

SEMINOLE STATE COLLEGE COLLEGIAN

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PUSHCART PRIZE

Professor Paul Juhasz was recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize. [Page 6](#)

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NURSING PINNING

Twelve students graduated from the SSC nursing program in Dec. [Page 6](#)

Submitting to The Collegian

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Stay up-to-date with all campus news by visiting sscok.edu/media. You can also view our collection of archives, which includes past issues of *The Collegian*.



NEVER MISS A GAME OF **SSC SPORTS**

Students and employees can attend every SSC athletic event for free with a campus ID. View sports schedules at sscathletics.com.

SSC PROVIDES CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO LOCAL CHILDREN



Seminole State College employees and students recently participated in the Angel Tree program, providing gifts to 25 children in need through the Salvation Army and the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. The SSC community purchased clothing and toys, carrying on a tradition of giving the college began in 1997 with this program. Pictured (left to right): freshman Kennedy Hudgins of Seminole, Academic Affairs Administrative Assistant Tina Morris, Student Affairs Administrative Assistant Toni Wittman and freshman Aubree Wilkins of Earlsboro.

SSC SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER TO VETERANS



Se'Naqua Hildreth (left), the Voluntary Service Assistant with the Center for Development and Civic Engagement at the VA Medical Center, accepts holiday greeting cards signed by the SSC campus community from Professor of History Marta Osby (right).

Seminole State College students, faculty, staff and administrators made the 2024 Veteran Appreciation “Holiday Cheer” project a success, continuing a nearly decade-long tradition of honoring veterans during the holiday season.

From Nov. 11 to Dec. 2, the SSC community signed holiday cards filled with heartfelt messages of thanks and holiday cheer. A total of 200 cards were delivered to the VA Medical Center in Oklahoma City, where they were distributed to inpatient and outpatient veterans.

Se'Naqua Hildreth, Voluntary Service Assistant with the Center for Development and Civic Engagement at the VA Medical Center, expressed gratitude for the effort. “We are so thankful for the heartfelt and generous outpouring of support from Seminole State College,”

Hildreth said.

In addition, cards were delivered to Carl Odom, Commander of the Seminole American Legion Post #204. Both Hildreth and Odom were moved by the kindness of strangers demonstrating their support for veterans during the holiday season.

The project, led by SSC Professor of History Marta Osby, began in 2015 and has grown significantly over the years. “I am continually amazed by the support and thoughts expressed in our holiday cards for veterans,” Osby said. “In the busyness of the holiday season, so many of our veterans get overlooked. I want to personally thank each person who contributed. We, as grateful citizens, are forever in debt of these heroes, our veterans.”

