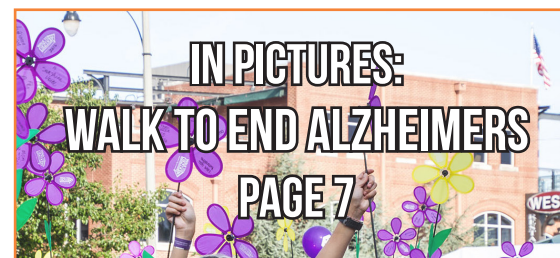


# PIONEER



## Student Debt By the Numbers

**\$1.27**  
**trillion**

America's total  
student loan debt  
(As of 2015)

**\$23,430**

Average loan debt  
among Oklahoma  
graduates

**\$3,055**

Increase in total U.S.  
Student loan debt  
each second

**1,916**  
**students**

with balance owed  
preventing their  
enrollment at OCCC

# Buried in debt:

*Students face the harsh realities of student loans*

By Aaron Smoot, Lillie Anderson, Paige Stuart, Jessamine Nazari  
and Edna Varela, OCCC News Writing Students

Jonathan Smith, of Norman, was depressed – even suicidal.

Smith, seeking a degree in English education, can't return to college until he pays off his student loans.

He's currently working two jobs to pay his bills, but he's not sure he wants to return to school.

"I was getting really depressed and I even attempted suicide," Smith said. "I had little hope that public colleges would become cheaper and that I could go back to the University of Oklahoma, where I grew up. I know OU is a good school, but I'm scared to go back."

Smith attended Oklahoma City Community College last fall. He enrolled at OU in the spring of 2016. He owes thousands of dollars in student loans and he is concerned that his future does not look as bright as it once appeared.

Smith isn't the only one. Many Oklahomans seeking a higher education face similar financial problems. Student debt is an issue that many current and former students across the nation deal with on a consistent basis.

Some experts point to tuition, saying the rising cost of college across the United States has pressed many into debt.

"Tuition has continued to rise steadily at U.S. public colleges with the average yearly cost nearly doubling between 2000 and 2014," says Forbes data journalist Niall McCarthy. "During the same time frame, median household income dropped seven percent, increasing the fiscal impact on U.S. families even further."

At OCCC, Cynthia Gary, the college's bursar, said that during the spring semester there were 1,916 students who owed a balance which kept them from enrolling in classes.

Some students turn to loans. Records show that of the 20,000 students who are enrolled at OCCC, about 11,000 of those students receive some form of financial aid.

"On average OCCC receives 18,000 FAFSA applications a year, although not all are accepted," OCCC Assistant Financial Aid Director Meghan Morgan said.

Yet even if a student qualifies for a loan, Morgan said those loans are not always the best option.

For Smith, it was easy to get the loan -- but it was much harder to pay it back.

"They tell you about how much money it'll cost you and you think you are gonna be able to afford this and you think you will find a way to pay it, but in the end you can't," he said.

In Oklahoma, the issue of student debt isn't as bad as it is in other parts of the country.

According to a study conducted by The Project on Student Debt, Oklahoma students graduated with the fifth lowest average student loan debt in 2013. The same study shows the typical Oklahoma college graduate owed \$23,430 compared to the national average which is \$28,400.

"Oklahoma's percentage of students graduating with student loan debt was 53 percent and the national proportion was 69 percent," wrote Oklahoman journalist Arianna Pickard.

Outside of Oklahoma, student debt is rising rapidly and getting worse. A report issued by The College Fix indicated that the class of 2015 graduated with the largest amount



Jonathan Smith

## EDITORIAL/OPINION

EDITORIAL | State question stands to help small businesses disadvantaged by current liquor laws

## Vote YES on State Question 792 in November



State Question 792, labeled as the “Wine and Beer Amendment,” will be on the November 8 ballot for Oklahoma voters.

Since the ending of Oklahoma prohibition in 1959, local wineries and grocery stores have operated under laws and regulations that have not been substantially changed in nearly 60 years. It is well past time to modernize our liquor laws and revitalize Oklahoma wineries and vineyards.

Oklahoma voters should vote “yes” on SQ 792.

A “yes” vote on SQ 792 will amend regulations to the sale of alcohol in Oklahoma, with changes that permit grocery stores to sell full strength wine and beer. Distribution laws will also change under SQ 792,

allowing Oklahoma wineries to distribute wine directly to grocery stores and vendors. Local grocery stores and wineries alike will benefit from the passage of 792.

On a national scale, winemaking has grown into a substantial agricultural industry since the repeal of prohibition nationwide. Data from the U.S. Winery Database shows a 4 percent growth in national winery openings last year, with 372 U.S. wineries opening in 2015.

The U.S. accounts for 8 percent of the world’s wine production, and leads in global consumption of wine, with sales reaching over \$34 billion annually. This national growth is something Oklahoma wineries and vineyards desperately want to be a part of.

Oklahoma’s history of winemaking goes back to the early 20th century. The Oklahoma Historical Society estimates that the acreage of grapes planted in 1907 reached numbers between 3,700 and 5,425. Soon after Oklahoma became a state, the introduction of prohibition squandered the Oklahoma wine industry, making it insignificant on a national scale.

