Otero Junior College began a year of celebration of 75 years of excellence in education with a variety of events held Labor Day weekend. Over 150 people attended the events over the three-day weekend.

On Friday, Sept. 2, attendees enjoyed Rattler Volleyball’s Otero Classic in McDivitt Center Gym as well as an open house hosted by the TRiO Student Support Services program.

Ratter Volleyball continued their play in the Otero Classic on Sept. 3. The Men’s and Women’s Soccer teams took on Northeastern Junior College at Tiger Field at La Junta High School.

A crowd enjoyed the barbecue dinner served al fresco by Sodexo (our campus dining service vendor) staff, who celebrate 50 years of service this year.

One of the biggest hits of the weekend was the OJC archive display in the Koshare Kiva on Saturday and Sunday. Alumni, faculty and staff enjoyed the trip down our 75-year memory lane.

On Sept. 4, the OJC Foundation held a reception in the Student Center Banquet Room. Coffee, tea and light refreshments were served and student, staff and faculty representatives were on hand to answer questions about the Foundation’s programs.

A birthday party featuring Minute to Win It Challenges and cake and ice cream was hosted by Student Life and the Lady Rattler Soccer Team.

Throughout the weekend tours of campus were available to those who wanted to see the changes to campus or take a memory walk through the halls of campus buildings.
More photos from the 75th Anniversary Homecoming

Current OJC Wrestlers supporting the soccer teams—Future Alumni!

Bill Van Buskirk ('56) and Larry Tucker ('55)

Joe Tanner ('67)

Laurie (Nursing Alum) and John Knapp (Foundation Board Chair) and Gerry Oyen (Foundation Board)

Larry ('68-71) and Nancy Mitchell (OJC Staff)

Doris Blumenthal ('70)

Frank McKenzie ('68) and Cathy McCall ('69)
Medical Lab Tech program receives NAACLS accreditation

The Medical Laboratory Technician Program (MLT) at Otero Junior College has received full accreditation from NAACLS (National Accreditation Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science). Students who complete our program will have an AAS degree and be able to work in hospital and clinic laboratories.

The program began in January of 2013 with just a few students and has continued to grow. Four students have graduated from the MLT program, many more from the Phlebotomy certificate program.

The program’s Self-Study Report was accepted in July earning the program “Serious Status” for accreditation giving graduates the ability to take the national certification exam for licensing.

A site visit was conducted in April 2016 as part of the accreditation process as well. The final accreditation letter was received this month.

OIC’s MLT program is a gateway to a field in high demand around Southeast Colorado. The program prepares individuals to perform routine medical laboratory procedures and tests and to apply preset strategies to record and analyze data.

Students prepare for a career as a Medical Laboratory Technician through online/hybrid formats, classroom laboratory practice, and supervised clinical experience. They complete classes in general education along with Hematology, Clinical Chemistry, Clinical Microbiology, Immunology / Immunohematology, Urinalysis, and Parasitology/Mycology.

The MLT program is designed for the student to graduate with an AAS degree in two years. Three semesters are spent at the OJC campus and two semesters are partially spent in clinical rotations at an affiliated clinical facility.

The development of the MLT program at OJC was supported by the TAACC/CHEO grant funds.

For more information about the Medical Lab Tech program, contact Angela Tarrant at 719-384-6813.

OJC hosts Agri-Business Management conference

On September 29 and 30, Agri-Business Management (ABM) Instructors from across the state met at Otero Junior College for their annual fall conference. Instructors met to discuss important changes in the agriculture businesses sectors as well as visit with local agriculture business men and women.

This year Frank Grant, Crowley County Commissioner, spoke to the group about county land planning and the need for small agriculture communities to increase entrepreneurship opportunities. The group also toured L&M packing in Rocky Ford; an excellent learning opportunity on cash crops and their distribution.

ABM courses enhance the business management skills of area farm and ranch producers and operators in ag-related business. Emphasis is placed on developing computerized records, which will enable students to analyze the profitability of their overall operations, as well as each identified profit center.

ABM courses are independently taught at each producers/ operators personal location making each class personalized to your agriculture business. If you are interested in learning more about this certificate program, please contact Becky Gremillion, 719-252-9163, Ryan Belew, 719-469-3820 or Mack Myers 719-569-0734.
“Otero Junior College is a special place for me because my college education started here,” says Seth Franzman.

Seth is a 1958 graduate of OJC. He and his wife Barbara, both graduates of Arizona State University, are retired and live in Phoenix, Arizona. They enjoy occasional visits to the OJC campus to meet students, faculty and staff, and to learn of new developments at the college.

“Our decision to support Otero Junior College and the OJC Foundation was an easy one that made good sense. My only regret is that we did not start sooner,” explains Franzman.

“Barbara and I both had financial assistance and strong family support for our education, so we decided that we should give back by helping other students. Although there are many reasons to support Otero Junior College and the OJC Foundation, ours are related to personal experiences,” Franzman adds.

Seth and Barbara established the Franzman Family Scholarship to honor Seth’s parents, Pete and Alberta Franzman, who emphasized the importance of education for both Seth and his sister Gail, and for the benefit of the community as a whole.

“Our parents insisted that Gail and I continue our education beyond high school and made significant personal sacrifices to make it possible. With appreciation for my parents’ example, Barbara and I want to help others have that opportunity at Otero Junior College as well,” says Franzman.

Later, Seth and Barbara established the Franzman Family Nursing Scholarship to honor nurses and the nursing profession, and to recognize the importance of their role in the healthcare system.

