



MVSKOKE NEWS

PRODUCED BY MVSKOKEMEDIA



Students from across the Muscogee (Creek) Nation reservation and across different age categories competed against one another to test their Mvskoke knowledge. (Muscogee Nation)

RESULTS FROM CHALLENGE BOWL

GLENPOOL TEAMS TOOK HOME GOLD IN EACH DIVISION

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee Nation Challenge Bowl 2023 returned to an in-person competition. It was hosted at the College of the Muscogee Nation each Friday over the month of February starting on Feb. 10.

The middle school division was the first competition held

with a total of 27 teams. The championship round featured two teams from Glenpool to go head to head, Glenpool Lvste vs. Glenpool Oske Entacv.

The Glenpool teams took the top three spots with Glenpool Pvrko Ome at third place, Glenpool Oske Entacv at second place, and Glenpool Lvste at first place.

The Wilbur Gouge Award honors Wilbur Gouge, a founding member of the Challenge Bowl. It

is awarded to the team of each division who exemplifies the true spirit of the games.

The Wilbur Gouge award was awarded to the Beggs No Names for the middle school age group.

According to comments gathered from an evaluation, the middle school students “love the Challenge Bowl” and “will be back” for next year’s game.

Out of 26 teams, it was a Glenpool team to take home the championship title during the elementary division as well, Glenpool Tentke. Glenpool Kaccv came in second place and Glenpool Fayv came in third place.

The Glenpool teams shared the Wilbur Gouge Award for the elementary age group.

One student said, “Muscogee (Creek) Nation is the best place to be,”

There were 16 teams for the high school division that was held on Feb. 24.

The competitions got serious as students sat with team members with buzzers in hand; ready to hit the button quickly.

Glenpool teams went head to head again for the championship. It was Glenpool Fuswvlke coming out on top with Glenpool Hot-

CHALLENGE BOWL - 2



Jiselle Martinez (Mvskoke), Adyson Beaver (Seminole), Gabby Noriega (Mvskoke), and Danielle Rollins (Mvskoke) pose for a photo with the champion hoodies and runner-up shirts during the 3-on-3 basketball tournament at the Euftaula Dorm Gym in Euftaula, Okla. Feb. 18, 2023. (Kaylea Berry/Reporter)

EUFAULA NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL CLUB HOSTS 3-ON-3 BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

THE EVENT WAS A FUNDRAISER FOR THE CLUB TO GO ON FIELD TRIPS AND MORE

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

EUFAULA, Oklahoma - The Euftaula Native American Cultural Club hosted a 3-on-3 basketball tournament Feb. 18 at the

Euftaula Dorm Gym. The ENACC started around March 2022 for high school kids to have more cultural involvement in their community. The tournament was their

3-ON-3 - 2



Jessica Wilson poses for a photo with her family during her softball signing with Eastern Oklahoma State College in Morris, Oklahoma Dec. 2022. Back row: Jason Walls, Curtis Boydston, Dan Boydston, Linda Boydston, Nate Wilson, Jerry Wilson, and Junior Walls. Front row: Jerry Wilson Jr, Jennifer Wilson, Jessica Wilson, and Joyce Wilson. (Courtesy: Jennifer Wilson)

MVSKOKE STUDENT FROM MORRIS SIGNS FOR A FULL-RIDE SOFTBALL SCHOLARSHIP

JESSICA WILSON TO PLAY AT EASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE COLLEGE

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

MORRIS, Oklahoma - Jessica Wilson (Mvskoke), a senior at Morris High School, signed with Eastern Oklahoma State College for a full-ride softball scholarship. Wilson is the daughter of Jennifer and Jeremiah Wilson Jr. (Mvskoke) and the granddaughter of Linda and Dan Boydston and Joyce and Jerry Wilson (Mvskoke).

She is a utility player, meaning that she is able to efficiently play multiple positions on the field, but she enjoys playing first base the most. Wilson has played softball since she was six years old and has been coached by her dad for summer and competitive ball up until a couple years ago.

“He’s always been my coach for Little League or competitive teams up until two years ago,” Wilson said. “It was rough at times, but I liked him being there because it meant he could be at every game.”

The decision on where to sign was not an easy one for Wilson.

“It was a really hard decision, I was looking at the University of the Ozarks in Arkansas and Oklahoma Wesleyan in Bartlesville,” Wilson said. “I felt a better fit going there, somewhere closer to home, and I know some girls that are going there.”

She is excited for this next step in life and her parents are proud of her.

“Jessica has worked very hard, and it hasn’t been easy, putting in extra work and spending every summer at the ballfields, not getting to do what most teenagers get to do,” said Jennifer. “I’m so glad she is finally getting to see hard work pays off by getting college paid for.”

“I was excited for her because she was ready for the process to be over with and I was too really,” Jeremiah Jr. said. “It is exciting.”

Wilson has maintained a 3.94 GPA while also attending Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology as a concurrent high school student. Upon graduation she will have already completed 12 credit hours, the equivalent to one semester as a full-time student.

Wilson plans on getting her associate degree at EOSC and then pursuing an Ultrasound Technician degree.

She is also a member of the National Honor Society, received All-District Utility Player her junior and senior year, received All-Region Team 2 Utility Player her senior year and played on the Green Country Diamond All Star Team in the Fall 2022 season.

When asked what she would tell underclassmen, she said to never take your season for granted.

Wilson’s freshman year slow-pitch season ended early because of covid. Covid also affected her sophomore year. Wilson attended school and played fast pitch, then when the season was over, and it was time for basketball her coach required the players to go to school virtually. The team still practiced in person, but attending school virtually was a way for the coach to try and keep the players healthy and ready for games. After the basketball season she was able to return to school in person and play slow-pitch.

She also wanted to stress the importance of being a good teammate.

“It’s not that hard to be a good teammate, you can be having your worst game, or your best game and you can be a better teammate to someone,” Wilson said. “Like if you’re having a good game and your teammate is having a really bad game then you can always go up to them and say ‘it’s okay, it happens, you’re fine, just be there for them.’”

Wilson has many supporters that have been with her along the way.

“My parents, grandparents, coaches, friends and boyfriend are my biggest supporters, and I wouldn’t be where I am without them.”

Her support system has helped her develop into the person and player she is, they spent days off helping her, and pushed her.

The Morris High School slow-pitch season starts this month, and the schedule can be found on their school website.



Employees from MCN Children and Family Services hold colorful backpacks donated for the luggage drive at the Council Oak House. Okmulgee, Okla. March 1, 2023. (Braden Harper/MM)

LUGGAGE DRIVE PACKS IN DONATIONS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

THE EVENT IS A FIRST FOR MCN CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – For Mvskoke children in the foster care system, they can experience a great deal of change in a short amount of time. Emergency situations can cause foster children to move several times before being reunified with their birth parents or finding a forever home through adoption. During these transitions, they might only be able to carry their belongings in a trash bag. On top of dealing with the anxiety that comes with change, trash bags can unfortunately provide a sense of indignity.

