

COWLEY COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2021  2022



COWLEY COLLEGE NAMES
DR. RANDY SMITH
NEW PRESIDENT



Dear Residents, students, stakeholders,

Throughout my career, I have been privileged to see the direct impact that an education has on individual students, as well as the businesses and industries they work in and the community in which they live. An education is life-changing and can provide a livable wage and a sustainable career. These much-needed professionals fill a critical role in our rural communities in essential jobs and contribute to the overall economic development of our area. The “skills gap” in rural America is growing, and our local economies need a trained workforce. Furthermore, our rural communities are experiencing an outflow of population, and this rural brain drain is unfortunate and has a tremendous negative impact in rural America. Education can help with all of these issues; in fact, it has the most significant positive impact on them. Many, many years ago, my great grandfather admonished the Choctaw people to “get as much education as you can it will serve you well.” I believe that wisdom and council still holds true today.

It is a privilege and honor to serve in this position, and to serve all of you. It is critical that we not only serve our students with excellence but also serve all of our stakeholders and focus on local workforce and economic development. Cowley College has amazing employees! These highly talented employees and I are here to serve our students, businesses, citizens, and all of our stakeholders and contribute to the workforce and economic development of Cowley County and across our entire service area.

If you are considering an educational program, returning to finish a degree or certificate, or are interested in any of our continuing education courses, I encourage you to stop by and visit our outstanding faculty and staff. Even if you don't have a need to further your education, we will still serve you by continuing to contribute to the workforce and economic development needs of our service area, which is a positive for everyone who lives, works, and shops in our communities.

Again, it's an honor to serve with the outstanding employees of Cowley College, and I look forward to continuing the great work and accomplishments of many employees, board members, community members, and others. Please stop by and see us if we can be of service.

Randy Smith, Ph.D.

CORE VALUES

Cowley County Community College and Area Vocational-Technical School is dedicated to the continual pursuit of excellence by embracing our Core Values, the fundamental principles that guide our actions.

PEOPLE

- * We emphasize the importance of human relationships, diversity, and a sense of community.
- * We provide student-centered instruction.
- * We provide a safe, learning environment where joy, humor, and teamwork are embraced.
- * We encourage open communication and the sharing of ideas.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- * Our students will receive a quality education.
- * The college will provide students the opportunity to take an active role in their success.
- * All employees are responsible and committed to excellence.
- * We are accountable to the community to educate students and to sustain and improve society.

INTEGRITY

- * We regard honesty, trust, and respect as essential principles in our academic, personal, and professional standards.

LEADERSHIP

- * We provide a positive atmosphere that fosters personal and professional growth.
- * We empower students and employees to be innovative and visionary.
- * We are an ethical leader in the field of education.

MISSION STATEMENT

Cowley College is committed to providing opportunities for learning excellence, personal achievement, and community engagement.

VISION STATEMENT

Champion the relevance of two-year colleges in higher education through holistic learning and workforce development opportunities.



KOWALSKA NAMED COWLEY COLLEGE STUDENT OF THE YEAR



Managing school work along with being a collegiate athlete is not an easy thing to do. However, Cowley College's Martyna Kowalska makes it appear easy as the Biology major excelled on the court and in the classroom. Despite her accomplishments, the seemingly always positive Kowalska was surprised to hear her name announced as Cowley College's 2021-2022 Student of the Year during the annual honors and awards banquet held in the Earle N. Wright Community Room.

"I did not expect this at all, I am so happy," Kowalska said. "I appreciate everyone at Cowley for believing in me and helping me so much. There are so

many opportunities at Cowley and the instructors are so helpful."

The sophomore from Leszno, Poland has a 4.0 grade point average and is admired by instructors and fellow students.

Pam Smith, Natural Science Department instructor, said even though Kowalska has a huge time commitment as a member of the Lady Tiger basketball team, it is evident she dedicates a large amount of time to her studies as well.

"She has an unrivaled natural curiosity and an uncommon perspective regarding her coursework and how it relates to her future career,"

Smith said. "She is frequently seen helping fellow students, as it is evident that she wishes success for them too."

Kowalska takes the same pride in her school work as she does her dedication to the game of basketball as she was named an NJCAA First Team Academic All-American as a freshman.