With a lack of vendors and heavy regulations, it has taken almost a century for the Oklahoma wine industry to get back on its feet.

In 2000, a vote approved a constitutional amendment that allowed wineries to sell their wine to restaurants and other retailers, without going through a middle-man wholesaler. This vote helped increase winery numbers from just three in 2000 to 55 in 2008. However, in March of 2006, three Oklahoma liquor wholesalers filed a suit against the amendment, and the amendment was ruled unconstitutional.

Though the recent changes have helped a small Oklahoma wine industry emerge, the amendment reversal and remaining restrictions still heavily affect local vineyards and wineries.

Susan Boehrer, owner of Redbud Farm and Vineyard in Washington, Okla., commented on the difficulties faced by local vineyard owners.

“This year there were several vineyards that weren’t able to sell their grapes,” Boehrer said. “A winery only wants to buy enough grapes to make the wine they think they can sell. Unless we bring the sales up in Oklahoma, there are going to be grapes that are dying on the vine.”

“We have to build back this industry in Oklahoma. It’s not only a huge agricultural product, but an agritourism product,” Boehrer said.

Agritourism is defined as “any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch.”

“People love to go visit vineyards and wineries in Oklahoma. It’s good business for everybody,” Boehrer said. “It gets us more market, and gets us more ability to ship.”

The passage of SQ 792 would benefit both small business owners and winemakers. Local and family owned grocery stores will be allowed to carry Oklahoma

made wine, supporting local wineries. If there is more demand for locally sourced wine, there will be less Oklahoma grapes dying on the vine, and in turn a thriving viticultural industry.

“We have a lot of family owned and locally owned grocery stores and convenience stores in the state of Oklahoma,” Boehrer said. “By passing 792, a lot of grocery stores will start to carry Oklahoma made wine. It will put more Oklahoma wine into local markets for people to buy.”

Though winemakers and vineyards support SQ 792, Oklahoma liquor stores are not as enthusiastic. The president of the Retail Liquor Association of Oklahoma, Bryan Kerr, is afraid SQ 792 could lose business for liquor stores and retailers.

Despite concerns, liquor stores will still likely have a wider range of liquor choices than most grocery stores, and SQ 792 will allow liquor retailers to stay open later and longer. SQ 792 will also allow liquor stores to sell items such as ice, corkscrews, and cold beverages in their shops.

SQ 792 would introduce more convenience for shoppers wanting to buy alcohol at grocery stores, while also benefiting the Oklahoma grape and wine industries. It is time to change our antiquated liquor laws. SQ 792 will not only benefit beer runs for family parties or Fourth of July get togethers, but will help the growth of an important agricultural sector of Oklahoma.

Vote YES on SQ 792.

—SOPHIA BABB  
EDITOR



We value your opinion.  
Send your letters to the editor to [editor@occc.edu](mailto:editor@occc.edu)  
and visit our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/OCCCPioneer](https://www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer)



# COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

TELEVISION REVIEW | NEW SHOW EXPLORES RELATIONSHIPS

## ‘This Is Us’ a compelling ‘slice of life’ series

Have you ever wondered who you share your birthday with?

Among billions of people in the world, have you met someone with the same birthday as you?

Did you feel a connection?

The new drama, “This Is Us,” shares the story between Kate, Kevin and Randall, all who are born on the same day.

The NBC series mixes the past and present as it tells the story of parents Jack (Milo Ventimiglia) and Rebecca (Mandy Moore).

Kate, a twin to Kevin, is a witty and sweet woman struggling with weight loss and low self-esteem. Although she feels that she’s not good enough, to Kevin, Kate is his life-line. She is the one person he can count on.

Kevin is known as the “pretty boy.” He is determined to prove that he’s more than just a pretty face by standing up to the network he works for. Kevin’s future is on the line. The audience has yet to find out what will happen next.

Despite his arrival into the world, Randall overcomes his own barriers and becomes a successful businessman and the model family man.

Because the storyline switches between past and present, the series must be watched from the beginning with much attention to detail.

The script is written so that the audience makes its own conclusions.

“This Is Us” brings a fresh energy to television.

Much of this can be credited to the level of acting, especially that of Mandy Moore who plays Rebecca, a passionate and loving mother. It’s difficult to avoid feeling emotional during her scenes.



Mothers are often the backbone of a family and Rebecca is no different.

Like the rest of the characters, Jack’s role as a father continues to develop as the story continues. In episode two, Jack’s weakness to alcohol is introduced. This detail of the story allows the viewer to begin making assumptions of what might happen next.

Along with the top level of acting, the script is excellent.

The conversation between Jack and a doctor at the end of episode one opens the stage for the rest of the story.

Life is full of happiness, self-discovery and struggles, and this series captures both the beautiful and ugly moments of it all.

