

PIONEER

OCCC grad going to Cannes Film Festival

YOSUKE SHINGU
News Writing Student

“Oh my god, I’m going to France. We are going to Cannes!”

These words came from Bunee Tomlinson, OCCC’s first Film and Video Production graduate to be selected for the prestigious French film festival.

He was speaking during an interview April 10 in Oklahoma City.

His documentary is called “Bunee: The Boy from Constanta.”

The film will be shown as one of 23 finalists from around the globe as part of the American Pavilion Emerging Filmmaker Showcase at the Cannes Film Festival in May.

This 15-minute documentary is about Tomlinson’s personal growth after surviving the first six years of his life in the dreadful Romanian orphanage system of the 1980s and ‘90s.

Tommy and Susan Tomlinson fell in love with the little boy in Oct. 1988 as they watched a video of Bunee

sent to an Oklahoma City adoption agency. The Romanian orphanage system sent videos of the children available for adoption to organizations around the world that served people seeking to adopt.

The couple adopted him by Christmas that year. Tomlinson was just 6 years old when he crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the U.S.

Bunee was drawn to video storytelling.

“He always liked the cameras, and he always had to be taking videos,” said his father Tommy Tomlinson. “I think he got serious about filmmaking when he was in sixth grade. He was taking video-making classes.”

Bunee Tomlinson started the film that was later accepted to Cannes in an OCCC documentary film class last year.

Now Bunee is studying film at Santa Fe University of Art and Design in New Mexico on a Redford/Milagro Initiative Scholarship.

He credits his professor with

See TOMLINSON Page 9



Bunee Tomlinson. Photo Provided.



Photography major Aubrey Meneses and nursing major Ryan Middleton are gathering participants for their new LGBTQ club Sexuality And Gender Acceptance (SAGA). Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer

New LGBTQ club puts focus on ‘T’

LENORA LAVICTOIRE
Editor
editor@occc.edu

OCCC has not had an active lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer student club on campus for at least two years.

Two students, Aubrey Meneses and Ryan Middleton, are working to change that.

“We for sure need one of these spaces like this here on campus because every—I mean almost every—other school does have a space for LGBTQ students,” said Meneses, a photography major and junior at Pathways Middle College high school

on campus.

Her club SAGA, Sexuality and Gender Acceptance, will follow in the footsteps of other OCCC LGBTQ focused clubs including LIFE and the Gay-Straight Alliance.

“We noticed that there was not an LGBTQ club currently active,” said Middleton, a nursing major.

“There was a former one but it kind of just fell apart.

“We’re trying to focus really on trans and gender nonconforming people because we feel that we really need that representation here,” he said.

The two are currently recruiting

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EDITORIAL/OPINION

EDITORIAL | Media consumers may be losing all sense of what is information and what is propaganda

Journalistic standards betrayed for blogs



GRANT
SWALWELL

The blogosphere is a series of loud echo chambers filled with bloggers blogging to other bloggers and sharing op-eds citing other op-eds.

The court ruling against Gawker and for Hulk Hogan was a win for standards in journalism, but it wasn't enough.

There is an economic bubble of media that is attempting to be informative, while ad-hungry social media platforms hunt for the next viral video.

Thankfully, social media apps are starting to play out. People seem to be getting enough from Vine, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, Periscope, Twitter, Tinder, and whatever else. There appears to be a limit to how much frivolous information someone can disseminate and consume. Sadly, there is still an entire industry built around the perspective of writers on the news instead of news with the perspectives of writers.

"The Media" does not inform the public. It misleads it in whatever way the consumer chooses. Websites from the opposing team have lower standards and are practically propaganda, while headlines in support of your beliefs do not raise a similar level of skepticism.

People needing their ideas reinforced can find content on the internet in spades, but a lot of companies are trying to turn a profit through ad revenue that is declining. Media companies have not yet discovered how to enact micro transactions for articles or subscriptions. This model has supported a high-intensity, low-quality feedback loop of bad journalism. Blogs claim to be magazines or relevant sources of information rather than the opinion of unqualified millennials.

When I started my job at the Pioneer I was excited to share my opinion, but now it is extremely difficult.

I want to inform the public, but what on earth do I have to inform the public about? I've conducted no research, I've never worked in the field, I haven't written a book. Nothing qualifies me to share my opinion, but the situation is so bad in terms of information quality I feel almost obligated as an inherently skeptical person, but without well researched and thought out points I can only add to the problem. What if someone cited one of my lies in an argument? What if someone took me too seriously?

With so many people screaming, how do you hear someone whisper?

Sadly, today's answer in journalism is to supplant fact with anecdote, conjecture and spurious correlation. The recipe for the day is writing from internal logic instead of external reality. Blogposts and "news" articles with headlines supporting your point do not prove anything. They are only "right" to you within your own ideology.

Sadly in place of good and bad newspapers you may only find between blue and red garbage. To stay informed now just means being current on your teams propaganda.

Thankfully no media conspiracy is at play (probably). Instead the market has just not caught up with the internet. Corporate modeled Buzzfeed turned TV and news into ad revenues. However, blanket advertising is ineffective against the growing popularity of adblock software. The market is changing.

Today I mostly read good articles in the Economist, but they are behind a paywall. I have a snip of code to bypass it tagged "Basic Economics." I will miss the irony when they improve their website.

—GRANT SWALWELL
MULTIMEDIA WRITER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR | Letter carriers across Oklahoma will be collecting donations of canned goods to feed those with inconsistent access to food

Leave some cans by the mailbox to stamp out hunger

To the Editor:

On Saturday, May 14, letter carriers in more than 190 cities in central and western Oklahoma will "Stamp Out Hunger" by collecting canned food donations from households on their route.

To help "Stamp Out Hunger," fill the plastic donation bag you receive in your mailbox the week of May 9, or any plastic bag, with canned food donations and place it by your mailbox on Saturday, May 14, before your letter carrier arrives.

Your letter carrier will do the rest.

"The Letter Carriers' Food Drive is more important than ever," said Rodney Bivens, executive director of the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma. "During the summer, utility bills skyrocket and children, who usually receive meals at school, may not have enough to eat. "We are asking the community to help us by donating canned items through the Letter Carriers' Food Drive. Together, we can solve hunger."

Monetary donations can also be made online at feedinghope.org or by calling 405.600.3136. Every dollar donated will provide five meals for Oklahomans with inconsistent access to food.