Kowalska has also volunteered with the Phi Theta Kappa Earth Day project and has assisted with the Ark City Recreation Commission basketball camp each of the past two years.

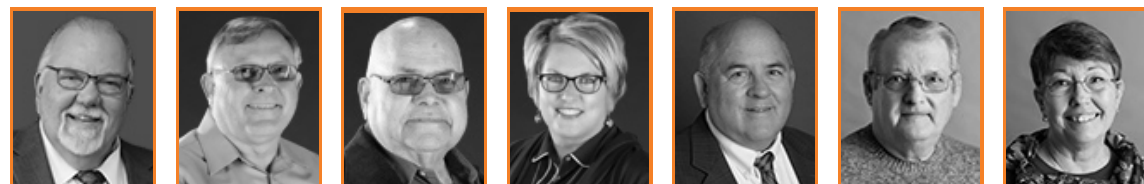
On the court, Kowalska averaged a double-double of 14.7 points and 10.2 rebounds per game. The 6'0 sophomore also averaged 1.5 blocked shots per game as she was named a Second-Team all-conference selection.

"Martyna had to learn a new language when she came here," Cowley women's basketball head coach Todd Clark said. "Along with that and juggling her academics and athletics the way she did was just phenomenal."

Kowalska is the daughter of Rafal Kowalski and Ewa Omanska. She has a brother, Konstanty, and a sister, Kaya. After graduating from Cowley in May, Kowalska plans to play basketball at Idaho State University. She also plans to graduate with a Biology degree with future plans of becoming a veterinarian.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Steve Abrams | Brett Bazil | Bob McGregor
Marla Sexson | Christopher Swan | Gary Wilson | Glennis Zimmerman



SHELBY FUQUA NAMED COCA-COLA ACADEMIC TEAM SILVER SCHOLAR



Shelby Fuqua, a sophomore at Cowley College, has been named a 2022 Coca-Cola Academic Team Silver

Scholar and will receive a \$1,250 scholarship.

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation sponsors the Coca-Cola Academic Team program by recognizing 50 Gold, 50 Silver, and 50 Bronze Scholars with nearly \$200,000 in scholarships annually. Each scholar also receives a commemorative medallion.

"The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation has a long history of providing financial assistance to outstanding students at community colleges," said Jane Hale Hopkins, President of the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation. "We are proud to partner with Phi Theta Kappa to

make it possible for more deserving students to achieve their educational

goals and support tomorrow's leaders of the global community."

Students are nominated for the academic team by their college administrators. Selection is based on academic achievement, leadership, and engagement in college and community service.

Coca-Cola Academic Team members will be recognized in both local and statewide ceremonies and will also be recognized internationally during Phi Theta Kappa's annual convention, PTK Catalyst, to be held in Denver, Colorado, April 7-9.

"We thank the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation for recognizing these student leaders and for investing in their futures," said Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner, President and CEO of Phi Theta Kappa. "Scholarships like these are integral to the success of these students in reaching their educational and career goals."

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Dr. Randy Smith | Dr. Michelle Schoon | Holly Harper | Paul Erdmann | Kristi Shaw
Janice Stover | Debbie Phelps | Jason O'Toole





LONG-TIME COWLEY COLLEGE EMPLOYEES' RECIPIENTS OF BEN LECLAIR STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD

A pair of familiar faces on Cowley College's main campus in Arkansas City were named recipients of the Ben LeClair Staff Excellence Award.

To honor and remember LeClair's legacy, the college accepted nominations for the award which was given to head athletic trainer Jeff Fluty and Cowley College Bursar Jamie McGee.

Exhibiting excellence in the four core values of Cowley College, Fluty has been in his current role at the college for the past 17 years.

"It is nice to be recognized by my peers at the school," Fluty said. "I am glad to be able to work with the coaches and athletes. I am honored to receive this award, especially knowing the person it is named after and what the award stands for."

McGee, who has worked at Cowley College in the business office for the past 12 years, said receiving the Ben LeClair Staff Excellence Award is an honor she does not take lightly.

"I never had the privilege of meeting Ben but his legacy lives on at Cowley

College," McGee said. "I will continue to keep focusing on students first and striving to do my best. Thank you Cowley College."