“This scholarship is for second-year students who are candidates to become Registered Nurses,” says Franzman.

Motivation for this scholarship came after Seth experienced major surgery and received excellent professional care by the hospital’s nurses. Those nurses were also generous with support and compassion for Barbara during that trying time.

“That experience gave us a renewed appreciation for nurses and their profession,” Seth observes. “The excellent nursing program at Otero Junior College provides a perfect opportunity to accomplish the goal of honoring nurses, and to assist aspiring registered nurses in achieving that goal and advancing their own careers.”

The Franzman International Scholarship assists returning, second year international students to complete their associate degree at OJC.

“International students bring different perspectives and cultural backgrounds as visitors to this country. They provide an opportunity for us, as their hosts, to learn their customs and traditions and to share ours with them.”

While attending OJC, Franzman met some of the first international students to enroll in the college and later he studied in England as an international student himself. As a result of those experiences, Seth believes that when people work and
study together, they can better understand each other.

According to Franzman, “There is no better place than Otero Junior College and the La Junta, Colorado community, the Heartland of America, for international students to learn about the United States.”

Through the Otero Junior College Foundation, Seth and Barbara have supported the President’s Leadership Program because they believe that good leadership is essential in all aspects of life.

“Students who learn and practice good leadership qualities as members of the

President’s Leadership Program at OJC will benefit from that experience throughout their entire careers and will also be better prepared to serve their community.”

“It’s evident that our reasons for contributing to Otero Junior College and the OJC Foundation are based on our own personal experiences. Obviously, there are many other different reasons why members of the OJC community can and will offer that support. I believe that no matter how one chooses to do so, it’s important for all of us to be loyal supporters of our Otero Junior College,” Franzman concludes. “We benefitted from the contributions and labors of those

who preceded us. Now we must do our part to make our OJC an even better place for those who follow.”

For more information on the Otero Junior College Foundation, contact Sue Samaniego at (719) 384-6821 or visit www.ojc.edu/about/supportojc/

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Support the OJC Foundation on Colorado Gives Day

- **Who:** Alumni, staff, faculty, students, board members, community supporters
- **What:** Donate to OJC Foundation scholarships and programs
- **When:** December 6 (or schedule your donation early from Nov. 11—Dec. 5)
- **Where:** From the comfort of your own home
- **Why:**
  1.—Support students and affordable, accessible education opportunities
  2.—The $1 million incentive fund increases the value of your donation
  3.—You choose the program or scholarship you support
  4.—A donation to the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Fund through Colorado Gives day will be matched (up to $10,000) as well as qualifying for the incentive fund
- **How:** [https://www.coloradogives.org/OteroJuniorCollegeFoundation/overview](https://www.coloradogives.org/OteroJuniorCollegeFoundation/overview)

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Add to Outlook  |  Add to Google Calendar  |  Add to iCalendar
MacKenzie King named 11th Andrew Ricken Memorial Scholar

MacKenzie King was honored as the 11th annual Andrew Ricken Memorial Scholarship winner on July 30 at the Bent County Fair Car Show in Las Animas. MacKenzie sang the national anthem at the beginning of the show, then was asked to remain on stage to be awarded the scholarship of 6 credit hours at Otero Junior College.

King is the daughter of Billie and Kimberlie King of Las Animas. She graduated from Colorado Virtual Academy this past May.

King’s plans after receiving her Associate of Arts degree from OJC are still open. Currently employed by LA Café in Las Animas, King likes to sing, sketch, paint, sew and make jewelry in her free time.

Andrew Ricken attended Las Animas schools from kindergarten through graduation in 2001. He was an active member of Future Farmers of America (FFA) and his church youth group. A founding member of Muscle Cars Unlimited and a member of Christian Motor Club, Ricken loved working on vehicles and going to shows. He had aspirations to attend Wyoming Tech after working to save money to pay for his tuition. Ricken was killed in a car wreck on August 20, 2001.

His family, as well as members of Wheels Ablaze Muscle Car Ministry, have established a memorial scholarship fund to honor at least one area graduate each year. “We feel he would have wanted us to help other young students reach their dreams in life and help pave their road to success,” said Doug and Missy Ricken, Andrew’s parents.

2016-2017 Kane Scholars

Otero Junior College and the Kane Family Scholars scholarship program are pleased to announce the two OJC recipients of this year’s awards.

Bethann Traver and Dillon O’Neal, both recent graduates of Swink Junior/Senior High School, were chosen based on their academic achievements in high school.

The Kane Family Scholars scholarship is designed to assist OJC students in their efforts to pursue a bachelor’s degree at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. The program enables a student to graduate from OJC and transfer to UCCS with financial assistance at both colleges for books, tuition and fees.

Traver was active in Drama Club, Health and Wellness Club, Student Government, Operation Smile, Knowledge Bowl, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), National Honor Society (NHS), and Poetry Out Loud during high school. She was co- valedictorian of her graduating class.

After graduating from OJC, Traver plans to transfer to UCCS to continue her studies with a double major in Psychology and Biology. Her long-term educational plans are to obtain a master’s degree in Occupational Therapy and work with children.

Dillon O’Neal was active in golf and basketball in high school. In addition to sports, O’Neal participated in FBLA, Operation Smile, the Euclid Club, the Fellowship of Student Athletes, Swink Youth in Community Service, NHS, Knowledge Bowl, and Math Bowl. He received an All-Conference Honors in golf and basketball and qualified for the state golf tournament twice. He was co-valedictorian of his graduating class.