As the demand for food assistance continues to rise, the Regional Food Bank depends upon the generosity of the community to support its mission of "Fighting Hunger...Feeding Hope."

For more information about the Letter Carriers' Food Drive, ask your letter carrier, contact your local post office, or call Angie Doss at 405-604-7109 or email adoss@regionalfoodbank.org.

—ANGIE GAINES DOSS
REGIONAL FOOD BANK OF OKLAHOMA

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>.



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Film majors Thomas Royall, David McEntire and Sam Taylor at work in the college courtyard. *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer.*

Digital Cinema is the name

HADEN TOLBERT
News Writing Student

For the last 16 years, students at OCCC have been majoring in Film and Video Production.

Starting this fall semester, that will change. The program will, from that point on, be known as Digital Cinema Production.

"We don't use film, and we don't use video," said Professor Gray Frederickson. "Everything now is digital."

Frederickson said he predicted that years ago, when everyone was pressuring him to purchase a film camera for the program he started.

Instead, the Oscar winning producer purchased a digital camera.

It was the decision that set the future of the program.

Out of everything that is taught in the program, none of it has to do with film.

Frederickson said he has been trying for years to change the program's name.

According to him, the college didn't want to change the name because everyone knew it as Film and Video.

"They know it because people call it that all the time," Frederickson said.

It wasn't until Frederickson's old friend and award-winning director Francis Ford Coppola came to visit the college over the summer, to attempt his live-cinema project, that they were able to convince the college to change the name.

"They never listened to me, but when they heard that Francis said that, they said ok," Frederickson said jokingly.

Frederickson said that some younger students don't even recognize film when he shows it to them.

He said that film isn't relevant today. Even in the professional industry, film is a rare commodity that few directors use.

Very few directors use it, and even then they have to convert their footage into a digital medium.

Most theaters across the nation and throughout the world no longer have the ability to show true films.

Former OCCC student, and current adjunct professor Jason Gwynn documented the process of transitioning to solely digital at a local Oklahoma theater.

His documentary, "Going Dark," was broadcast on television and won an Emmy award.

Frederickson said that the main reasons film is no longer being used is the price.

Frederickson listed some of the costs of running film, including: upkeep of camera, the price of raw film, processing and developing footage, and finally editing and prints.

If OCCC were to do all this for every student project and assignment, it would cost a small fortune, Frederickson said.

And as for the video portion of the program title, Frederickson said, "we don't make wedding videos at OCCC."

For more information about the Digital Cinema Production program, contact Gray Frederickson at his email harry.g.frederickson@occc.edu.

<http://pioneer.occc.edu>

GRADUATES

Announcing the graduating class

The following students have applied for May graduation. Diplomas will be granted after credentials are completed and degree requirements are met. Students who expect to fulfill degree requirements may participate in the May commencement ceremony.

Spring 2016 Graduates

Leila Abu-Robb, Carrie Ackley, Tyler Adams, Andrew Addison, Elizabeth Adegoke, Nosarieme Adima, Jesse Ahern, Taylor Aiello, Francisco Albert, Jonathan Ariel Aldana Perez.

Tariq Alfateel, Amr Alhuraibi, Melissa Allen, Tammy Allen, Trey Allen, Kyle Allen, Jesse Allen, Kenneth Allen, Danielle Allison, Janet Alvarez, Erick Alvarez Menchu, Emad Ali Alwesaibie, Chad Amrein, Graham Anang Adamah, Taylor Ancik, Rebecca Anderson, Melanie Anderson, Ayd-heel Anzo, Sean Archibald, Trevor Armitage, Glenda Armstrong, Jasmin Arredondo, Judith Arrieta, Lacey Arvizu McMullen, Eugene Atkinson, Will Atouchwi, Susan Atwell, Mallonie Atwood, Rhonda Audette, Lindsay Austin, Brandon Austin, Brittini Aylor.

Sara Babb, Tyler Baker, Kami Baker, Rebecca Baldwin, Chris Bales, Nicole Ballinger, Abu Bangura, Sydney Barker, Taylor Barnes, Sean Barnette, Janie Barr, Jonathan Barstow, Staci Barton, John Basgall, Tericka Bates, Julie Baublitz, Meghan Bauer, Vincent Baza, Morgan Beavers, Casada Beckwith, Sylvia Beddingfield, Stephen Begay, David Belk, Lamont Bell, Heather Bennett, Stephanie Bentley, Ajeminayanate Berepele, Melissa Bergeron, Jenifer Bergman.

Kiliana Bergstresser, Meghin Berko, Jayvun Berry, Jennifer Bijan, Cynthia Bishop, Alexis Bjork, James Black, Chelcie Black, Devynna Blackwelder, Elisabeth Blair, Melissa Blankenship, Andrew Blue, Benjamin Bobbitt, Tayler Boggs, Jennifer Bohannon, Abigail Bolin, Isabelle Bolin, Michele Bolin, Stacy Bolser, Courtney Boone, Charles Bostick, Hannah Boswell, Stephen Boulden, Brandon Bourassa, Richard Bowen, Kirsta Bowles, James Boyd, April Boyd, Michelle Boykin, Julijana Bozhinovska, Paula Bradford, Joseph Branco, Samuel Brandon.

Channing Bray, Ty'shena Brazille, Madison Brewer, Meagan Bridgforth, Crystal Brightwell, Thomas Brock, Brandon Brooks, Courtney Brown, Hunter Brown, Sara Brown, Dawn Brown, Amanda Brown, Michael Brown, Walter Brunner, Kristen Bryant, Cindy Bui, Linh Bui, Kevin Bui, Quynh Bui, Elisabeth Bullock, Melat Bulti, Phyllis Burk, Amanda Burk, Angelia Burkhart, Jacob Burnett, Sarah Burns, Amanda Burns, Taylor Burns, Aislinn Burrows, Carly Buss, Kelly Butner.

Christina Butzer, Marisela Cadena, Julie Campbell, Scott Campbell, Mikayla Canaday, Bridget Cannon, Patricia Carnes, Rose Carselowey, James Carter, Kelly Carter, Monisa Carter, Morgan Carter, Jessica Cary, Christian Castro-Nieto.

Sean Cusack, Andrew Czeropski, Natalie Dalby, Britanie Dallas, Xuan Phi Dang, Kenny Dang,



Jonathan Daniel, Hunter Daniels, Cody David, Kyle Davis, Emily Davis, Zachary Davis, Kathryn Davis, David De la Rosa, Charlena De Leon, Ian Dean, Riley DeArmond, Madison Degraffenreid, Vladimir Del Bosque, Gaudy DeLeon, Stephen Dellinger, Mayra Delossantos, Kyle Devries.