—ERIKA FIERRO  
STAFF 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)

OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# PIONEER

Vol. 45 No. 05

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Mateusz Gugalka.....**Videographer**  
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Jorge Krzyzaniak.....**Lab Director**

7777 S May OKC, OK 73159	<b>phone:</b> 405-682-1611, ext. 7307	<b>email:</b> <a href="mailto:editor@occc.edu">editor@occc.edu</a>
<b>Pioneer Online:</b> <a href="http://pioneer.occc.edu">pioneer.occc.edu</a>	<b>Facebook:</b> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer">www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer</a>	<b>Twitter:</b> <a href="https://twitter.com/OCCCPioneer">@OCCCPioneer</a>

The PIONEER is a student publication of Oklahoma City Community College through the Division of Arts. It is published bi-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 reserves 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](mailto:editor@occc.edu) with a phone number for verification included.

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



# Transgender students share their experiences

SOPHIA BABB

Editor

editor@occc.edu

Val Wiestner, Aubrey Meneses, Piper Chamberlain, and Brighton Arellano, three Oklahoma City Community College students, answered questions, told stories, and offered insight into what it's like to live as a transgender person during a panel discussion Sept. 26.

The Human Sexuality Class at Oklahoma City Community College hosted the event, which highlighted the importance of educating students about issues transgender men and women face.

Psychology professor Gregory Parks coordinated the event, while statistics professor Jeffrey Anderson hosted.

The room was roughly half full. Many students and other professors attended.

The discussion began with introductions of the panel's members, which included six transgender individuals.

After everyone gave their names, a forum was opened for questions from the audience – questions like “When did you know you were transgender?” and “What is the difference between gender and sexuality?”

Each person on the panel gave answers to the questions, embellishing them at times with personal experiences and realistic examples for context.

Piper Chamberlain, a transwoman, explained that public discussions with transgender individuals is beneficial for everyone involved.

“Panels like this are generally important to open up a space where people can feel okay about being uneducated, and they can have a space to feel okay with asking any question even if it might be offensive,” she said. “They can leave and think, ‘okay, I have a more well-rounded idea of what being transgender means.’”

Chamberlain was invited to the panel by OCCC student Val Wiestner.

“It’s all about education, because when people don’t know something, they tend to fear it.” - Val Wiestner



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Speakers Aubrey Meneses, Piper Chamberlain and Val Wiestner work to educate students about issues facing the transgender community. *Sophia Babb/Pioneer*

Chamberlain said she and Wiestner met at an LGBT youth group in Oklahoma City, working together as facilitators and volunteers.

Wiestner and Chamberlain agreed that it was helpful to represent all faces of the trans community.

“It’s all about education, because when people don’t know something, they tend to fear it,” Wiestner said. “The more that you can say this is who I am, this is my face, this is what we actually look like, we’re not all Laverne Cox or Caitlyn Jenner, or Chaz Bono, the more we can get our stories out better.”

Earlier this year, the Sexuality and Gender Acceptance club was founded at OCCC.

SAGA president Aubrey Meneses also spoke at the panel and said doing so was important to her.

“It’s an empowering feeling, having this panel,” Meneses said. “Just going back to visibility and when people actually see us and talk to us, they see we’re trans but even more they see we are people.”

A 2016 study by the Williams Institute shows “approximately 0.6 percent of adults in

the United States, or 1.4 million individuals, identify as transgender.”

With transgender issues in the eye of national media the past year, the panel perhaps comes at a vital time for community understanding.

Earlier this year, the Obama administration released a directive on how to treat transgender students in public schools.

The directive informed schools that transgender individuals should be allowed to use whatever restroom matches their gender identity.

Several Oklahoma legislators pushed for a new “bathroom bill” to counter the directive, which would have required Oklahoma schools to set aside separate bathrooms for religious students who did not want to share a bathroom with a transgender person.

The bill died in an Oklahoma House committee. Chamberlain commented on the fears held when using the bathroom as a transgender woman.

“There’s this idea that transgender people are the predators, but if I went into a men’s restroom, I am instantly subject to murder, rape, brutalization,” she said. “I’m the one in danger there.”

Psychology major Brighton Arellano was happy to be a part of the panel, and said it gave the community a better perspective.

“Positive exposure is always good,” he said. “You get a lot of TV exposure that isn’t necessarily accurate, so the more that real people can be in front of people, the better.”

“It’s harder for people to hate us once they meet us,” Arellano said.



**A CROWD:** Mostly of Human Sexuality students. *Sophia Babb/Pioneer*





**SOUTH WIND:** Clinic provides several medical services. *Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer*

# Abortion clinic opens in Oklahoma City

**SOPHIA BABB**

Editor  
editor@occc.edu

The first abortion clinic to open in Oklahoma City in more than forty years began seeing patients September 10.

The Trust Women South Wind Women's Center provides general gynaecological services, minor surgical services, family planning care, early obstetrical care, transgender care and adoption placement.

The opening comes at a timely moment in Oklahoma history.

This week, the Oklahoma Supreme Court struck down a new law that would have placed new restrictions on abortion providers.

The law included heavier inspections for abortion providers and stronger criminal penalties for providers in violation of abortion statutes.

Despite legal setbacks, the chief executive officer of Trust Women, Julie Burkhart, said she wants to increase access to reproductive healthcare in Oklahoma.