Benny Joe "Ben" LeClair was a long time employee of Cowley College, who died February 7, 2011. He was a valuable staff member who was dedicated to the continual pursuit of excellence by embracing the four Core Values of Cowley College. LeClair performed his daily duties with integrity and a smile and led by example, as does Fluty and McGee.

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Shanna Nichols - Sept. | Dawson Crawley - Oct. | Martyna Kowalska - Nov. | Shelby Fuqua - Dec.
Morgan Nellis - Jan. | Isaac Stebens - Feb. | Madisyn Pitts - Mar. | Joe Blake - Apr.



PEOPLE

COWLEY COLLEGE NAMES DR. RANDY SMITH NEW PRESIDENT



After open forums for Cowley College employees and the Arkansas City community, dinner, and a face-to-face interview with the Board of Trustees, it was announced that Dr. Randy Smith has been selected as president of Cowley College.

Dr. Smith is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Tribe of Oklahoma. He has been involved in higher education for over 26 years. He has served as a faculty member, dean, vice president of academic affairs, and College president. He currently serves as the Director of Program Development/Emergency Management and special advisor to the Chief of the Seminole Nation of

Oklahoma.

“My Great Great Grandfather was a Choctaw Chief, and he always promoted the importance of education over a hundred years ago,” Dr. Smith said. “He knew how important education was and he encouraged the Choctaw people to get as much education as possible because it would serve them well. I believe that counsel holds true today for everyone. I do my best to try and fulfill his legacy and honor my Choctaw culture.”

Dr. Smith will assume the post on July 11, 2022. He will take over for current Cowley College president Dr. Dennis C. Rittle, who will be leaving to lead a community college in Arkansas.

“I hope to make a difference for the College and the community,” Dr. Smith said. “Working in higher education is what I do and who I am. I love serving a rural population because you have to be very responsive to the community.” “I am a rural living person; I would not live anywhere else!”

He served as the president of a large organization of rural colleges, which included lots of policy work in DC and countless on-the-ground trainings and consulting for rural colleges. Dr. Smith is a regular presenter at state and national conferences on the topics of leadership in higher education and student recruitment and retention at

rural colleges, and workforce and economic development in rural communities.

“I love working with students and seeing their success,” Dr. Smith said. “Whether it be a degree or a certificate, an education can change an entire family culture.”

He has testified in front of committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate as an expert on issues regarding rural higher education. He was an invited participant to the White House Summit on Community Colleges and has served as a member of the 21st Century Community College Commission that was charged with developing a long-term strategic plan for community colleges nationally. He also facilitated the first-ever Memorandum of Understanding between a higher education organization and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Smith facilitated the inclusion of rural community colleges in the Federal Farm Bill, the first-time rural colleges have been specifically included in federal legislation. He received a three-year appointment to the America’s College Promise Advisory Board which deals with higher education costs nationally. His true passion is helping colleges retain students to completion, and he has developed training programs to assist colleges in all aspects of enrollment management.

“Recruitment and retention of our students has to be our main focus,” Dr. Smith said. “An engaged student is a retained student. I want everyone at the College to be involved in this process.”

He also developed a Board Training Program entitled Roles and Responsibilities for Boards of

Trustees at Rural Colleges, and he teaches this program across the Nation.

Dr. Smith enjoys serving in the community and has held several positions, including board chairman for a rural county hospital district, volunteer firefighter and paramedic, member of a municipal police commission, and board member for a regional chapter of the American Red Cross. He is currently a certified law enforcement officer and has been for more than 14 years. He has provided service as a police officer to his rural community for many years. He also served as a judge for the Miss Rodeo America Pageant in Las Vegas, and he coaches rodeo queens and contestants from across the Nation. His daughter Emily was a Miss Rodeo Oklahoma State Titleholder.

Dr. Smith holds a B.A. in Political Science, an M.S. in Emergency Health Services Administration, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership. He also completed the Educators’ Leadership Academy at the University of Central Oklahoma. He is a recipient of the USDA Lincoln Honor Award (for his work with rural colleges and communities), the highest award presented by the US Department of Agriculture.

He and his wife Dora have horses and cattle near Seminole, Oklahoma. Their daughter Emily is a student-athlete at Northwestern Oklahoma State University (sophomore), where she is majoring in music education. She is an accomplished track athlete and is a member of the NWSU track and cross-country teams.

