

# PIONEER

IT'S A SMALL  
WORLD  
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## WOMEN WANTED:

Women urged to study science and engineering

**ENGINEERING DIVERSITY:** Society of Women Engineers President Leslie Crissup visits OCCC's Engineering Club as a guest speaker. *Photo by Sophia Babb*

**SOPHIA BABB**  
News Writing Student

The number of women studying engineering at OCCC has grown steadily, but the overall number is still low for the time being said Greg Holland, professor and head of the engineering department.

Along with witnessing improvements in the number of women engineering majors, Holland said he has also seen other types of advancements in the Engineering Department over the course of his 11 years at OCCC.

"I started teaching at OCCC in 2005 and the engineering program had 14 graduates that next year (2006). Last year (2015) we had increased to 52 graduates."

The college now has the added advantage of an Engineering Lab, more funding towards the engineering program, a 3-D printer, and more overall resources for its students.

"We have the resources and the ability to prepare

engineering students more now than ever," Holland said.

The percentage of women engineers in the U.S. has increased from 5.8 percent in 1980 to 14 percent in 2012, according to the Congressional Joint Economic Committee's most recent report.

Ruby Limas, an engineering major at OCCC, will soon be a part of that 14 percent.

Limas said she sees more men than women in her classes, but it does not intimidate her.

"I would say there are about 25 people in my whole class, with just three women," she said.

Before deciding to study engineering, Limas met with all of the female engineers her mother worked with at OG&E, who inspired her to pursue engineering as a career.

Limas plans to focus on electrical engineering, a degree uncommon for women.

"We're not seeing a lot of women in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science, or coding," said Leslie Crissup, president of the Society

of Women Engineers, who recently came to speak at an OCCC Engineering Club meeting.

"That's the future, so we really want to push a lot of young ladies to go into that," Crissup said.

Limas agrees, saying that she thinks girls should be encouraged to pursue math and science at a young age.

Crissup explained that women engineers are still somewhat uncommon in the workforce.

"I can be sitting in a meeting and I might be the only lady there," she said. "We want to help support ladies in the workplace."

Holland attributes the low ratio of women engineers to the possible influence of early gender-based ideas taught in school.

"Ultimately, it comes down to the ideas that may be taught early on in education, such as suggesting women should have certain jobs and not others, and teaching women the idea that they shouldn't bother with math," he said.

For more information about OCCC's engineering program, contact Holland at gholland@occc.edu.

## Making students from afar feel at home



**HUNG TRAN**  
Senior Writer  
seniorwriter@occc.edu

There are many international students studying at OCCC in any given semester and more enrolling each year.

This population is important in creating a culture of diversity on campus. But, something I've come to understand as an international student myself, is that students so far from their own homes still sometimes hold themselves back.

Being mainly surrounded by American students

to whom the intricacies of the English language and the style of education is already second nature can discourage international students from learning their new country's culture. This can cause international students to feel isolated on campus.

At OCCC however, there are places and organizations dedicated to helping those out-of-country students feel more connected to the campus community. These are things that offer a chance to learn more about American culture, socialize among those who share a similar experience and even to practice their English.

See **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS** Page 9

## EDITORIAL/OPINION

**EDITORIAL |** Departing writer reflects on his experience as a student

# Lessons taken from time at OCCC



IAN MANERA

After two and a half years, I'm finally moving on from OCCC.

No longer will I crawl out of bed and make the same drive down I-40 every morning for class. I'll never have to walk up the three flights of stairs for an 8 a.m. class ever again, which is a relief. I won't have to keep buying subpar macchiatos from the coffee shop anymore, either.

**IAN MANERA**  
I'm moving on to a new journey and now looking back on my experience here seems like a must. This may be my last editorial for the Pioneer.

The most important thing I've learned from being at this school is to not take it for granted.

I decided to go here to save money on school, first and foremost, and that opportunity isn't something to be taken lightly. But, I can honestly say at times I've done just that, and it's something I will definitely learn from going forward.

From my time here, I've learned how important it is not to wait on things.

It's been very easy for me to put things off at OCCC, for whatever reason. I've always had an issue with procrastinating, but the more comfortable I've become with the college, the more I've procrastinated on things. For me, being too comfortable leads to me wanting to get by putting in the least amount of effort possible. I settle for average when I know I'm much more than that. Because of this, I've tried to be a lot more direct in accomplishing the things I want to accomplish. I don't just wait for things to happen anymore, and I think this school has helped me with that. I've genuinely realized that every day and every class period is important. That goes for both school and everything else in life.

This school has a lot to offer its students, and I've had many great experiences here.

As a journalism major, my classes have taught me loads about the field I've always wanted to pursue. Those specific classes are the ones that have brought me the most enjoyment here. Working here at the Pioneer has taught me so much about journalism, and I've gotten insurmountably better at public speaking because of all of the interviews I've done. It has been an experience I'm so thankful for.

One thing that I think is really important here is that you're genuinely excited about going to class every day. And, throughout most of my time here, I can say that this has held true. Overall, I can say that OCCC has been a great experience for me, and I've learned a lot.

One great thing about OCCC is that so many people are here for different reasons. It could be simply saving some money before transferring to a university, like I'm doing. Or, OCCC could be a symbol of hope and initiative for someone who is going back to school to pursue a new career and, ultimately, a new life. Regardless of your reasons for being here, it's important to never lose sight of the goals you've set for yourself and never get too comfortable despite how easy that can be. As college students, this time period of our lives is so crucial. Decisions we make now can and will affect our futures going forward, and it's important to never take anything for granted, especially at school.

—IAN MANERA  
SPORTS WRITER

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR |** Reader responds to news of the library changing its hours, a story printed in the March 4 edition of the Pioneer

# Schedule change for library better than alternatives

## To the Editor:

The move by OCCC to limit the library hours is the least worst option OCCC had.

Closing the library at 9pm  
will save hundreds of thou-

sands of dollars in electric bills and staff costs.

With the onset of additional budget cuts many, services and classes will have to be reduced.

It's very promising that

OCCC has decided to take proactive steps in making sure that core services are preserved.

The way OCCC's administration has handled this situation is superior to many

other colleges and government agencies that have failed to get ahead of this issue.

By acting now, it will help prevent catastrophic layoffs and tuition increases.

The state legislature would be well served by being as proactive and creative as OCCC has been.