Dallas Diamond, Nicole Diaz, Dalia Diaz, Jairo Diaz, George Dick, Tracy Dilbeck, Kaitlyn Dillard, Anthony Dillard, Sakinatou Djantchiemo, Yannick Djomo, Hoan Doan, Dustin Donaghe, Jerret Donaldson, Emmanuel Donkor, Ian Donovan, Myeasha Dorman, Andrina Doty, Cortney Dove, Khadejah Drakes, Branden Dufour, Carly Duncan-Griffis, Hien Duong, Vinh Duong, Ermilo Duque, Fransua Durazo, Gary Durham, Jimmy Dutton, Celisha Duty, Diana Dzara.

Erikka Eaton, Kaci Eckmann, Kristy Ekhooff, Gabriel Elizardo, Ahmed Elkhatib, Jessica Elliott, Marissa Elliott, Haley Ellison, Kristin Elsenbeck, Andrew Emerson, Michael Emerson, Stephanie Emperly, Courtney Engel, Kameo Ernst, Perla Esparza, Marisela Esparza, Jonathan Espinoza, Kortney Espitia, Jonathan Estrada, Hilda Estrada, Karen Evans.

Sharna Faerber, Charles Fagans, Asako Fahrenthold, Jasmin Farmer, Dirk Farris, William Feezor, Chase Ferrell, Mardesia Finch, Patrick Finn, Ashton Fisher, Randell Fixico, Michelle Fleck, Aaron Fleehtart, Juan Flores, Roselynn Floyd, Karen Foster, Hunter Foster, Rebecca Fountain, Jacob Fourcade, James Fox, Brodie Frazier, Elizabeth Freer, Rudy Frescas, Nichole Funk.

Dakota Gaines, John Gaines, Matthew Gallea, Isaac Gallegos, Nicthed Garay, John Gardner, Claudia Garibay, Justin Garrett, Meranda Garrett, Ashley Garrison, Kevin Garrison, Roena Gateley, Julie Gentry, Maureen Georgiadis, Vincent Giambaresi, Chasity Gibson.

Leette Gilbert, Aaron Gilks, Bronte Gill, Johnnie Gilpen, Timothy Girkin, Michael Glancy, Bruce Godwin, Olivia Goff, Jonathan Gold, Charles Golden, Anacely Gomez, Monica Gordon, Lacey Gordon, Vinu Gowda, Brianna Grady-Buchanan, Kayln Graf, Julie Graham, Brittany Graham, Odlanier Grajales,

Jeremy Grassi, Christopher Graves, Jacqueline Gray, Zane Gray, Josiah Grayson, Sarah Green, Kendra Green, Ken Greenshields, Danielle Grenier, Robin Grunhof, Jose Guerrero, Kristie Guidry, Christian Gutierrez, Tiffany Gutierrez, Isabel Gutierrez.

Amanda Hacker, Brendan Hackett, Daphne Haddad, Mary-Beth Hafer, Karen Hamm, Nathan Hammond, Amanda Hannifan, Amanda Hardage, Tara Hardeman, Amy Hare, Hamilton Hargrave, David Harkey, Pamela Harrington, Jessie Harris, Tyler Harris, Kaila Harris, Neiley Harris, Ashley Harris, Samantha Harris, Amber Harris, Dee Harrison, Cornelius Harrison, Tammy Harvey, Frank Hawkins, Leah Hayes, Colby Hays, Walter Heitman, Brianne Henderson,

Meagan Hendrix, Hunter Herje, Jordan Hernandez, Viridiana Hernandez, Earvin Hernandez, Allison Herren, Caitlan Herrera, Tammy Herring, Tedi Heron, Renee Hesby, Kirsten Hess, Jonathan Hester, Hailey Hibdon, Ruth Hicks, Jessie Hicks, Sandra Highfill, Jamie Hileman, Erica Hill, Liz Hinkle, Andrew Hinshaw, Emily Hise, Quy Hoang, Jesse Hogan, Christopher Holman, Andrea Holmes, Kyle Holt, Elise Hooks, Kritsana Hoonsan, Haley Huckabay, Bradley Huddleston, Tiara Hudson, Adrian Hudson, Brandy Huff, Marshelle Hunter, Julie Hunter, Kaitlyn Hunter, Mai Huynh, Daniel Hyden.

Jesus Ibanez, Amber Idlett, Ifeanyi Ijioma, Laura Incarnato, Peter Ippoliti, Daniel Irwin, Jacob Islas, Akhila Issac, Jonathan Iwertz.

Kareema Jabbar, Brooke Jackson, Eddie Jackson, Andrew Jackson, Karla Jarrett, Peter Jenkins, Dillon Jennings, Sylwia Jerczynska, Jayme Jimboy, Mario Jimenez, Rachel Jindasurat, Jincy John, Lori Johnson, Erin Johnson, Christian Johnson, Maurine Johnson, Chase Johnson, Lani Jones, Lauren Jones, Jaqueline Jones, Kelsey Jones, Nathan Jones, Myka Jones, Christopher Jones.

Kassandra Kahrs, Yvan Kamtchouang Ngouongo, Moses Kamuiru, David Karugo, Rosanna Kchao, Kyler Keel, Kobie Keller, Ryan Kendrick, Jonathan Kennedy, Kristen Kennedy, Hollie Key, Jaime Keyes, Karrar Khudhair, Brian Kiarie, Darla Kilhoffer, Stella Kim, Kayla Kimbley, Mark Kincher, Erica King, Paul Kirk, Melissa Kisamore-Boos.

Samuel Knight, Ashley Kockos, Michael Koehler, Brendan Koester, Angela Kolander, Frederick Kordsiemon, Taylor Kosechata, Ladislav Kotoucek, Lauren Krapff, Lynae Krausnick, Royce Kunjappy, Dickson Kuria, Dennis Kuriakose, Destiny Kuykendall.