"As of about two years ago, the provider in Oklahoma City closed. Before that there were only three providers in the state, so access was limited in the state," Burkhart said. "Especially in a metropolitan area as large as Oklahoma City, it is critical for women to have access to proper health care."

Oklahoma City was one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country to not have an abortion provider.

Burkhart said the low numbers of obstetric and gynaecological care in Oklahoma, has affected the health care of Oklahoma women.

"If you look at the number of women per OB/GYN, in the state of Oklahoma it is one physician to 18,000 women," she said. "That is a totally unmanageable

annual patient load. People are not able to access the health care they need."

A 2014 report by the Center of Reproductive Rights, said Oklahoma had the highest number of abortion restrictions in the country, tied with Kansas and Mississippi. After individual state abortion restrictions were analyzed, the study compared the number of restrictions to the overall wellbeing of women in each state. The three states with the worst overall well-being scores were Oklahoma, Kansas, and Mississippi.

Oklahoma Center for Reproductive Rights board member Annie Norman sees the opening as helpful for women's healthcare.

"Increasing access is a good thing, because if you flip it, decreased access means increased risks to women's safety and well being," she said. "The fact is, women will do almost anything to avoid becoming or staying pregnant."

Norman said states that have the least restrictive abortion policies, women and children are better off overall in terms of their health and well being.

"That really tells me that when women have access to abortion care, they'll also have access to other services," she said.

OCRJ Board President Carolyn Chowning outlined the challenges of abortion access in Oklahoma.

"The greatest challenges to abortion access are cost and stigma," Chowning said. "Federal and state restrictions prevent any public or private insurance from covering the cost of abortion care, and even folks who are able to receive help from the state's only



**Consultation Area** Photo Provided

abortion fund still typically must pay several hundred dollars in a short amount of time."

Even more challenging to address than funding, she said, are the personal issues.

"How does a pregnant person in Oklahoma know who they can talk to about their feelings and options without losing that relationship? Can you talk to someone in your family without

this coming up at the family reunion? Can you talk to your friends, your primary care provider, your faith leaders?"

Though the clinic has received some support, Trust Women has also faced opposition from protesters and nearby businesses.

"We had some neighbors who were trying to rally people in opposition to us, that were quite unhappy that we moved in. We also had protesters that started to come out to the clinic during construction, they were coming into the building and trespassing, and protesting outside of course," Burkhart said. "We continue to have protesters on a daily basis at the clinic."

Burkhart said she saw the clinic as a step in the right direction for Oklahoma.

"Just because women might live in a more conventional, traditional, conservative state, it doesn't mean that you don't also, at times, need access to reproductive health care or abortion care," she said. "Just because the politics are more conservative and right wing doesn't mean we don't need good health care."

Trust Women South Wind Women's Center is located at 1240 SW 44th St in Oklahoma City.



# FAIR THEE WELL



Friday evening at the 2016 Oklahoma State Fair. Visit [pioneer.occc.edu](http://pioneer.occc.edu) for a collection of pictures from the fair. *Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer*

## College cops respond to trespassers, pranks and fender benders

**GRACE BABB**

Senior Writer

[seniorwriter@occc.edu](mailto:seniorwriter@occc.edu)

Oklahoma City Community College police found a young woman inside a dumpster September 6. Police said the woman was instructed to show her hands and step out of the container. The responding police officer secured the container and made sure no one else was accompanying her in the dumpster.

The woman told police she assumed the dumpster was full of trash that was meant to be discarded, and she thought it was okay for her to look through its contents.

She was told that it was not okay, and she was not supposed to be rummaging through the dumpster.

She was told not to return to the campus for the next six months.

On September 8, a staff member at the Professional Development Institute told police she thought two of her students were under the influence of something. The students, the woman said, had come in late and were acting strangely, but were not being disruptive.

Both students, a male and female, were interviewed without incident and were allowed to leave after it was determined that they were not under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

On September 9, a student reported that an ancient prank had been revived

and performed upon her vehicle. Vaseline appeared to be placed on her windshield wiper so that when she turned on her wipers, it would smear the substance across her windshield.

September 15, a staff member notified a police officer that an unconscious female was laying face down on the floor outside the women's restroom. The police officer observed that the woman was pregnant.

The officer placed his hand on her shoulder and asked if she could hear him, to which she said, "Yes."

The woman began to cry and complain of abdominal pain. After about fifteen minutes, the woman was transported to the Oklahoma University Health Sciences center.

Later that same day, a man in his vehicle reported that a van parked in the space in front of him backed up into his car's front bumper. As the man exited his vehicle, the driver of the van said "Sorry I hit your car, buddy, I'm going to go now." The driver waved then drove away.

The driver of the van was identified and told to return to the scene. He admitted that he knew he had struck the vehicle, but had "panicked."

Police also reported that a male subject was walking around on the rooftop of the main building. The man was removed from the rooftop of the main building, and told to not walk around on the rooftop of the main building.

He was issued a trespass warning.