In order to meet the needs of Mvskoke foster children during these transitions, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Children and Family Services Administration (CFSA) held their first luggage drive March 1 at the Council Oak House in downtown Okmulgee.

The need for luggage is vast. According to Acting CFSA Director and CPRT Program Manager Michelle Bender, there are cur-

rently around 350 Mvskoke children in the foster care system. The department’s goal for the drive was initially 20 luggage items, a goal they surpassed.

“That would take care of 20 children that need a suitcase for when they have to come into custody and move so that they would have something that is theirs to put their belongings in,” Bender said.

CPRT Case Worker Brittani Candioto believes luggage offers structure for foster children. Structure during a time of transitioning through different living situations is important in providing a sense of comfort.

“It’s some type of security because the whole process is overwhelming and their whole life is being disrupted,” Candioto said. “To have something that’s not a trash bag, that they can carry around and make their belongings that they own at the moment feel safe and secure I think gives them some type of security and secure feeling while they transition through what can

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CHALLENGE BOWL
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vlvke in second place. Beggs No Names came in third place.

First place team Glenpool Fuswlvke was awarded the Wilbur Gouge award in the high school age group.

The high school students said they enjoyed coming to the college for the competition and that it was “hard but educational”.

The Belvin Hill Scholarship went to Olivia Begay and Grant Greever.

Belvin Hill is one of the original founders of the Challenge Bowl. The committee honors Hill by awarding a scholarship to one female and one male graduating senior.

This scholarship is based on the students’ participation and their essay on “Why the Challenge Bowl is important to me”.

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Continued from Page 1

second event to raise money for activities; their first being a raffle at the Eufaula High School homecoming game. The club also raffled off donations in between games.

“We kind of decided to do a tournament because back in the olden days most people had tournaments at the dorms with different boarding schools,” said ENACC President Gabby Noriega (Mvskoke). “To raise a little bit more money for our club to get things going so we can do more stuff.”

“We’re still a growing club at the moment, but there are around 20 people in our club,” said ENACC Treasurer Danielle Rollins (Mvskoke).

The other ENACC officers include Vice President Jiselle Martinez (Mvskoke) and Secretary Adyson Beaver (Seminole). Noriega, Beaver, and Rollins currently reside at the dorm, and Martinez is a former resident. Noriega is the former 2021-2022 Jr. Miss Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and Beaver is the former 2015-2016 Little Miss Seminole Nation.

LUGGAGE DRIVE
Continued from Page 1

be a traumatic process.”

Foster care and adoption is one of the many services CFSA provides for the nation through the Certification, Placement, Recruitment & Training (CPRT) program. According to Bender, her department processes applications for families to become licensed resource homes for Mvskoke foster care children.

“CPRT is an all-inclusive program,” Bender said. “We do our recruitment, we do our certification licensure, we also do our

Oneta Ridge Middle School JOM Sponsor Russell Sullivan said his group was glad to be back in person.

“Sportsmanship and respect could be witnessed throughout the day,” he said. “We were fortunate to be a part of this wonderful event and we look forward to competing again.”

Johnson O’Malley Manager Brittany Kesler was elated at the games’ success during her first year serving in her manager position and the first year back in person.

“We wanted it to be a great experience for everyone, and were all ready to come back in person. When I say we, I believe it would be okay to say this includes our tribe, the core committee, volunteers, students and sponsors.”

Kesler looks forward to next year’s competition.

MCN Principal Chief David Hill, Second Chief Del Beaver, and National Council Representative Okfuskee District Randall Hicks sponsored the event.

“They have supported me as a princess and told me they’d continue to afterward,” Noriega said.

Teams could have four players, and ages ranged from 16 and up. The games lasted either 15 minutes, or whomever was the first to 21 points and faced double elimination.

There were five women’s teams and six men’s teams that participated. The women’s teams included the Stecate bodies, Tune Squad, Kvsvppe, The Truth, and the Dreamsnatchers. The men’s teams included the Trailwalkers, Jayhawks, Mob Creeks, Wagon Burners, Dragons, and the High Rollaz.

The Trailwalkers and the Mob Creeks were the only teams to reach 21 points before the 15 minutes were up. The Stecate Bodies took home the Champion title for the women, and the Mob Creeks for the men. The Runner-ups were the Dreamsnatchers and the Jayhawks.

own training and we monitor our homes.”

Accepted donations included new or gently used suitcases, duffle bags, backpacks or any other type of luggage. These items all go to Mvskoke children so that they can keep their belongings safe during home transitions, and to do so with a sense of dignity.

If you would like to learn more about CFSA, or how to begin the application process to become a licensed resource home for Mvskoke foster care children, call 918-732-7869.



TRIBAL PROJECTS,
AG PRIORITIES, HARVARD
DODGES?

NEW DEALS, NEW AG PRIORITIES, RETURN
ANCESTORS, TAFVMPUCE TIME

by **GARY FIFE**
RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Okmulgee, Oklahoma—O.K., I’m back. Two editions of this column got caught in a shuffle of personnel and responsibilities. That’s why it disappeared for two months. The ‘mea culpas’ have been rendered.

A plan for the Mvskoke Nation and the City of Tulsa to ‘pool’ resources would result in a new lake in the Arkansas River between 71st and 101st. The idea is to create a recreational area to draw more visitors. According to a report on KJRH News, the project is on the Muscogee Nation to create a ‘Tax Increment Financing District’ to pay for the infrastructure.

The tribe’s share will be \$8 million. The plan includes some flood prevention and would benefit the Mvskoke Nation plus Jenks and Tulsa. Does it include any ideas for the brown, sandy water? What are they going to name it?

Onward....Indian Country Today has an article that says the remains of Mvskoke and other tribal ancestors are destined to be returned from the Etowah mounds area in Northwest Georgia. This is occurring

under the stipulations of the Native American Graves Protection and Restoration Act. Staff from the Mvskoke Historic and Cultural Prevention office said NAGPRA is ultimately about human rights, not objects.

Speaking of....nothing much heard about a \$335,000 grant that went to tribes in our area, including the Mvskoke Nation. Native News Online reports Oklahoma State University Extension has received two grants from the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) in support of the university’s partnerships with tribes in Oklahoma.

NAAF money will help establish an archery program, support anti-bullying and health curricula, and train youth in meat appraisal. The tribe will also explore pecan grafting and beef and small animal production.

A news release from Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond said one of the new AG’s priorities would be “working to improve relations with Oklahoma’s Native American tribes.”

Drummond will have quite a challenge, seeing how Governor Kevin Stitt has a pretty bad record from his last term.

The statement said, “Drum-

mond said he will prioritize working with tribal nations to restore a positive working relationship between them and the State of Oklahoma. Drummond cited gaming disputes and various issues related to McGirt v. Oklahoma present opportunities to collaborate with tribal leaders to reach workable solutions in the best interests of all Oklahomans.”

“Oklahoma’s relationship with our great tribal nations has been damaged by divisive rhetoric and combative litigation,” he said. “Oklahoma must forge commonsense agreements with our tribal brothers and sisters that respect their sovereignty and ensure public safety. This is very simple and achievable; we all want good people protected and bad people in jail.”

