

# OSPA TODAY



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By now our school year has begun, with all its excitement and anticipation of the unknown course that lies ahead. We have dealt with our own personal summer regression-recoupment issues, met our new colleagues and co-workers, received our school site assignments for the year, and started to settle into "the routine."

This is an exciting time to be a school psychologist...and OSPA member. Your new OSPA Board includes outstanding people who have already been hard at work developing an exemplary Strategic Plan, which sets optimistic yet achievable goals for school psychology in Oklahoma. Plans were made to be involved in the professional-opportunity-of-the-decade interactive School Psychology Futures Conference Nov. 14-16 at OSU. The Conference will include the "Who's Who" of our profession, including Thomas Kratochwill, Michael Curtis, Robert Sternberg, Sandra Christenson, and Past NASP President Deborah Crockett, who is OSPA's Fall Conference speaker on "Stop The Bullying: The First Step in Violence Prevention and Creating Safe Schools" (in time for the School Bullying Prevention Act which goes into effect on November 1).

OSPA's Fall Conference will be held at the Edmond Ramada Plaza on Oct. 24-25, with a free bonus for conference attendees on Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. NASP GPR Trainer Stephen Crane will be presenting an orientation to effective grassroots politics (so important to OSPA's legislative efforts for NCSP recognition). Topics will include a residency credential /internship license, streamlining OCTP's exam procedures to include only the subject area test for school psychology (as we work to remove barriers for school psychology students entering the profession), and collaboration with other professional organizations in working for legislation that benefits the children and youth of Oklahoma.

Your Board announces a CONTEST for a **public service announcement for school psychology**, to be developed by individuals or teams, perhaps from our university training programs, school districts, and/or individual Steven-Spielberg-wannabees, with prizes to be awarded at OSPA's Spring Conference.

It is an exciting time to be a school psychologist...and NASP member. Nationally, NASP has provided leadership in many important areas: how to help others cope with the anniversary of September 11, 2001, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in general, as well as providing helpful handouts on this topic for educators and students. A new NASP "Students of School Psychology Interest Group" has been started. Policy recommendations for the Reauthorization of IDEA were highlighted.

School Psychology Awareness Week will be held November 4-8 this year instead of April, so each of you is appointed a Public Relations ambassador for School Psychology—please make an effort to share handouts, make a presentation, or

find ways to assist with a building or district concern. NASP also has started a new monthly "NASP-Announce E-Mail" for all members with e-mail addresses, about a timely issue, with handouts to print out, articles to share, and websites for additional information. The President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education presented its final report, "A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and their Families," which is well summarized in the September NASP Communiqué. The Severe Discrepancy model in LD diagnosis, originally designed to prevent over-diagnosis, has been debated as more effective models of learning disabilities have been considered.

Experiencing the anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and looking back over the past year, we recall not only the changes that this act of terrorism wrought, but also those associated with the Murrah Building bombing. Although we Oklahomans lost our sense of innocence and naivete then, we also witnessed the heartwarming miracle of rescue workers who rushed to OKC to help from across America, just as they did for New York City and the Pentagon. We saw uncommon good in everyday people who found ways to offer their assistance in whatever needed to be done, including Stephen Crane's leadership in establishing NASP's National Emergency Assistance Team after the OKC tragedy, and in those brave patriots on Flight 93 on September 11. In our collective agony and mourning, Oklahoma set the standard for the nation in showing how to help each other through tragedy, and exemplified the resilience of the American people, with exceeding empathy for September 11<sup>th</sup> victims, survivors, and their families. Let us always remember these hard won lessons of renewed patriotism, genuine caring, love of family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers; sense of community, deepened faith, and strong hope for the future.

It's an exciting time to be a school psychologist...so LET'S ROLL!!!  
I look forward to seeing you at the OSPA Fall Conference Oct. 24-25 in Edmond.