Melissa Lackey, Erica Lafollette, Phuongthi Lam, Asma Lama Tamang, Makayla Lambeth, Britny Lane, Megan Langford, Teresa Langley, Harrison Langston, George Lankford, Trenton Larkin, Wanda Lassiter, Lenora LaVictoire, Kim Le, Tho Le, Loan Le, Hang Le, Lien Le, Luis Lebron, Magen Ledford, Kristen Lee, Amber Lee, Corbin Lee, Austin Leippe, Ash-

GRADUATES

Of OCCC's Spring 2016 semester

ley Lestarge, Matt Leu, Callie Lewis, David Lewis, Ya'Tae Lewis, Gideon Lincecum, Elizabeth Lindley, Zhaotong Liu, Yang Liu, Katherine Lloyd, Patricia Long, Jennifer Looney, Juan Lopez, Graciela Lopez-Hernandez, Melissa Sue Lopez-Neely.

Adam Loughmiller, Joshua Lout, Kathleen Loux, Georgia Love, Tiashawn Love-Garza, Christopher Lovett, Xin Luo, Julianne Lute, Leticia Luviano, Anna Lyles, Hannah Lynch.

Amanda MacIas, Brandon Mahaffey, Huong Mimi Mai-Do, Jillian Malaska, Mary Malcom, Nehemiah Malin, Nathan Mancil, Jessica Mandujano, Pum Mang, Frankie Mangus, Melissa Manos, Jordan Manser, Krysta Marchant Daves, Elizabeth Marley, Shanasha Marlow, Chris Martin, Treyson Martin, Franklin Martinez, Antonio Martinez, Chelsea Martinez, Jose Martinez, Isabel Martinez, Jeffery Mason, John Mason, K Matthews, Lesa Matthews, Austen Matthews, Deborah May.

Kari McCaskill, Lisa McCathern, Asha McCoy, Jonathan McDaniel, Stephen McDonald, Diane McElyea, David McEntire, Crystal McGaha, Anthony McGaughey, Stephanie McGregor, Sarah McKenzie, Jacob McKinney, Kathryn McMichael, Aaron McNeil, Alex McTee, Garret Medell, Julian Mejia, Parker Melendez, Stony Melton, Ge Men, Aileen Mendoza, Rocio Mercado Carrillo.

Jason Meyer, Susan Meyer, Presley Miller, Laresa Miller, Kyle Miller, Catheren Miller, Nathaniel Miliken, Amanda Mills, Jason Mills, Latosha Milton, Derek Minor, Andreea Mirza, Kripa Mishra, Marigona Misini, Enis Misini, Joshua Mize, David Monlux, Juan Montoya, Montana Mooney, Skyler Moore, Austin Moore, Jessica Morales, Casie Morris, Heather Morris, Kathy Morris, Yasmin Morrow, Robert Morse, Whitney Mosby, Jazzmine Mosley-Vidrine.

Dezery Mucker, Stacie Mueller, Chance Mueller, Daniel Murray, Kye Muzny, Levi Mwirigi, Cammie Myers, Cassondra Myers, Dustin Myers.

Theodore Nchako Ngakwi, Jane-Francis Ndenka, Orlando Neal, Sarah Nelson, Kayla Nelson, Monica Neri, James Nesthus, Jennifer Neville, Dominique Newberg, Sierra Newey, Dinh Nguyen, Maryanne Nguyen, Kimberly Nguyen, Teresa Nguyen, Phuong Nguyen, Tien Nguyen, Jay Nguyen, Vy Nguyen, Joanna Nguyen, Phuong-Anh Nguyen, Cam Nguyen, Phong Nguyen, Justina Nguyen, Christina Nguyen, Tien Nguyen, Cuong Nguyen, Thao Nguyen, Ashley Nichols, Lynsay Nichols, Sandra Nicolescu, Deependra Niroula, Caroline Njaramba, Ragan Noonan, Brandi Norman, Paula Norton, Adriana Nunez, Melissa Nunez Quinonez, Kathryn Nunn, Angelique Nutter, Guy Nwanko.

Taylor O'Brien, Corina Ochoa, Rikki Ogden, Nancy Olivera, Sowa Oloyede, Natasha Olson, Alayna Opp, Martha Orina, Raelynn Ortiz, Joshua Ou, Melissa Owens, Chelsea Owens.

Leonardo Padron, Emily Page, Megan Palmer, Matthew Palumbo, Ashley Pankhurst, Jennifer Paradis,

Hailee Paridon, Candice Parker, Keegan Parrish, Ann Patterson, Nicholas Pattison, Paul Paulson, Christopher Payao, Nolan Payne, Micayla Payne, Andrea Payne, Sean Payne, Breanna Pelton, Bethany Pelton, Raymond Pemberton, Gabriela Pennock, Tyler Penny, Lorena Perez Huerta, Trinisha Perry, Susan Perry, Richard Perry, Megan Pertiet, Ashley Peters, Kelliagh Pfeil, Breanna Phillips, Linsey Phillips, Joel Pickard, Bryan Pietrowicz, Brenda Pittser, Heather Plake, Ouchsathava Poch, Alexander Price, Kathy Prince, Neha Pullela, Amanda Pursley,

Ashley Quanstrom.

Rylee Rackley, Lavetta Rains, Mohammed Rakha, Bianca Ramirez, Teresa Ramos, Re-deana Ramsey, Caleb Rattarree, Ashley Raymond, Jason Razo, Lacy Reinke, Tayla Reynolds, Andrew Rhodes, Wesley Rhodes, Sydney Rice, Kelsey Rice, Irvin Rickey, Andrea Riebel, Abbey Riedl, Ferdinand Riley, Diana Rios, Deralin Ritter, Marian Ritter, Andrea Rivera, Lisa Roberts, Michael Roberts, John Roberts, Casey Robertson, Madison Robins, Haley Robinson, Rhonda Rock, Kimberly Rodriguez, Neyra Roig, Gregory

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Kaitlyn Sager, Christian Salas Moran, Yuridia Saldana, Joseph Salinas, Ayesha Boureima Sambo, Kysha Sampson, Ronnie Sanchez, Dharma Sanjyal, Robert Satterlee, Ryan Saunders, Riley Saunders, John Savage, Una Savic, Shon Scarberry, Cameo Schemenauer, Sarah Schettler, Jennifer Schmidt, Michael Schoonover, Jeremy Schroeder, Schelby Schuneman, Joe Scoggins, Haley Scott, Jake Scroggie, Emily Seabolt, Sandy Seagroves-Burgert.