Uh-huh. He talks the talk... but will he walk the walk? Mvskoke Radio has asked for an interview with the AG, but so far has not had a response as of January 18. We’re still waiting.

Want to pick on Harvard University some more? The Harvard Museum said that hair samples in their museum, taken from Native children in boarding schools, were not subject to the legal requirements of the Native American Grave Protection Act (NAGPRA).

“Oh, yes they are,” says a recent Native News Online report. Their article said the Interior Department says this is the case. Could it be that Ivy League pillar is trying to dodge an important fact: legal responsibility? That could mean the museum could be liable for over \$5 million.

Spring is quickly approaching and time for that annual taste treat: Tafvmpuce—Wild Onions! Let us know if your church or group is planning a dinner. Let us know: time, date, place and cost. Let’s hope that the inflation factor in our economy won’t affect prices.

O.K. Hvtvm cerecares.

Disclaimer: The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.



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To submit a change of address or a letter to the editor, call: 918-732-7720 or email: info@mvskokemedia.com.



Youtube is being sued by the family of Nohemi Gonzalez who claim the company should be held responsible for its algorithms that promote terror extremist organization recruitment. The case will determine whether tech companies can continue to use algorithms without content moderation. (Jerrad Moore/Assignment Editor)

ALGORITHMIC DEBATE AT SCOTUS

DECENCY ACT TESTED AT HIGH COURT

by **JERRAD MOORE**
ASSIGNMENT EDITOR

Washington D.C. – On Feb 21 and 22 the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in two cases, Gonzalez v. Google and Twitter Inc. v. Taamneh.

The Supreme Court decisions in these cases could determine what user generated content is found on the internet in the future.

Gonzalez v. Google

On Nov. 13, 2015 Nohemi Gonzalez, a student at California State University, Long Beach was killed by Islamic State terrorists while at a restaurant in Paris, France. Her family filed a lawsuit against YouTube, alleging that its recommendation system helped the terrorist group recruit new members.

Section 230

Gonzalez v. Google deals with section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996.

The Communications Decency Act was designed to make sending indecent or obscene material to minors a criminal offense.

Section 230 created a federal immunity to any cause of action that would make internet service providers or websites liable for information generated by users of the service.

In a pre-internet world, content providers were classified into two types, publishers and distributors.

Publishers, for example, would be a person or business that writes, edits, or prints a book. Because publishers would have knowledge of the content they were publishing, they could be held liable for any illegal content in the material.

Distributors, on the other hand, were entities like libraries or bookstores. They might sell or lend the published material, but would not be aware or have a hand in editing the information it contained and for this reason they were not liable for the content of the materials they sold.

This framework had created a problem for ISPs that wanted to moderate the material posted by users. Two cases involving early ISPs, CompuServe and Prodigy, had set the precedent for liability. ISPs that moderated content were to be treated as publishers and were thus liable for content posted by users. ISPs that did not moderate content were treated as distributors and were not liable.

Due to the CompuServe and Prodigy decisions, ISPs were dis-

incentivized to moderate this content as they would be legally liable if they did.

This led to the creation of Section 230, which classifies ISPs, websites and search engines as distributors. This allowed them to moderate the content the bill was created to block.

Flash forward to the present, where Youtube now utilizes algorithms to sort and deliver relevant videos based on user preferences and watch history.

Gonzalez v. Google will determine whether these recommendations change YouTubes classification from a distributor to publisher, moving it out of section 230's liability protection.

Aiding and Abetting

Oral arguments in Twitter, Inc. v. Taamneh were heard by the Supreme Court on Feb. 22.

On Jan. 1, 2017, Abdulkadir Masharipov, operating as an Islamic State of Iraq and Syria operative, conducted a mass shooting at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey. Thirty-nine people were killed and 69 injured. ISIS officially claimed responsibility for the killings.

One of the victims' relatives, who are citizens of the United States, filed a lawsuit against Twitter, Facebook and Google. They allege that the platforms aided and abetted ISIS by helping recruit, radicalize, and instruct terrorists.

This case deals with Section 230 immunity claims by Twitter in liability stemming from the use of its service by terrorists to organize and recruit.

Under Section 2333 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, United States citizens who are injured by an act of international terrorism are able to sue any person who "aid and abets, by knowingly providing substantial assistance, or who conspires with the person who committed such an act of international terrorism".

Oral arguments in this case center on whether Twitter is aiding and abetting terrorist organizations, and if so, whether Section 230 provides immunity from suit.

Impacts

If the Supreme Court rules that the selecting and suggestions made by algorithms on YouTube removes its Section 230 immunity status, many sites on the internet would have to drastically change their business model.

YouTube, Facebook, Twitter

and other sites utilize algorithms to suggest content to users that will increase "engagement" by stoking emotional responses.

"Engagement" is a social media marketing metric of how actively involved the audience is with a piece of content.

Content that generates engagement can be intense, violent or offensive.

Engagement is then in turn sold to advertisers, who want to place their products before attentive eyes.

This, along with the collection and sale of users' personal data, are the two main revenue streams for these types of websites.

Without these algorithm's ability to target content to user groups based on preferences, engagement and by extension advertiser revenue would drastically decrease.

YouTube argues these algorithms are necessary to sort and organize the massive amounts of content uploaded every day, and without them the user experience would be much more unpleasant. In reality, it is advertising revenue that would be most harmed by an unfavorable Supreme Court decision.

This decrease in ad dollars could damage the profitability of these sites to the point where they may have to shut down. A more likely result would be a return to user recommendation and sharing systems. It would also create a substantial increase in moderation cost with some of those duties being placed on users of the service.

Mvskoke Media

Mvskoke Media's three main methods of publishing the news are the physical paper, the website Mvskokemedia.com and our social media channels, such as YouTube and Facebook.

It is possible that if algorithms cannot be utilized by these websites in the future to direct people interested in news associated with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to our social media channels, Mvskoke Media could see a drop in our new online subscriber base.

If these sites ultimately shut down, Mvskoke Media would have to host digital news content itself, instead of utilizing the free infrastructure provided by YouTube or Facebook.

This would result in a cost increase for the distribution of our digital content to provide for the necessary I.T. services and server utilization.

MUSCOGEE(CREEK)NATION
ELECTION BOARD

2023 MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION ELECTION
PRINCIPAL CHIEF, SECOND CHIEF & NATIONAL
COUNCIL SEAT A

Primary Election
September 16th, 2023
7:00A.M-7:00P.M

Early Voting for Primary
September 13th & 14th, 2023
7:00A.M-7:00P.M (each day)

General Election
November 4th, 2023
7:00A.M-7:00P.M

Early Voting for General
November 1st & 2nd, 2023
7:00A.M-7:00P.M (each day)

A mass mailing of absentee ballot request forms will be mailed to voters
in February.