# OCCC brings volunteer force to charity walk



**Service Learning:** More than 300 Oklahoma City Community College students, staff, faculty and community members, coordinated through the office of Student Life, volunteered at the 2016 Walk to End Alzheimer's event on Saturday, Sept. 24. Volunteers did everything from hosting the Champions Club tent for top donors, registering participants for the walk, dressing in costumes to manning advocacy booths. OCCC first began the partnership with the Oklahoma City Alzheimer's Association six years ago to make the community wide event a success, said Student Life Director, Erin Logan.

Photos by  
Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer





# Tai Chi classes added to group fitness offerings

**TRAVIS FORSYTH**  
Sports Writer  
sportswriter@occc.edu

Oklahoma City Community College is now offering beginner and advanced Tai Chi classes to students every Tuesday and Friday this semester.

The class will be taught by Thailand native Chock Petchprom who is highly skilled in practicing Tai Chi, Yoga, and Tai Massage.

Petchprom will hold a beginners class at 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and an intermediate/advanced class at 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Tai Chi is practiced by millions of people around the world to improve and maintain healthy lifestyle by improving physical fitness to gain energy while remaining calm and relaxed.

Through deep and rhythmic breathing, oxygen levels increase throughout the body to improve circulation, stamina, balance and strengthen muscles.

“It is more than just exercise,” Petchprom said. “It is a way of life.”

Petchprom said the three key principles of Tai Chi are movement, breathing and mental focus.

These principles produce many benefits including; health and well-being, better posture and balance, fall prevention, stress relief, sense of harmony, increased confidence, healthier aging, and improved mental focus.

Tai Chi was recently added to OCCC’s list of fitness classes that are offered this semester as expansion to give students a larger variety to choose from.

OCCC’s intramural flag football season has been a moderate success despite the limited number of players. The season will continue to Oct. 12 when the pigskin will be put away for the semester.

Sign-ups for Ultimate Frisbee, will begin on Oct. 17 and will be played on Monday nights between 4p.m. to 7p.m. through early November.

The Wellness center is located between the College Union and Social Sciences. For more information, contact Wellness Center Manager Brooke Dresel at brooke.dresel@occc.edu

And for more information about intramural sports, contact Sports and Recreation Specialist Matthew Wright at matthew.j.wright@occc.edu

FALL GROUP FITNESS SCHEDULE						
MAIN CAMPUS						
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday		Thursday
11:00 - 11:30	TRX Gary	Zumba Rhonda	Tai Chi	TRX Gary	Tabata Spin Patti	TRX Gary
11:30 - 12:00						PIYO Alisha
12:00 - 12:30	TRX Gary	Sets & Reps Joni		TRX Gary	Sets & Reps Rhonda	TRX Gary
12:30 - 1:00			Cardio Kickboxing Julie			Cardio Kickboxing Julie
1:00 - 1:30	TRX/HIIT Gary	Stretching Joni	CrossTrain X Julie	TRX/HIIT Gary		CrossTrain X Julie
1:30 - 2:30	TRX Gary			TRX Gary		TRX Gary
5:15 - 6:15			TRX Brooke			TRX Brooke
6:30 - 7:30			Yoga Liz			Self-Defense/ Tae Kwon Do
The group fitness class schedule is subject to change. Please check back for updated scheduled at the beginning of each month or like us on facebook to receive up-to-date information.						
FACE CENTER						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
12:45p - 1:15p		PIYO Alisha		PIYO Alisha		



# Debt: students look for options to loans

*Continued from Page 1*

of student loan debt ever recorded, an average of \$35,051 per person. The same report states that in 2015, student loan debt in the United States topped \$1.27 trillion and is increasing \$3,055 every second.

Data shows that college loans are the second highest form of consumer debt, topped only by mortgages.

There are solutions to easing the cost of higher education, for not all who attend school come out with loads of debt.

Lauren Asher, president of The Institute for College Access and Success, told Forbes magazine that an inadequacy in presenting information about paying for school is a key problem in the student loan crisis. Prospective college students, Asher said, should max out their federal loans before looking to private loans.

University of Central Oklahoma graduate Teresa Anderson realized a few years into school that there were other ways of paying for her tuition.

“Once I transferred schools I was enlightened on the different scholarships that were available,” Anderson said. “My advice to any incoming student is to research any and all scholarships that not only the school has to offer, but the nation.”

***“But I’m not sure if the debt is worth it. It’s a better education, but by how much?”***

A graduate of Rose State College with an Associate’s degree in business, Michael Drayton used scholarships to survive college.

“Actually, the truth is, if I’m being completely honest, I wasn’t a struggling student,” Drayton said. Because he wasn’t qualified for federal aid, Drayton became well acquainted with his advisor who also oversaw admissions, financial aid and the enrollment offices.

Drayton said his advisor had the ability to offer him scholarships, free tuition and textbooks based on his transcript. At the time, Drayton also owned and managed a local business he founded. Rose State, he said, improved its graduate percentage rate and Drayton earned a degree nearly for free.

In addition to receiving federal aid, many scholarships – covering a diverse range of subjects -- are available for students.

Still, even with the increase in the number of scholarships being offered, rising tuition costs and the

growing pile of student debt will continue to haunt students.

Jonathan Smith and countless others, say more change is needed.