Upon completing his degree at OJC, O’Neal plans to transfer to UCCS to study Mechanical Engineering with emphasis on Aerospace Engineering.

The Kane Family Foundation is a merit-based scholarship program that provides financial assistance to students who attend public higher education institutions in Southern Colorado.

Andy and Wanden Kane’s vision was to help others. Though Andy never received a formal education, he and his wife believed that education was the key to lifelong independence. The Kane Family foundation allows this vision to continue by helping thousands of Colorado residents achieve the dream of a college education.

For deadlines and criteria for the Kane Family Scholars scholarship, contact Angela Benfatti, OJC financial aid director, at 719-384-6834.
OJC leads the way in educating health/patient navigators

Otero Junior College’s vision is to provide superior educational opportunities and be a valued partner with the communities we serve. The Health Navigator program is a specific example of how it does just that. OJC boasts the state’s first associate degree in health navigation and a potential career pathway that extends from community health worker to health navigator to a master’s degree in public health.

A health navigator is someone who guides individuals and families through the complex health care system to take advantage of services appropriate and available to them, largely through the Affordable Care Act. Their duties include linking patients with services, providing information and resources, helping providers interact with patients, and offering health education and promoting healthy behaviors.

Health navigators work in hospitals, community health centers, private practices and other agencies, assisting individuals across the continuum of care, from prevention to end of life. The demand for trained health navigators is growing because they have been shown to increase the quality and reduce the cost of care for patients in rural and other underserved areas.

OJC continues to build this program with the support of a Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Prevention Services Division (PSD) grant. The program has been modified to be delivered in two formats: a classroom face-to-face version and distance learning option which allows students to access the program including faculty support from home, wherever they live.

“Otero County educators are helping transform health care in Colorado by training a growing workforce of patient navigators to help underserved populations in reducing and eliminating barriers to health care access and in negotiating complex health delivery systems,” said Pat Uris, who heads the Patient Navigator Workforce Initiative.

They’re drawing support from local health plans, interest from students across Colorado and recognition from the state’s community college system for their outstanding program.”

In mid-September, OJC Health Navigator faculty Kaysie Schmidt and Ron Striegel were invited to present at “Unifying Industry, Education and Health/Patient Navigators,” an invitational meeting co-sponsored by the Colorado Community College System and CDPHE. The summit examined the role of community colleges in patient navigator training and the feasibility of a career pathway leading to a bachelor’s degree in public health.

“Making Colorado the healthiest state in the nation means eliminating health disparities,” said Uris. “Health navigators like those trained at Otero Junior College can help us do that.”

For more information on the Health Navigator program at OJC, contact Kaysie Schmidt at 719-384-6854 or Kaysie.Schmidt@ojc.edu

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Get Registered Today!

Spring Semester begins January 9

Otero Junior College
Justin Koenig named 2017 Chinook student-editor

Justin Koenig, from Houston, Texas, has been named editor of the 45th edition of Chinook. Chinook is a literary publication highlighting student and community writing and art, published annually at Otero Junior College.

Koenig is currently a sophomore at OJC working on an Associate of Arts degree in Business. His plans include continuing his education at a four-year institution in the future with a long-term goal of opening his own business.

Koenig encourages potential contributors to express their creativity, take a chance and get their creative works out there. The theme for the 2017 edition of Chinook will be “What We Think, We Become,” however, submissions are not required to relate to the theme.

According to Christina Stork, chief editor/advisor for Chinook, there are several reasons to submit to Chinook. “The biggest reason is, of course, for yourself,” said Stork. “It is also a community tradition, to take an opportunity to show the community your talent. Creating things, in general, is typically fun, and it is a fantastic stress reliever. If you are seeking to become a professional writer, artist, or even a teacher, having your work published looks great on a resume.”

The literary magazine Chinook enters its 45th year in the Arkansas Valley with this edition. Chinook, meaning warm wind, was introduced to the Otero Junior College campus by veteran professor, Dr. Tim Walsh who sponsored the publication for roughly twenty-five years.

Over the years, it has supported hundreds of writers' voices through poetry, essays, short stories, and art work. Submissions in each year's addition are not only from the La Junta area, but also from surrounding schools, businesses and community members.

“We anticipate another warm wind of new talent to arrive in our new edition,” said Stork.

Any form of original creative writing or art may be submitted, including poetry (24 lines or less), short stories and essays (1,500 words or less), and two dimensional art work. All submissions must be original and not previously published.

Written works should be submitted in Microsoft Word.

The magazine is printed in color and offers a vivid showcase for artwork such as oil, pastel, watercolor, pencil sketch, graphic design and photography. Visual arts pieces of work must be scanned and submitted as large, high-quality image in JPEG format.

All writing and art submissions must be received by February 1, 2017 at midnight; no exceptions.

For more information, visit the Chinook 2017 website at: www.ojcchinook.com.

Email submissions can be sent to at: chinook2017@gmail.com. In the email, include the title of the work and the first and last name, mailing address, phone number and email address of the contributor. Items without a title will not be considered.

For more information, please contact Christina Stork at 719-384-6847.
**OJC Seeks Public Comment for HLC Visit**

Otero Junior College is seeking comments from the public about the College in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The College will host a visit Feb. 13-14, 2017 with a team representing the Higher Learning Commission.

Otero Junior College has been accredited by the Commission since 1967. The team will review the institution’s ongoing ability to meet the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation.

The public is invited to submit written comments regarding the college to the following address:

Public Comment on Otero Junior College
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Il 60604-1411

The public may also submit comments on HLC’s website at: www.hlcommission.org/comment.

