



WOMEN *for* OSU

Leading with Purpose

2014 FALL NEWSLETTER

Ann Hargis

FIRST COWGIRL

Since its inception, Women for OSU has seen growth and progress. And behind that success is a posse of incredible women.

There is no doubt Women for OSU has acted as a catalyst for many exciting programs at Oklahoma State University. Whether it is funding scholarships, creating regional events, or hosting world-renowned speakers at the annual Women for OSU Symposium, these ladies are blending passion and success. We are making a real and tangible difference in the lives of students and alumni. Perhaps the most exciting component of this program is the women who are not actually alumni, but affiliated with the university in other ways. Sharing information and ideas through Women for OSU often leads to action in other areas of the university.

As a person who is not an alumna of Oklahoma State (and I will say again, had I known about OSU then, I would have been here!), I understand the excitement that surrounds campus. Not only are many things happening in Stillwater, but also at our branch campuses and our county extension offices. I truly believe there has never been a better time to wear America's brightest orange!

Women for OSU has also played a major role in the *Branding Success* campaign, not only by establishing priorities, but also by helping to realize the goals. And while the campaign will soon come to a close, these women are not yet finished. The future is shining brightly with more growth in both the number and value of our scholarships, and coordinating more regional events to help facilitate and foster interaction among these women.



There are many things that make me proud to be a Cowgirl. Women for OSU is certainly one of those programs. I am thankful for this group of women who are committed to not only making a difference in their corner of the world, but also making a difference in the lives of the Cowboy family.

Sincerely,

Ann Hargis



Visit OSUgiving.com/Women/AnnHargis
for Ann's video interview

Thank You

Women for Oklahoma State University wishes to express its appreciation to the following Council Members and Partners, whose leadership and support helped make 2013-14 our most successful year yet.

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GROWING *in* GREATNESS

WOMEN FOR OSU CONTINUES INCREASING IMPACT

Among Women for Oklahoma State University's many achievements over the past six years, the group's leadership consistently points to \$74,000 in scholarships presented to 22 students as the most significant. That's especially impressive considering the organization awarded just one \$2,000 scholarship in 2009. At last spring's Symposium, Women for OSU presented \$5,000 scholarships each to five recipients.

"We have made tremendous progress growing our scholarship program," says Becky Steen, who recently began a two-year term as the organization's chair. "We have increased the value and total number of annual awards, which reflects increasing success inspiring and celebrating philanthropy among the entire OSU family."

Another sign of success is that the 22 scholarship recipients are becoming donors themselves, having already combined for more than \$30,500 in gifts and commitments to OSU. All 13 recipients who have graduated are donors, as are five of the nine honorees who are still in college.

"That is quite a statement," says Pat Knaub, a founding council member. "We know that involving students inspires them to begin giving back, even at such a young age."

Knaub is the former dean of the College of Human Sciences, which established Women for OSU's predecessor in 1995. The organization, then known as Women in Philanthropy: Advancing a Spirit of Caring, became a victim of budget cuts in 2005. When Knaub retired from the college in 2007, she was approached

by Kirk Jewell, president of the OSU Foundation, about resurrecting the program and expanding the focus to include all of the university's colleges and campuses.

"In my private moments, I wondered if we could pull this off," Knaub says. "It was a rather daunting task because the earlier program had been on hiatus. But a core group of women dedicated to doing something positive university-wide through philanthropy and leadership came together, and it has been successful beyond my wildest imaginings."

One of those dedicated women was Martha Johnston, a founding member of both iterations of this organization who remains on the council today. She is one of 65 ladies who have served on the Women for OSU Council.

"This is one of the most fulfilling things I've done in my life," Johnston says. "I look at the newer group and am thrilled we have more women involved. Corporations and companies are involved that weren't in our earlier days. It is exciting to see women have a deeper understanding of what it means to be a philanthropist and more comfort acting philanthropic. I see this group moving forward to inspire student philanthropy, provide more scholarships and ultimately contribute to better lives for people."

Women for OSU is determined to continue inspiring leadership, philanthropy and stronger connections to the university. With that in mind, one major priority over the next year is evaluating and potentially revising the organization's programs and focus. The process will begin with a review of the official mission, vision, goals and



MARTHA JOHNSTON



PAT KNAUB



BECKY STEEN

core values. Women for OSU's four committees – awards, events, fundraising and marketing – will also re-evaluate their methods for supporting the program's overall goals.