— JOHN CLINGER

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
**PIONEER**

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The PIONEER is a student publication of Oklahoma City Community College through the Division of Arts. It is published weekly during the 16-week fall and spring semesters and the eight-week summer session.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the PIONEER, the college or the publisher.

THE PIONEER welcomes letters to the editor and encourages the use of this publication as a community forum. All letters must include the author's name, address, phone number and signature.

E-mail letters should include all but the signature. The PIONEER will withhold the

author's name if the request is made in writing.

The PIONEER has the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be no more than 250 words. Students must list a major. OCCC staff and faculty must list a work title.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the PIONEER office, located in room 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, or submitted via e-mail to editor@occc.edu with a phone number for verification included.

The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at <http://pioneer.occc.edu>.

**What you have to say is important and we want to put your thoughts and opinions in the Pioneer**

Visit us in the Pioneer office in room AH 1f2  
or send your letters to the editor to [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu)



# COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

**MUSIC REVIEW |** The formation and the ongoing adventures of what one reviewer describes as Oklahoma's best cover band

## Kings of covers playing near you

My favorite cover band in town, Street Kings, played last weekend at the Alley Club on the south side of town. If you like your rock mixed with some southern charm you should hear these guys.

I'd once also seen them perform around Halloween. They put on a Kiss tribute show in costume, complete with high-heeled boots and make-up. The bass player played the part so well I would have mistaken his long tongue for Gene Simmons if I hadn't known better.

Street Kings is not your average cover band.

The members of the band are exceptionally talented. All four band members said they were raised in Southern Gospel churches where they first got a taste of playing live music.

Chris Dolan is the leader of the band, lead singer and rhythm player. I love his Texas Rock set that includes a Doobie Brothers medley of "Jesus Just Left Chicago," "Jesus - He's my Friend" and "Been Waiting on the Bus All Day."

Dolan and the bass player, Nathan Stout, became automatic best friends when they became step-brothers (no lie) as young boys. Dolan said his older brother was the first one he looked up to as a musician. They have enjoyed playing in a band together since 2001.

Bob Morris, who plays lead guitar, recently returned to his home of Norman after serving as the director of musical education for the Fender guitar company.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) Nate Stout, Chris Dolan, Rod Frizzell and Bob Morris. *Photo provided*

Morris told me, when he was with Fender, he'd schedule his work responsibilities around flights in and out of town to play with Street Kings.

The band's drummer, Rod Frizzell, is the newest member to join in 2012. Dolan said Frizzell took them to a whole new level and they all loved him as soon as he started.

The band has been playing together exclusively for four years with the same group of guys, which is in itself an accomplishment these days. It shows, because their music is really tight.

They have written some original music and released one album called "High Dollar Buzz."

The guys say they have a busy summer ahead of them. Chris said their main goal right now is "to enjoy playing music as long as our bodies will allow."

Follow Street Kings on facebook for up to date information on where you can catch a show.

**Rating: A+**

—GEORGIA WOOD  
COMMUNITY WRITER

**MOVIE REVIEW |** Writer says the new movie 'Allegiant' may have poor ticket sales amid the competition but is still a good watch

## Dystopia more worthwhile than 'Zootopia'

Its finally here. For fans of the series, you know exactly what I'm talking about. The Divergent Series: Allegiant hit theaters on March 18.

As the city of Chicago falls into chaos after the events of the previous installment, Tris, Four, and a handful of others venture "beyond the wall" to discover what really is left on earth after what they believe to have been an apocalyptic war.

To their surprise, they discover that the city of Chicago has been under the supervision of an organization called the Bureau of Genetic Welfare and its director, David.

As the movie progresses, Tris and Four begin to take different paths on their ventures in this new world, each one forming different perspectives of what is truly happening. Soon the pair realize David may not be who he claims to be, and the fight to save the ones they love begins.

The movie is based on Veronica Roth's novel of the same name, but like other popular movies, the final book is being split in two.

'Part 2' of Allegiant will be titled Ascendant, and is due June 9, 2017. However, don't let this deter you. The movie gets most of the book's plot accomplished.

Allegiant has done surprisingly poor in the box

office, bringing in just under \$30 million on its opening weekend, an almost 50 percent decrease from Insurgent's opening of over \$52 million.

Two things may have contributed to this. The first is Disney's Zootopia.

This animated kids movie has skyrocketed in the box office and in popularity, bringing in over \$37 million in its third weekend.

The second is that the young adult dystopian genre may be done for.

After the extremely successful Hunger Games franchise, every series that has followed gets relentlessly compared to it, bringing down its originality and convincing people not to see it. The Hunger Game sucked all the energy from the genre, and people simply don't care.

I still maintain Allegiant is a great film.

It has a riveting, supercharged plot with tons of action and relatable characters, and I recommend anyone who has seen the first two films to give it another chance, and "escape the world you know."

**Rating: A**

—TREY BELL  
STAFF WRITER





# COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

**TV REVIEW |** Reviewer relaxes and adds spice to her life all at once with this hot TV drama

## Television gets wonderfully scandalous

My time in front of the television is limited, but Thursdays have become my night to sit back, relax, and binge on new episodes of my favorite TV dramas.

Creator Shonda Rhimes has written and produced the American political drama, “Scandal,” that has captured the attention of thousands of faithful followers.

“Scandal’s” protagonist Olivia Pope, perfectly played by Kerry Washington, and her associates, are hired by Washington, D.C. elites to solve the problems they seem to endlessly create for themselves.

The crisis-management firm has a revolving door of interesting scandals. From sex scandals to rigged voting, to blackmail, Olivia Pope and the “gladiators in suits,” handle the situations and problems and make them quickly disappear before the media even notices.

Pope has only one goal and that is to preserve and maintain the public image of every single one of her clients. Even if it means going against what she believes is right.

But the viewer can expect a shift in Pope’s attitude (and decision making process) as she discovers things about her mother and learns about what a powerful monster her dad really is. And you’ll notice some change through the evolution of her love affairs.

In the first episodes, viewers quickly learn

there’s a more than professional relationship between Pope and POTUS Fitzgerald Grant (Tony Goldwyn), who is married.

But the secretive and steamy sexual encounters happening between the two inside the White House doesn’t last long.

The two lovebirds will have you rooting for them one season and completely hating their characters, the next.