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and received by January 13, 2017.

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**OJC rolls out new OJC Mobile App**

Otero Junior College recently rolled out a free online mobile application for students, staff and the public to use from their Smartphones.

According to Guy Randall, webmaster for the college, OJC Mobile App was developed in cooperation with the Colorado Community College System and is similar to what other community colleges across Colorado have adopted.

Randall explained that Smartphone users can download the free app in order to stay up-to-date with events, athletic schedules and quick access to other OJC information.

“Anyone who needs to make a quick check of an athletic schedule or an event location and time can easily access that information from their Smartphone. In addition, students can log onto their student portal to check grades, submit assignments and view their schedule,” Randall said.

To download the free OJC Mobile App, Android phone users will find the app at Google Play by searching for OJC Mobile App. iPhone users can go to the iTunes App Store to download the app.

**Key features of the OJC Mobile App include:**

- **Courses** — Students can manage their courses on the go by accessing their course schedule and class assignments.
- **Grades** — Students can check their midterm and final grades on the go.
- **Library** — Students can access resources at the college’s library.
- **Athletics** — All users can access the most current athletic schedules.
- **Important numbers** — Find all the college numbers, websites, and addresses.
- **Directory** — Find contact information for faculty or staff.
- **Maps** — View campus maps.
- **News** — Bring up the latest campus press releases.
- **Events** — Get the latest information about campus events.
- **Media** — View videos or listen to audio.
- **Social Media** — Join OJC’s social networks.
New Faculty

Richard Gambino, who claims both West Texas and San Francisco as home, has joined the Math and Science department as Developmental Math Faculty. He will be supporting student success in qualitative and algebraic literacy and contributing to other faculty growth and development.

Gambino has a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Texas - El Paso, a Master of Arts degree in educational administration from New Mexico State University and a Master of Arts degree in education from the University of Denver.

Gambino’s work experience includes teaching at several community colleges and universities in New Mexico and California and at Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Academy. He also has experience working for various utilities, including gas and electric.

“I am here because of OJC’s commitment to student success. Few colleges hire faculty specifically to support students that need a little extra help and support,” said Gambino.

Outside of work, Gambino enjoys photography and watching baseball.

Helen Haley, Las Animas, joins the nursing faculty. She will be teaching psychosocial nursing.

After 20 years as a K-12 special education teacher, Haley returned to school to earn a bachelor’s degree in Nursing from Colorado State University-Pueblo. She is currently working on her master’s degree in nursing education. Haley has worked in several areas of the nursing field including cardiac care, emergency nursing, med-lines, and in the prison system.

Haley’s goal is to complete her master’s degree and move into a leadership position. In her free time, Haley enjoys reading, crocheting, cross stitch, garden and lawn work and caring for her three dogs.

Helen Haley

Jesse Hight, La Junta, moved from part time to full time automotive faculty. He brings 45 years’ experience to his role; having worked in various Ford dealerships, independent auto repair shops and two bus manufacturing plants.

“I was assistant to the previous automotive instructor and am interested in seeing the current automotive students complete their classes,” said Hight. “My goal is to prepare these students for successful careers in the automotive industry.”

Jesse Hight

Dol Nath Khanal, Nepal, joins OJC’s math and science faculty. He will be teaching algebra, trigonometry, calculus, and statistics courses.

Khanal earned Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from Tribhuvan University in Nepal, a Master of Science degree in applied math from the University of Nevada-Reno, and a Master of Science degree in Statistics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Prior to OJC, Khanal was a teaching assistant at both the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Nevada-Reno as well as full-time math faculty at Xavier Academy.

“Professionally, I am devoted to providing a comprehensive mathematics program to meet the needs of developmental students, transfer students and the students whose careers will rely heavily on mathematics,” said Khanal.

Khanal is married and has seven-year-old twin boys, Adit and Ashit. He enjoys travel, social events and making new friends.

Cassidy Litle, from Winfield, Mo., is a new Arts faculty member. He will be teaching English, communication and theatre classes.

Litle’s instruction background includes working as an English instructor at Western Illinois University and as an adjunct instructor at Carl Sandburg College and Spoon River College. He received a Master of Arts degree in English from Western Illinois University.
and dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and history from Culver-Stockton College.

“I was drawn to the small, community-oriented focus of the college from my first visit,” said Litle. “My best experiences as a student came from small classes with faculty dedicated to each student and OJC values the same experience. I hope to teach English and communication courses that are accessible, relevant and empowering for students while developing theatre courses to expand the ways students can express themselves.”

Outside of work, Litle enjoys creative writing; in particular, science fiction short stories and absurdist plays. He also enjoys playing guitar, running and playing video games. He and wife, Emily, have an infant son.

Emily Litle, a native of Canton, Ill., has joined Arts department, teaching Developmental English and English Composition.

Litle gained her teaching experience as an adjunct instructor for Spoon River College and Carl Sandburg College in west central Ill. She also has experience as an outreach worker for the Illinois Student Assistance Commission on Financial Aid and Student Mentoring program. She earned an Associate of Arts degree from Spoon River College, a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Illinois College, a Master of Arts degree from Western Illinois University and a post-baccalaureate certificate in literary studies.

“OJC prepares students for transfer or for career entry. It is very student focused,” said Litle. “The interview committee all seemed to love OJC so much. I know I can find a home here. I hope to expand my resources as an English faculty member and incorporate pop culture and digital media into the learning environment.”

Outside of work, Litle enjoys cooking and eating new foods, exploring the outdoors with my family and reading. She also hopes to learn to sew. Born to an agricultural family, Litle appreciates the small town atmosphere of La Junta. The Litles have a son who was born in May.