Wishing you the best school year ever,

*Candis Hogan*  
*OSPA President*

## **Backpacks May Cause Spinal Damage**

Researchers across the nation have identified backpacks (exceeding the child's body weight by 10% to 15%) as a cause of permanent spinal damage. According to the Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AOS), they are seeing more and more back related problems due to heavy backpacks. In a Survey completed by AOS, 7 out of 10 surgeons said backpacks are becoming a clinical problem in children, with increases in back pain and muscle fatigue from the enormous loads students carry in their backpacks. The following recommendations were taken from articles from American Federation of Teachers, The American Pediatric Association, Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons and Consumer Reports for backpack safety.

1. Be sure to use all straps that are available (shoulder and hip straps) and be sure that the load is balanced with the heaviest books nearest the child's back.
2. Make sure your backpack has wide padded straps and a padded back.
3. Secure your backpack two inches from your waist using all straps.
4. Use correct lifting techniques and provide adequate exercise to insure a healthy back.
5. Carry as few items as possible, using lockers or desk to store items not needed.
6. Consider using a backpack with wheels to avoid heavy loads on the child's back.
7. Frequently weigh your child's backpack to be sure that it does not exceed the 10% to 15% rule.

*Joyce Lowrey, Public Relations and Information*

## **Crane Presents NASP/GPR Workshop in Nebraska**

The NASP Government and Professional Relations (GPR) Committee provided a summer training workshop on June 17<sup>th</sup> in Cozad, Nebraska for approximately twenty members of the Nebraska State association leadership. The training workshop was presented by Steve Crane, GPR (Central Region Representative) Committee Member. The goals of the GPR training for participants included: understanding the federal and state legislative process; learning how to use the public policy process at the federal, state and local levels; strengthening your base of public policy resources through the GPR Committee and NASP staff; becoming part of a national network of colleagues committed to public policy and advocacy efforts; learning how to communicate comfortably and effectively with members of congress and their staff on important NASP and state initiatives; acting as an informational resource to NASP regarding your state politics and policy issues; creating and/or expanding public policy efforts in your state; developing goals and objectives for your state relative to public policy (state plans); and becoming involved with ongoing efforts on behalf of NASP public policy.

The local/state host for the workshop was the Nebraska School Psychologists Association and the NASP (NE) Delegate, Barb Ehrhart. A most important outcome of the training resulted in a state advocacy plan which addressed revisions to Nebraska's public policy (implementation of Rule 51 revisions) and procedures regarding definition and eligibility criteria for specific learning disabilities. Jerry Tieger, school psychologist (Omaha) and Nebraska State Department of Education Task Force Co-chair on revisions of Rule 51, was selected as the spokesperson to lead a state association ad-hoc committee in implementing the state advocacy plan. Follow-up to the workshop training will be provided by the NASP/GPR Committee during both fall and spring of the upcoming school year.

Other states may request NASP/GPR training by making a formal request in writing to Ruth Fodness, GPR Committee Co-Chair [rfodness@mchsi.com](mailto:rfodness@mchsi.com) and/or Libby Kuffner Nealis, NASP Director of Public Policy [lnalis@naspweb.org](mailto:lnalis@naspweb.org)

{SEE PHOTOS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE}



*Steve Crane with workshop attendees*



*Workshop Attendees*

## **John Corpolongo Leaves State Department of Education**

John Corpolongo has been named as the sales representative for Mobility ADA/ Commercial Sales for Newby-Vance mobility at the John Vance Auto Group in Guthrie, Oklahoma. Newby-Vance was founded in 1995 by Dr. Jim Newby and now has its own building and show room at the Vance Auto Group. John will be focused on expanding the commercial sales aspect of the business, including leasing, and will be working with state agencies, institutions, hospitals, and assisted living facilities in addition to retail sales.

Newby-Vance is a one-stop sales and service center for all types of accessible equipment for people with disabilities, including state-of-the-art accessible minivans, commercial-grade ADA-compliant paratransit vehicles, lifts, hand controls, power chairs and electric scooters. Service for all vehicles and equipment is available at this location.

John has served as Assistant State Superintendent, Oklahoma State Department of Education, since January of 1995, overseeing the division which includes the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs), Early Intervention, and Special Education Services. This division has over 200 employees within the statewide network.

Prior to his role as Assistant State Superintendent, John served as Executive Director of Special Education for four years and prior to that as Technical Assistance Officer for five years. John started service with the agency in 1981 as a psychometrist at the Stillwater RESC.