The biggest shift in characters is during season four, when incredibly good-looking Jake Ballard (Scott Foley), enters the scene and shakes the relationship between Pope and Grant and the bond between Pope and her father.

So you can see, for a person who has nothing exciting going on in her life, the show is entertaining.

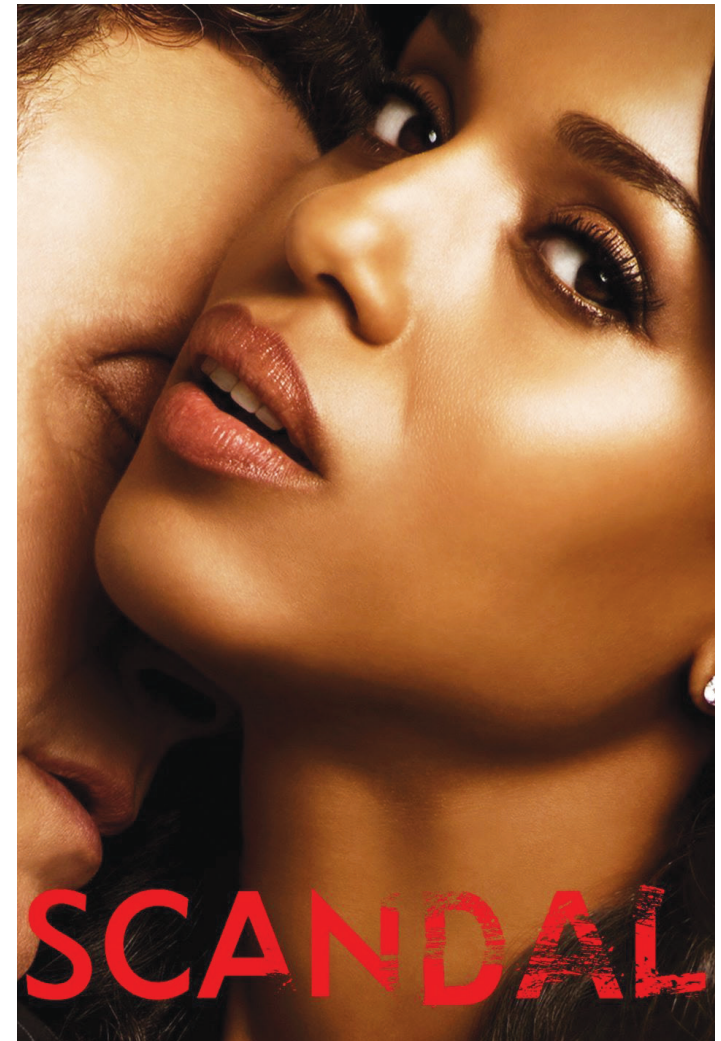
Pope’s character is fierce, bold, and flat out hot. Although, her affair with the president is not something to look up to, the way she handles her firm is very intriguing.

With the help of her associates, Olivia Pope and Associates is a force to be reckoned with.

Seasons one through four are available now on Netflix and the fifth season of “Scandal” is currently on ABC.

**Rating A+**

—ERIKA FIERRO  
ONLINE EDITOR



**REVIEW |** In attempting to review anime, writer reviews himself while waxing philosophical opinions in general

## Getting introspective on reviews



My superiors at work have goaded me into writing my next assignment early. This is it.

“Just review something Grant,” they say.

But there is no way I can stretch out my opinions on things to be longer than a couple sentences usually.

Brevity isn’t just the sole of wit, it is wit, and it’s classy.

Most things just don’t need so many words said about them.

A lot of people like to use phrases like “I don’t care.”

But if you need to constantly reaffirm that you don’t care, you care.

I really just don’t care about almost anything though... not enough to say more than a paragraph at most.

That should let you know just how sad it is that I’m reviewing the anime I just finished.

I could get away with reviewing any number of concepts but everything is overdone. Yes everything.

I used to want to write books but I realized there’s no longer anything worth writing a book about. They are already being written or were written before. Good luck with that catchy original title.

People with the vague desire to publish books really just need validation.

Need everyone to know how deep you are? Release a book with a title like “On Gossamer Wings” featuring post-postmodernist rhetoric.

Oh yeah so this anime...

It’s called Agame Ga Kill – very bloody, 2000 percent fan service, well constructed, good character development, very sad moments, and a bittersweet ending.

It’s definitely worth checking out if you like Kill La Kill or Attack On Titan.

**Rating B**

—GRANT SWALWELL  
MULTIMEDIA WRITER

**Do you have an idea for a review? Send it to the Pioneer!**  
Email to the Pioneer editor at [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu)



# Advisers address student concerns

**TREY BELL**

Staff Writer  
staffwriter2@occc.edu

The Academic Advising office does its best to ensure the enrollment process is smooth and efficient for all students. The volume of students can run high and errors can occur when details are overlooked.

Advising Director Tammy Madden said the Academic Advising office had over 22,000 visits in the fall. She said fine details can be crucial to each of these students. As an example, Madden discussed transfer credits.

"If you intend to transfer, meeting with an academic adviser is very important," Madden said. "The four-year institutions discern what credits will transfer."

Madden stresses the difference between peer advisers and academic advisers.

"Peer advisers mostly take on the roll of enrollment," Madden said. She said academic advisers plan the schedule for students," she said.

Madden said the college also offers faculty advisers to those with a declared degree program to assist with career planning and internships.

All students are assigned a faculty adviser when they declare a major, but students can change advisers through

the academic advising office.

Madden says, like with anything else, enrolling involves some risk.

Diversified Studies major Hannah Fiorello said her experience with the Academic Advising office didn't go as she'd hoped.

She said her adviser didn't seem interested in helping her.

"When I said I was going into psychology, he said he didn't know what that was and he would just put me in diversified studies," Fiorello said, "It seemed like a rushed decision."

Nursing major Abdi Mahdi said he also had a negative encounter with the Academic Advising office.

He said he was told that chemistry was not a required course, for his degree program, and in its place, took nutrition. He later found that chemistry was indeed necessary for graduation.

Mahdi said he also felt advisers had looked down on him as an international student.

"Because of my accent they think I'm less intelligent," Mahdi said, "But I'm no different than anyone else."

Enrollment Planning Coordinator Troy Williams oversees the peer advisers.