Emily Litle

Students: Leave your mark on campus

The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society “Commit to Complete” fundraiser is under way. For $30, current students can commit to complete their degree at OJC and a brick with their name and graduation year will go up on the Great Foundation Wall outside of MacDonald hall once they graduate. It’s a great way to leave your mark on campus permanently and to celebrate your commitment to yourself, your future and your education. For more information, talk to Mr. Wayne Beadles or any member of Phi Theta Kappa.
**New Staff**

**Shawn Borton**, originally from Pueblo, has joined the IT staff in the role of Technologist. He will be assisting with a variety of technology-related projects around campus as well as troubleshooting day to day issues.

Borton has a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Colorado State University - Pueblo. He came to OJC from the East Otero School District where he worked for seven years as a sixth and seventh grade reading teacher and, most recently, for three years as Tech director.

He accepted the position at OJC for the open environment and available opportunities for growth. “I hope to continue to expand and improve my technological skills,” said Borton.

Outside of work, Borton enjoys running and computers.

**Jordan Bishop**, originally from Colorado Springs, has joined OJC as the assistant Women’s Basketball coach. She will be assisting Taylor Shaffer, who moved from assistant to head Women’s Basketball coach this summer.

Bishop received her Associate of Arts degree in psychology from Northeastern Junior College and a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, N.C.

Bishop’s goals are to develop OJC Women’s Basketball players into “next level” players (division 1 or 2), clinch the Region IX championship and qualify for the NJCAA National Tournament.

“I am excited to have a collegiate coaching opportunity straight out of college. Being a part of a new coaching staff will allow plenty of room to develop as a coach,” said Bishop.

Outside of work, Bishop enjoys exercise, biking, painting and teaching her dog new tricks.

**Cruz Cortes**, Las Vegas, Nev., is the new Men’s Soccer assistant coach. Cortes joins new head coach Chris Smith, taking on Smith’s previous role with the Rattlers.

A standout soccer player during his time at OJC, Cortes earned an Associate of Science degree then transferred to UNLV. He is currently attending UNLV in pursuit of a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Admin.

Prior to his return to OJC, Cortes had been working for the Clark County School District and coaching high school soccer.

“Having attended OJC as a student gave me a strong desire to come back and be a part of such a strong, community-based institution,” said Cortes. “I hope to encourage our student athletes to be the absolute best they can be both in the classroom and in their respective sports.”

Cortes enjoys travel and playing soccer in his free time.

**Chris Eddy**, La Junta, joined the grounds keeping team. He is responsible for landscaping, tree maintenance and grounds maintenance.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Eddy has worked as a self-employed contractor, East Otero School District carpenter, and as head of maintenance for Cheraw School District.

“I am proud to be a part of a team that makes our community shine,” said Eddy of his new position. “I hope to increase my greenhouse knowledge as well as my overall knowledge of trees and plants on campus and possibly move into building maintenance in the future.”

Happily married with four children, Eddy enjoys hunting, fishing and ATV riding in his time off.
Tiana Eddy, La Junta, is the new coordinator of business office and bookstore purchasing.

A recent OJC Associate of Arts graduate, Eddy was a work study in the Welcome Center at OJC and also worked at the Barista.

“I loved being a work study here at OJC, because everyone was so friendly and it was a great environment to work in,” said Eddy. “I hope to contribute as much as I can and be an asset to OJC.”

In her free time, Eddy enjoys camping, fishing and participating in any outdoor activity with her family.

Chelsea Herasingh, Fort Collins, can be found in the library. She serves as an Educational Resource Specialist.

Chelsea Herasingh

Herasingh earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in social work from Colorado State University and a Master of Science degree in general psychology and a Ph.D. in organizational psychology from Walden University. She comes to OJC from Community College of Aurora, where she worked for the past 4.5 years as an adjunct instructor.

What drew Herasingh to OJC was the close-knit community, the campus environment and the wide open spaces of the Arkansas Valley. “I hope to help students and faculty develop information and digital literacy and to make research fun,” said Herasingh.

Married with two stepdaughters and three dogs, Herasingh enjoys fly fishing, hiking, camping, four-wheeler, baking, reading, volleyball and tennis in her spare time.

Jesse Jolly (Agate), Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) cowboy, is the new Otero Junior College Assistant Rodeo Coach.

Jolly grew up competing in rodeo from Little Britches to the professional ranks. He played a pivotal role winning a World Championship Ranch Rodeo team title in 2014. He attended Oklahoma Panhandle State University, where he received a bachelor’s degree in agriculture business. Jolly also acted as the team captain while competing in Saddle Bronc riding, team roping and steer wrestling. Jolly qualified for the College National Finals Rodeo in the steer wrestling in 2009.

Jolly is a true all-around Cowboy competing in both the rough stock events and timed events. He has built a name for himself in the professional ranks qualifying for the Mountain States Circuit Finals on six different occasions in the team roping, four times in the steer wrestling and two times in the Saddle bronc riding. Jolly has been crowned the Colorado Professional Rodeo Association Champion All-Around Cowboy 2008-2011, Champion Steer wrestler 2009 and 2015 and a multiple qualifier in the team roping.

Jolly plans to strive to build student’s strengths both inside and outside the arena - by stressing the importance of a commitment to both academics and practice. Under Jolly and Head Coach Linsay Sumpter’s guidance Otero Rodeo plans to have a strong team on both the rough stock and timed event side of the arena.