“America should value education, and the greatest way to do that is to fund that education,” Smith said. “I’m not sure if the debt is worth it. It’s a better education, but by how much?”

## Power outage closes school, delays Pioneer production

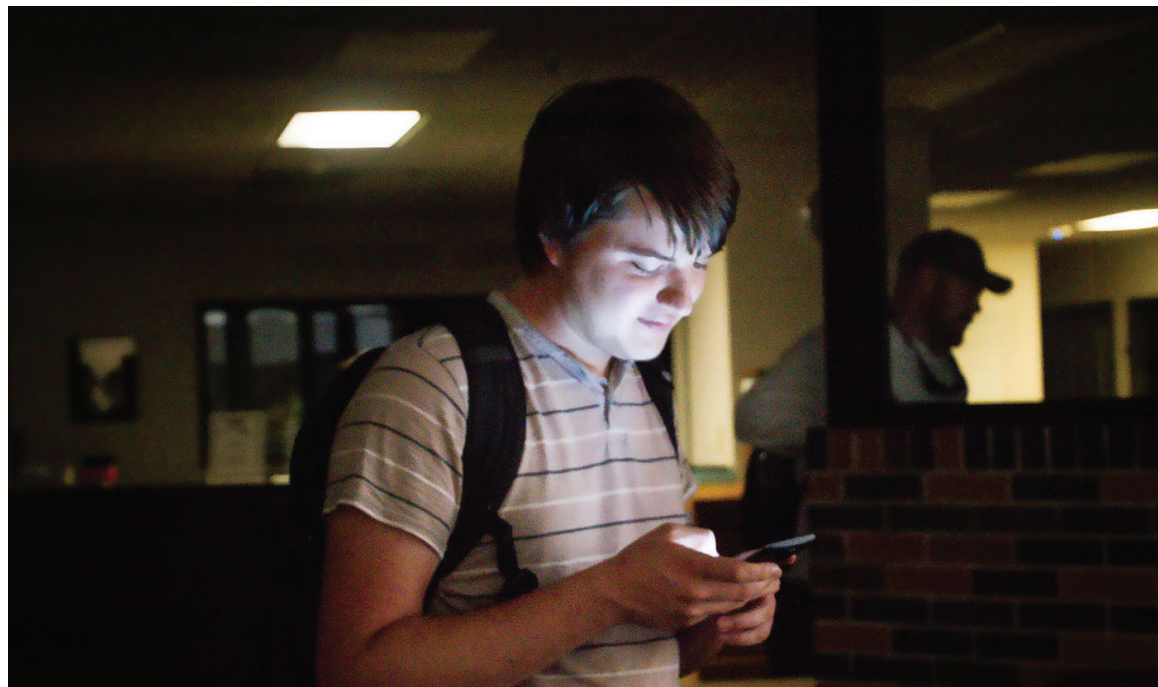
**Power restored late Thursday evening, school officials said.**

A power outage across parts of Southwest Oklahoma City on Thursday shut down the Main Campus of Oklahoma City Community College and the Pioneer student newspaper.

Printing of the newspaper was delayed but has resumed after power was restored to the area Thursday evening.

The Pioneer will deviate from its regular printing schedule once more, hitting newsstands with a new issue on Friday, Oct. 14.

The regular printing schedule will resume after OCCC’s Fall Break.



**BLACKOUT:** Sociology student Trey Gourley during a power outage that effected over 9,000 customers, including OCCC, on Thursday, Oct. 6. Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer

**Take part in the conversation – leave a comment on our Facebook page.**

**[www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer](http://www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer)**

# Jazz performance set for Oct. 11

**ZACH VOLK**  
News Writing Student

At 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday October 11 the Division of Arts will host the “We got the Jazz Student Jazz Ensemble.”

The event will take place in the Bruce Owen theater and will be free to attend.

The jazz ensemble will feature six musicians, including Mark Giammario who will not only direct the performance, but play the electronic keyboard.

“The ensemble has all new musicians with the exception of one,” Giammario said.

That exception is the singer of the ensemble, Kegan Rose.

Among the new faces is Journalism major Christopher Plunkett, who originally played the drums but ended up being asked to play horns.

Plunkett was told to bring his trumpet in and “see what he could do.”

**OCCC Music Presents...**



**Featuring  
OCCC's Student Jazz Ensemble**

**7:30 pm  
October 11, 2016**

# Student clubs joining together

**ERIKA FIERRO**  
Staff Writer  
staffwriter4@occc.edu

Oklahoma City Community College's Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Alpha Theta Alpha, is determined to unify clubs on campus and increase member engagement as part of their college project this semester, said Charles Myrick, an OCCC business professor and PTK adviser.

Every fall PTK meets with the highest administrator available at OCCC to identify how the club can collaborate with the college. “The college project is an international initiative to make chapters enhance the mission of their respective college,” Myrick said.

At the end of fiscal year 2015, seven clubs self identified to discontinue their participation as a club and changed to “inactive” status, said Student Life Assistant Director Kendra Fringer. Advocates of Peace, College Poets and Writers and the Military Student Association are among those on the “inactive” status list.

Fringer said lack of student interest in these clubs is the main reason for their “inactive” status.

