



Oklahoma | Campus Compact

2013 State Award Recipients

Winners of the State Awards were announced for each of the host states at the close of the 2013 Heartland Campus Compact Regional Conference in Tulsa on September 20th. At this annual event exceptional efforts and contributions to civic engagement are recognized in each of three categories: community engagement professional, community and campus collaboration, and community-based teaching and scholarship.



Pictured above with OkCC administrators are the OkCC State Award recipients with their awards. From right to left: Dr. Debbie Blanke, Executive Director, OkCC; Ms. Gina Wekke, past Executive Director, OkCC; Ms. Pam Pittman, Northeastern Oklahoma Higher Education Forum; Dr. Janelle Grellner, University of Central Oklahoma; Mr. Blaine Frierson, member of the Buddhist Mind Monastery in Oklahoma City, Community Partner to Oklahoma City University; Mr. Dann May, Oklahoma City University, and Ms. Debbie Terlip, Associate Director, OkCC. Join us in congratulating these outstanding colleagues.

Community Engagement Professional of the Year Award

Ms. Pamela Pittman-Adkins

Founder and Chair of the Higher Education Forum of Northeast Oklahoma – Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University

The Higher Education Forum of Northeast Oklahoma unites Tulsa Public Schools, nine public and private colleges and universities, and numerous community and civic engagement organizations to develop collaborative and innovative strategies to coordinate, integrate and support the secondary to post-secondary educational pipeline. As founder and chair of the Higher Ed Forum, Ms. Pittman has provided the leadership and framework for academically-based service learning projects in coursework utilizing relevant resources and innovative partnerships. During the past five years Forum delegates initiated academically-based community service courses across numerous departments including English, Nursing, STEM, Chemistry, Sports Medicine, Anatomy, Physiology, Media Production, Architecture, Web Design, Fine Arts, and Education. Ms. Pittman's accomplishments through the Higher Ed Forum also include developing online and social media sites for the Forum, leading the design and development of an online database to connect campus and community partners interested in collaboration, and hosting an annual student leadership conference for public school students.

Outstanding Community & Campus Collaboration Award

Mr. Dann May and the Buddha Mind Monastery

Director of Service-Learning and Adjunct Professor of Religion – Oklahoma City University

Buddha Mind Monastery is one of Oklahoma City University's (OCU) most engaged and active community partners. The abbess, Ms. Jian-Mao, serves on the advisory board for the Wimberly Center on Ethics and Servant Leadership at OCU. In the past seven years, over 600 students have completed service-learning projects at Buddha Mind, averaging 25-50 students per semester. The students have assisted with fund raising, conferences and ceremonies, food preparation, gardening, and general maintenance, and with building an extensive walking meditation trail, furnishing a children's room, and moving to an expansive new temple. In a larger sense, this sustained partnership goes directly to fostering greater appreciation for diversity in general as well as lessening tensions between ethnic and religious groups in Oklahoma City through helping to overcome student misconceptions and ignorance about other faith traditions.

Excellence in Community-Based Teaching & Scholarship Award

Dr. Janelle Grellner and the Oklahoma Civic Health Index Research Team

Professor of Psychology and Director, American Democracy Project - University of Central Oklahoma

Through the leadership of the research team at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO), the Oklahoma Civic Health Index (OCHI) serves to strengthen citizen participation in our communities, state and nation, fulfilling the public purpose of higher education to improve community life and educate students for civic and social responsibility. In addition to developing the skills critical for professional success as well as democratic vitality, civic education and engagement also contribute to increasing student retention. The OCHI research team was led by Dr. Janelle Grellner, a professor of psychology who also directs the American Democracy Project at UCO, and by Dr. Patti Loughlin, a professor of history who is a former director of the American Democracy Project. The faculty team members included Dr. Ed Cunliff

(Adult and Higher Education), Dr. Jan Hardt (Political Science), Mr. John Maisch (Legal Studies), and Dr. Brad Watkins (Geography). Ms. Emily Griffin Overocker (Transfer Student Support) participated from administration. Student Civic Scholars were Ms. Lauren Craig (Psychology), Ms. Danielle Hernandez (Organizational Communication and Spanish), Ms. Natasha John (Political Science), Ms. Sofia Price (Psychology), Mr. Jerry Shelton (Business Administration), and Ms. Alyce Vigil (History). The research team partnered with the National Conference on Citizenship and Oklahoma Campus Compact to measure the civic habits of the state's citizens across a wide range of indicators, focusing on civic skills, voter education, politics, and citizen engagement at the state-level. The OCHI exemplifies the tradition of transformative learning at the University of Central Oklahoma – community-based, civic engagement research – with faculty, students and community partners working together to produce a report to share with the state and nation.