Greg Mendoza, has volunteered as an assistant coach for the Rattlers for two years. This year he will remain with the Rattlers as an official hire.

Mendoza is originally from Colombia, where he graduated from “La Salle” Institute before immigrating to the United States in 2008. Mendoza played for the Rattlers in 2010-2011 where he graduated with his Associates degree. Mendoza is currently pursuing his

Continued...
Bachelor in Sports management at the University of Colorado Denver.

Mendoza wants to do everything to help these young men become the best versions of themselves on and off the field.

Karla Mendoza, Miami, Fla., took over this year as residence hall director. Her duties include supervising student resident hall assistants, dealing with any issues on campus related to dorms and students who live there, managing the Wunsch Hall Club, and planning events for students.

Mendoza has an Associate of Arts degree in hospitality management from Miami-Dade College. Prior to coming to OJC, she worked as a clerk/receptionist for the Otero County Department of Human Services.

“Everyone is very welcoming at OJC and it feels kind of like a family,” said Mendoza. “It’s a beautiful campus and the staff and faculty really care about the kids who come here. I hope to make the students’ college experience a great one. Hopefully with all of the events and gatherings, they will create awesome memories of their time at OJC.”

Mendoza and her husband, Assistant Rattler Baseball Coach Greg Mendoza, enjoy traveling.

Matthew Paeth, Holley, N.Y., joins Chris Hacker as the coaching staff OJC’s new wrestling program.

Paeth began wrestling at the age of 7. He is a four-time New York State Champion in Greco Roman wrestling and a three-time USA Wrestling All-American. While training for USA wrestling and international events, Paeth was a member of the Buffalo Wrestling Club at the University at Buffalo. He placed fourth in the 2004 Eastern US Olympic team trials.

A USA Wrestling Bronze certified coach, he has experience coaching at the high school and college levels. While at Kansas Wesleyan University, Paeth helped start the first wrestling program in the school’s history and helped to recruit student athletes. While at Waldorf College in Forrest City, Iowa, he coached 9 NAIA national qualifiers and 2 NAIA All Americans. He owned and operated WNY Elite Wrestling Club, a wrestling club designed to bring elite wrestlers from all over Western New York together to train during the summer months.

What drew Paeth to Otero Junior College was the fit for him as a coach. “I hope to help our student athletes get to the next level in their education as well as their wrestling,” said Paeth.

Paeth is a graduate of the University of Buffalo with a degree in agricultural engineering. In his free time, Paeth enjoys hunting and fishing. He is also a die-hard Buffalo Bills fan.

Rion Rayfield, Burlington, Wis., joins new Men’s Basketball head coach Brenden O’Connor as assistant coach of the Rattlers. He will also serve as assistant residence hall coordinator.

Prior to OJC, Rayfield was director of basketball operations at the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay. Before that he served as assistant Men’s Basketball coach at Black Hills State University in Spearfish, S.D. Rayfield has a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Movement and Performance.

Rayfield was drawn to OJC by the success of the program over the past several years. “I’m also grateful to be able to work alongside a young and energetic coach in Coach O’Connor,” said Rayfield. “My goals are to help our student athletes have the best experience possible while at OJC and help to mold them into future leaders in whatever their future endeavors may be.”

Outside of work, Rayfield enjoys staying active by working out and by doing individual instruction in basketball-specific workouts for professional, collegiate, high school and elementary level players.

Lynette Ramirez, La Junta, is the new TRiO Student Support Services advisor and tutor. She will provide support for TRiO students with registration, mentorship, tutoring and other student services to ensure that students are as successful as possible.

An alumna of OJC, Ramirez earned an Associate of Arts before transferring on to
Oral Roberts University to study business administration with a minor in music technology. Prior to OJC, Ramirez worked as an adult case manager and early intervention service coordinator at Inspiration Field.

“I am excited to come to OJC and do what I love to do in math and tutoring/advising,” said Ramirez.

In her free time, Ramirez enjoys spending time with her family, playing tennis, playing Spades, and mountain biking.

Anne Taylor, Grove, Okla., is the new international student coordinator. She will help facilitate international students’ transitions into American Culture and college life.

Anne Taylor, Grove, Okla., is the new international student coordinator. She will help facilitate international students’ transitions into American Culture and college life.

Taylor has a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications, radio and TV from Oklahoma State University. She is currently working on her master’s degree through the UCCS Alternative Licensing program.

As a reporter, anchor and producer, Taylor has worked in Louisville, Ky., Tulsa, Okla., and Colorado Springs. Most recently, she has served as a substitute teacher for Las Animas and Cheraw Schools.

“When I was in high school, we hosted several international students. I was also an exchange student in Belgium. Since then, we have hosted a student in our home and I served as host mom,” said Taylor. “I am hoping to continue to learn new things and meet new people in this position.”

Outside of work, Taylor enjoys creative writing, photography, 4H, target shooting, cooking and singing. She and husband, Chad, have a daughter, Hannah, two dogs and a herd of Taylor tabby barn cats.

Anne Taylor

Rachel Weiland

Rachel Weiland of Walnut Creek, Calif. has joined new head coach, Jordan Willis, as assistant coach for Rattler Volleyball.

Weiland graduated with honors from London Metropolitan University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music industry management. Her coaching experience includes coaching club volleyball at Juggernaut Volleyball Club.

“I came to OJC for the family vibes,” said Weiland. “My goal is to help lead our girls to the NJCAA National Championship.”

Weiland’s enjoys volleyball, discovering new bands, travelling and watching football.