John holds a Master's degree in Applied Behavioral Studies in Education from Oklahoma State University and a Bachelor's degree from Pittsburg State University (Kansas). He is a recipient of an Outstanding Young Alumnus Award from his alma mater in Kansas. John holds national certification as a school psychologist and state certification as a school psychometrist.

He has presented at numerous workshops and conferences on a variety of topics related to special education; including: evaluation, legal issues, discipline, due process, parents' rights, and legislation pertaining to children with disabilities. In his professional capacity, he has served on a number of state level councils and advisory groups, including the Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Intervention, the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Department of Human Services' Advisory Committee on Services to Persons with Developmental Disabilities. During his service to the State, John has received the Governor's Commendation Award.

As a member of the Oklahoma School Psychological Association (OSPA), he previously served as President and has been a member of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). John also has been active in the

leadership of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) and is a Past-President of that organization.

John's mailing address is Newby-Vance Mobility, I-35 & South Guthrie Exit, Guthrie, Oklahoma 73044. Work Phone: 1 (800) 375-4471 Fax: 1(405) 282-4714 Mobile: 1 (405) 205-2845 Email: [mobility3@aol.com](mailto:mobility3@aol.com)

If you are Guthrie, please stop by and say hello.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

OSPA Fall Conference

October 25, 2002

Stop The Bullying: The First Step in Violence Prevention and Creating Safe  
Schools

**Deborah Crockett, Ph.D., NCSP**

Ramada Plaza

Edmond

### Looking Ahead to NASP Conventions

2003 April 8-12

Sheraton Centre, Toronto, ON, Canada

2004 March 23-27

Adams Mark, Dallas

2005 March 29-April 2

Marriot Marquis, Atlanta

## **Mary Ramzel Retires**

Mary Ramzel recently announced her retirement. She has been in education for 30 years, the last 21 years in Bartlesville. She received her Bachelor's degree from OU, master's from NEOSU and psychometry certification from TU. Mary taught EMH students in Oklahoma City and began LD programs in Wayne and in Dewey before moving back to her hometown of Bartlesville.

## NASP DELEGATE REPORT

NASP held its annual Delegate Assembly and Executive Council in Miami on July 13th and 14th. The following items were among those discussed and worthy of mention to NASP members.

**Membership:** As most of you are aware, the impact of 9-11 and the downturn in the U.S. Economy has had an adverse impact on the NASP investments; while at the same time, leasing costs have increased and current software for accounting and database need replacing. The Executive Council recommended and the Delegate Assembly approved the regular membership fee be increased to \$150.00. This amounts to a \$2.50 per month dollar increase; or as a supporter remarked, "the cost of one cafe latte a month." Benefits include annual subscriptions to the *Communique* and *School Psychology Review* (also available on-line), job opportunities, savings on NASP publications, convention discounts, NCSP re-certification discount, self-study courses on-line, and national prominence in shaping social policy and legislation. Total Oklahoma NASP membership as of June 2002 was 116. Delegates were asked to set membership goals. The goal for Oklahoma was 130, just one more than the 129 final membership roster for 2000-01. I think this is a reasonable objective and I encourage everyone to make a commitment to an organization that has had a lasting impact on children and youth. Remember that *U.S. World Today* cited School Psychology as one of the ten top professions in the U.S. What an honor to be in the top ten (especially in Oklahoma)! If you are not a member, please join; if you are a member, please renew that pledge. (Yikes, this sounds like I'm hawking pledges for Public Television!)

**Strategic Plan:** Deborah Johnson, Chair of the Strategic Planning Work Group, presented the NASP Strategic Plan. Highlights include: Professional Competency--NASP will ensure that current and future school psychologists have competencies and skills to support the diverse strengths and needs of children, families and schools. Advocacy--NASP will advocate for appropriate research-based education and mental health services for all children and families. Member Support—NASP will address the importance and values of membership. Diversity--NASP will work actively toward addressing diversity in all aspects of the association. Operational Excellence--NASP will have an effective infrastructure (governance) and plan allocation of resources that will enable the provision of efficient and responsive service to all constituents. External Relations and Communications--NASP will promote the work of school psychologists and be recognized for value and excellence by key stakeholders.