Christopher Seals, Samantha Searle, Sarah Sehati, Luke Selby, Jason Senne, Clay Sewell, Demetra Sexton, Janae Shafer, Traci Shaffer, Shannon Sharp, Nicole Shaw, Richard Shaw, Christopher Shaw, Crystal Sheehy, Tina Shepherd, Melanie Shepherd, Dakota Sherrill, Yosuke Shingu, Reana Shirley, Shelly Shook, Paul Shook, Jordan Shugart, Shelia Silas, Jon Simms, Paul Simon, Brittany Simpson, Christopher Simpson, Bryon Sims, Chelly Sims, Lauren Sims, Dragana Sindjic, Andrew Skidmore, Calvin Small, Destiny Smart, Jacqueline Smiley, Parthenia Smith, Alisha Smith, Erin Smith, Kristen Smith, Melvin Smith, Austin Smith, Blake Smith, Charlotte Smith, Kayla Smith, Walter Smith, Stella Smith, Heather Smith, Stephanie Smith, Taylor Smith, Christopher Smith, Raquel Snively, Tiezheng Song, Tracey Sonka, Monica Soots, Nicholas Southwood, Heather Splawn, Jaron Spor, Jerrie Sporn, Bradley Springer, Zachary

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Obinna Ude, Jesse Uffen, Juan Ulloa.

Amie Van Dorn, Todd Vanbebber, Rachel Vandevor, Jason Vanhouter, Charol Vasquez, Elizabeth Vass, Tammy Vaughn, Debra Vaughn, Pedro Velasco, Alondra Velasco, Jacqueline Velez, Itzel Verduzco, Abigail Verschage, Taylor Vick, Ashton Vierus, Alesha Villarreal, Dat Vu, John Vu, Minh Vu.

Justin Waldeck, William Waldrop, Amelia Wall, Tyler Wallace, Matthew Waller, Ted Walls, Crusoe Wambua, Luyi Wang, Abbey Warren, Reese Watson, Nykita Webb, Bradley Webb, Michelle Wells, Iris West, Taylor Whitaker, Casandra White, Matthew Whitney, Ladonna Wieland, Sarah Wigham, Dalton Wilhoit, Jimmy Wilkins, Lisa Wilkins, Jana Williams, Jeremiah Williams, Dennis Williams, Alyssa Williams, Kymiyo Williams, Chelsi Williams, Erika Williams, Jerney Williams, Lyndsi Wilson, Charles Wilson, Johnny Wingate, Katherine Winstead, Summer Winters, Yvone Wirngo, Kelsi Witt, Kylie Wittenbach, Bonnie Wood, Deidra Wood, Scott Woodbury, Kendrica Woods, Ja-Young Worrirow, Tanyala Wright, Jeffrey Wright, Spencer Wright, Warren Wright, Tori Wright, Nyemady Wright.

Brandon Xiong, Merideth Yarbrough, Christina Yeager, Amy York, Anastasia Yorke.

Paul Zapletal, Brandi Zielinski, and Chimei Zou-non.

(Don't see your name and think it should be on this list? Call the Graduation, Employment and Transfer office at 405-682-7589 or email GET Director Jill Lindblad at jllindblad@occc.edu.)



Come face to face with the people of OCCC



Above: Sophia Sanchez, art major and Wala Zoubi, nursing major.
Below: Visual Art majors Sheri Talkington, Ann Margaret Rice and Kirsten Hess.
To the right: Djantchiemo Sakinatou, business major.



2016 in photographs *by* Melissa Sue Lopez



Above: Psychology Professor Jeff Anderson. To the right: Ari Poualeu, aerospace engineering, and Narcissengole Ngando, petroleum engineering.
Below: Nursing majors Van Tran and Ginnie Avino. All photos by *Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer*.



SPORTS

Up in the gym just working on my fitness:

Political science major Thomas Miller does his sit ups in the weight room of the Wellness Center. For more information about the Wellness Center call the Recreation and Fitness office at 405-682-7860.
Melissa Sue Lopez/Pioneer



Gym a resource for summer

IAN MANERA
Sports Writer
sportswriter@occc.edu

After a semester of growth in terms of popularity for the Recreation and Fitness department, Wellness Center Manager Brooke Dresel says the Wellness Center will remain open during the summer.

While the spring semester is coming to a close, students that have been using the Wellness Center on campus won't have to worry about finding a new place to work out, said Dresel.

The summer hours for the Wellness Center begin on May 31. The weight room and cardio room will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday. The gym will be closed Saturdays and Sundays.

"We wanted to keep the exercise equipment available for students

who plan on regularly being here in the summer," said Dresel.

"The workout equipment has been very helpful for a lot of students, and we want to keep that going."

The gym, which is free to any OCCC student with a student ID, received a massive overhaul last summer and the equipment is on par with a lot of other gyms that require monthly memberships.

Students agree with Dresel, saying it will be convenient to know that the gym will remain open in the summertime.

In addition to the weight room and the courts remaining open, the fitness classes offered on campus will also still be available during the summer.

"The fitness classes will con-

tinue throughout the summer but students should check to ensure that no changes have been made. Periodically, we may move a few classes but changes will be few. We will post any changes to our Facebook page as well as the OCCC Recreation & Fitness page."

The biggest change from the spring schedule is the lack of intramural sports that normally run through the semester.

"We won't have any of the intramurals during the summer," she said. "We wouldn't have enough interest with the amount of people [on campus.]"

For more information about the summer schedule at the Wellness Center, students can stay up to date by heading to <http://www.occc.edu/rf/index.html>, or by calling the office at 405-682-7860.



SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

San Antonio Spurs @ Oklahoma City Thunder

When: May 6, 8:30 p.m. on ESPN

Players to watch: The first two games of this series were polar opposites.

In game one, San Antonio wiped the floor with OKC, starting with a big lead in the first quarter and never looking back. They dominated all the way to a 124-92 victory.

In game two, the teams battled throughout the game with OKC somehow coming away with a victory in San Antonio, 98-97.

While the games were vastly different, there was one constant: the play of Spurs forward LaMarcus Aldridge.

Aldridge absolutely roasted the Thunder's defense in game one, scoring 38 points on 18-23 shooting in just 30 minutes on the floor (a playoff record). Game two saw much of the same, with the former Texas Longhorn going for 41 points on 15-21 shooting, singlehandedly keeping San Antonio in the game.

Thunder forward Serge Ibaka, and Thunder center Steven Adams, played Aldridge about as well as you could this game. The Thunder were positive 18 points with Ibaka on the floor in Game 2. Still, even with solid defense from OKC, Aldridge couldn't miss, hitting every tough angle. At this point, Aldridge is San Antonio's biggest weapon in the series. He's the game-breaker that OKC doesn't have an answer for. If he continues dropping 40 points a night, the Thunder better hope that everything else goes right for them.