Lynette Ramirez

Jordan White

Jordan White, from Chandler, Ariz., was appointed the Assistant Women’s Soccer coach. Jordan is honored to work with Head Coach Sierra Doherty-Cardenas.

White’s club team achieved ten Arizona State Cup Championships and finished as two-time regional finalists. Ranking first in the country, White’s U18 Sereno club team acquired wins in high profile tournaments that included the President’s Day Cup and San Diego Surf Cup.

She was ranked in the top 100 recruits coming out of high school and received scholarship offers from Notre Dame, Texas A&M, Washington State, University of Colorado, and the University of Oklahoma. She accepted a full ride scholarship to the University of Oklahoma and was a three year starter for the program.

While playing at Oklahoma she helped her team move from the bottom of the Big 12 Conference to the Big 12 Championship game and the NCAA tournament her junior year. After a career-ending injury her third season, White was forced to take a medical hardship her senior year. She remained a participant on the team working alongside the strength and conditioning coach taking on a new role as an undergrad assistant.

Since graduating from the University of Oklahoma Jordan has begun her career as a coach for both high school and club soccer and is excited to assist at the collegiate level.

Jordan White
Fifth Annual OJC Ag Olympics Makes a Splash

The OJC Ag Club and OJC Rodeo Team sponsored the 2016 Annual OJC Ag Olympics on October 20. barrel racing, pumpkin chucking, hay bale stacking, and irrigation siphon-tube setting.

The 5th Ag Olympic Games brought together teams of students from across campus to get a taste of what agriculture is about, while having a lot of fun. Nine teams of five students each competed in five events with agricultural themes, including goat dressing, three-legged barrel racing, pumpkin chucking, hay bale stacking, and irrigation siphon-tube setting.

Additional activities tested the skills of spectators and ag athletes, including dummy roping, butter making, placing a nipple on a calf bottle, and the “Name that Poop” game.

After completion of the events, tension mounted as a tie for second place required a roping dummy rope-off. When the dust settled, the Men’s Soccer Team had won the first place Gold Boot, Softball Team 2 had the second place Silver Boot, and the President’s Leadership Program (PLP) Team walked away with the Bronze Boot.

The Men’s Soccer Team was renamed the “Tub Jumpers” after a member created a splash by diving into the tank for the siphon tube setting competition. They also earned the “Most Enthusiastic Team” award. The two teams from Cosmetology shared the “Best Dressed Team” award. Additional teams from the International Relations Organization (IRO) and Softball added to the fun.

The success of the event was possible with support of the local and OJC communities. Wendy’s Restaurant of La Junta and Bent County Health Care Center contributed prizes and Hirakata Farms provided pumpkins. Event judges were Ryan Trosper, Dr. Joel Gray, Wayne Beadles, Lisa Gallegos and Carol Noll, and Robert Samaniego emceed. Staff, administrators, and faculty from across campus, including OJC President Jim Rizzuto, cheered on the participants.

The next event to be sponsored by the OJC Agricultural Program will be the Annual Ag Gala on New Year’s Eve, a dinner and dance held at OJC to raise funds for OJC Ag Premier Scholar scholarships. Last year’s event raised more than $10,000. For more information about attending or sponsoring this event, contact Brooke Matthew at 384-6964 or Martina Murray at 384-6930.
Imagine 40+ pictures of famous people. You have to pick the one that you think is the greatest leader and tell why. Who would you pick? Mahatma Ghandi? Napoleon Bonaparte? Adolph Hitler? Martin Luther King? Margaret Thatcher? That’s just one of the activities that TRiO students and staff did during the all-day conference with Paradigm Shift.

TRiO students worked on their leadership skills, developed powerful relationships, set SMART goals, created personal responsibility, and developed a defined purpose. Students were asked to write down one thing on their bucket list, a favorite quote and where they wanted to be in 5 or 10 years.

What our students are realizing is the power that comes from sharing their goals with others. Once we vocalize what it is we are working towards, our goal becomes much more real and we are motivated to accomplish it.

How many people know what they are truly talented at and then get to use those talents? The staff at TRiO are helping their students do just that. Starting this year, TRiO students will get to take the Clifton StrengthsFinder, a powerful online assessment that helps individuals identify, understand, and maximize their strengths.

Gallup says that when people understand and apply their strengths, the effect on their lives and work is transformational. People who use their strengths every day are six times more likely to be engaged in their work and three times more likely to say they have an excellent quality of life.

We have been taught to focus on fixing our weaknesses rather than maximizing our strengths. Think what a difference it would make if people were given the opportunity to use their strengths at school, home and the workplace? We are giving our students that chance!

In the entrepreneurial workshop some students have already taken the assessment. When asked about their results, one student exclaimed, “Oh yeah, this is definitely me!” TRiO is hoping that by utilizing tools such as the StrengthsFinder assessment that we can change the course of lives one student at a time.
Discover OJC on April 6

OJC will host its Spring Discovery Day on Thursday, April 6 from **8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.** (optional dorm tour at 1:15 p.m). The event will begin in the **Humanities Center**.

Discovery Day is an opportunity for **prospective students and their parents** to visit the campus and explore the many options available to them at OJC as they prepare to choose a college for next fall.

Prospective students and families tour the campus in small groups, led by Student Ambassadors, current students who provide great information about the college and what it is like to be a student here.

During the tour, the groups will attend some hands-on sessions to help them understand more about specific **programs of study, financial aid and scholarships**.

Guests who register for the event will get a free lunch and attend a **Campus Fair**, where they can meet with instructors, student club representatives, student housing and student support staff. There will be **drawings for prizes** during the lunch session. Students that are interested in student housing will also be able to tour the OJC student dormitories.

