

SEMINOLE STATE COLLEGE COLLEGIAN

MARCH 2026 | SEMINOLE, OKLA. | VOL. LV • ISSUE 7



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Submitting to The Collegian

"The Seminole State Collegian" is published during the fall and spring semesters by the Seminole State College Office of Media Relations, under the direction of Josh Hutton. The staff reserves the right to edit submitted material for spelling and style. Consideration is given to all submitted material, but submission does not ensure publication. No anonymous material will be considered. All views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of Seminole State College. "The Collegian" is distributed on the SSC campus and mailed to more than 300 friends of the college.

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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.

Staff Attend Summit for Dual Credit Programs



Seminole State College Concurrent Academic Advisor Cindy Nolen, Director of Enrollment Management Edith Cathey and Dean of Instruction Jessica Isaacs attended the Summit for Dual Credit Programs Feb. 15-17 at the South Padre Island Convention Center in South Padre Island, Texas. Hosted by South Texas College and the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, the conference brought together K-12 and higher education leaders nationwide to share strategies and best practices to strengthen dual credit and concurrent enrollment programs, support student success and ensure college-level rigor in courses offered to high school students.

Wapskineh Represents SSC at Nigh Leadership Academy



Participants in the 2026 George and Donna Nigh Leadership Academy volunteer at the Oklahoma City Zoo as part of a service project during the four-day leadership program.

Seminole State College freshman Alivia Wapskineh, of McLoud, attended the George and Donna Nigh Leadership Academy held in Oklahoma City Feb. 7-10.

Wapskineh joined college students from across the state for the four-day academy, where she participated in leadership development programming, civic engagement opportunities and service-focused activities. The itinerary included attending an Oklahoma City Thunder game, sharing dinner with Donna Nigh, exploring leadership principles during a “Your Leadership Journey” session, visiting the First Americans Museum, touring the Oklahoma City National Memorial, and participating in a Super Bowl watch party at Chicken N Pickle.

Students also completed a volunteer service project at the Oklahoma

City Zoo, met with state leaders and partners, visited the Oklahoma History Center, toured Express Personnel and the Clydesdale Ranch in Yukon, and concluded the academy with programming at the Oklahoma State Capitol and a session with the Women’s Legislative Caucus, followed by a Rotary lunch at St. Luke’s.

“The Nigh Leadership Academy provided an impactful leadership experience,” Wapskineh said. “During the program, I had the opportunity to connect with fellow student leaders as well as influential Oklahoma leaders who often work behind the scenes to create meaningful change across the state.”

“Through museum visits, leadership discussions and community-focused activities, I gained a deeper understanding of Oklahoma’s history,

leadership values and the importance of service,” she said. “The experience reminded me of the importance of collaboration, integrity and community engagement.”

Wapskineh said the academy challenged her to think deeply about how leaders serve others. “The Academy helped me grow as a leader and as an individual,” she said. “Being surrounded by motivated students who are dedicated to creating and sustaining positive change inspired me to reflect on my own role in serving my community.”

Wapskineh is a member of SSC’s President’s Leadership Class and was named 2025 Miss Seminole Nation. She is a graduate of McLoud High School and the daughter of TJ and Yecica Wapskineh.

The George and Donna Nigh Pub-

lic Service Scholarship was established on April 19, 1999, by the Oklahoma State Legislature and former Gov. Frank Keating. The purpose of this scholarship is to allow each of the two- and four-year higher educational institutions, both public and private, to select and honor one student each year as a Nigh Scholar. Each student is selected and nominated by their institution’s president and receives a one-time \$1,000 leadership scholarship.

The Nigh Leadership Academy is supported by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, which contracts with the Nigh Leadership Academy for implementation. Over the years, more than 700 students have been awarded the title of Nigh Scholar.

SSC Professor Releases Sixth Book

Seminole State College Assistant Professor of English Paul Juhasz has released his sixth book, *Katabasis*, a new collection of poems published by Turning Plow Press.

In *Katabasis*, Juhasz explores grief, memory and the complicated work of recovery, using the ancient idea of a descent “into the world below” as a lens for modern life. Turning Plow Press describes the collection as a journey through darkness marked by loss, hope and the reality that “healing is not linear.”

Juhasz is a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominated author of five previous books: *Fulfillment: Diary of a Warehouse Picker*, a mock journal based on his time working at an Am-

azon fulfillment center; *As If Place Matters*, a collection of short fiction; and three poetry collections, *Ronin: Mostly Prose Poems* (a finalist for the 2022 Oklahoma Book Award), *The Inner Life of Comics* and *The Fires of Heraclitus* (a finalist for the 2025 Oklahoma Book Award).