“Every organization goes through lifecycles,” Steen says. “It’s time to review, update and refocus to ensure we continue making progress and that the guiding documents are challenging and relevant.”

Johnston adds, “This group has always been focused on its mission. If the mission isn’t working quite right and needs adjusted, we have changed it. That ability to change with the times is what has really made it very successful.”

One major change came in 2013 when the organization began complementing the annual Symposium by hosting regional events throughout the year. All told, more than 1,300 people have attended Women for OSU events over the past six years. These attendees have combined for almost \$325 million in lifetime gifts and commitments to the university, including more than \$1.3 million for funds supporting the Women for OSU program and scholarships.

Steen expects all of those numbers to keep growing as the organization reaches even more people over the next two years.

“ We will continue to increase the scholarships, reach out to more women who share our passion for OSU, and inspire women to realize their leadership potential through philanthropy.”

“We’re working toward increasing the number of regional events in surrounding states and beyond,” Steen says. “They provide a great way to catch up on all the wonderful things happening at OSU, and give us an opportunity to engage and reconnect with alumni and friends of OSU who may not get back to campus very often.”

Steen says she is humbled to become the fourth chair of Women for OSU and strives to lead as effectively as her predecessors – Anne Greenwood, Phyllis Hudecki and Trish Houston Prawl.

“I think we have a really strong, great history and I’m confident all of the incredible women who make up this organization will propel us to even greater accomplishments in the upcoming years,” Steen adds. “We will continue to increase the scholarships, reach out to more women who share our passion for OSU, and inspire women to realize their leadership potential through philanthropy.”

Recap of **2014 SYMPOSIUM**



Jean Chatzky delivered the keynote speech. She is the financial editor for NBC's Today Show, a best-selling author, AARP's personal finance ambassador, the host of Money Matters with Jean Chatzky on RLTV and a sought-after motivational speaker.

To watch a video or view photos highlighting the Symposium, please visit OSUgiving.com/women.



Women for OSU honored **Nancy Payne Ellis**, of Oklahoma City, as its Philanthropist of the Year during the sixth annual Women for OSU Symposium. She co-chaired OSU's first comprehensive fundraising campaign, Bringing Dreams to Life, and led the campaign to renovate Boone Pickens Stadium.



Women for Oklahoma State University presented \$5,000 scholarships to these five students. From left are **Aubrey Scott**, **Nadir Nibras**, **Charlie Gibson**, **Nicole Ralston** and **Chacey Schoeppel**.



The sixth annual Women for OSU Symposium continued the event's run of sellouts, with **359 attendees** filling the ConocoPhillips OSU Alumni Center's Click Hall.



OSU assistant professor Shannon Ferrell, left, made a surprise announcement that scholarship recipient Chacey Schoeppel, center, had been chosen as a 2014 Truman Scholar for her leadership, public service and academic achievement. Schoeppel's mother, Kay, joined her daughter onstage as Ferrell explained the prestigious honor, which went to only 59 students nationwide.



2015 SYMPOSIUM

featuring

MARLEE MATLIN

ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTRESS

Thursday, April 16, 2015

ConocoPhillips OSU Alumni Center

BENBROOKS CONTINUE *Inspirational Philanthropy*



Bruce, Rachel, Julia and Sheryl Benbrook

Loving OSU is a family value for the Benbrooks. Bruce and Sheryl were high-school sweethearts in Woodward, Okla., before graduating from OSU in 1976. Their oldest daughter, Rachel, earned a Women for OSU scholarship in 2012 and completed her degree in 2013. Their younger daughter, Julia, is now an OSU sophomore and member of the pom squad.

Bruce and Sheryl have been generously giving back to their alma mater since 1979. They also volunteer their time to assist the university in many ways, including Sheryl joining the Women for OSU Council in 2013. They recently created the Sheryl Benbrook Women for OSU Endowed Student Scholarship, which will be awarded with the other Women for OSU scholarships each year.

If you are also interested in continuing Women for OSU's cycle of inspiring philanthropy by honoring philanthropists throughout their lives, please contact the OSU Foundation at 1-800-622-4678 or info@OSUgiving.com.

"We are pleased to support Women for OSU in its efforts to recognize student academics, philanthropy and volunteer activities," the Benbrooks say. "These students have made a positive impact on OSU, our state, nation and world. This is one small way to recognize the students and encourage their service to others."