Williams said they take measures to avoid problems like these as much as possible.

"My first semester here I spent



Advisers Guy Nembhard and Laura Donner are hard at work in the Academic Advising office. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*

revising our training program," said Williams, "It is now a 4 week training program."

In the training program student workers learn the ins and outs of the Advising office. In week two they shadow other advisers. In the third, they are shadowed by other peer advisers. The final week has them shadow other offices to better understand how the school operates.

Peer Adviser Guy Nembhard said that extensive training pays off and has allowed him to enjoy his work more.

"I also like to personally connect

with students when I speak with them," Nembhard said.

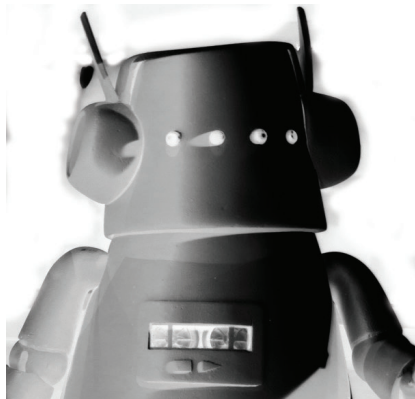
He said he would never look down on a student for their accent.

"I enjoy culture," Nembhard said. "My wife is Kenyan. I grew up in Jamaica, so when I got here, my accent was really thick."

Madden says the advising office is always open to helping all students succeed in their academic career and continues making strides toward this endeavor.

"We want to strengthen our availability across campus," Madden said.

# DJ's 'unusual production' all about love



**KW SIMPSON**

News Writing Student

A production that combines live music, film, and theater all in one spectacular hybrid adaptation will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 8.

Kid Koala's "Nufonia Must Fall" will be the most unusual production of the season, said Linda Bosteels, OCCC's

Performing Arts coordinator.

Eric San, better known by his stage name Kid Koala, is a producer and scratch DJ from Montreal.

He will be working along with Oscar-nominated director K.K. Barrett to present a unique stage adaptation of Kid Koala's graphic novel "Nufonia Must Fall" and accompanying sound track.

"It is a stage presentation with puppets, music, and film," Bosteels said. "There are 12 miniature stages that they have the puppets performing in. While the puppets are performing, they're filming and projecting onto a screen for the audience to view as if it were a movie."

In this monochromatic love tale, the headphone-wearing robot protagonist T4 tries to write a love song while lacking the ability to sing.

T4 seeks the affection of a girl, a

lonely dweller in the city where the story takes place.

The story will be accompanied by live scoring by Kid Koala himself along with the Afiara Quartet on piano, strings, and turntables.

Bosteels said the company has been touring the U.S. with their live stage adaptation in cities such as Nashville, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, New York and Minneapolis.

"We selected 'Nufonia Must Fall' because it is unique and offers so many possibilities for educational opportunities," Bosteels said. "There will be a showing for OCCC film students, one for the community, and a daytime show for area high school students."

Bosteels said she looks forward to seeing how Barrett and Kid Koala take the "page to the stage" in this unique coming-of-age love story.

Tickets are now on sale for \$45 for lower orchestra seats and \$26 to \$35 for upper orchestra seats.

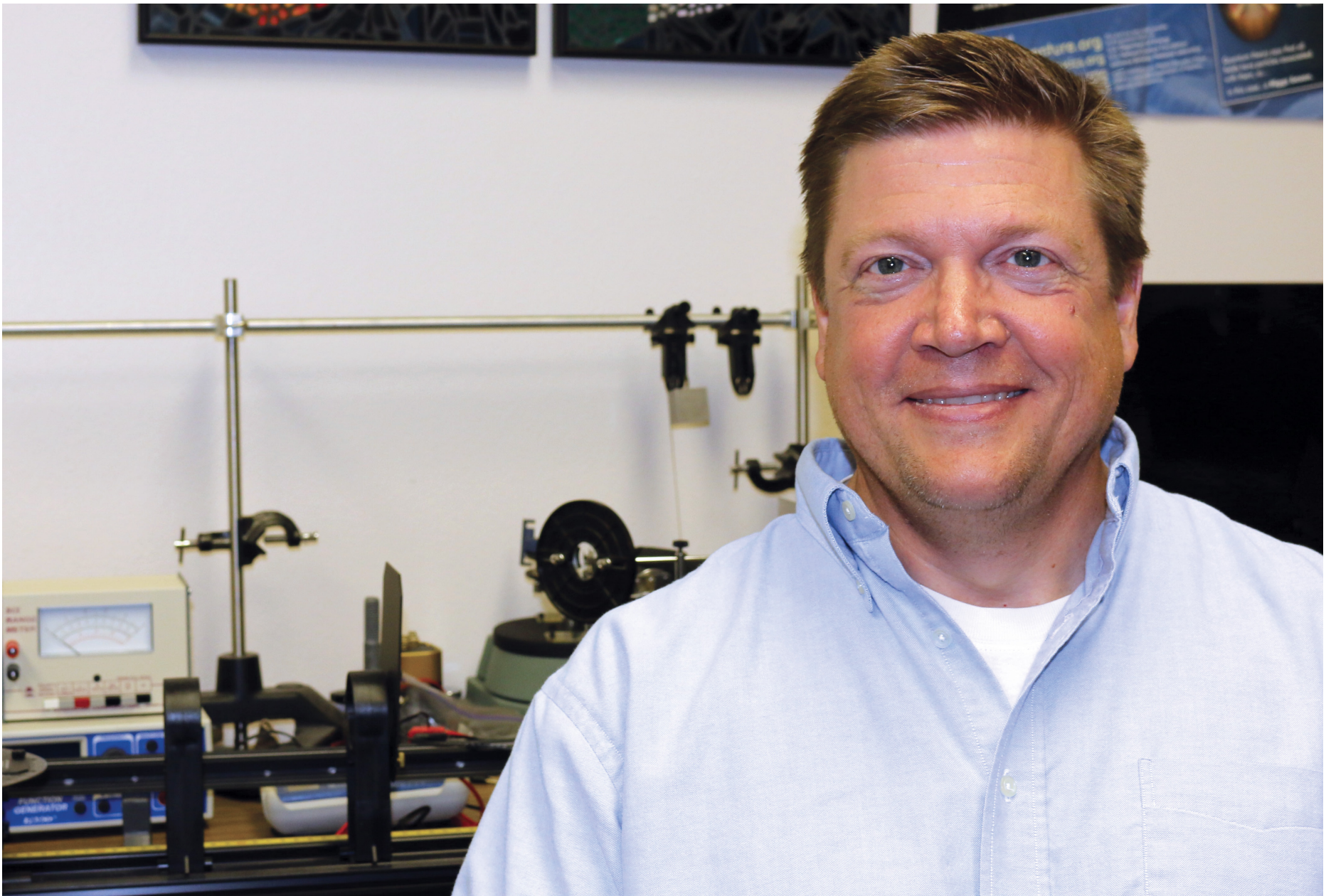
Tickets are free for all OCCC students.