After meeting with OCCC President Jerry Steward earlier this year, it was agreed that clubs on campus would benefit from support in the promotion of their events and encouragement of unification between clubs.

“Studies show a correlation between students who are involved on campus tend to be more successful in their academics,” Myrick said.

Derek Biggers, PTK president-elect and digital media production major, said there are other benefits

from getting involved in civic clubs. “It’s a chance to network with other students, learn leadership skills and serve through community service,” he said.

Joshua Buzzard, PTK vice-president said his organization would like to see more cross membership.

“We would like to see more cross membership. If more people are willing to join other clubs and be active then all clubs can benefit,” said.

Other organizations said PTK has helped organize and staff major events.

“PTK joined us at Fiestas de las Americas, one of our biggest events this semester, by volunteering to put the OCCC float together and walking in the parade of the event. We had a major turnout compared to last year and PTK was one of the reasons for the success,” said H.O.P.E. President Salvador Arcivar, business major. “It’s a great initiative and H.O.P.E. is behind it.”

During the clubs and organizations fair, PTK sat in as representatives for the Black Student Association, Kappa Beta Delta, Psychology club and others to help promote those clubs. PTK officers and members are leading by example as they continue to work on this project.

Fringer said she encourages current clubs to continue sharing their mission and values with its members, make them feel connected and practice good record keeping skills to pass onto the next group of leader who will come in after them.

PTK is the largest honor society in higher education for two-year institutions, Myrick said. “Last year, Alpha Theta Alpha placed in the top five in their region for best college project. I think we have a real chance at receiving a national award for this college project.”

# CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

## Free Immunizations For Kids

The “Caring Van” will be at the OCCC FACE Center parking lot (6500 S. Land Ave.) from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, October 20th, providing free immunizations for children who are uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid eligible and Native American. For questions, please call OCCC’s Child Development Center and Lab School at 682-7561.

## Mass Casualty Simulation

Health Professions will host an educational simulation of a mass casualty event at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26 and will be looking for volunteers to serve as actors during the simulation. More details will follow soon in the Pioneer.

## Cop In The Head Theater Performance

Students from OCCC and OCU perform “Cop in the Head,” a play based on Augusto Boal’s “Theatre of the Opressed” at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 7 and Saturday, Oct. 8 in the Bruce Owen Theatre. Admission is free.

## Christians on Campus Bible Study

Bible studies take place Noon to 12:45 p.m. Mondays and 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Tuesdays in room 1C5. For details, email [christiansoncampus.occc@gmail.com](mailto:christiansoncampus.occc@gmail.com) or text/call 210-685-8718.

## Native Amercian Student Meetings

The Native American Student Association hosts meetings 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. every Tuesday in room 1X5.

## Philosophy Discussion

The Agnostics, Atheists and Freethinkers club hosts the Socrates Cafe, part of an event series to discuss interfaith issues and encourage critical thinking about world issues and everyday life. Socrates Cafe takes place 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. every Tuesday in room 2N7.

## Pioneer Election Coverage

On Tuesday, Nov. 8 the Pioneer will bring you up to the minute coverage of the general election with a focus on the races and State Questions that matter to you. Follow us on social media and at [pioneer.occc.edu](http://pioneer.occc.edu) for coverage and expert analysis.



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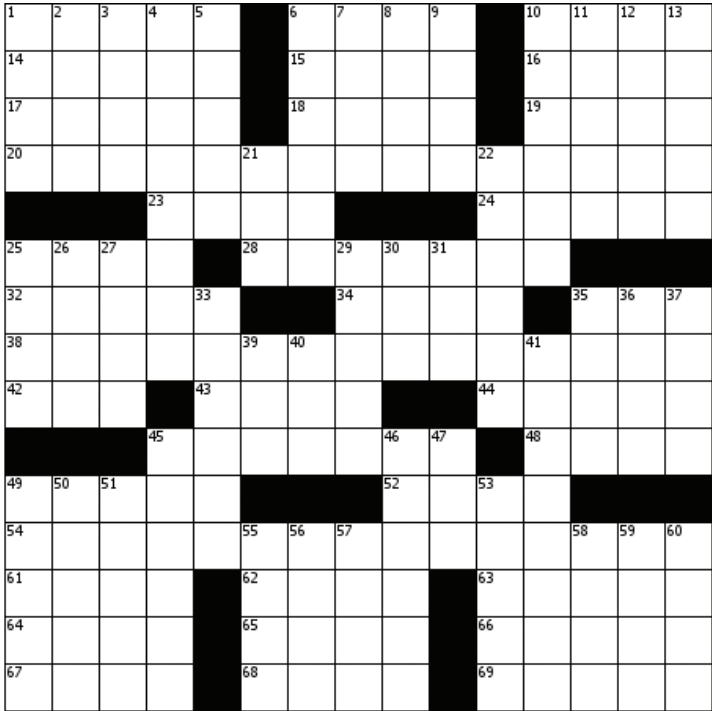
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## WEEKLY CROSSWORD