COLLEGE HOSTS RETIREMENT RECEPTION FOR EMPLOYEE

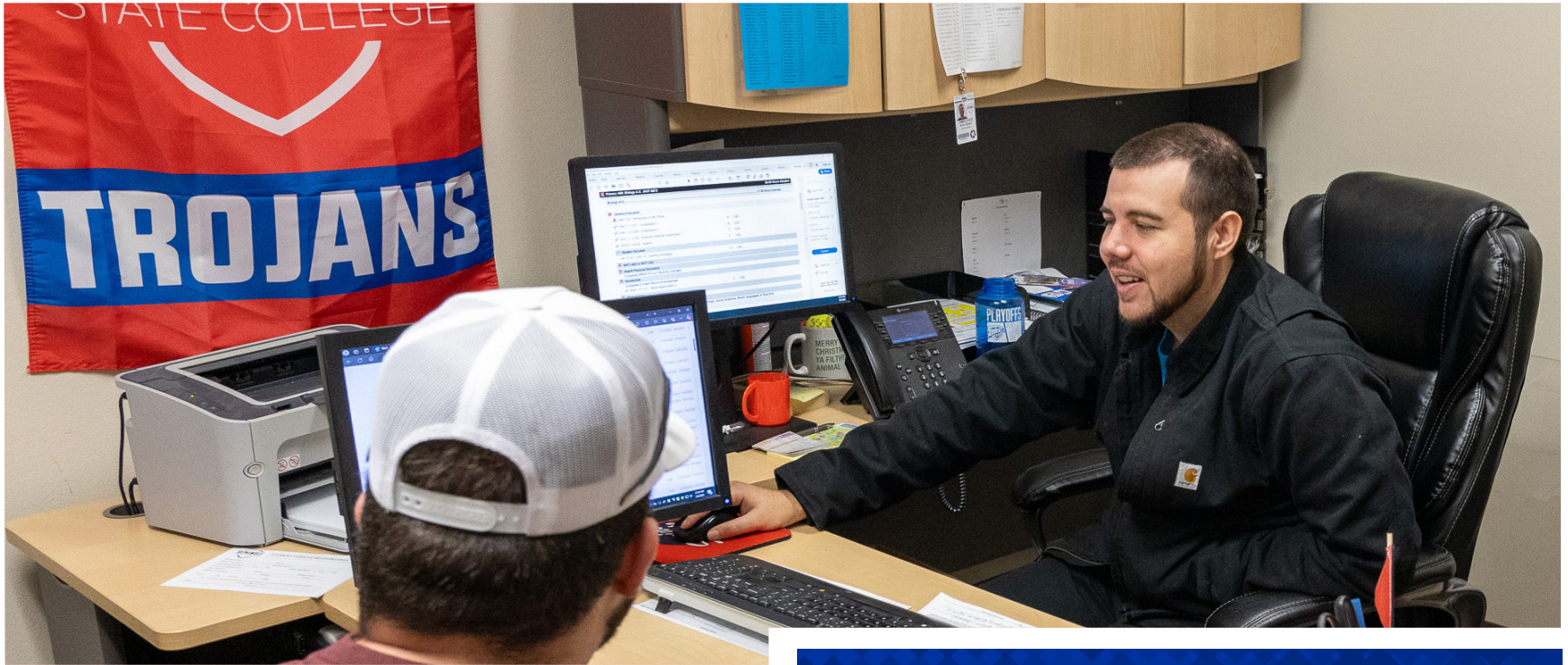


Seminole State College hosted a retirement reception for IT Technician David Cobb in the E.T. Dunlap Student Union on Dec. 13. Cobb worked for SSC for six years. Prior to working for the College, he served as the IT Director for Seminole Public Schools for 11 years and an instructor at Tecumseh High School for 13 years. He completed his bachelor's degree in Petroleum Land Management at the University of Oklahoma. Following his retirement, he plans to seek out the best barbeque and Mexican food he can find, attend more OU games and travel. He and his wife, Lisa, have been married for 43 years. They have two children, Matthew and Lara, and five grandchildren.



Cobb talks about his time working and SSC and thanks the crowd of family, friends and colleagues for attending the reception.

SPRING SEMESTER BEGINS SOON AT SSC



SSC Academic Advisor Davis Kappel assists a student enrolling for the spring semester.

The 2025 spring semester will begin on Monday, Jan. 13. Enrollment remains open for new and returning students looking to take advantage of SSC's variety of degree programs and class formats.

To make the enrollment process as seamless as possible, SSC will offer extended office hours in the Walkingstick Student Services Center during the week leading up to the semester. The center will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, Jan. 6-9, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 10. Additionally, the center will host special Saturday hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Jan. 11.

Saturday, January 11, will also feature a Reach Higher event, an opportunity for non-traditional students to meet with advisors and explore degree

programs and scholarships tailored to working adults. Travelin' Tom's Coffee of Shawnee will be on-site from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. offering complimentary drinks to visitors interested in enrollment.

SSC offers a wide range of degree programs, including transfer options in business, education, health sciences, language arts, humanities, STEM and social sciences as well as workforce-ready programs in business operations, engineering technology, medical laboratory technology, nursing and physical therapist assistant. Many programs are available online to accommodate remote learners.

For more information about enrollment, degree programs or advising, please visit the Walkingstick Student Services Center, call (405) 382-9797 or email advising@sscok.edu.



SEMINOLE STATE COLLEGE

EXTENDED ENROLLMENT OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday, Jan. 6-9
8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 10.
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 11.
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HONORS TWO SSC EMPLOYEES

Two Seminole State College employees were recognized for their dedication and service during the Seminole Chamber of Commerce Forum on Dec. 12. Assistant Professor of Microbiology Amanda Soward was honored as Faculty Member of the Month, and Director of Human Resources Holly Wilson-Byrd was named Staff Member of the Month.

The Seminole Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, along with the Lions Club and Kontoor Brands/Wrangler, recognize SSC employees several times during Forum each year. Individuals are nominated from across the campus and chosen by SSC administrators to receive the honor.

Soward earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma Baptist University and her Master of Science degree from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She began her teaching career in Beijing, China, where she taught for two years before returning to Oklahoma to teach high school biology for nine years. In 2019, she was honored as the Meeker Public Schools



The Seminole Chamber of Commerce recognized Director of Human Resources Holly Wilson-Byrd (left) as the Staff Member of the Month and Assistant Professor of Microbiology Amanda Soward (right) as the Faculty Member of the Month at their Forum on Dec. 12.