If interested, students can bring their student IDs to the box office located in the Visual Performing Arts Center Atrium between noon and 5 p.m. before or on the night of the performance to receive two free tickets. Students can also visit the Cultural Programs office, also located in the Visual Performing Arts Center in room VPAC 161, to receive their tickets.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the Performing Arts Series website at [www.occc.edu/pas/](http://www.occc.edu/pas/) or contact the box office at (405) 682-7579.

For more information about "Nufonia Must Fall" and Kid Koala, you can visit [kidkoala.com](http://kidkoala.com).





Physics professor, Tad Thurston, sits at his desk and talks science, music and theater. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*

# Physics professor talks hobbies outside of college

**ERIKA FIERRO**

Staff Writer

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The love of science and the intention to help others is what brought Physics Professor Tad Thurston to teach at OCCC 12 years ago.

Thurston said his interest in science grew after he read the science fiction novel, "Contact" by Carl Sagan. The novel tells the story of an astrophysicist's mission to make the connection between human and extraterrestrial life.

Originally a declared engineering major, Thurston said he took an astronomy class on supernovas as he took his second year engineering courses.

Eventually, his interest in learning more about supernovas became greater than designing machine parts, Thurston said. As a result, he changed his major from engineering to astrophysics.

Thurston graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a bachelor's degree in Astrophysics and a master's and a doctoral degree in physics.

Thurston said his advice to students for success

is to learn their best study methods, manage their time, and engage with material a little bit every day.

"Generally the people who come here are people that are really trying, and it might be their last shot at an education, or might be their only shot because of finances," Thurston said.

"It just feels worthwhile, which is about the most you can ask of any job."

Thurston said working at OCCC has kept him close to science but has also been the place of lasting memories and the root of strong friendships.

He's made friends across campus, many of whom are from the English and Humanities or Arts departments, including his "bestie," Julie Corff, speech communications professor, Thurston said.

Although Thurston may be well-known to many in the science department and across campus, what they might not know is Thurston's drummer skills and his role in local theater.

With engineering professor Gregory Holland on the bass, biology professor, Julian Hilliard on one set of drums and Thurston on another, the only piece of the puzzle missing is a lead singer, Thurston said.

"We appreciate good rock music," Thurston said. "The three of us have gone to some concerts together. We saw RUSH this last summer."

Not only does the physics professor play drums as a hobby outside the classroom, but also he has recently taken the time to explore community theater.

Thurston said he appeared in the two-person play, "Four Poster," as Michael, husband of Agnes, in the Jewel Box Theater's production, directed by Terry Runnels, late last year.

"It was exhausting because with only two people, it's a lot of lines, and we had a big long character arc to go through," Thurston said.

"Four Poster," is a play which tells the story of a couple and their journey through their 35 year marriage, Thurston said.

"It was very dramatic. But now that it's over, I look back on it and I'm really proud of it."

Thurston also enjoys golfing and jogging in his spare time.

Thurston said he was born in Hampton, Virginia on an Air Force base but has been living in Oklahoma for 34 years.



## it's a small world

# International student has long-term plans in US

HUNG TRAN

Senior Writer  
seniorwriter@occc.edu

International students should have as many friends as possible so that they will never feel alone or isolated while they are living and studying in another country, business major Bing Xu Zhao said.

"I realized that making friends is very important — especially when your family is not here around you. So, I care more about the relationships with my friends here," she said.

Zhao said business was not her favorite subject when she first enrolled.

"Before I go to college, I don't know what I am going to do after I graduate, but many people around me choose to study business. That is the original reason, and I see studying in business will offer me more job opportunities after I graduate."

After two semesters taking business-related classes at OCCC, she became more confident in her initial decision.

Zhao said she enjoys OCCC because of the thoughtful and helpful professors.

"They understand the hard time international students have to suffer when they first come to America, so they always try to help us get through the problems," she said.

UCO will be her next destination to further her education after OCCC, Zhao said.

"OU is kind of far from my house right now. And I also like living in Edmond because I have many Chinese and Vietnamese friends at UCO," she said.

Zhao's hometown is located in Northeast China, which has four distinct seasons in a year, she said.

"For example, in winter, we have very big snows and we can build snowmans. I can feel the real winter time in my country. Summer is also really hot."

Compared to her hometown, she said, Oklahoma's weather is unpredictable.

"Sometimes, the day is really hot, but the night is really cold and windy," she said. "We also do not have tornadoes in where I live."

One thing that Oklahoma and her hometown have in



Bing Xu Zhao

common are friendly and kind people.

She said she had to face a lot of struggles when she first came to Oklahoma. One of the big problems was interaction with new people, she said.

Zhao said after two years living in America, she has had a lot of opportunities to get to know many people from many different countries and cultures all around the world.

"I think America is a multicultural country," she said. Although the way Americans celebrate their holidays is totally different from her country, she thinks she can adapt quickly to that.

"It is OK for me with the difference between America and my country's culture because each country has its unique culture," Zhao said. "When I came here, I have to

obey American culture."

"I contact with my family twice a month. That depends on how busy I am."

She said she currently does not have any plans to return to her country soon.

"I think I want to graduate from university here and try to get a good job in order to make a living. I want to live in America."



## China

**Capital:** Beijing

**Population:** 1.357 billion (2013)

**GDP:** 6,807.43 USD (2013)

**Size:** 3.705 million mi<sup>2</sup>

**Official Language:** Standard Mandarin

**Currency:** Renminbi

**Government:** Communist

**Religion:** Buddhism, Taoism, Islam and Catholicism

**Details:** China, a communist nation in East Asia, is the world's most populous country. Its vast landscape encompasses grassland, desert, mountain ranges, lakes, rivers and 14,500km of coastline. Beijing, the capital, mixes modern architecture with historic sites including sprawling Tiananmen Square.