Dr. Smith understands the importance of athletics at Cowley College and is impressed by the tremendous success of the Tiger athletic programs.

“I am grateful for the coaches and teachers I had that helped develop my love for athletics,” Dr. Smith said. “I believe athletics helped develop me into who I am today. I want the athletic

programs at Cowley College to be successful and continue to grow. We also want to win and do things the right way.”

Dr. Smith knows there will be challenges but is excited to lead the College into the future.

“Enrollment at the College is the most important thing for us to focus on,” Dr. Smith said. “I am a huge employee advocate and want everyone to participate in moving things forward. I want Cowley College to be a great place to work. I am also an advocate for workforce and economic development and am eager to serve the businesses and industry and all stakeholders of this area.”

In his free time, Dr. Smith enjoys rodeo, ranching, working with horses, playing and coaching basketball, powerlifting, golf, community service as a law enforcement officer, and all outdoor activities. His favorite activity is simply being outdoors on his horse.

“Cowley is a wonderful College with amazing employees,” Dr. Smith said. “My wife Dora and I look forward to integrating ourselves into the community.”



VIRDEN'S NAMED RECIPIENTS OF OUTSTANDING TIGER ALUMNI AWARD

Cowley College graduates Glen and Lisa Virden have gone on to forge successful careers and have the College to thank for it. The couple were recently honored for their work

by being named the recipients of Cowley College's Outstanding Tiger Alumni Award.

Both Glen and Lisa were born and raised in Arkansas City. Glen worked

at Total Pipeline Corporation out of high school and Lisa was a stay at home mother to the couples' two children, Kody and Kyndol.

"With the money I was making at



Total, the last thing I thought I needed was college," Glen said. "But, Lisa had decided to go back to school at Cowley and I thought it couldn't hurt anything to try. I went back to gain some knowledge."

Glen was a member of the President's Honor Roll and graduated from Cowley College's Criminal Justice Program in 1996. He went on to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Southwestern College in 2000 and has been employed with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation since 2001. He is currently a Special Agent in Charge. Lisa graduated from Cowley College in 2001, while the couple's son, Kody and his wife, Lori (Legleiter), each graduated from Cowley.

Glen began his career in law enforcement in 1991 when he was hired part-time with the Ark City Police Department. He then took on the role of reserve deputy with the Cowley County Sheriff's Office in 1995 and remained in that roll until 2001. During this time, he was also employed by the Arkansas City Fire Department.

In 2001 he began his time with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation as a special agent assigned to the special operations division. He was later promoted to special agent in charge and also serves as the Kansas Bureau of Investigation's high risk warrant team commander.

He has received numerous awards throughout his decorated career in law enforcement and considers his

attendance at the 10-week, FBI National Academy in 2017 to be among his top accomplishments in the field.

"No doubt Cowley was a stepping stone," Glen said. "Was it not for Cowley I would not be in this field of work. Elvin Hatfield and the Criminal Justice program launched me into the career I have now."

Glen and Lisa, being non-traditional students, felt they got more out of the college experience than they would have if they started right out of high school.

"Because we were paying for it, it meant more to us," Glen said. "I didn't realize I would enjoy it as much as I did."

Lisa echoed those sentiments.

"I wanted to go back to school to feel better about myself. I wanted to feel like I was doing something for me."

When Lisa graduated from Cowley she was a buyer at Parman's Furniture Store in Ark City.

"My business degree from Cowley fit in perfectly," Lisa said. "I really enjoyed working in sales."

Lisa went on to own her own business, Grapevine Interiors, and later worked at General Electric for Kelly Services.

Cowley College Foundation President Dr. Kori Gregg said the Outstanding Tiger Alumni award is the highest honor bestowed upon Cowley College alumni.

"This award recognizes alumni whose personal lives, professional achievements, and community service exemplify all that it means to be a Tiger," Dr. Gregg said. "Glen and Lisa both attended Cowley College as non-traditional students, demonstrating their commitment to hard work,

persistence and vision and proving that it is not when you start that matters, but where you end up. They continue to demonstrate how important it is to always pursue your goals and dreams, particularly for students who are balancing multiple responsibilities. I can't think of a better example to set for our students here at the college."

In their free time, the couple enjoy spending time with their six grandchildren.