Prediction: If there's one thing that Oklahoma City (or any team really) doesn't do, it's beat the Spurs at home.

The Spurs were 40-1 at home this season, with their only loss coming to the Golden State Warriors (the best regular season team of all time.) OKC, in both 2012 and 2014, lost games one and two in San Antonio. No one expected them to snag a game on the Spurs home-court like they did in game two this year. It can't be overstated how impressive the OKC win was.

After OKC went up early, everyone simply waited for a typical Thunder collapse. But this time, it never came. Thunder head coach Billy Donovan succeeded where former Thunder coach Scott Brooks failed, holding on to a playoff-lead and running actual offensive plays at the end of the game to get Durant, and others, some great looks. As I mentioned in my last preview, if the Thunder's supporting cast can keep up with San Antonio's, they have a real shot at taking this series. Game 2 was a great example of that, with Adams, Ibaka and center Enes Kanter all playing very well. The Thunder came into San Antonio like thieves in the night, and came out with a road victory. Now, they come home to Oklahoma City, where the next two games will be played. They're expected to come out swinging at the Chesapeake Arena, and now the possibility of the Thunder winning this series seems a tad more likely than expected.

Tomlinson: Inspired by his OCCC professor

continued from Page 1

helping him see the power of the topic.

"Greg Mellott pushed me to make this project," he said.

He said the film professor inspired him and all the students in the documentary class.

"He said 'make what you know,' choose a topic that allows you to connect with your own personality," Bunee Tomlinson said of Mellott.

"When my instructor insisted that I do my life story for a grade, I was very reluctant," Bunee said. "So I researched my old orphanage in Cernavoda, Romania.

"This film is from my (non-biological) parents' point of view," Bunee Tomlinson said. He said he couldn't have made the film without them.

This project is also about Tomlinson's search for something to drive him forward in his new world. He said through making the film he discovered that film-making could be the engine for his personal growth.

It is a story of one child and two parents finding their way through totally uncharted territory.

"This got me excited and I felt telling the story could touch both children and parents alike," Bunee Tomlinson said.

His father expressed pride in his son's commitment to his craft.

"He is always working on something, and it is great to see his passion and motivation," said Tommy Tomlinson.

Bunee Tomlinson said he found the right college to nurture his talent.

"Oklahoma City Community College was a great



In his youth, Tomlinson lived in an orphanage in Romania. *Photo Provided.*

asset for me," he said. "They allowed me to focus on education. It helped me to improve."

Bunee Tomlinson was able to make this project with OCCC film equipment and his personal funds.

He also started a video production company called Windswept Media right after he graduated Edmond Memorial High.

Bunee Tomlinson said that he works with OCCC film program graduates on a daily basis. He is always working with his passion everyday in Oklahoma City and Santa Fe.

"Film school is good for education and, most importantly, great networking," Bunee Tomlinson said.

According to the Cannes festival website, the finalists were selected from hundreds of entries from all over the world and will compete for awards in five different categories.

The film will screen in Cannes on May 17 or 18 and will be competing for the Student Documentary Award.

Bunee and his editor Brady Foster will be there for the screening.

Bunee's other work can be seen at windsweptmedia.net. Also, you can see the trailer of "Bunee: The Boy from Constanta" on YouTube.

SAGA: Raising awareness of the school's LGBTQ community

continued from Page 1

students and faculty advisers so that SAGA can be an official OCCC club in the fall semester.

"We're just really excited to be actually going through with this and starting this club," Meneses said.

Both Meneses and Middleton said that they have felt like they are the only transgender people on campus.

Middleton, a transman, said that he and another trans friend went to speak to Student Services about this feeling.

"[The people at Student Services] were kind of laughing to themselves a little bit because there's a whole bunch of trans people on campus apparently, and we just all walk around feeling like we're the only ones here," Middleton said.

He said that when he started at OCCC he had been taking hormone therapy for over a year.

"No one could really tell... that I was assigned female at birth," he said. "There are a lot of people that I've made friends with here on campus that have no idea that I'm trans."

Now that he is working to start SAGA, Middleton has to be more visible as a transman on campus.

"It's kind of weird because I'm basically stealth. But, to do this, I know that I have to not be anymore

so I'm kind of, like, trying to push myself that way," Middleton said.

Meneses has had a different experience, as she identifies as a transwoman of color.

"It's a little bit different because I'm still transitioning right now," Meneses said.

She said that she started transitioning a little over a year ago, and being a high school student, she wants to reach out to other young transgender people.

"I'm 17, so I feel like that is important too, because youth is important in these kinds of conversations," Meneses said.

Meneses said that SAGA could educate OCCC students, faculty and staff by raising awareness of the LGBTQ community at OCCC. She said that it is important to offer a place for LGBTQ students to be welcome at.

"Just to provide a safe space for them, for their voices to be heard and for their stories to be heard too," she said.

Meneses said that her experience as a transwoman on campus has been tolerable.

"Kind of so far, it's been a somewhat positive experience," she said.

She said that she still faces issues on campus.

"It's just like little things like I haven't legally changed my name so that's kind of an issue sometimes as well as like my gender marker," Meneses said.

Gender markers can be found on legal documents that follow the gender listed on a person's birth certificate. According to nonprofit LGBTQ advocate group Lambda Legal, transgender students wishing to change their name and gender marker on their educational records can legally do so under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Middleton said he changed his name the second week of school.

He said that for the most part, the campus is a safe place for trans students.

"I feel like if I told a professor or something that I was being harassed ... they would take it seriously," he said.

He said he looks forward to signing more students to join SAGA.

"When I just first got here I felt like, yeah, like I was the only one, and then I feel like having this space would be good for other people to kind of feel like there is someone here like them."

For more information, or to join the club or be a club sponsor, call or text 405-437-3728.

CAMPUS COMMUNITY



TAKING THE PRIZE:

OCCC Broadcast students stand with their awards during the annual OBEA Student Day in Tulsa. Front row from left: Clayton Mitchell, Victoria Harrell, Emily Mitchell, Lisa Lasater. Back row from left: Carlton Thompson, Sean Giles, Brooke Altstatt, Grace Babb, Hunter Foster, Sophia Babb, Rick Allen Lippert, Gwin Faulconer-Lippert.

Photo provided

Broadcasting students take awards

SOPHIA BABB
News Writing Student

Broadcasting students brought home five awards after attending the annual Oklahoma Broadcast Educators Association Student Day in Tulsa on March 21.