## SPORTS



**Staying fit:** Chadwick Gates, EMT paramedic major, visits the Wellness Center six times a week. "I like to be healthy and stay fit," Gates said. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*

## Social Dance free to students

IAN MANERA

Sports Writer

sportswriter@occc.edu

Aspiring dancers of any caliber at OCCC can put on their dancing shoes and try out the Social Dance Club being offered on campus this semester, said Dance Instructor Elizabeth Hobi.

The Social Dance Club is a fitness class that teaches students how to properly dance with a partner, Hobi said. She said she teaches her students a variety of dances.

"Right now, we're working all waltz, but it rotates," she said.

"We could be doing waltz, or cha-cha, or rumba. We also do West Coast swing, which is very popular amongst young people now. It's a lot of fun."

While the dance class is dependant on having a partner, Hobi said, students don't have to bring a partner to partake in the class.

"... People think that if you show up without a partner, you don't have anyone to dance with. We rotate partners."

Hobi said people may be intimidated by dance classes because they have little experience, but this class is for beginners.

"Most people are afraid to take a dance class because they're afraid they're going to be the only person in the class that doesn't know anything," she said.

"You don't have to know anything at all. Absolutely nothing at all. All you have to do is be able to walk."

The accessibility of the class makes it great for students who want to pick up a new skill, Hobi said.

"It's a great way to broaden your horizons," she said.

"Take a little bit of West Coast swing, you can start going out to clubs, and feel confident and be able to dance with people."

Hobi said the only things required for the class are shoes

with slick soles at the bottom.

She said students shouldn't wear athletic shoes that are normally meant for running.

The class, like all of the other fitness classes offered on campus, is free for students with a valid OCCC ID.

"This is a great opportunity for students to have dance instruction for free," she said.

"Social dance classes for partner dancing are usually very expensive."

The Social Dance Club meets from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. Tuesday evenings in the Wellness Center group fitness room on the first floor of the Main Building.

For more information about any of the fitness classes being offered at OCCC this semester, visit [www.occc.edu/rf/wellness-classes.html](http://www.occc.edu/rf/wellness-classes.html) or contact Recreation and Fitness at 405-682-7860.



## SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Final Four

Saturday, April 2nd, 5:09 p.m. on CBS

**Player to watch:** As in the regular season, Oklahoma Sooners guard Buddy Hield has been the talk of the tournament. The Sooners convincingly beat their most recent opponents in the tournament, Oregon and Texas A&M, handily, en route to their first Final Four appearance since 2002. Hield is the main reason, averaging an incredible 29.3 points per game. In Oklahoma's Elite 8 match up against first seed Oregon, Hield scored 37 points, including a tournament-high 8 three-pointers. Hield has made the entire sporting world his fan base, not just Oklahoma sports fans. He'll likely scoop up the Wooden Award, given to the best player in the country, and time will tell if he can lead Oklahoma to the first national championship in school history.

**Reason to watch:** At this point, your bracket is probably in shambles. Most of our brackets were in shambles midway through the second day of the tournament. My friend's mother is going to end up winning our group this year, which says a lot. Even if that's the case, this tournament has been a joy to watch from the start all the way up to the remaining four teams that are left. Half court buzzer beaters, upsets, and some seriously talented players have been on display during this year's big dance, and the conclusion will be just as exciting. Obviously, you've heard about Buddy Hield and the Sooners by now. But, the University of North Carolina Tarheels have been rolling through teams, and the Villanova Wildcats knocked off top-seeded Kansas in the Elite 8. Syracuse defied all odds and made it to the Final Four the year after this self-imposed postseason ban for tampering, which is a true Hollywood story if I've ever seen one (kind of). The tournament's end will simply be must watch sports.

Oklahoma City Thunder @ Houston Rockets

Sunday, April 3rd, 2:30 p.m. on ABC

**Player to watch:** While the Rockets haven't had the best season, former Thunder shooting guard James Harden put up great numbers for the team. Harden's averaging career highs in points per game, assists and rebounds. However, this isn't necessarily as good as it sounds. Harden's also putting up a career low in three-point shooting percentage, as well as shooting just 43 percent from the field. In addition to those numbers, Harden's averaging a career high in usage rate, meaning a lot of the Rocket's offensive possessions involve Harden. So, in all honesty, while those numbers are great, they aren't as efficient as they should be. Still, Harden played well in match ups against the Thunder this season and he should have another great game.

**Reasons to watch:** The Houston Rockets have had a tumultuous season, to say the least. Star shooting guard James Harden came into the season overweight, and the Rockets got off to a very bad start they haven't recovered from. There were even rumors that their two star players, Harden and center Dwight Howard, were trying to get each other traded before the trade deadline. It hasn't been the year that the Rockets envisioned after reaching the Western Conference Finals just last season. However, they can attempt to save some face by at least reaching the playoffs. The Rockets are currently locked in a battle for the 8th seed with the Dallas Mavericks, and every game is important. The Thunder are currently playing some of the best basketball they've played all year, and this game should be very fun.



# International students: cultural experiences, learning offered

Continued from Page 1

## ESL Conversation Group

Communications Lab Assistant Tonja Nelson, who runs the English as a Second Language Conversation Group, said it's a place for international students to improve their understanding of American culture by practicing the language.

"It helps them to build their confidence. It can give them a place that they feel more connected," she said. "I also focus on the knowledge building, the vocabulary, the pronunciation."

The group includes English speakers and non-English speakers. She said this semester the group includes students from Vietnam, Korea, Iran and El Salvador.

"Each week, I send out an email to let you know about the schedule and topic that we are going to be talking about, so everybody is on the same page," she said. "Last week, we had an Internet game. I have a smart board, and I pull up this game on the Internet. It shows a little piece of clue and we try to guess what that was on that little clue, and some of them would guess it wrong and I would pull up the answer."

To participate in the ESL Conversation Group, OCCC students can attend any of the meetings held at 2 p.m. every Monday, in the Communications Lab, room 1N7, and at 12:30 p.m. in the Visual Performing Arts Center, room 146.

For more information, contact Nelson at [tnelson@occc.edu](mailto:tnelson@occc.edu) or at 405 682 1611 ext. 7150.