"They are the light of our lives," Lisa said.

Glen and Lisa are also very active in their church. They are thankful and give God the glory for everything they have and do.

"God is our rock, without him we are nothing," Lisa said.

The couple created a \$10,000 Endowed Scholarship at Cowley College to be awarded annually to a Criminal Justice major displaying a financial need.

Although the couple reside in Great Bend, KS, they still have fond memories of their time in Arkansas City.

"We continue to have strong ties to Ark City and consider it home," Glen said. "Cowley College is an institution we are so proud of. We are both extremely humbled and honored just to be nominated. To be the recipients of the Outstanding Tiger Alumni Award is the pinnacle."

SENATOR MORAN TOURS FUTURE ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER AT COWLEY COLLEGE



Senator Jerry Moran recently made a stop in Arkansas City to tour the future Academic Success Center at Cowley College. Former Cowley College president Dr. Dennis C. Rittle and College administrators showed Senator Moran how the new congressional dollars the College plans to receive will transform the space into an Academic Success Center.

A few Cowley tutors attended the event as well so that the Senator had an opportunity to visit with those students who will be part of the solution to moving the needle on student success for some of the most at-risk students.

Dr. Rittle said the congressional dollars of \$225,000 the College will

receive will jumpstart the Cowley College Academic Success Center.

“Thank you, Senator Moran, for making student success a funding priority at the federal level,” Dr. Rittle said. “This will enable many students to finish who may have otherwise given up on their academic journey. Such investments benefit students, businesses, and our communities. These congressional dollars will have an overwhelming R.O.I. Again, thank you.”

According to vice president of academic affairs, Dr. Michelle Schoon, the actual title of the project is Improving Student Success and Retention using Data and Intrusive Advising. Dr. Schoon said the goal is to improve student success by using data proactively to identify potentially “at risk” students and to reach out to

these students early in the higher education journey to direct them to the academic support services that are available to them.

“Funds will be used to update instructional technology to be used by the tutors and students,” Dr. Schoon said. “The funds will be used to hire and train an Educational Navigator/ Student Success Coach that will coordinate the support services and work with students using intrusive advising techniques. Additionally, the College will use funds for the development of data dashboard to use predictive analytics to reach out to students that would benefit from the academic success center.”

COWLEY COLLEGE THEATRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES COMMENDATIONS FROM KENNEDY CENTER



The Theatre Department at Cowley College was the recipient of numerous awards during the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival held in Washington, D.C.

Cowley received the majority of its commendations for its production of *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, while also being recognized for costume design on *Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella*.

These awards were given by the respondents who come to the

productions and are based entirely on merit.

Cowley College Theatre Director Nick Albrecht said the department was surprised and excited to hear about the Certificates of Merit the Cowley Theatre received from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

“We have received recognitions before, but never so many and especially on one individual production,” Albrecht said. “These honors are a wonderful affirmation of all the hard work our students, staff, and faculty do in our

program.”

Awards received:

- Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *Cinderella*
- Meghann Borum for Costume Design
- Six Characters in Search of an Author*
- Nick Albrecht for Direction
- Jason Huffman for Lighting Design
- Cast for Ensemble Performance
- Bekah Crisp for Sound Design
- Meghann Borum for Costume Design

MACLAUGHLIN NAMED RECIPIENT OF TIGER HEART AWARD



Rhoda MacLaughlin, the director of library services at Cowley College, was named the recipient of the spring 2022 Tiger Heart Award.

The award is presented each semester to an employee that has gone above and beyond to help a fellow employee, therefore exhibiting the heart of a tiger. MacLaughlin has over 30 years of library experience and serves on the State Library of Kansas Board.

MacLaughlin received the award from Fall 2021 Tiger Heart Award recipient Ashley Leighty.

“Rhoda is always friendly and happy to see you,” Leighty said. “She is helpful to the students and staff, and she creates an inviting environment for the library.”

MacLaughlin was honored and surprised to receive the award.