**High Stakes Testing:** In light of President George W. Bush's policy as reflected in the Leave No Child Behind Act, NASP considered the first motion on a new position statement on Large Scale Assessment and High Stakes Decisions. Basically, this document recommends that "standards-based tests be used as global markers of student and program progress, rather than the critical indicator

used to make decisions about educational placement, graduation eligibility, or rewards or sanctions for any school or district. NASP discourages over reliance on the use of high stakes testing at the expense of measuring individual student rates of progress to determine instructional programming and the provision of quality instruction..."

President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education: There was a lot of discussion regarding President George W. Bush's 24 member Commission on Excellence in Special Education. It was charged with studying issues related to federal, state, and local special education programs in order to improve education for children with disabilities. I strongly recommend you go to the web site and download the document titled *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and their Families* (in Word or PDF format). There are sweeping social policy changes changing the landscape of public education in general and special education in particular. An intriguing excerpt of the introduction states: "The President sought a commission that would recommend reforms to improve America's special education system and move it from a culture of compliance to a culture of accountability for results." I hope that brief statement prompts your desire to know more and download the entire document, available at [www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/index.html)

National Invitational Conference on the Future of School Psychology: Representatives from key stakeholder groups will participate in this conference November 14-15 in Indianapolis. There will also be off-site video access including OSU. Contact Dr. Judy Stinnett for more information.

Convention: O Canada! Our home and native land! True patriot love in all thy sons command. With glowing hearts we see the rise. Our True North strong and free! .....Canadian National Anthem. Let the garage sales and the aluminum can drives begin in earnest so that interested parties can attend the 2003 NASP Convention which will be held in Toronto at the Sheraton Center, April 8-12. We were encouraged to make reservations early and reminded that a PASSPORT is recommended (applications available at the US Post Office). You can also use a current Driver's License and Birth Certificate, but the certificate must have a raised seal, not just a photocopy. Keep in mind the adage, "People don't plan to fail, they just fail to plan." Begin budgeting today and remind your family and friends how money makes the perfect "stocking stuffer" (Just ask Martha S.) It is important to keep in mind that the U.S. dollar's exchange rate is in OUR favor; a dollar buys more in Canada, just don't tell that to your benefactors.

Other topics: Other topics for discussion included Respecialization in School Psychology, Advanced Credential in School Psychology, and IDEA Reauthorization/LD Eligibility.

If I can be of service to the NASP membership, please don't hesitate to contact me. It is an honor to represent Oklahoma.

With every good wish,  
*Marshall Andrew Glenn, Ph.D.*

## OSPA at Leadership Conference

OSPA participated in the State Department of Education's Annual Leadership Conference on July 17-19, 2002, in Oklahoma City. Members volunteered to set up and staff a booth to provide information to attendees regarding our organization and the many duties of school psychologists. Those assisting with this effort were Tracy Fenton, Tamara Mitchell, Steve Crane, Candis Hogan, Elizabeth Hatcher, Jami Haywood, and Jane Bias. As part of our strategic plan and objectives, OSPA members continue to educate the general public and school officials regarding our organization and the important work we do for children in our state. Volunteers are always needed for this endeavor. If you would like to assist with future events, please contact Joyce Lowery or Tracy Fenton.



*Jami Haywood, Elizabeth Hatcher, Candis Hogan, Tracy Fenton and Steve Crane are pictured in front of OSPA's display.*

## **OSPA Welcomes New Members**

OSPA warmly welcomes **Monica Austin, Cristella Catalano** and **Sherry Coy**, all Education Specialists from Hennessey Public Schools, **Marilyn Brower**, Psychometrist for Yukon Public Schools, **Jana Collins**, Psychometrist for the Cushing RESC, **Shirlene Kay Kaufman**, Psychometrist for the Muskogee RESC and **Sue Helmig** from Commerce Public Schools. We are excited to welcome several new students, **Stacia Blakeman** and **Suneeta Mani** who attend OSU and **Kari Hawthorne** who attends UCO. From higher education, we are pleased to have **Gary Duhon, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor OSU, **Sterling Lynd, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor ECU, **Terry Stinnett, Ph.D.**, Professor OSU and **Robert Thompson**, Speech Language Pathologist and Consultant to the University of Oklahoma Health & Science Center. Again, welcome to each of you and we look forward to getting to know you better.