## World Languages and Cultures Center

World Languages and Cultures Center Coordinator, Chiaki Troutman said the lab was established in 2008 with the specific intention of assisting OCCC's international student body but it has succeeded because of its welcoming atmosphere.

"International students have many choices on campus where they can come and study such as the

communication lab, the library, or in classes. However, many of them choose to come to the (WLCC) lab because they feel more comfortable with the assistance here," Troutman said.

"It is not a class, it is more like a resource library or resource center. We usually assist newcomer students to access programs such as English programs or Microsoft programs," Troutman said. "Some students do not know how to use Microsoft programs or computer programs to access Moodle, or how to find their grade, or those kind of similar things. Therefore, we are here to help them."

She said international students usually first visit her lab because some English professors require it. After they've finished with their English classes, most of the students return and visit the lab regularly.

She said foreign students come because they can meet friends who come from their country, even if they are studying in different classes.

"In class, they do not have too many chances to talk, so after class, they come here to relax, chat and talk with each other," Troutman said.

Students from Vietnam, the Middle East, China, South Korea, Indonesia and Africa and other countries frequent the lab.

"In order to make them feel comfortable, I always try to greet them and smile with them," she said. "International students are really nice and kind."

The WLCC is located on the second floor of the Main Building.

The WLCC is open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Thursday, and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

For more information, contact Troutman at [ctroutman@occc.edu](mailto:ctroutman@occc.edu) or at 405 682-1611 ext. 7104.

## International Student Association

Azara Baraze, the president of the International Student Association said her student organization offers a unique social experience for students abroad.

"You don't want a college experience which is just all about coming to school, going to classes. You want to do outside activities. You want to get to know Oklahoma, to go outside to meet people, you want to have friends," Baraze said.

She said the club's purpose is to gather international students on campus and let them get to know each other and share their thoughts on culture with one another.

"This club gave us an opportunity to make friends," Baraze said.

The ISA provides both on and off-campus activities.

"We play a lot of games, especially culture games. We also have a map and we try to let people guess which country is it," she said. "The last time we met, we played a game called 'How to say Hello', and through it I learned how to say 'Hello' in seven different languages."

Student Life Assistant Director Kendra Fringer said the ISA's off campus activities vary each semester.

"They've gone to events in Tulsa before in order to join some festivals and some different cultural activities. I know that they've done that here in Oklahoma City as well," she said.

Baraze said ISA's members originate from many different countries including South Korea, China, Vietnam, Iran, Morocco, Cameroon and Nigeria.

Students interested in joining ISA can apply online through Student Life page at OCCC's website. From there, students can simply click "Join a Club" and look for ISA.

There are no charges for registration, and food and drinks are served during each meeting.

The International Students Association meets this semester from 12:30 p.m. to 1:20 p.m., on April 7, April 21 and May 5 at Visual and Performing Arts Center, room 122.

For more information, contact Baraze at [isa@my.occc.edu](mailto:isa@my.occc.edu)



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# CAMPUS COMMUNITY



Guitarist Edgar Cruz performs around the metro area at such places as the University of Central Oklahoma Jazz Lab and the historic Skirvin Hotel in downtown Oklahoma city.

Left photo courtesy of Pinterest. Right photo by Georgia Wood/Pioneer

## Professional guitarist got his start at OCCC

**GEORGIA WOOD**

Community Writer  
communitywriter@occc.edu

Local acclaimed guitarist Edgar Cruz has been named Oklahoma's top performing artist by the Gazette each year for the last 10 years.

He's toured Europe and Mexico, and regularly performs at his alma mater—OCCC.

It was 1980 when Edgar Cruz graduated from Northwest Classen High School.

Cruz said, at the time, he didn't think he was good enough to go to a major college. He said he didn't know he could be a college student but he knew he had a dream. A dream that didn't include working for somebody else.

"I was selling stuff out of my car," he said. "It was terrible. The worst part was I was doing it for someone else."

Cruz said modeled himself after his father, Manuel Cruz, who worked for himself as an independent musician and photographer in Oklahoma City.

"My father was a huge inspiration for me, he also played music," Cruz said.

As a child Cruz would accompany his father to gigs at restaurants.

It was at those gigs, while being tipped just a few dollars at a time, that Cruz began learning a vast repertoire of music including classical works and standards.

Cruz said he has never been a very good singer.

He learned that he would have to rely instead on his instrumental skills.

It was this search for knowledge that led Cruz to enroll at OCCC shortly after he'd graduated high school.

"A friend of mine talked me into going up to OCCC to look at their program," Cruz said. "An hour later I was enrolled in 12 credit hours."

"I suddenly felt like somebody, like I had a goal in life," he said. "It was comfortable and not a lot of pressure."

As a student at OCCC, Cruz learned how to play piano and play bass in a choir. He learned music theory and most importantly, he learned to play in front of people with both skill and integrity.

Cruz now often brings a second guitarist in to play with him. He played recently with Thom Bresh, country music singer, musician and impressionist.

"Edgar is always a pleasure to visit," Bresh said. "He is fun to be around, and besides all that, he's a really talented dude."

After Cruz graduated from OCCC in 1982, he chose to continue his education.

In 1986, Cruz was in the first class of graduates from Oklahoma City University's guitar program. Now, Cruz is a member of OCCC's Alumni Hall of Fame.

As an independent musician, Cruz said he's required to take on many roles. Along with his other tasks, Cruz designs his own CD covers and books over 200 shows per year.

To see where Cruz is playing around you, visit [edgarcruz.com](http://edgarcruz.com).

## CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

### Take the next step in nursing April 6

Nursing students can start preparing to receive a bachelor of science in nursing degree at the RN-2-BSN Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, in the College Union 3. Many regional universities will be in attendance. For more information go to [occc.edu/get/](http://occc.edu/get/).

### Practice being interviewed April 6

Students looking to enhance their interviewing skills to better prepare for the workforce are invited to attend a mock interview session, from noon to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, in College Union 2. Students will have the opportunity to practice interviews with GET personnel and other students. The event is hosted by the Graduation, Employment, and Transfer services office. For information contact them at 405-682-7519 or by email at [employmentservices@occc.edu](mailto:employmentservices@occc.edu).

### Kid Koala's 'Nufonia Must Fall' April 8

See the preview from news writing student KW Simpson on Page 5 of the Pioneer.