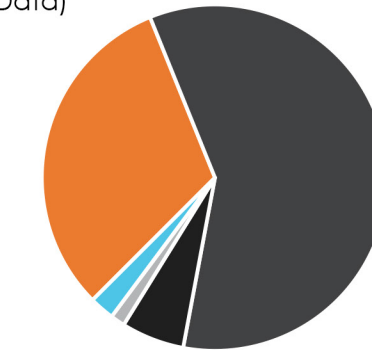
“I appreciate Ashley Leighty for nominating me as a worthy recipient,” MacLaughlin said. “I genuinely consider Cowley a great place to work. It is comprised of wonderful people - employees and students, which makes my job very enjoyable.”

- Past award recipients include:
- *Rikki Hettenbach (Fall 2019)
 - *Robin Graves (Spring 2020)
 - *Liz Shepherd (Fall 2020)
 - *Somsy Sengvixay (Spring 2021)
 - *Ashley Leighty (Fall 2021)

ACCOUNTABILITY

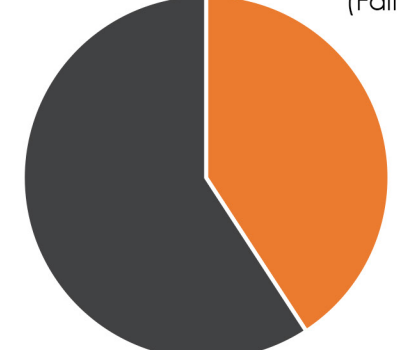
WHO WE SERVE

FTE by location
(Fall 2021 Data)



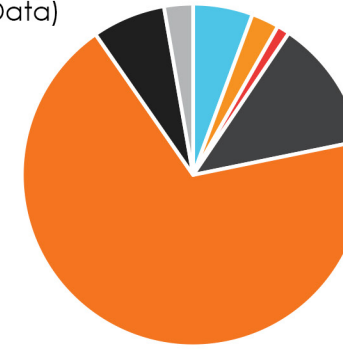
Virtual Campus	1,805
Arkansas City	959
Mulvane SEI	180
Winfield	71
Wichita	41

Percentage by Gender
(Fall 2021 Data)



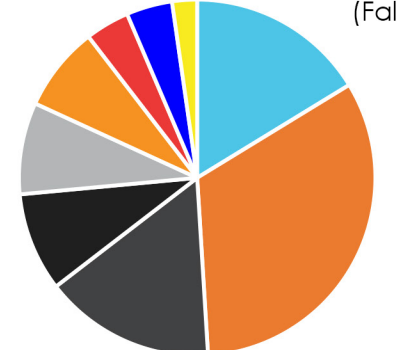
Male	40.80%
Female	59.20%

Percentage by Ethnic Group
(Fall 2021 Data)



Black/Non-Hispanic	5.64%
Native American	2.61%
Asian	1.20%
Hispanic	12.35%
Caucasian	68.55%
Two or More Races	6.92%
Other	2.74%

Percentage by Age
(Fall 2021 Data)



Under 18	16.27%
18-19 years old	32.75%
20-21 years old	15.54%
22-24 years old	8.96%
25-29 years old	8.33%
30-34 years old	7.71%
35-39 years old	4.01%
40-49 years old	4.17%
50 and over	2.26%

2021-2022 Enrollment Data
(Fall and Spring Semesters Only)

Annual Unduplicated Headcount	3,191
Unduplicated Headcount Fall 2019	2,568
Unduplicated Headcount Spring 2020	2,373
Full-time Equivalent Students Fall 2020	1,792.07
FTE Students Spring 2021	1,593.13

International Student Enrollment
(2021-22 Fall/Spring Semesters Only)

179 Unduplicated Headcount

YOUR RETURN

Revenues by Sources

FY 2021

Student Sources	\$7,904,540
Federal & State Sources	8,405,221
Local Sources	5,927,432
Other Sources	942,467
Total Revenues by Sources	\$23,179,660

Expenditures by Sources

Instruction	\$7,820,589
Academic Support	689,852
Student Services including Athletics	4,360,100
Institutional Support	3,546,200
Operation & Maintenance	3,132,418
Scholarships/Grants	2,058,942
Transfers	3,025
Total Expenditures by Sources	\$21,611,126

Foundations Balance Sheet

ASSETS

Total Cash and Investments	\$8,953,873
Accounts Receivable	70,000
Interest in Trust	532,546
Total Assets	\$9,556,419