Teacher of the Year.

Soward has worked at SSC for nearly three years, teaching microbiology courses and advising returning students.

She is a member of the Professional Development Committee in the Faculty Senate and mentors students in the Health Sciences degree program.

She and her husband Steven reside in Shawnee with their three children, Sophia, seven; Emily, five; and Jameson, three.

Wilson-Byrd received her bachelor's degree in biology from East Central University and her master's degree in Adult and Higher Education Student Personnel and Training from the University of Central Oklahoma. She has worked at SSC for 16 years, holding a number of roles, including Employment Readiness Skills Instructor, Talent Search Advisor, Sponsored Programs Compliance Officer/Deputy Title IX Officer, and currently, Director of Human Resources.

She is an active member of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Shawnee and a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.

Wilson-Byrd and her wife Janna reside in Shawnee. She has three sons, Ethan, Andrew, and Levi Newell; a daughter-in-law, Abby Newell; and three grandchildren, Easton, 11; Samson, four; and Andi Elizabeth, eight months.

ENROLL FOR **SPRING 2025**

Speak to an advisor or visit the Enrollment Center to secure your spring classes today.

You can also enroll by emailing **advising@sscok.edu** or calling **405-382-9797**.



PUSHCART PRIZE NOMINEE PAUL JUHASZ ON STORYTELLING'S POWER TO HEAL

Seminole State College Assistant Professor of English Paul Juhasz poses with his published works. The author was recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize for his flash memoir "Row."

For Paul Juhasz, storytelling has always been more than words on a page—it's been a means of survival. Born in Connecticut and shaped by experiences across seven states, Juhasz now writes and teaches in Oklahoma, a place where stories are as much a part of the landscape as the red earth. As an Assistant Professor of English at Seminole State College, he's passing on power of storytelling to his students.

That storytelling prowess has earned him significant recognition. This year marks the second consecutive time Juhasz has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, one of the highest honors in independent publishing. Established in 1976, the Pushcart Prize celebrates the best poetry, short fiction and essays published by small presses.

His nominated flash memoir, "Row," is an exploration of trauma, resilience and mentorship. The piece was nominated by the MoonPark Review and recounts an experience with his high

school English teacher, Clara Gyorgyey, a former Yale professor who fled Hungary during the 1956 Revolution. In the story, Gyorgyey invites a young Juhasz to row a boat on a pond, sharing haunting memories of her own past, including the loss of her uncle and her own experiences of violence during her escape from Soviet forces. Gyorgyey's wisdom and strength impacted Juhasz, particularly as she shared how reading Hamlet became a lifeline for her during her darkest moments.

"Row" connects Gyorgyey's encouragement to "just row" with Juhasz's own struggles and survival. The piece not only honors his teacher's legacy but also speaks to the power of storytelling as a tool for healing.

For Juhasz, storytelling began as a survival mechanism during a tumultuous childhood. "I grew up with a lot of abuse," he said. "I learned early on that humor and storytelling could defuse situations."

Juhasz's arrival in Oklahoma stemmed from a long-standing friendship with Hank Jones, a colleague from his days teaching at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. "Hank was persistent," Juhasz recalled with a chuckle. "He kept trying to get me involved in the Red Earth MFA program. Eventually, I gave it a shot, and I'm so glad I did."

The Red Earth MFA program at Oklahoma City University is a low-residency Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. Designed for students balancing creative aspirations with professional commitments, the program combines intensive on-campus residencies with distance learning.

Oklahoma's literary culture captivated him. He described it as "unexpectedly welcoming," highlighting the camaraderie among writers like Oklahoma Book Award Winner Ken Hada and 2014 Oklahoma Poet Laureate Benjamin Myers. "There's no hierarchy here.

It's not snobbish. Everyone's equal," Juhasz said.

Juhasz has published several works, including "Fulfillment: Diary of a Warehouse Picker," a creative nonfiction account of his time at an Amazon Fulfillment Center; "Ronin: Mostly Prose Poems," a finalist for the 2022 Oklahoma Book Award; "The Inner Life of Comics," and "As If Place Matters." His most recent book, "The Fires of Heraclitus," is a collection of poetry.