Grace Babb won first place for her entertainment short.

Victoria Harrell and Carlton Thompson placed second for a radio public service announcement.

Lisa Lasater placed second for her television informational video.

Emily Miller and Clayton Mitchell placed second for an entertainment short.

Jorge Krzyzaniak placed third for his entertainment short.

Professor Gwin Faulconer-Lippert said the contest is designed to boost broadcasting students in their professional development.

"We hold a competition every year so that our students can see how they compare with one another, as far as quality of work," Faulconer-Lippert said. "Our OCCC students are always very competitive, and we're always very proud of the work they do."

Faulconer-Lippert has been teaching at OCCC for 28 years. She said she has been a member of OBEA since she began teaching.

She described the singularity of Student Day, telling of its purpose.

"The OBEA is unique in that it is a statewide organization created solely for the benefit of Oklahoma students," she said. "It doesn't matter the size of your program, or the number of majors, whether you're a college or university. Everyone that is a member is dedi-

cated to the education of broadcasting students."

She described the day as a motivational event.

"It's a great resume builder, and it's also a great prompt. Inevitably every student that attends will think, 'I could do that, if I had just spent the time and energy and creativity, I could have won.'"

The students who attended concluded that having the right connections can help you get where you need go.

They took advantage of the opportunity to make those connections at the event.

Every year, broadcasting students from colleges and universities across Oklahoma participate in a job fair, giving students the opportunity to meet future employers.

Broadcasting major Hunter Foster described the day as incredibly useful for networking.

"In our field of broadcasting, it's really all about who you know," Foster said. "When you meet people in the business, you make connections and get your name out there."

The job fair provided opportunities to meet radio hosts, executive producers, and representatives from local news stations.

Supplemental instructor and audio lab assistant Sean Giles has learned the ropes of the conference. This was his third year in attendance.

"If you don't talk to anyone, you can't expect to get anything out of the job fair," Giles said.

He spent his time speaking with producers and radio representatives throughout the day.

"You can make some great connec-

tions, because they are there looking for the best students in broadcasting to hire," Giles said. "In the local media, everybody seems to know everybody. If you network, you can make the right connections you need."

Emily Miller, public relations major and OBEA competition winner, concurred.

"I firmly believe that networking is 80 percent of getting where you need to go," she said. "If you know someone, you could be half as good as someone else, but that connection will take you farther."

Miller described how OCCC has helped make networking easier, providing creative opportunities to students and the tools needed to compete with other schools.

"We're very lucky to have the best professors for what we do. The heads of our departments really care and know how to file for grants for the equipment we need. There are so many opportunities at OCCC to be hands-on with the labs, and to be creative with broadcasting tools."

"This was my second year attending, I was extremely glad to go again," Miller said. "It's great to show on your resume because there is nothing else like it in the state."

At the end of the day, students felt welcomed and encouraged to pursue their careers.

"It was absolutely worth going," Foster said. "I would go again."

For more information about OCCC's Journalism and Broadcasting program, contact Faulconer-Lippert at 405-682-1611 ext. 7254 or by email at gfaulconer@occc.edu.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Commencement Friday May 13

The 2016 Commencement Ceremony will begin at 7:30 p.m., on Friday, May 13, at the Cox Business Services Convention Center. If family and friends are unable to make the ceremony, a live streaming will be offered on the OCCC website. Use www.occc.edu/GET. For any questions regarding the ceremony, contact the Graduation, Employment, and Transfer Services office at 405-682-7519.

'Streetcar Named Desire' on May 15

Tennessee Williams' timeless masterpiece "A Streetcar Named Desire" will be broadcast live from the London National Theatre to OCCC at 6 p.m. on Sunday, May 15. This performance will star Gillian Anderson (The X-Files, The Fall) as Blanche DuBois, Ben Foster (Lone Survivor, Kill Your Darlings) as Stanley, and Vanessa Kirby (BBC's Great Expectations, Three Sisters at the Young Vic) as Stella. OCCC student tickets are free, OCCC staff and faculty tickets are \$10 and general admission tickets are \$15. For more information, contact the box office at 405-682-7579.

Cookies, coloring at Almonte Library

Think outside the crayon box! Coloring isn't just for kids anymore. Join in on the latest craze in relaxation for adults only at 7 p.m., Thursday, May 19, at the Almonte Public Library located at 2914 SW 59 Street. Relax and create your own masterpiece for free. The library provides coloring sheets, crayons, pencils, and a small snack. For more information contact Becky Fesler, associate librarian at 405-606-3575.

Byron Berline Band on May 24

Bluegrass and Western Swing music comes alive with the upcoming performance of The Byron Berline Band. Recognized fiddle player, Byron Berline, and his bandmates will show off traditional world class tunes starting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 24, in the Visual and Performing Arts center. For questions or to purchase tickets contact the box office at 405-682-7579 or visit www.occc.edu/pas.

All Highlights are due Monday by noon for inclusion in the next issue. Email your event to editor@occc.edu or drop by 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.

CLASSIFIED BUSINESS AD: \$8 per 7 lines. Find out how to advertise affordably. 405-682-1611, ext. 7674.

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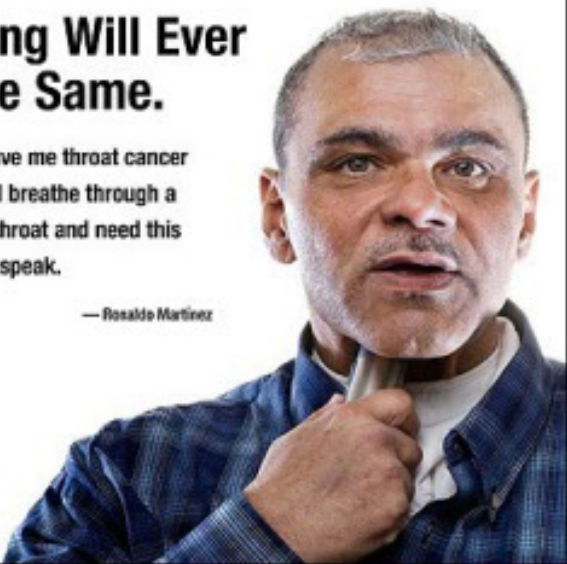
THANKS

Thank you for another great semester.
Sincerely,
The Pioneer

Nothing Will Ever Be the Same.

Smoking gave me throat cancer at 39. Now I breathe through a hole in my throat and need this machine to speak.