Should you need a new membership certificate, have any directory information changes such as address/email, or have any concern or question about OSPA membership, please contact Jami Haywood at [jmehaywood@cox.net](mailto:jmehaywood@cox.net) or OSPA, P.O. Box 665, Jenks OK 74037. Thanks so much to our members who have promptly responded to dues renewal requests. Your timely financial support ensures our ability to provide continued services such as the Fall Conference, public relations activities, legislative input, and newsletter production. Each of you makes a BIG difference in this organization and you are appreciated.

*Jami Haywood, Membership*

## **Hilldale Project Reduces Bullying**

The National Association of School Psychologists studies show that 1 in 7 students have been bullied or are bullies.

Schools have been the setting for violent acts that have shaken our nation. In examining the events, we have discovered that several of the perpetrators had been bullied at school. These events have led to a greater awareness of the harm that individuals experience from bullying.

The first governments to launch anti-bullying campaigns were Sweden and Japan, after a number of their youths killed themselves. After the shootings at Columbine, Colorado was the first state to have a law regarding bullying. Now Oklahoma joins the ranks of 10 other states that have passed bullying prevention laws, with SB992 (The Bullying Prevention Act).

Bullying is a serious problem that can dramatically affect the ability of students to progress academically and socially. We know that bullying is a learned behavior; and the earlier a school intervenes with students, the better the results. There are no simple solutions for dealing with bullying problems or for making our schools safe. Each school has its own unique challenges and resources to address these important issues. However, students, who attend schools that take on the challenge, benefit greatly when staff members are committed to intervening in bullying incidents.

Since most incidents of bullying occur in areas where there is little adult supervision, we must rely on student reports. By reviewing every report we look for patterns of behavior to emerge. The composite picture gives the school psychologist, counselor, teacher, and principle a basis for action, even when the school staff didn't witness all of the events.

As we look at the profile of perpetrators, the majority were first victims. A rash of shootings at schools show that an alarming number of students use violence as a panacea for the difficulties riddling their lives. Most studies show that attacker's ages range from eleven to seventeen.

Since the majority of problems are caused by a small percentage of students, it is essential to track, monitor, and closely supervise these students to discourage this type of behavior. Findings show that, as soon as students who bully others realized they are being carefully monitored, they tend to change their behavior, because attention and help is what violent kids were after all along.

Students are the ones who know what happens at school everyday. They know the things we are doing right. We need to ask them to bring us suggestions for changes, which will help us improve our schools.

This program at Hilldale is in its 4<sup>th</sup> year. It began with students who saw a need and wanted to make a difference. Following the shootings at Columbine, the Student Council (STUCO) officers asked students to take a “No Taunting Pledge” which encouraged respect for others and peaceful resolution of conflicts. It was a first proactive step. The STUCO President also asked students to complete an anonymous questionnaire that asked students about their experiences in school, and the results were posted. Following the shooting at Ft. Gibson, the STUCO established a Safety Task Force (SSTF) open to all students to help reduce bullying, taunting, and harassment and promote school safety. SSTF is divided into teams with Captains and Co-Captains to help with training other students. At meetings, students learn the effects of bullying, work to increase empathy among the student body, and encourage witnesses of bullying to report the problem to school staff. Members also learn responses to use when they witness or are confronted with bullying behaviors. STUCO officers also hand out surveys to parents at Open House asking for their observations and concerns. Working in partnership, school personnel, parents, and community members can create a safe environment for young people. To encourage involvement of the parents, a letter is sent to homes at the beginning of the school year regarding the Bullying Prevention Policy and stating the school’s commitment to nonviolence.

Safe schools can only exist within safe communities. Everyone has a vested interest in violence prevention, and schools can provide leadership to bring about a safer environment. Students want safe schools, and we can’t have safe schools without student involvement. Students are more likely to witness bullying, so it is crucial for them to learn the importance of reporting bullying incidents to staff. Moreover, when students report bullying behaviors, it is crucial that the staff responds appropriately. Furthermore, educators must be diligent in protecting those who report incidents of bullying.