### Across

1. "Birches" poet Robert
6. Plaintive reed
10. Palm whack
14. Measure in Manchester
15. It eddies in Kazakhstan
16. Express carrier, once
17. Join the cast of
18. Uses a shuttle
19. Borodin's "Prince ---"
20. Where the water-loving carpenter takes a dip?
23. Start for plane or sol
24. Duncan in the kitchen
25. Expendable chess piece
28. Display
32. Like peas in a pod
34. Microwave, for one
35. Retriever
38. What a water lover says when confused?
42. Remove a branch
43. Kind of ring or swing
44. Like a designated driver
45. Number of tons in a Ford tune
48. Cymbal's bigger cousin
49. Odom of the LA Clippers
52. Bit part
54. How water lovers get things done?
61. Scrabble piece
62. Large composition
63. World's busiest airport until 1998
64. One logged in
65. It can be spliced
66. One facing life, maybe
67. Receives socially
68. They work on a hill
69. Became an issue



### Down

1. Envelope part
2. Role for Edward G.
3. Holy Roman emperor
4. Sinhalese is its official language
5. Walking on eggshells
6. Beat cleverly
7. Unruly little stinker
8. Inauguration recitation
9. "If all --- fails ..."
10. A good team should have it
11. Boston airport
12. Positive pole
13. Viking send-offs
21. Lode contents
22. Uses the bean
25. Toy in the sandbox
26. Certain choirboy
27. Thin puff of smoke
29. Bunch of huns
30. "--- had it up to here!"
31. This may sting a little
33. New York city
35. Western timber wolf
36. Congregation word
37. Titanic downfall
39. Bagel accompaniment
40. No-frills bed
41. En masse
45. Swashbuckling arms
46. Shakes an Etch-A-Sketch
47. Chalcant beginning
49. Exotic sitting position
50. Liqueur flavorer
51. Brouhaha
53. Sponge that's not from the sea
55. Cross-legged exercises
56. Crack, as a book
57. Smallest of the litter
58. Holy head light
59. Son of Aphrodite
60. "In the Line of Fire" actress Russo

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**Theater:** Professor Brent Noel addresses the cast of "A Cop in the Head." Photos by Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer

# OCCC Theater crew heads to Del City

**VICTOR A. POZADAS**  
Art & Music Writer  
artwriter@occc.edu

It's been awhile since I've attended high school.

Strange feelings arose while I passed through empty halls and gazed into classrooms to see bored and rowdy students. It's a weird thing to compare what I knew back then to what I know now.

One thing I know now is that there are students who just need that little bit of insight to what else is out there. They need talk and encouragement, that I wish I had back then.

Oklahoma City Community College theater professor Brent Noel understand this. Noel and the "Cop in the Head" crew were invited to Del City High School to conduct a workshop by drama teacher and OCCC Theater alum Tyersa Holliman.

Noel said he encourages everyone to try out theater and that, through outreach, theater can mean so much more.

"Theater can be more than lavish Broadway musicals," Noel said.

He said theater can change perspectives and create appreciation for the arts. He pointed to Holliman as a great part of the college theater program when they met and worked together in her years of study.

Holliman attended OCCC in 2010 and spent her time studying theater under Dean of Arts Ruth Charnay. Holliman performed in productions such as "In The Blood" and "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," where she took the lead role of Beth. She met Noel about halfway through her stay at OCCC, but she said her experience with the college and theater

program was phenomenal.

"I loved every minute of it. It was great. I got to act and do things I haven't done since high school, but in a college environment. I got to do plays that were a bit more avant garde and risqué," she said.

Holliman was recently contacted by Noel with the workshop proposal and thought the idea was amazing. She met Noel at a coffee shop to talk things out and plan the workshop where she suggested, "I have an advanced drama class that would be perfect for this."

Noel told her how the "Theater of the Oppressed" worked. Holliman thought it would be a great opportunity for her students.

Developed by Brazilian theater director Augusto Boal, the Theater of the Oppressed creates a dialogue between the performers and the audience.

The actors on stage portray different scenarios or exercises that demonstrate personal definitions of oppression. The audience then talk the "Joker," or the person leading the conversation, about their interpretations and are to share their way of thinking things through each scenario or exercise.

After short introductions in the classroom for the seventh hour advanced drama class, Noel addressed the room with his vision of oppression and how it can be channeled through theater.

"There are things we have to understand that theater can do for us and each other," he said.

"Embrace the discomfort. It's the things you know you're awkward and bad at that make you comfortable and a better actor."

The group then moved to the main theater to begin the exercises and get familiar with one another.

"Put your left hand up and draw a cross in front



**Del City:** Student actors.

of you with your finger," was Noel's first instruction after telling everyone to get in a circle. "Now, take your right hand and draw a circle in the same fashion. Now, do both at the same time."

The students laughed and struggled to wrap their heads around the task.

"It's not easy, and it's not supposed to be," Noel said. "There are things you sometimes cannot do. This is where you understand how silly and dumb you look and are okay with it because everyone else looks silly and dumb."

"Embrace the discomfort," he said.

The Oklahoma City Community College Theater production of "The Cop in the Head" begins October 6, 7, and 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Bruce Owen Theater and the following Thursday and Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma in Chickasha.