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Total Liabilities	-
NET POSITIONS	
Net Investment in Capital Assets	-
<i>Restricted</i>	
Expendable	\$5,713,851
Non-Expendable	3,842,568
Total Liabilities and Net Position	\$9,556,419

Accrual Basis

Accrual Basis

Accrual Basis

ON INVESTMENT

College Balance Sheet

ASSETS

Total Cash and Investments	\$13,529,565
Inventory	483,955
Accounts Receivable	2,542,508
Prepaid Expenses	139,100
Capitalized Assets	29,491,693
Total Assets	\$46,186,821
Deferred Outflows of Resources	706,761
Total Assets and Deferred Outflows of Resources	\$46,893,582

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Total Liabilities	15,024,318
Deferred Inflow of Resources	701,160

NET POSITION

Net Investment in Capital Assets	18,733,096
<i>Restricted</i>	
Expendable	43,860
Unrestricted	12,391,148
Total Liabilities and Net Position	46,893,582

Accrual Basis

COWLEY PTK RECEIVES AWARDS AT REGIONAL CONVENTION



The Phi Theta Kappa Kansas-Nebraska regional convention was held March 4-6 at the Marriott in Overland Park, Kansas. Attending from Cowley College's Alpha Gamma Upsilon chapter were President Carolina Pruss de Abreu, Vice President of Communication Shelby Fuqua, and advisor Julianna Smarsh.

Cowley College's PTK chapter, Alpha Gamma Upsilon, received awards for Five Star Level, Five Star Advisor (Julianna Smarsh), second place for Distinguished Officer Team (Carolina Pruss de Abreu, Shelby Fuqua, Kennedy Johnson, and Elise LeGrand), third place for Achievement in Literature - Creative Writing (Joseph Gunderson), third place for Achievement in Literature - Research (Joseph Gunderson), and honorable mentions for the College Project and Honors in Action Project. Cowley College also received a REACH Reward for membership development.

Chapter president, Pruss de Abreu, shared that "the conference was a great experience" with Fuqua adding that she "especially enjoyed the many great guest speakers that talked on motivation and leadership."

Attendees had opportunities to gain information about Phi Theta Kappa's Competitive Edge Program, Scholarships, and Five Star Chapter Development Plans, including Honors and Actions and College Projects, during breakout sessions on Saturday.

Both Pruss de Abreu and Fuqua had a chance to interact with officers and members of other chapters in the region. When asked about the highlights of the conference, Fuqua stated she enjoyed "seeing old friends from previous conferences and making new ones at this one!"

The informative speakers entertained and educated participants throughout the weekend. Devin Henderson, an

award-winning comedian, magician, and keynote speaker, utilized his magic act to inspire the attendees to employ a possibility mindset and ask, "What else is possible?" KC Wolf, Dan Meers, asked students to consider how they "spend the coin" each day, with stories of his time as the KC Chief's mascot and his near-death experience practicing for a stunt. On the last day of conference, Bill Cordes spoke on YOGOWYPI (You Only Get Out What You Put In), encouraging the attendees to get the most out of life.

The chapter would like students to consider joining this great international honor society to reap the many benefits. Emails and postcard invitations have been sent to qualifying members from ptk.org. Contact local advisors with questions: Deborah.Layton@cowley.edu or Jennifer.Rupp@cowley.edu or Julianna.Smarsh@cowley.edu.

INTEGRITY

COWLEY COLLEGE TO RECEIVE \$4 MILLION TO FUND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW TECHNICAL CENTER

As part of the state budget signed in April by Governor Laura Kelly, Cowley College will receive \$4 million in funding to establish and furnish a Career and Technical Education Center on the Arkansas City campus, provided the funds are matched by non-state resources.

Community College leadership and their advocates championed this necessary workforce initiative for south-central Kansas because of the need to scale-up training to meet business demands for skilled employees.

“These matching dollars are invaluable in jumpstarting this urgent and high impact project that will increase the capacity and options to deliver training to meet the needs of the Kansas business community and will allow students to train for high-wage and high-demand positions

open in Kansas businesses,” said former Cowley College President Dr. Dennis C. Rittle. “We appreciate the investment into student success and the advancement of workforce training.”

Once constructed, the Career and Technical Education Center will feature new and expanded training options in carpentry and construction trades, welding, electromechanical maintenance, and other high-wage, high-demand careers in the region.