Juhasz has shared selections from *Katabasis* in multiple public readings, including Green Feather Book Company in Norman on Feb. 13 and *The Lunch Box* in Shawnee on Feb. 19. Both events were open to the public.

From 2020-2024, Juhasz served as curator and coordinator of the Woody Guthrie Poets. He currently lives in Oklahoma City.



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Accreditation Collaboration Brings NOC, SSC Leaders Together

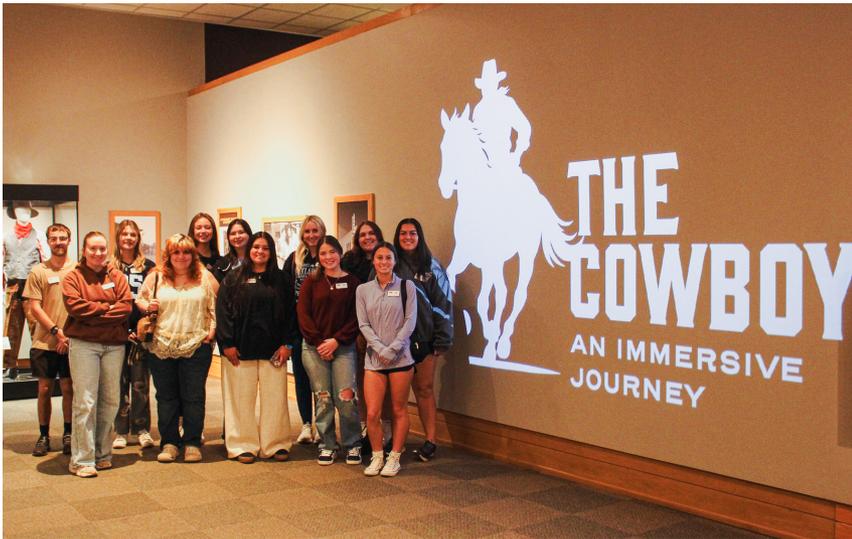


Administrators and staff from Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa, Enid and Stillwater visited with Seminole State College leaders on Feb. 26 to discuss Higher Learning Commission accreditation efforts. Representatives from both institutions learned about methodology and shared ideas about required criteria related to Mission, Institutional Integrity, Student Success and Planning. Pictured standing (left to right) are: Harli Dodge, NOC Director of Recruitment; Marc Hunter, SSC Director of Information Technology and Chief Information Security Officer; Dr. Mash Howard, NOC Stillwater VP; Kelli McBride, SSC Language Arts and Humanities Division Chair; Mechell Downey, SSC Director of Board Relations and Administrative Operations; Dr. Deanna Miles, SSC Accreditation Coordinator; Julie Huster Haney, NOC Academic Affairs Assistant; Dr. Kathleen Swain, NOC Director of First-Year Experience; Dr. Kathleen Otto, NOC Institutional Research; Emily Carpenter, SSC STEM Division Chair; and Cara Beth Johnson, NOX Business Faculty. Seated (left to right) are: Jeremy Hise, NOC Enid Vice President; Dr. Bill Knowles, SSC VP for Academic and Student Affairs; Dr. Shelly Mencacci, NOC Vice President for Academic Affairs; Lana Reynolds, SSC President; Jessica Isaacs, SSC Dean of Instruction; and Brad Schatzel, SSC Assistant Professor of Business and Education.

Leadership Students Experience “The Cowboy” Exhibit



Seminole State College President’s Leadership Class students pose Feb. 10 at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City in front of “The End of the Trail,” one of the museum’s most iconic sculptures, during a leadership and cultural enrichment visit.



PLC students explore “The Cowboy: An Immersive Journey” exhibit. The 360-degree immersive exhibit uses larger-than-life projections and sweeping soundscapes to bring the landscapes and stories of the American West to life and includes narration by actor Tom Selleck. The group also took a docent-led tour of permanent exhibits and later toured the Route 66 exhibit and other museum galleries.

Chamber of Commerce Honors Two SSC Employees



The Seminole Chamber of Commerce recognized TRIO Office Manager Rejeanna Tidmore (left) as the Staff Member of the Month and Associate Professor of Nursing Christine Clay (right) as the Faculty Member of the Month at its Forum on Thursday, Feb. 12.

Two Seminole State College employees were recognized for their dedication and service during the Seminole Chamber of Commerce Forum on Thursday, Feb. 12. TRIO Office Manager Rejeanna Tidmore was honored as Staff Member of the Month, and Associate Professor of Nursing Christine Clay was named Faculty Member of the Month.

The Seminole Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, along with the Lions Club and Kontoor Brands/Wrangler, recognizes SSC employees several times during Forum each year. Honorees are nominated from across campus and selected by College administrators.