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Voter Registration forms can be found on the Election Board's
website
or
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Please use the election board's tab to update or register to vote

For questions please contact us at 918.732.7631 or
email us at election@muscogeeelection.com

For more information please look at our website
<https://www.muscogeenation.com/election-board/>

Election dates are chosen based on the guidelines of the election code. (MM File)

ELECTION BOARD RELEASES POLLING DATES

THIS YEAR'S ELECTION SEASON WILL INCLUDE
THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL CHIEF

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - Muscogee (Creek) Nation Election Board has set the dates for this year's election that will include National Council District Representative Seat A along with the Office of Principal Chief and Second Chief.

Primary Elections will be held on Sept. 16 with polls open for early voting on Sept. 13 and 14.

The General Elections are set for Nov. 4, polls will be open for early voters on Nov. 1 and 2.

According to the Manager Nelson Harjo Jr. dates are chosen based on what the code has outlined for election season. Depending on the election tier, it may say "the third Saturday in September" for reference.

Registered voters may have received an absentee ballot request form in the mail from the Election Board. Harjo said these forms are due on Aug. 23. Within the first week, around 100 were mailed back.

Absentee voter forms allow voters to cast their vote by mail for those who return the request form. Ballots are received in the mail with a pre-paid postage envelope to mail the ballot back.

Voters remain anonymous.

In the most recent election, absen-

tee votes were missed.

"That was a laundry list of issues that were beyond our control and beyond the Nation's control," Harjo said.

The United Postal Service had a nationwide problem with mail delivery due to COVID.

To get ahead of this potential situation, the MCN Election Board has invested in priority postage for absentee ballots that will be mailed the next day.

"It's a lot more expensive but we believe it's worth it," Harjo said.

Typically, the voter turnout is higher during chief elections, Harjo claims. Voter turnout remains a problem, not only within the tribe but throughout the Nation.

"This has always been a problem our tribe has had," Harjo said. "It's an ongoing battle."

Only about 20 percent of Mvskoke citizens are registered to vote.

"If you don't exercise this right, eventually you may not have it," Harjo said.

Harjo encourages citizens to vote. He said it helps elected officials understand the need to listen to citizens.

The total number of registered voters for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is 18,003 as of Feb. 1.

For more information, call the Election Board at 918-732-7631 or visit <https://www.muscogeenation.com/election-board/>.

MVSKOKE CITIZEN HONORED FOR EFFORTS IN SERVING HOMELESS IN OKMULGEE COUNTY

OCHS BOARD PRESIDENT LESLIE POWELL
RECEIVES APPRECIATION AWARD

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – Leslie Powell is a Muscogee (Creek) Citizen who has dedicated her career to serving the less fortunate and helping others become self-sustaining by finding jobs. She currently works for the Oklahoma State Department of Rehabilitation Services as a counselor and serves as the board president of the Okmulgee Homeless Shelter. Recently she received an appreciation award for her many years of service with the shelter.

"I was surprised," Powell said regarding the award. "I wasn't expecting anything, that's just me. That just kind of proves this is my gift."

Powell has worked in her current position as a counselor for the past six years, before that she worked for MCN in rehabilitation services. It's these services that help others with disabilities find jobs.

The work that Powell does can be challenging, it is work that requires a passion for serving others. Powell said her passion for rehabilitation services came from her sister who was born with Down Syndrome. Ever since, she has sought to learn more about people with disabilities.

In regard to helping tribal citizens, Powell believes there are more efforts that can be done to collaborate and help those less fortunate. Based on conversations she has had with other MCN communities across the reservation, there are areas that could use more services.

"I think there should be more," Powell said. "I was just down in Checotah the other day, and they said they feel sorry because people are homeless and it's getting worse."

The issue of homelessness can have

a negative connotation. Oftentimes, the stigma surrounding the issue fosters the belief that someone's direct life choices are what enabled them to become homeless in the first place. Whereas the issue is vastly more complex, with the root causes involving poverty, mental illness, and lack of social services.

"My question is always, 'What brought you here?'" Powell explained. "Their answers would be family they couldn't get along with, they lost a job, or they lost everything."

The OCHS serves many citizens from MCN and other tribes. According to Powell, she has seen a lot of tribal members in and out of the shelter.

Powell attributes her successful career to education. She holds two associate degrees from the Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, as well as a bachelor's degree and master's degree from East Central University. She was also the first woman to graduate with a degree from the College of the Muscogee Nation.

The most rewarding part of Powell's work is seeing others grow, when they have reached a point where they are able to support themselves independently.

"That's what I am thankful for as a Muscogee Creek Citizen to direct our tribal people in the direction they want to go," Powell said.

OCHS is a non-profit 501(c)(3) that serves Okmulgee, McIntosh, Hughes and Okfuskee counties. They accept donations for their thrift store. They accept clothing, household items, furniture and unused toiletries. All donations must either be in a new or gently used condition. If you would like to learn more about where to volunteer or donate, visit okmulgeehomelessshelter.org.

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A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Regular Session was held at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. (MM File)

NATIONAL COUNCIL DENIES \$3.7M MVSKOKE LANGUAGE VIDEO GAME BUDGET

GRANT APPLICATION FOR TRIBAL COMMUNITIES’ ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE APPROVED

by **MORGAN TAYLOR**
MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma – The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Regular Session was held at the Mound Building on Feb. 25.

The Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

TR 23-021 Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a U.S. Department of Justice, Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) Purpose Area Four-Tribal Justice System Infrastructure Program (TJSIP) grant application for the benefit of the MCN Department of Health.

Representative Leonard Gouge sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

The DOH submitted the request to apply for the grant for \$1,500,000.

The funds will be used toward building a 30-day treatment facility and expanding substance abuse services.

TR 23-022 A MCN resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a MCN Department of Housing contract with B-V-P, LLC. Representative Charles McHenry sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

The MCN Dept. of Housing is requesting approval for a contract with B-V-P, LLC, to construct three homes. The cost for the work on the three homes come in total to \$791,000.

TR 23-023 Authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a grant notification letter and spe-

cial conditions with the National Policing Institute and the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Rural Violent Crime Reduction Initiative for the benefit of the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

The grant funds of \$113,182 will be used to help rural agencies support their crime reduction efforts.

TR 23-024 Authorizing the Principal Chief to submit a Department of Energy, Grid Deployment Office, National Energy Technology Laboratory, BIL – Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid Formula Grants to states and Indian tribes for the benefit of the MCN Tribal Utility Authority. Representative Joseph Hicks sponsored the resolution, which was adopted 14-0.

The grant will ensure that critical Tribal facilities serving citizens are not impacted by disruptive events such as extreme weather, fire, floods, or other outage events. It will implement new and improved controls, automation, communications technology, and infrastructure. It will also train and increase skills of the tribal workforce while addressing the needs of the tribal communities’ energy infrastructure.

The NC has approved a leverage match in the amount of \$271,137 if awarded in separate legislation. The application proposal amounts to \$1,807,580.

NCA 23-002 Authorizing the expenditure of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fiscal Year Recovery Funds for the purchase and creation of a Mvskoke Language video game. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which failed 7-8.