“My goal is to see Cowley County continue to thrive and grow,” said Senate Majority Leader Larry Alley, a champion for the bill. “By supporting workforce training initiatives like the new Cowley College CTE center, we ensure our kids and grandkids have meaningful professional opportunities beyond high school. This is an investment in the future I’m proud to

support.”

When asked about his support for the project, Cowley College service area representative and Appropriations Vice Chair Rep. Kyle Hoffman said, “As a longtime supporter of workforce training, it was an easy decision to support the one-time funding of projects like the Cowley College Career and Technical Education Center in Ark City. Local businesses need skilled employees, and this investment is key to making that happen.”

Anyone wishing to learn more about job training opportunities at Cowley College should visit www.cowley.edu for more information. In addition to future expansion, the College currently offers a variety of skilled workforce training options, many of which include funding to offset the cost of tuition.



COWLEY SIGNS 2+2 ARTICULATION WITH WSU IN SPORTS MANAGEMENT

Cowley College recently received some good news when they finalized an articulated agreement for the Sports Management program at Wichita State University. Students who complete the courses outlined in the Cowley College two-year associate of arts degree in Sports Management/Administration pathway will be admitted in the Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management program with completion of WSU application requirements.

This program prepares individuals to apply business and physical education principles to the organizations and management of athletic programs and teams, fitness and rehabilitation facilities, and health clubs.

Students with a degree in sports management have multiple career options in the world of sports. Sports Management at Cowley College is a Kansas Promise eligible program which allows qualified students to earn scholarship dollars to cover expenses

associated with this pathway.

Julie Rhoads, Cowley College Director of Education/Program Director, has worked with WSU to align the pathway as a seamless 2+2 articulation.

“Cowley College will provide the Sports Management Major with experiences both on and off campus during the practicum courses through such partnerships as Cowley athletics and the Ark City Recreation Commission,” Rhoads said.



COWLEY COLLEGE, ACPD, AND FOUR COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH PARTNER ON SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM



Looking for ways to better help students deal with mental health issues and assist with suicide prevention, Cowley College, the Arkansas City Police Department, and Four County Mental Health have partnered to start a student-led peer support group on campus called Hope Squad.

Hope Squad members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers and trained by advisors. Although many other states already have Hope Squad, Cowley College is the first school in Kansas to form this group.

Cowley College director of student life Peyton Cravens, student life counselor Ashley Demaree, and health services coordinator Lacey Kennedy teamed with Arkansas City Police Chief Eric Burr to start Hope Squad.

Chief Burr, Chairperson for the Suicide Prevention Cowley County Coalition, said one of the group's main goals is to look at peer-to-peer school-based programs, and Hope Squad came up on the radar.

"We were able to get one of the master trainers, as well as CEO and founder of the Hope Squad program

(Dr. Greg Hudnall), together in a zoom meeting and it kind of sparked the whole thing," Chief Burr said. "The way the program is set up, it will teach a selection of students about mental health crisis, suicide prevention, and anti-bullying. There is a lot of inclusion and connectedness with the program, so we are hoping that we have a student body that is very intentional in looking for those warning signs for suicide and a mental health crisis and utilize the resources that are available."

According to Hope Squad founder Dr. Greg Hudnall the program can be found in over 1,300 schools.

"Peer to Peer suicide intervention is one of the most important things we can add to a school system," Dr. Hudnall said. "We know that struggling individuals will reach out to a friend when they are struggling."

Cravens hopes to get the message out about Hope Squad and hopefully get surrounding schools on board with the program.

"I hope our students feel a sense of belonging when they are here away

from home and are able to meet new people on campus that they can connect with over the topic of depression and suicide and feel they are not alone while they are here at Cowley College," Cravens said. "It's a great opportunity for our College, but also to try to get the middle school and high school here in Ark City and other surrounding communities on board with us to get this program even in more states."

Cori Tuxhorn, ACPD Master Police Officer/Mental Health Officer, said this shows that Cowley College cares about its students and has the values people will want to be a part of.

Demaree echoed those sentiments.

"We think it will be a recruitment tool to where if students have Hope Squad at their high school or middle school, then we hope they will want to come here because they know we have a Hope Squad available and there will be people there that they can connect with," Demaree said.

LEADERSHIP

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