The project at Hilldale has shown a reduction of bully/victim problems--a decrease of 21% in students who have been bullied and a decrease of 13% in students who have bullied others. The program has increased students’ perceptions of school safety. 92% of students graded the school’s safety program as C or better, with 71% giving an A or B. Moreover, students expressed “more positive social relationships and more positive attitudes to school work and school”. The peer mediation program has been expanded to involve more students, and it is now an elective class. The membership in the SSTF reached over 200 this year.

Students should have a vested interest in making school a safe place. Involving students results in safer and better schools. A comprehensive intervention plan that involves all students, parents, and school staff ensures that all students can learn in a safe and fear free environment. The involvement and support of all students is the key to school safety.

*Tracy H. Fenton*  
*OSPA President-Elect*

## **Sandra Reese-Keck Elected OSPA's Northwest Region Representative**

Sandra Reese-Keck was recently elected OSPA's representative for the Northwest region of Oklahoma. While this region is large geographically, it contains only a small number of members. Sandra is concerned about how psychological services are being delivered to the children in the small rural school districts in this region. "It is of utmost importance to me to convey the role of school psychologists to these small school districts and to impress upon them the necessity of providing professionals to deliver services."

Sandra has served as a school psychologist for the Enid Public Schools for two years and as their school psychometrist for four years. She has 21 years of classroom teaching experience in Fairview, Oklahoma, and Waco, Texas. She received her Bachelor's degree from Baylor University, M.Ed. from Northwestern Oklahoma State University and school psychology certification from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah.

Her husband, Paul, is the business manager for DynCorp at Vance AFB. Their children are Chad and Kelli Reese, Yukon, Becky Reese, OU, John and Josh Keck, Tulsa Community College, and Angelica Keck, Union Public Schools. They also have a grandson, Questen, Yukon. Sandra enjoys reading, walking, bicycling, cooking, and golfing.

## **Sixteenth Annual NASP Children's Fund Auction**

The sixteenth annual NASP Children's Fund Auction was held at the 2002 Convention in Chicago and records were broken with regard to attendance and the amount of dollars raised. Many of the exhibitors, individual NASP members, and state associations made donations for the auction. The auction would not be "The Auction" without Alex Thomas as the auctioneer. Alex has been the auctioneer since the beginning. American Guidance Services again donated \$10,000 toward providing the hospitality for the evening.

OSPA donated a print by Greg Burns. Dr. Andrew Glenn donated a photo of the Dallas Cowboys autographed by Troy Aikman. The final tally for the evening was \$20,000+. This money will be used to support special projects that impact children and provide funding for post-crisis projects to assist when communities have experienced some type of disaster. This past year, students from classes in two Chicago schools received "I Like Me" packets which included books individualized for each child with their names, relatives names, pets names, etc. The smiles on their faces were, as the commercial says, "priceless."

The NASP Children's Fund, Inc. Board of Trustees would like to express its appreciation to OSPA and its members for all of their support. We look forward to another successful auction in Toronto.

For more information regarding submitting a proposal for a special project, contact Rivka Olley, [RIOPHD@aol.com](mailto:RIOPHD@aol.com), or 410-887-6915. To request assistance after a disaster has occurred, contact one of the Board of Trustees within your region.

## **UCO Update**

The School Psychology program at UCO seems to be growing exponentially; currently there are 64 students in the program. Numbers may continue to climb since the State Department of Education approved tuition reimbursement for the third year in a row, approving \$45,000 in tuition reimbursements for the 2002-2003 school year.

UCO's Psychology Center testing clinic has reopened after a one-year hiatus. Last school year, the Old North building was closed and the Special School Services Center was without a home. This year the Center is housed in the Psychology Center of the Education building, room 307.

The Special School Services Center is staffed by graduate students who are enrolled in practica. The Center provides an array of testing services for children from the community and surrounding area. Center fees are \$20 per assessment instrument, up to a maximum of \$100. If you are interest in the Center's services, contact Dr. Peggy Kerr at (405) 974-5477,

Jill Woodard, UCO Student Representative