Speaker William Lowe voted against the legislation in the swing vote. Representatives Joyce Deere, Sandra Golden, Nelson Harjo Sr., Joseph Hicks, Randall Hicks, Anna Marshall, and Darrell Proctor voted against the bill.

MCN and SoundPuzzle are partnering to create a video game using the Mvskoke language. The project’s total cost is \$3.7 million. When first presented in prior legislation, the NC approved a \$2.2 million budget for the game’s most basic package. The budget increase would have allowed the game to have more features.

NCA 23-010 Establishing the Muscogee Nation Resource Center Revolving Fund for various activities of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Resource Center Office. Representative Mary Crawford sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The center can generate income from rental and leasing opportunities from outside sources. The account will allow funds to be paid to the center as well as for the center to expend them.

NCA 23-011 Authorizing the expenditure of funds awarded from the Department of Health and Human Services for the Muscogee Nation Department of Health 988 Tribal Response Project. Representative Leonard Gouge sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The award of \$825,000 will be used to improve response times to 988 calls, texts and chats. It will ensure that Native people have culturally, competent, and trained support as well as connections to appropriate resources.

NCA 23-012 A MCN Law authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the

U.S. Dept. of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation for the benefit of the Office of Environmental Services. Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Office of Environmental Services was awarded the Indian Tribal Water Resources Development, Management and Protection Grant in the amount of \$200,000. The grant funds will be used to restore a five-acre pond located on the Dustin Cattle Farm in Hughes County. It will reintroduce native plant species, with an emphasis on pollinator plants to attract important species to the area.

NCA 23-013 A MCN Law authorizing supplemental appropriation for MCN Risk Management - Arbor Care Services Fiscal Year 2023.

Representative Galen Cloud sponsored the legislation, which was adopted as amended, 13-1. Rep Randall Hicks voted against the bill.

The original amount of \$735,187 was amended to \$748,445.

The supplemental appropriation will cover the salaries for new positions, and provide additional increases throughout the budget to accomplish the work load requests.

NCA 23-014 Authorizing the expenditure of grant funds awarded from the National Policing Institute for the benefit of the MCN Lighthorse Police Department. Representative Mark Randolph sponsored the legislation, which was adopted 14-0.

The Act will allow the LPD to expend grant funds from bill TR 23-023.

The full legislation can be viewed at www.mcnnc.com.



A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session was held via teleconference March 3. (MM File)

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION NATIONAL COUNCIL EMERGENCY SESSION HELD MARCH 3

COUNCIL VOTED ALL IN FAVOR TO POSTPONE NCA 23-016 INDEFINITELY

by **KAYLEA BERRY**
REPORTER

OKMULGEE, Oklahoma - A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council Emergency Session was held via teleconference March 3.

The Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

TR 23-026 A MCN tribal resolution authorizing the Principal Chief to execute a sale agreement with Mobile Modular and the placement of a modular building on tribal property for the MCN District Court to use. Speaker William Lowe sponsored the resolution, which was postponed until the next emergency session by an all-in-favor vote.

The increased docket of the MCN District Court created a need for additional courtroom space for the District Court. The courtroom demands can be temporarily resolved by the placement of a modular courtroom to be located between the MCN Mound and the MCN Controller’s Office at the MCN

Tribal Headquarters in Okmulgee, Okla. Mobile Modular has been identified as a vendor that can provide the modular building.

NCA 23-016 A MCN law appropriating funds to purchase a modular building to be utilized by the MCN District Court. Speaker Lowe sponsored the act, which was postponed indefinitely by an all-in-favor vote.

The increased docket of the MCN District Court created a need for additional courtroom space for the District Court. The courtroom demands can be temporarily resolved by the placement of a modular courtroom to be located between the MCN Mound and the MCN Controller’s Office at the MCN Tribal Headquarters in Okmulgee, Okla.

The purpose of this law is to appropriate \$648,287 to cover the costs to purchase, install and furnish a new modular building for the use of the MCN District Court.

View the meeting at www.mcnnc.com.



Families that are participants of a tribal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) are now eligible for a discount at the Oklahoma City Zoo. The discount can be used up to four people per WIC program card, and will last until Mar. 31. (Shutterstock)

OKC ZOO NOW OFFERS TRIBAL WIC DISCOUNTS

WIC CARD HOLDERS CAN PRESENT THEIR CARD TO RECEIVE A DISCOUNTED ADMISSION FOR THEMSELVES AND THREE GUESTS

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

OKLAHOMA CITY, Oklahoma – The Oklahoma City Zoo recently announced a new discount pilot program for members of the tribal Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Those with a WIC program card and a valid photo ID will receive a \$3 general zoo admission for themselves and three additional guests.

The WIC program is federally funded and has offices within tribes like the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The MCN WIC’s purpose is to provide supplemental foods and nutrition education at no cost to young mothers and children residing in Oklahoma.

Nutrition on the reservation has been a long standing issue among tribes. Native Americans have historically faced challenges since removal in regard to facing health problems and simply having access to food with nutritional value.

MCN WIC program director Katura Bunner oversees its 12 sites that serve the nation. Her department is crucial in providing nutritional foods in areas of the reservation that need it

most. This is especially crucial for young families that need nutrition during critical times of physical growth and development.

“We provide a nutritional food package based on high-risk areas that are frequently seen in diets,” Bunner said. “Any type of nutritional risk based on evaluation.”

Nutritional risks are categorized in two major types; medically or diet based. Medical-based risks include anemia, underweight, or a history of pregnancy complications. Diet-based risks include consuming foods that are low in nutritional value and high in sodium, fat or sugar.

The tribal WIC program serves women who are either pregnant, postpartum or who are breastfeeding. It also serves young children up to the age of five.

Another service that is provided for program participants are monthly food benefits which includes a cash benefit for fresh produce options. Nutrition education is provided alongside food packages to inform participants on how to keep on top of their family’s health and diet.

Breastfeeding counseling is

another important resource provided by the department and is available 24/7. This allows first-time mothers to face obstacles that may be difficult to overcome on their own.

The primary need Bunner’s department sees on the reservation is education and counsel.

“Oftentimes we just see that they need a little guidance on what their next step is,” Bunner said. “Whether it’s seeking healthcare, center care that the state of Oklahoma offers for mothers, and of course for newborns connecting them with all available resources (inside and outside of the nation).”

While the need is great for first-time mothers and their newborns, Bunner and her department find the work rewarding because they know they are making a difference across the reservation. Specifically, helping others learn how to help themselves.

“Empowerment, empowering our families to be successful in their child rearing years and continued success for the little ones once they are born,” Bunner said.

According to the Oklahoma City Zoo’s website, the tribal WIC discount is only available at the front zoo window and no reservation is required. The discount can not be used with any other discount or promotion, and can only be applied for same day admission, not future visits. Children ages 0-2 are admitted for free.

The Oklahoma Zoo will continue the tribal WIC discount through March 31. At the end of the month discount access program participation will be taken into account regarding future offerings of tribal WIC discounts.

