interdisciplinary Studies in Forensic Science, 23 bachelor's and six master's.

## UCO, OU Partner to Expand UCO's Urban Teacher Program, Meet Need

Alarming, across Oklahoma, fewer students are choosing education as a career path. Even fewer are answering the call to teach in urban school districts, with their unique environments and challenges.

However, the University of Central Oklahoma and the University of Oklahoma are responding to the urban teacher shortage through a partnership that will expand the Urban Teacher Preparation Academy, a program started at UCO in 2010 and the only one of its kind in Oklahoma.

For the last two years, Central administrators have worked with Oklahoma City Public Schools to place upper-level UCO Education majors in Oklahoma City schools. The college students enlist with the promise of three years of mentored clinical teaching experience.

To date, 34 students have participated, with 17 of those now employed as full-time teachers in the Oklahoma City Public Schools district and 13 currently student teaching. An additional two graduates are teaching in other urban districts in the state.

The need for these teachers, however,

continues to grow rapidly.

Oklahoma City Public Schools started the 2012-13 school year with 270 teacher vacancies. By mid-December, the district was still 80 teachers short.

In the next three years, 433 Oklahoma City Public Schools teachers will be eligible for retirement. Another 410 teachers will reach retirement ages, while not meeting the retirement standards.

"We are at a critical time in education and specifically in an urban education setting with a looming teacher shortage on the horizon," Karl Springer, Oklahoma City Public Schools superintendent, said.

"Those of us in higher education share a commitment to meeting the specific needs of our community," Jim Machell, dean of Central's College of Education and Professional Studies, said. "We're thrilled to expand this program through this partnership with OU."

OU's Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education started its first cohort of students in the spring 2013 semester.

Central officials would like to see the program expand to more state universities in the future, ultimately creating a consortium throughout Oklahoma, Machell said.

For more information, visit [www.uco.edu/ceps/utpa](http://www.uco.edu/ceps/utpa).



# UCO Faculty, Student Researchers Compile Civic Health Index



*Kristen Cambell, with the National Conference on Citizenship, speaks with reporters following the release of the Civic Health Index in December at the State Capitol.*

A team of Central faculty and student researchers released in December the Oklahoma Civic Health Index, indicating how informed and engaged Oklahomans are in the democratic process.

Most promising was Oklahomans ranking 30th in the nation for discuss-

ing politics combined with an 8th for eating dinner with family. The combination offers the possibility of increased dialog and education, leading to a more informed and engaged citizenry, said Patricia Loughlin, Ph.D., director of Central's American Democracy Project.

Less encouraging was Oklahoma ranking 44th in the nation for its small percentage of people registered to vote, along with 47th for voter turnout. State voter turnout averaged only 40.4 percent, with local elections registering less than 8 percent.

On the positive side, Oklahomans ranked 20th in the nation in the number of citizens who volunteer, 29.2 percent.

These were just a few of the findings released Dec. 4 at the Oklahoma State Capitol by the UCO faculty and student researchers involved. The report was produced in partnership with the Oklahoma Campus Compact, the Kerr Foundation Inc., the Walton Family Foundation and the National Conference on Citizenship.

UCO students participating in the project found the project enhanced their civic skills.

"People can make a difference in their communities, and I hope this report generates ideas and inspires people to take action to create a better state for everyone," said Danielle Hernandez, a senior Organization Communications and Spanish double major from Blanchard.

The complete report may be downloaded at [www.ncoc.net/OK](http://www.ncoc.net/OK).