— Rosaldo Martinez



QUIT SMOKING TODAY

FOR HELP CALL 311

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor. Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner.



WEEKLY CROSSWORD

Across
1. Fertile desert spot
6. Concluded
10. Messy fellow
14. Razor ____
15. Ascend
16. Roman garment
17. Comic ____ DeGeneres
18. Christmas carol
19. Bakery item
20. Not year-round
22. Showed feelings
24. Finale
25. Kept
27. Flower container
28. More sharply inclined
32. Most skillful
35. Pause
36. Legendary boxer
37. Sulk
38. Maiden name indicator
39. Grinding machine
40. Pitcher's stat
41. Bottomless
43. Raspy
45. Get together again
47. Wish
48. All people
50. Bustle
53. Make attractive
56. Jeweler's helper
58. Placed
59. Smelling organ
61. Make right
62. Window ledge
63. Pub potables
64. Succinct
65. Fashion magazine
66. "____ we forget"
67. Computer key

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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45			46				47						
48						49				50	51	52	
53	54	55				56				57			
58					59	60			61				
62					63				64				
65					66				67				

Down
1. Overweight
2. Woody or Tim
3. Mixed greens
4. "Beware the ____ of March"
5. Spanish women
6. Elaborate
7. Fiddle's kin
8. Compass point (abbr.)
9. Eases up
10. Took long steps
11. Burglar's booty
12. Stare
13. Hairless
21. Bird's home
23. Track event
26. Words of comprehension (2 wds.)
27. Animal doc
29. Couple
30. House additions
31. Agitate
32. One who mimics
33. Tedious one
34. Hawaiian feast
35. GOP member
38. Not ever, poetically
39. ____ West of Hollywood
41. Opera star
42. Unending
43. ____ Kong
44. Perform surgery
46. Sewing item
47. Not lying
49. Positive answers
50. Turn aside
51. Compact
52. Command
53. Ultimatum word
54. Brad
55. Pickle seasoning
57. Prayer close
60. Bullring cheer



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Award-winning engineering student will miss the biscuits

ERIKA FIERRO

Online Editor

onlineeditor@occc.edu

Eivy Arroyo Diaz, the son of Mexican immigrants emerges as the recipient of the President's Award for Excellence in engineering.

Ken Harrelson, the mathematics professor who nominated Diaz for the prestigious award, said he truly deserves it.

"He's a wonderful guy and he's going to be very successful not only in the classroom but in the community," Harrelson said.

Diaz, the 25-year-old pre-engineering major said he was surprised to win.

"I still can't believe this is my life," he said. "If someone would've told me two and a half years ago I would be here right now, I wouldn't believe them."

Diaz, the eldest of four siblings, said he was raised in south Oklahoma City and graduated from U.S. Grant High School.

He said his childhood wasn't the best. He had to cope with domestic violence and an on-going divorce between his parents growing up.

He said, for a long time, he'd never considered college.

"I thought I was only going to get through 9th grade year in high school because I got kicked out for wearing the wrong colors, on purpose," he said.

"I was the least expected to go to college," Diaz said.

After attempting a year of college after high school, Diaz took a four year break when he came across a great paying job that allowed him to travel out of town.

Diaz said he has a one-track mind when he thinks about achieving success.

"I grew up being told to work hard with your hands, working long hours," Diaz said. "I think that's the Hispanic mentality, not that it's a bad thing, but that's the only option I knew of growing up."

Diaz said that there's another option: working hard using your brain.

The decision to return to college and continue an education came when his wife, Blandy Arroyo, found out they were having a baby boy.

"I would still have that mentality if it wasn't for my son Ethan," he said.

OCCC has been an educational building block to prepare him to continue higher education, he said.

Diaz said he started out in the re-

medial college math class but he was determined to study that much more to get to where he needed to be.

"He was in the Calc. one class and he was a little nervous. But by the time it was all said and done, he was one of the best students," said Paul Buckelew, a mathematics professor.

"I always put emphasis on studying math," Diaz said.

The fear of failure fueled him to keep going and to take in the material his professors presented.

"I have met some of the most passionate professors ever at OCCC," he said.

Among those are Harrelson, Buckelew, and Tad Thurston, a physics professor.

"Thurston has this dry sense of humor. He would bring this character to class and bring his lectures to life," Diaz said. "He is in love with physics so honestly it made me love everything about physics and I think it's because of him."

Diaz is currently attending his last class as an OCCC student while also taking 12 credit hours at the University of Oklahoma, as an electrical engineering student.

He will graduate OCCC in May as a double major in math and science with an engineering associate in science degree and associate in science in mathematics degree.

"Another great thing about OCCC is the biscuits and gravy," Diaz said. "It's phenomenal and I'm honestly going to miss it."

His success thus far couldn't have been possible without the support of his wife, close friends and family.

Diaz said he would spend 12 hours a day at the OCCC campus as a full-time student between classes and studying.

"Sometimes during the evenings my wife would come to campus and bring our son to see me while I took a study break," Diaz said.

Baby Diaz is now two years old.

There were many times that he thought of quitting, he said.

"People where I come from don't make it this far, they're content with blue collar jobs," Diaz said.

"You better not," Diaz said his wife would tell him every time he contemplated quitting school.

"It was tough at the beginning because our world was flipped upside down, it's not just like a nine to five type job, we had to adjust. Our schedule revolves around his schedule but his



Eivy Arroyo Diaz, pre-engineering major, poses for a photo with his wife Blandy Arroyo at the Student Awards Ceremony on April 29. Diaz was awarded OCCC President's Award for Excellence in Engineering. *Erika Fierro/Pioneer*

hard work and studying are not taken for granted."

"Ethan and I are proud and lucky to have him and thankful he's working on providing a better life for our family and our future," she said.

Former youth leaders and now great friends, Eli and Rachel Velazquez have also been supportive role models for Diaz.

Before returning to college, Diaz said he contemplated attending a technical school and shared his thoughts with the Velazquezes during dinner one night. Their advice for him was to go to college because they knew he was not going to be challenged enough to stay interested

in technical school, Diaz recalled.

Diaz said he's setting a new standard for his siblings, cousins and his son by being the first in his family to go to college.

"I've always wanted to be my son's t-ball coach, I imagine spending entire weekends at baseball tournaments, living in a nice home and comfortably," Diaz said.

Focusing on providing a quality lifestyle for his wife and son keeps him motivated, he said.

"I still think about this on my way to school, what am I doing here," he said. "I still can't believe how much I've accomplished so far."