The MCN WIC program is an equal opportunity employer. Its services are available to everyone and are not restricted to just Muscogee (Creek) Citizens or Native Americans. Further information on MCN WIC services can be found on their website. You can also contact the department at 918-549-2790.



Dr. Kirsten C. Kunkle talks with Mvskoke Media Assignment Editor Jerrad Moore about her role in the new opera, "Chicago Currents". This marks Dr. Kunkle's second appearance on Live Wire. (MM File)

MVSKOKE OPERA SINGER SET FOR DEBUT AT CHICAGO FRINGE OPERA

DR. KIRSTEN C. KUNKLE WILL BE FEATURED IN "CHICAGO CURRENTS"

by **BRADEN HARPER**
MANAGING EDITOR

CHICAGO, Illinois – Opera soprano Dr. Kirsten C. Kunkle (Mvskoke) continues to stay busy in the world of live theater by composing, writing and performing live music productions. The latest production she is involved with, "Chicago Currents" is set to premiere in late March.

This production is different from Kunkle's past work, it is a staged production of art song. Similar to a recital, it's staged with five different singers. It features original poetry and music compositions from Kunkle herself.

Although this type of musical theater is not a format Kunkle is as comfortable performing compared to opera, she still found the work compelling.

"It's tricky because it's not typical of what I do," Kunkle said. "I tend to sing classical music and solo music so it's been really interesting and exciting."

The story of the production is inspired by the land and water Chicago is built on. The ensemble performing the show is comprised of five singers, a pianist and a violinist.

While Kunkle does not have heritage in any local Chicago-area tribes, part of her role involved ensuring the story was respectful to Indigenous people.

"Part of the goal of the project is to be kind of a musical land acknowledgement for the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi tribes," Kunkle explained.

Kunkle has also kept busy by collaborating with composer Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate (Chickasaw) on the Chickasaw opera "Shell Shaker", a story performed entirely in the Chickasaw language. In addition to collaborating on other composers' stories spoken in traditional Native language, Kunkle has taken up classes in the Mvskoke language as well. She continues to break barriers in the performing arts as she brings Indigenous culture to the forefront of the stage.

"Anything I think gets the languages out there for more people to hear, whether they're Native or not, I think is important because it brings representation but it also keeps our language alive in a different way," Kunkle said.

It is one way to hear a traditional language spoken in conversation, it is another to hear it sung in a live performance. It is also special due to Indigenous cultures' scarcity in the performing arts.

"Chicago Currents" will be performed at the Edge Theater, located at 5451 N. Broadway, Chicago. The performance will run March 19-25. Tickets range from \$28-\$45 and can be purchased at chicagofringeopera.com.

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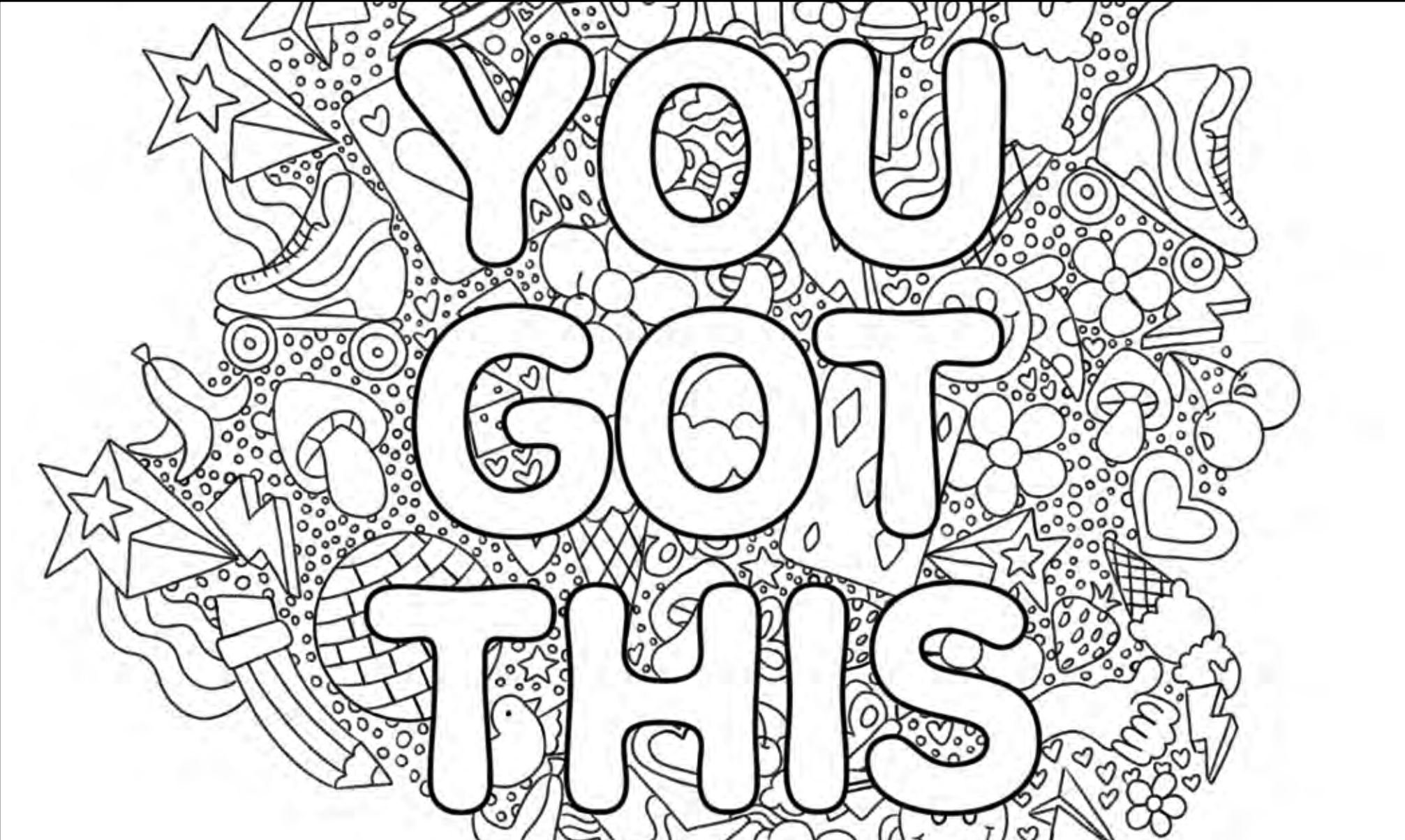
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PRESS RELEASE

101 Archer opens on First Friday with new Tribal Sovereignty exhibition

The University of Tulsa's Oklahoma Center for the Humanities is opening a new exhibition for the inaugural First Friday Art Crawl in its new home at 101 E. Archer St. in downtown Tulsa.

Work of Sovereignty examines the historical and artistic struggle for Native sovereignty in Oklahoma before and after the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Tribal jurisdiction (McGirt v. Oklahoma, 2020). Historic documents and maps detailing the fraught history of Native authority in Oklahoma accompany original artwork by more than a dozen contemporary Native artists, representing eight Tribes. The artwork is inspired by the 13 counties in Oklahoma named after Tribal nations; examining the boundaries that have sought to limit Tribal authority while reinterpreting the very land itself.