## Funds Target Degree Completions

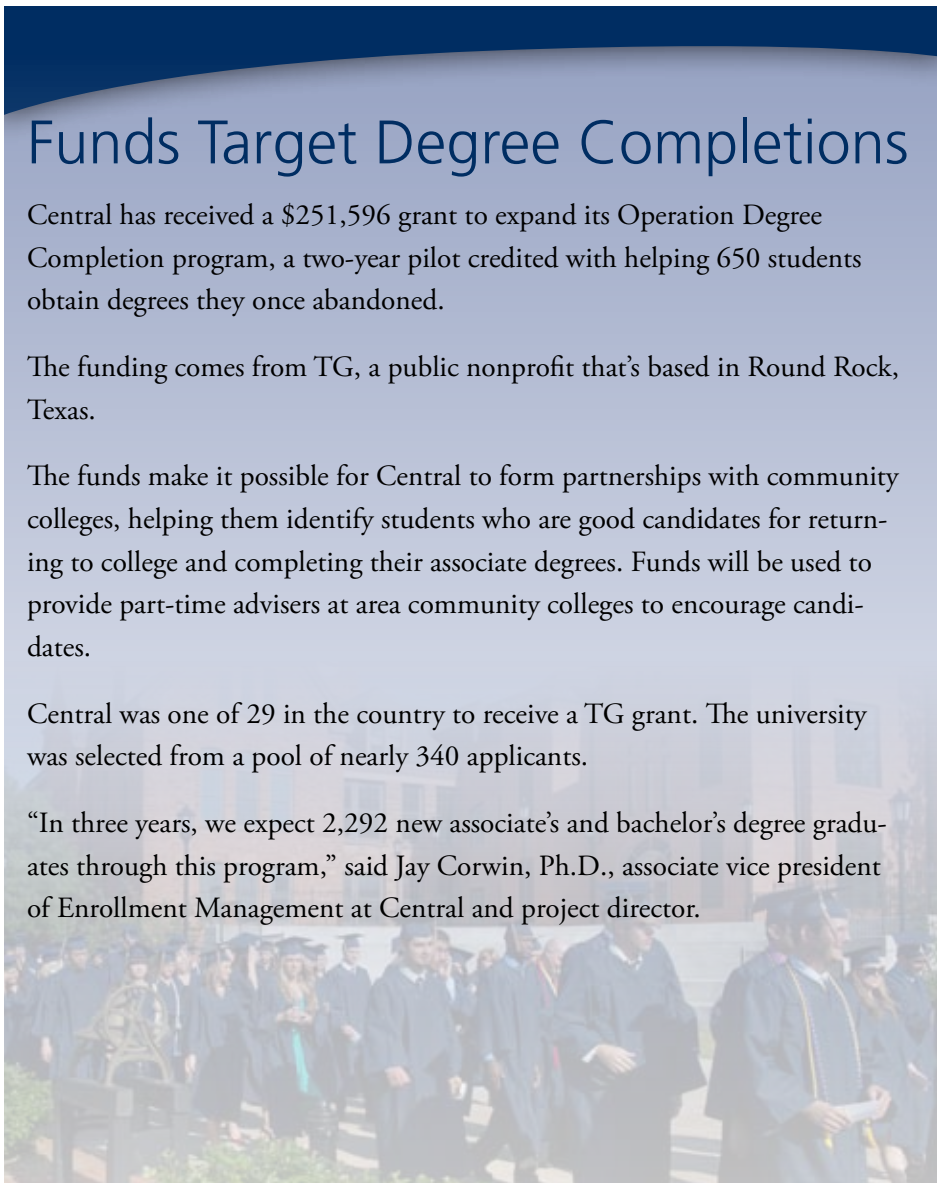
Central has received a \$251,596 grant to expand its Operation Degree Completion program, a two-year pilot credited with helping 650 students obtain degrees they once abandoned.

The funding comes from TG, a public nonprofit that's based in Round Rock, Texas.

The funds make it possible for Central to form partnerships with community colleges, helping them identify students who are good candidates for returning to college and completing their associate degrees. Funds will be used to provide part-time advisers at area community colleges to encourage candidates.

Central was one of 29 in the country to receive a TG grant. The university was selected from a pool of nearly 340 applicants.

"In three years, we expect 2,292 new associate's and bachelor's degree graduates through this program," said Jay Corwin, Ph.D., associate vice president of Enrollment Management at Central and project director.





# Oklahoma Regents' No. 1 Goal — Meeting State's Demand for Graduates

A growing Oklahoma demand for employees with certificates and degrees is the driving force behind the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education FY 2014 legislative agenda.

Chancellor Glen D. Johnson unveiled the effort in mid-December at UCO, explaining that the regents are requesting \$90.4 million in new state appropriations during the 2013 legislative session. The FY 2014 budget request is 9.47 percent higher than the current year's.

To increase the number of college graduates, the State Regents are requesting \$55 million for Complete College America. The money will fund additional course sections, full-time faculty and financial aid, as well as alleviate increased needs for information tech-



Oklahoma Chancellor Glen D. Johnson unveils the 2014 legislative agenda, emphasizing the focus is on growing the number of Oklahomans with college degrees.

nology equipment, library resources and other operational needs to support near-record student enrollment.

Chancellor Johnson emphasized that Oklahoma's public colleges and univer-

sities continue to cut operational costs. A total of \$411 million in actual and projected cost savings have been identified from 2010-14.

With college completion a No. 1 priority, the State Regents are seeking \$2.5 million for online education and degree completion technology. They also are requesting \$7.5 million to fund a grant program to provide student guidance in degree completion, including career counseling, advisement, financial aid and efficiency in degree attainment.

Other requests include \$2.5 million for the concurrent enrollment program that allows high school juniors and seniors to take credit-earning college courses; an additional \$540,000 for the Summer Academies program; \$1.3 million for the Oklahoma Tuition Aid and Oklahoma Tuition Equalization grants; \$200,000 for the Academic Scholars program; and \$250,000 for an adult degree completion community scholarship match.

The FY 2014 request totals \$1.05 billion.

## Kinders Named 2014 Chair-Elect

UCO Vice President for Public Affairs Mark Kinders has been named chair-elect of the National Task Force on Higher Education Government Relations.

He currently is a delegate representing the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU), one of four higher education associations represented by the task force.

Kinders will begin his new term as task force chair at the 2014 Higher Education Government Relations Conference.

He has a strong record of involvement with the task force, currently serving in his fourth year of a six-year term on the body.

"Mark is a trusted colleague who will add invaluable insight and experience as we explore new ways to partner with government agencies," UCO President Don Betz, Ph.D., said. "His involvement also elevates the University of Central Oklahoma, solidifying this institution's growing role on the national stage."



Mark Kinders



# Live Central

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