While establishing a substantial body of work, Juhasz remains committed to his students at SSC, where he teaches creative writing courses. Drawing inspiration from his high school teacher Clara Gyorgyey, Juhasz helps students turn their experiences into meaningful stories. By fostering creativity and encouraging growth, he continues to prove that storytelling has the ability to inspire and uplift.

NURSING STUDENTS CELEBRATED AT FALL PINNING CEREMONY



Seminole State College held a pinning ceremony at the Enoch Kelly Haney Center on Dec. 13 for 12 nursing students expected to meet degree requirements in the fall semester. Nursing graduates and nursing faculty and staff pictured (left to right): **Back Row:** Nursing Program Advisor Carmen Hutchins, Nursing Program Office Manager Julie Mathews, Assistant Professor of Nursing Damaila Lester, Assistant Professor of Nursing Miranda Stewart, Director of Nursing Dr. Misty Gray, Assistant Professor of Nursing Jessica Shelburne, Assistant Nursing Professor Ann Benson and Assistant Professor of Nursing Christine Clay. **Middle Row:** Kaylah Larmen, Tori Annanders, Ragan Dauzat, Daisha Minner, Hailey Fairres and Dusten Lancaster. **Front Row:** Falisha Wood, Crystal Davis, Kasey Balderrama, Adrienne Foster, Emylee Keith and Paige Kelly.

SEN. PUGH MEETS WITH SSC STUDENTS AND REGENTS AT FORUM



Prior to speaking at the Seminole Chamber of Commerce Forum on Dec. 12, Oklahoma State Senator and Chair of the Senate Education Committee Adam Pugh met with members of the Seminole State College President's Leadership Class. The students thanked Sen. Pugh for visiting campus and presented him with a gift. Pictured (left to right): Gavin Williams of Edmond, Logan Hill of Piedmont, Sen. Pugh, Adisen Williams of Mustang and Carter Sterling of Edmond.



Following Forum, Senator Adam Pugh spoke with SSC President Lana Reynolds and members of the College's Board of Regents. Pictured (left to right): President Reynolds, Regents Marci Donabo and Curtis Morgan; State Senators Pugh and Grant Green; Regents Robyn Ready, Ryan Pitts and Teresa Burnett.

SSC PARTICIPATES IN SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING



Seminole State College employees, Regents, Foundation Trustees, local community supporters, legislators and students show their support at the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Southeast Region Legislative Briefing at Pete's Place in Krebs on Dec. 3.

Seminole State College participated in the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education's Southeast Oklahoma Legislative Briefing on Dec. 3 at Pete's Place in Krebs. SSC was joined by delegations from other higher education institutions and state legislators for the event.

The program featured Sean Burrage, the new Chancellor of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, who officially assumed his role as the system's 10th Chancellor on Dec. 2. Chancellor Burrage outlined the State Regents' 2025 legislative agenda, emphasizing initiatives aimed at advancing education and workforce training for adult learners.

Among the legislative priorities dis-

cussed were: expanding the Oklahoma Opportunity Education Scholarship tax credit to support need-based scholarships for students at public institutions, creating an appeals process for Oklahoma's Promise scholarship recipients facing unique circumstances, stabilizing property insurance rates for educational institutions, enhancing campus safety and security measures and strengthening the concurrent enrollment model to provide more opportunities for high school students to earn college credit.

Several legislators attended on behalf of SSC, including Speaker of the House Kyle Hilbert, Sen. Grant Green, Rep. Danny Williams, Rep. Dell Kerbs and Rep. Danny Sterling.

SSC's delegation included a diverse group of students, regents, foundation trustees, and community supporters. Participating students were Logan Hill, Melanie Long, Clayton Moore and Adisen Williamson. SSC Regents Chair Curtis Morgan and Ryan Pitts were joined by SSC Educational Foundation trustees Chair Mark Schell, John Hargrave, Kim Hyden, Rhonda McKee and Lance Wortham. Community members Seminole City Manager Steve Saxon, Randy Gilbert and Paige Sherry also attended. Additionally, Karel Brewster of the Brewster and Associates legislative consulting firm and Sen. Chris Kidd, who now serves as the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Association of Community Col-

leges, were part of the delegation.

Representing SSC employees were President Lana Reynolds, Director of Community Relations Kim Pringle, Rural Business and Resources Center Director Danny Morgan and RBRC Consultant Larry Smith.

The event underscored the collaborative efforts of higher education institutions and state leaders to address key educational and workforce challenges. The event was attended by delegations representing Carl Albert State College, Connors State College, East Central University, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Seminole State College and Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

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