### Service Learning Opportunity on April 8

Join volunteers and Student Life on a day of service as they pack boxes of food from 8 a.m. to noon, on Friday, April 8, at Feed the Children's distribution center. The event is an opportunity for students to receive Civic Honors credit. Feed the Children is an organization with a mission to end childhood hunger. To volunteer contact the Student Life office at 405-682-7523 or register for the event at <http://www.occc.edu/studentlife/>.

### 'Water Matters' series continues, April 12

Students, staff, and employees are invited to attend and listen to Business and Economics Professor Charles Wayne Myrick as he leads a discussion, "Economics and Your Water Footprint." The discussion runs from 12:20 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, in College Union 3. Myrick will also discuss the vitality of water as part of the production process. For more information contact the OCCC library at 405-682-7564.

**All Highlights are due Monday by noon for inclusion in the next issue of the Pioneer. Please email your upcoming event details to [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu) or stop in to the Pioneer office located in AH 1F2.**



CLASSIFIEDS

Pioneer classified advertising is free to all enrolled OCCC students and employees for any personal classified ad. Ad applications must be submitted with IDs supplied by 5 p.m. Fridays prior to the next publication date. For more information, call the Ad Manager at 405-682-1611, ext. 7674, or e-mail [adman@occc.edu](mailto:adman@occc.edu).

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—Rosaldo Martinez

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WEEKLY CROSSWORD

**Across**

1. Rodeo rope  
6. Advertising emblem  
10. Not nearby  
14. Director Woody \_\_\_\_  
15. Primates  
16. Alley  
17. Hangar occupant  
18. For each person (2 wds.)  
20. Open shoe  
22. Raise  
23. Directed  
24. Manchester's country (abbr.)  
25. Volcanic rock  
27. Disintegrate  
29. Roasting rod  
30. Certain leathers  
34. Approach  
38. Eve's home  
40. Rattler, e.g.  
41. Agreeable  
43. Summer drink (2 wds.)  
45. Type of bean  
46. Bread topping  
48. Brashness  
49. Show up  
51. Beige  
53. Compass reading (abbr.)  
54. Penn or Connery  
55. Roberto's "two"  
58. Certain dashes  
61. Pub brews  
63. Bemoan  
65. Hunting dog  
68. Hobby wood  
69. Diva's solo  
70. Very little  
71. Metric measure  
72. Categorize  
73. Besides that  
74. Overjoy

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**Down**

1. Slip-up  
2. Edgar \_\_\_\_ Poe  
3. Street talk  
4. Forward  
5. Shaquille and Tatum  
6. Drink like a dog  
7. Perform surgery  
8. Richard \_\_\_\_ of "Pretty Woman"  
9. Movie awards  
10. Swiss peak  
11. Flunk  
12. Poker word  
13. Enjoy a book  
19. Stir up  
21. Jacket part  
26. MTV feature  
28. Looks after  
31. Computer fodder  
32. Squeaks by  
33. Oceans  
34. California valley  
35. Discharge  
36. Slangy negative  
37. Evaluates  
39. Sister's daughter  
42. Dwarfed shrub  
44. Reef material  
47. Reduces  
50. Remove  
52. Incapable  
55. River mouth  
56. Beginning  
57. Fixed gaze  
58. Distinct times  
59. Fiddling emperor  
60. Recipe verb  
62. Like a villain  
64. Send a letter  
66. Squeal  
67. Seeded bread

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# Club works to support its graduates



**INDIAN TACOS:** (BELOW) Janice Braxton, administrative assistant at Pathways Middle College (left), happily waiting for her Indian taco, prepared by Perry Toppah, health professions major, and Samantha Harris, business major. On Feb. 24, The Native American Student Association (NASA) was selling Indian tacos to raise money for their association. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*



**ROOT BEER FLOATS:** Timothy Thornton, psychology major, visits the table of the Native American Student Association for a root beer float from Tracy Eilbeck, NASA's secretary on March 23. "The fundraisers that we do are to help the students who are graduating, to pay for their gown and sash. Also we get to do an activity at the end of the semester," Eilbeck said. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*

# Garage sale to raise funds for scholarships

**ERIKA FIERRO**

Staff Writer

staffwriter4@occc.edu

A large flat screen TV will be among the items for sale at the Faculty Association garage sale which will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, April 6 and 7, in College Union 1.

The garage sale will raise funds for student scholarships, said librarian and committee co-chair Ann Raia.

"There's going to be a little bit of everything from houseware items, to books, kids toys, sunglasses, and electronics," Raia said.

Set priced items include paperback books at \$1, hardback books at \$2, children's clothing at \$1, and adult clothes at \$2, Raia said. Coats and jackets are priced at \$5.

Cash, check, and all credit cards are accepted as payment options, Raia said. There are no additional fees for credit card payments.

Anyone interested in donating items for the garage sale can drop them off during setup hours from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Tuesday, April 5, in College

Union 1.

Simultaneously, the "Be a Scholarship Superhero" silent auction will take place and those items will be displayed in OCCC's Bookstore windows, said Tricia Sweany, librarian and association co-chair.

Bid sheets will be available outside the bookstore windows.

Sweany said the auction offers various baskets filled with items donated by the different divisions across campus.

Campus Police donated a survivalist basket which includes two different types of lifestraws, a filter designed to remove waterborne bacteria and parasites from water for drinking, a weather radio, and more, Sweany said. The "Every Woman is a Wonder Woman," basket has facial and massage gift cards, lotions, and jewelry.

A tornado readiness basket will also be up for auction, Sweany said. The basket was donated by the Health Professions division.

Winners of the silent auction will be announced no later than Friday, April 8, Sweany said.

High bidders do not need to be present to win.

Cash, check or credit card payment is due at the time of pick up.

All proceeds raised from the garage sale and silent auction will be used to fund Faculty Association student scholarships, Sweany said.

"In mid to late April we will begin soliciting faculty for nominees," Raia said. Because this is a faculty nominated scholarship, Students who wish

to be nominated must have a faculty member who is willing to put their name forward.

Scholarships will be awarded to students before the end of the spring semester.

For more information about the fundraisers, contact co-chairs Tricia Sweany at 405-682-1611, ext. 7416, or Ann Raia at 405-682-1611, ext. 7468.