Admission is free and open to

all from 6 to 9 p.m. March 3. The reinvigorated 101 Archer space will offer free live music and a cash bar during the art crawl.

TU's Oklahoma Center for the Humanities in collaboration with The University of Tulsa College of Law, the Cherokee Nation and the Chickasaw Nation will present a three-day symposium that brings together questions of law, culture and Native American self-determination. Rebecca Nagle, creator of the award-winning documentary podcast *This Land*, and Brenda Pipestem, associate justice for the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians Supreme Court, will deliver keynote addresses, among other presentations and discussions. The symposium runs March 30 through April 1 at multiple locations including 101 Archer, TU's Lorton Performance Center and the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Tulsa. For more information, visit calendar.utulsa.edu.

The exhibition and symposium are funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Social Science Research Council.

The *Work of Sovereignty* exhibition runs March 3 through April 22. Starting March 8, 101 Archer will be open Wednesday through Saturday from 12 to 5 p.m.

About the Oklahoma Center for the Humanities

The Oklahoma Center for the Humanities was founded at The University of Tulsa in 2014 when an interested group of faculty and administrators gathered with the shared goal of developing a distinctive public think tank focused on core questions about history, identity, ethics, memory, art, music and literature. With the support of TU's Kendall College of Arts and Sciences as well as the Office of Research, the center was created and funded. Sean Latham, Pauline McFarlin Walter Professor of English and Comparative Literature, was named inaugural director. He works in cooperation with internal and external advisory boards. For additional information about the Oklahoma Center for the Humanities, visit humanities.utulsa.edu.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Begins Fielding New \$3 Million Communications System

March 6, 2023
Media Contact: Jason Salsman (539) 286-4559
jsalsman@muscogeenation.com

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation has begun fielding the tribe's new \$3 million Harris quad-band radio communications system.

In February, the Nation went live with portable radios and has now begun installation in its police, EMS, Emergency Management vehicles and healthcare

facilities.

"Equipping the Nation with this state-of-the-art technology provides the tribe's public safety employees with the rapid response capabilities needed to ensure the safety and security of all who live within our borders," MCN Director of Emergency Management Bobby Howard said. "This system allows the Nation to provide seamless coverage of all 11 counties of our Reservation."

The Muscogee Nation purchased the new system in December with a unanimous vote of approval and support from the tribe's National Council. In total, there will be 325 radios comprised of portable, mobile and the latest in dispatch consoles.

"We talk a lot about being there for our people and for our communities. Equipping our officers, first responders, emergency management officials and hospitals with the absolute best resources available is an affirmation of the level of our commitment," Principal Chief David Hill said. "The entire process from receiving the radios in the first week of January, to going live and operational on February 28, took only 60 days, and that's a testament to all who worked so hard."

The rapid delivery and fielding of this program was made possible through a collaborative effort between the Nation, L3 Harris and the City of Broken Arrow Communications Division.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

02/16/2023
Media Contact: Marissa Lewis, Marketing Coordinator (918) 549-2856
mlewis@cmn.edu

College of Muscogee Nation Recognized by Achieving the Dream as a 2023 Leader College

The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN) today announced that it has been designated a Leader College by Achieving the Dream (ATD), a national non-profit dedicated to advancing community colleges as hubs of equity and mobility in their communities.

CMN President Dr. Monte Randall stated, "ATD is a great partner and has provided valuable insights to data collection, analysis, and college leadership. We were progressing in many of the areas designated as leader colleges, and our ATD coaches helped us to pull that information together to leverage our existing work in manner that produced considerable results."

"We are excited and hon-

ored to be named as an ATD 2023 Leader College. This award reflects the dedication of our faculty and staff and reinforces the impact we are having on our tribe, state, and local communities."

Leader Colleges play an important role in accelerating the adoption of effective practices within the ATD Network and across higher education. Leader Colleges are recognized for the quality of their work in whole-college reform, resulting in increased completion rates for all students. Leader Colleges develop innovative ways to work with other colleges to share knowledge and facilitate an exchange of ideas about evidence-based reform strategies.

The College of the Muscogee Nation is part of the ATD Network, made up of 300+ colleges committed to advancing equity and supporting student success at their institutions and throughout their communities. CMN has been a member of the ATD Network since 2017.

About Achieving the DREAM

Achieving the Dream (ATD)

is a partner and champion of more than 300 community colleges across the country.

Drawing on our expert coaches, groundbreaking programs, and national peer network, we provide institutions with integrated, tailored support for every aspect of their work — from foundational capacities such as leadership, data, and equity to intentional strategies for supporting students holistically, building K-12 partnerships, and more. We call this Whole College Transformation. Our vision is for every college to be a catalyst for equitable, antiracist, and economically vibrant communities. We know that with the right partner and the right approach, colleges can drive access, completion rates, and employment outcomes — so that all students can access life-changing learning that propels them into community-changing careers. Academic Achievement, Native Values.

The College of the Muscogee Nation is Oklahoma's premier tribal college offering exemplary academic degree programs and student services preparing leaders in tribal and non-tribal sectors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



ADDESEN GLASS

Addesen Glass (Mvskoke) is a senior at Hilldale High School and was recently announced as the valedictorian for the Class of 2023. She currently holds a 4.51 GPA and resides on the Hilldale Superintendent's Honor Roll and the President's Honor Roll at Connors State College. She is a two-time State Champion in 4A Girls Golf (2021 and 2022) and is an All-District soccer player as well as the varsity girls soccer team captain. She is also the secretary of the National Honor Society, the Teen Republican Club and is a member of the Native American Student Association, Math Club and the FCCLA. Her civic achievements include being a Foster Hope Teen Ambassador, serving as a St. Francis intern, and attending the Chamber of Commerce Youth Leadership Conference. She was the November student of the month and is a member of the Brick Church. Addesen plans to attend the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in the fall to study Biology and Spanish with the intention of attending medical school to become an anesthesiologist. (Submission by National Council Representative Mary Crawford)

BLAKE MULLEN

University of Oklahoma senior Blake Mullen (Mvskoke/Cherokee) is a journalism major who serves as a Washington D.C. Bureau correspondent in the student news department, Gaylord News. Blake is originally from Pryor. In his role with the student news department, he covers the Oklahoma delegation along with other stories that impact the state. Most recently he published an article on Oklahoma Governor Stitt and President Biden. He has also served as an analyst for GameDay U Hoops, GameDay U football and as a reporter for OU Nightly. He is also the lead writer and managing editor for Sooners360, covering Oklahoma sports. He started his first podcast at the age of 14 and is now the host of the "RedHot Football Podcast". Mullen is one of only two to four students selected to participate in his current program, and plans to eventually work for ESPN as a sports journalist. (Submission by Thelma Sowards)



CALIP HARJO

High school senior Calip Harjo (Mvskoke) recently signed his letter of intent for McPherson College. He is a four-year varsity starter for the Okmulgee High School football team. He won the MaxPreps player of the game award and was voted Mr. Football by VYPE Magazine. He was also invited to participate in the 2023 Indigenous Bowl. He is the son of Carressa Jackson and Earnest Harjo and the brother of Christian, Kethan, Issiah. He is the grandson of Robert Jackson, the late Wilma Jackson, and the late Sheila and Naomi Harjo. (Submission by Carressa L. Jackson)

MALHON MORRIS JR.