Rejeanna Tidmore has worked at SSC for three and a half years and supports students and staff as the TRIO Program Office Manager. Her responsibilities include assisting with budget requisitions, inventory, supplies and student needs. Tidmore and her husband, William, make their home in Seminole. Outside of

work, she enjoys spending time with her family, including baking with her granddaughter, Bella, and attending Bella’s many activities. She and her husband, William, have one daughter, Talina Lee, who serves as SSC’s Business and Industry Coordinator.

Christine Clay has worked at SSC for two years and serves as an Associate Professor of Nursing. Her responsibilities include clinical teaching for MS II Traditional and MS II Online, serving as Professor of MS II Traditional Didactic and supporting instruction for the LPN-RN Transition Program. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and is currently completing studies in Healthcare Administration through Purdue Global University, with plans to graduate this summer.

Clay resides in Shawnee and enjoys spending time with family. She and her husband, Conny, have been married for 45 years, and their “many family grandbabies” keep things exciting around the Clay household.

SSC National Champs Reunited After 50 Years



Members of the 1976 Seminole Junior College Belles, the NJCAA women's basketball national champions, are recognized at halftime of SSC's game against Northern Oklahoma College-Tonkawa on Feb. 16 at the Raymond Harber Field House as part of a 50th anniversary celebration. Pictured, from left, back row: Cindy Perkins Stuart, Hettie Davis, Sherri Hudlow, Sherri Salyer Peckham and Diane Ray. Front row: Carole Carter, Head Coach Dixie Woodall and Belinda Candler Copeland. Admission to the event was free due to sponsorships from Kontoor/Wrangler and Security State Bank, and commemorative T-shirts were created and donated to former Belles by T&H Shirt Co.



National championship team member Carole Carter speaks with current SSC Belles players during a luncheon Feb. 16, sharing memories and lessons from the team's championship season.



Former Seminole Junior College Belles Head Coach Dixie Woodall visits with former Baseball Head Coach Lloyd Simmons at a reception prior to the 50th anniversary celebration. Woodall led the Belles to the 1976 NJCAA national championship, and Simmons won 1,804 games during his coaching career at SSC.

Story-Schell Achieves 450 Wins



Seminole State College women's basketball Head Coach Rita Story-Schell was honored during the Belles' home game Monday, Feb. 16, after earning her 450th career win with a Feb. 12 victory over Western Oklahoma State College in Altus. Pictured (left to right): Athletic Director Leslie Sewell, sophomore forward Alona Cooper-Rochovitz, Story-Schell and SSC President Lana Reynolds.

Retirement Reception Held for Longtime Employee



Seminole State College Comptroller Julie Hix was honored during a retirement reception Feb. 26 in the E.T. Dunlap Student Union. Hix served the College for nearly 20 years, previously as director of SSC's GEAR UP federal grant program before becoming comptroller in 2022. In her role, she oversaw campus budgets and purchasing processes while keeping general ledger accounts and state cash accounts in balance. Hix earned her associate degree from SSC and later completed a bachelor's degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education and a master's degree in Education Administration at East Central University. She lives in Seminole with her husband, Tony.

SSC Hosts Presidents' Day Event



Seminole State College hosted a Presidents' Day presentation, "George Washington: The Indispensable Man," on Friday, Feb. 13. Social Sciences Division Chair Jeffrey Christiansen led the program at 10 a.m. in the Haney Lecture Hall. The presentation covered Washington's command of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, his support of the new federal constitution and eight years of service as the nation's first president.



TRIO Day Celebrated at the Capitol



Participants and staff with the SSC Talent Search/FOCUS Program attended TRIO Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol on Feb. 25. Attendees from throughout the state filled the House of Representatives Chambers and overflow rooms to raise awareness about the importance of educational opportunities for low-income, first-generation students. Pictured (left to right): Amanda Thomas, Rachelle Jones, Damaris Haney, Rep. Danny Williams, Karan O'Dor, Yahnah Factor, Leslie Havlicek. The TRIO programs at SSC are Student Support Services, Upward Bound and Talent Search.

McQuiston Honored at Chamber Banquet

Seminole State College President's Leadership students Ethan Rich (left) and Alivia Wapskineh (right) visit with former SSC Regent and current SSC Educational Foundation Trustee Ray McQuiston. McQuiston was the featured speaker at the Seminole Chamber of Commerce Banquet on February 24 and was honored for decades of service to the community of Seminole. He will be retiring as Director of the Seminole's Kontoor/Wrangler Fulfillment Center this April.



405-382-9950
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SEMINOLE STATE COLLEGE
2701 BOREN BLVD
SEMINOLE, OK 74868