Malhon Morris Jr. is a Muscogee (Creek) Citizen and a D1 Football League player whose team recently won their championship last December. Morris is an honor student in Broken Arrow, and plays the violin. Due to his grades, he was selected to attend Kevin Stitt's second inauguration as governor. Morris is also a member of Community Indian Baptist church in Kellyville. (Submission by Kimberly Yahola-Morris)



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[Seal] Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court



**RICHARD
ANTHONY
HICKS JR.**

Richard Anthony Hicks Jr. passed away at the age of 57 on February 20, 2023 in Tulsa, Oklahoma surrounded by friends and family. He was born July 18, 1965 in Macomb, Illinois.

Richard is preceded in death by his parents, Richard Anthony Hicks Sr. and Annabelle Levi, his sister Gina McClure, and brother Sammy Easky.

He was raised primarily in Salina Oklahoma, as well as other towns around the state. He spent a memorable part of his childhood on a military base near Nuremberg, Germany. He still had many friends from his time overseas, and was described as a friend to virtually everyone he encountered.

Richard graduated from Salina High School in 1984 and played as a starter for the school basketball team that won 21 games his senior year. Throughout his life Richard worked jobs that allowed him to assist youth through social service work.

Richard was a member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and also had Cherokee heritage.

Richard's interests included music (his favorite bands included KISS and KC and the Sunshine Band), classic television sitcoms, scary movies, playing softball, fishing, keeping in touch with friends on social media, and watching sporting events. Some

of his favorite sports teams were the OU Sooners, the Dallas Cowboys, the Cincinnati Reds and the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar era of the Los Angeles Lakers.

Those left to cherish Richard's memory include his three children, daughters McKenzie "Kenzie" Hicks, of Durant, Oklahoma, Bella Hicks of Benton, Arkansas and his son, Evan Hicks also of Benton, Arkansas, Stepfather, Andrew Easky of Muskogee, stepmother, Ruben Hicks of Sapulpa, sisters Tanya Hicks-Jones of Attumwa, Iowa, Rhonda Hicks of Worcester, Massachusetts, Ladean Marris and husband Harold of Madill, brothers Clint Hicks and wife April of Glenpool, sister Nakita Presnell and husband Brandon of Sapulpa, brother Timothy Hicks of Muskogee, sister Kari McNeil and husband Luke of Muskogee and a host of many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and dear friends.

Funeral Services were held February 25, 2023 at Integrity Funeral Chapel with Reverend David Dunson officiating. Those serving as Pallbearers were Gavin Brady, Jimmie Tramel, George Littledave, Clint Hicks, Brandon Presnell, Joe Williams. Honorary Pallbearers were Nakona Johnson, Alva Roughface, Jordan Reynolds, Jimmy Reynolds, Brandon Layfield, Jim Hicks, Rojer Johnson, Charles Claunts and Gavin Williams. Arrangements and Services were under the direction of Integrity Funeral Service.

iel Grayson Sr., whom she had two children with. Betsy enjoyed many activities including beading, sewing, cooking, fishing, gardening, puzzle books, playing with her dogs, and watching old movies. She was also a member of the Okfuskee Baptist Church.

Betsy is survived by her son Nathaniel Grayson Jr. of Eufaula, her daughter Karen White and her husband Tully of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She is also survived by her brother Levi Hill and his wife Debbie of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, her sister Janet Hill of Eufaula, and her two grandchildren, Leah Elizabeth White and Vincent Andrew White. Betsy is preceded in death by her husband Nathaniel Grayson Sr., parents Siah and Elizabeth Hill, her brothers Thomas, Dunson, Siah Jr., Commey "Gumby", Colbert and her sister Juanita Harjo.

A funeral service was held February 18, 2023 at the Okfuskee Indian Baptist Church, officiated by Tom Pickering. Pallbearers were William Hill, Jon Hill, Steven Hill, Jonathan Hill, Nicholas Hill, Colbert Hill Jr, Anthony Hill, Tyler Grogan, Timothy Grayson, Joey Lewis, Glenwood Grayson. Jonathan Grayson, James Higgins, Mikey Deere, Lewis McGirt, Eagen Hill, David Long, and Daniel Heneha. Burial services were held at the Greenwood Cemetery under Hunn and the Black & Merritt Funeral Home and Crematory. If you would like to make an online condolence to the family, visit www.hbmfuneralhome.com.

Proposed Wellness Center in Henryetta, Oklahoma

Notice of Availability - Draft Environmental Assessment: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's proposal to build a Wellness Center in Henryetta, Oklahoma (the Proposed Action). NEPA requires that federal agencies consider the effects of a proposed action and any reasonable alternatives on the human environment. This Draft EA evaluates the potential impacts that would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action as compared to the No Action alternative.

The Draft EA is available upon request. Please send an email request to info@claygroupinc.com. The Draft EA will be provided in electronic format unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

Project Title: Reintegration Program Wellness Center Project

Project Proponent: EJA

Project Location: 615 East Corporation Street, Henryetta, OK 74437

Project Description: The proposed Action considered under this Draft EA is to construct a two-story, 10,370 square foot prefabricated metal-frame building to serve as a Wellness Center for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's Reintegration Program. The proposed Wellness Center would contain a basketball court, an activity room, an exercise room, a lobby with a reception area, a concession area, a mechanical/electrical room, two storage rooms, four restrooms, and four private offices. The Wellness Center would connect to the Reintegration Program's existing administrative building via a covered walkway.

Once operational, the Wellness Center will provide a building to serve as a gathering place for reentry clients and allow Reintegration Program employees the ability to provide services that promote a holistic approach for mind, body, and spirit.

BJA is accepting comments on this EA from March 1, 2023, through the end of the day of March 31, 2023. Comments should be submitted by email to info@clarkgroupinc.com or mailed to 615 East Corporation Street, Hennessey, OK 74437.

Date of Posting: March 1, 2023

**BETSY
HILL**

Betsy Hill passed away at the age of 69 on February 15, 2023 in Eufaula, Oklahoma. She was born on June 30, 1953 in Hanna, Oklahoma to parents, Siah and Elizabeth (Phillips) Hill. She attended and graduated from Sequoyah Tahlequah School. Betsy was married to her husband, Nathan-

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

MARCH 13-17, Muscogee Nation Lighthorse Tribal Police Department is hosting a youth police academy during spring break , 2023 with an awards ceremony, March 18th. This is for youth ages 11-15, contact Melissa Beaver @ 918-732-7813



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