**To make a reservation** for OJC’s Discovery Day event, or for a personal campus tour, prospective students can go to: [www.ojc.edu/visitOJC.aspx](http://www.ojc.edu/visitOJC.aspx).

There is no charge to attend Discovery Day and families and guests are welcome. For more information, contact Debbie Phillips at 719-384-6863.

![Participants explore their career interests during the campus tour.](image1)

![Prospective students get a tour of our beautiful campus during this fall’s Discovery Day.](image2)

![Prospective students and their parents visit with program faculty and staff at the Campus Fair during last spring’s Discovery Day.](image3)
Enrollment is open for Spring Semester 2017 at OJC. To help new students prepare for their first semester of college, OJC will be hosting Explore2Enroll each Wednesday for five weeks in the Macdonald Hall Welcome Center.

The event provides an orientation for new students to Otero Junior College and introduces them to the many services available at the college. Students will go on a campus tour and complete all their enrollment checklist items.

Dates for Explore2Enroll include: November 16, November 23, November 30, December 7 and December 14. Students can choose which date they would like to attend.

Each session will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until individuals have successfully completed all tasks that have been scheduled for them on that day. Students are only required to attend one orientation.

Each session will include a welcome from the institution’s president, Mr. Jim Rizzuto, an overview of the college experience including dormitory life, the dining hall, coupon booklets, clubs and organizations, programs of study and tips for college and academic success. Optional campus tours are available.

All students are asked to register online at www.ojc.edu; an Explore2Enroll slide will appear on the main page which will then prompt students to the spring semester orientation registration page.

Jump Start: Student Orientation on Jan. 8

New and returning students can come to campus a day early on January 8 to participate in Jump Start, an orientation that will prepare students to begin classes on January 9.

Jump Start will begin at 2 p.m. in the Humanities Center, Room 112, and continue through 4 p.m. with two 1-hour sessions. Online registration for the Jump Start sessions is required. Register at: www.ojc.edu/futurestudents/jump_start.aspx.

Each Jump Start session will instruct students how to:

- Set their student password and log-in to the Student Portal
- Access their official student email
- Learn to use Desire2Learn (D2L), OJC’s Learning Management Program that is used in most classes
- Print their class schedule
- Tour campus to locate their classrooms
- Visit the Library to get a Student Library Card
- Visit TRiO Support Services

For more information about Jump Start, call: 719-384-6863 or email information@ojc.edu
Fall Sports Teams

Women’s Soccer

Golf
Men’s Soccer

Rodeo

Volleyball
Early Settlers’ Day Parade

OJC was represented well in the Early Settlers’ Day parade. Student athletes and staff handed out candy and sports’ schedules to spectators.
Midnight Madness
Intramural Dodgeball Night

Minute to Win It challenges

Intramural “Minute to Win It” Winners: 1st place: Mattie Rose Alpert, 2nd place: Will Hoskins, and 3rd: Cassandra Moosburger

Dodgeball

Minute to Win It Bottle Flip Challenge

Balloon juggle
Random Photography
International Programs

Food Shares

International students at Otero Junior College get a chance to get a taste of “home” once a month at the club’s Food Shares. Students sign up to cook something from their home country and share it with the group. It is a chance to try something new from another culture and is very popular. Food Shares are made possible thanks to the generosity of the First Presbyterian Church in La Junta for use of the kitchen. This fall, students have had the opportunity to savor foods from Japan, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Russia, Argentina and the United States. To attend Food Shares which are also IRO meetings, students only need to sign up to join the club. American students are encouraged and welcome in the club. The IRO represents students from more than 20 countries. The club is active in both campus and community activities.

Lunch and Learn

Exciting things are happening this year for Otero Junior College International students and the long standing Lunch and Learn program. This year, a live stream was made possible so students’ families back home could tune in and watch. The Lunch and Learn series is held once a month in the Learning commons. Students, faculty, staff and community members are invited to bring their lunch while listening to an international student present their culture. This year, those attending have been treated to a dance demonstration from Argenis Blanco from Venezuela, a tag team presentation from Russians Alexandra Chernobaeva and Polina Malkova. Japanese student Natsumi Matsumoto even taught us about her culture wearing traditional dress.

Natsumi Matsumoto (Japan) and Tawny Crespin (USA) prepare their dish for the International student Food Share.

Russian students Alexandra Chernobaeva and Polina Malkova present on their homeland.

Russian students Alexandra Chernobaeva and Polina Malkova make a traditional toy at Bent’s Fort for Hispanic Heritage Day, September 17.

Gerard Mendez de Los Santos (Dominican Republic) finishes up making fried plantain for the IRO Food Share night.

Back to School in the Rattler’s Den. Pictured left to right: Christian Jimenez (USA with Mexican heritage), Marcos Silva Gesteiria Ferreira (Brazil), Iago Affonso Alves (Brazil), Ofentse Kwenaithe (South Africa), Gimale Essacu (Papua New Guinea), Scott McGuane (Australia).
On October 20, 2016, current OJC student Marcus Wolfram and CSU-P student Julian Fierro, a former OJC student, participated in a poster presentation at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics’ (AIAA) Annual Technical Symposium held in Golden, CO on the Colorado School of Mines campus. The AIAA is comprised of many of the entities, both corporate and governmental, that make up Colorado’s aerospace industry; Colorado is home to the 2nd largest aerospace industry sector in the United States. Their poster covered the design, the build, and the programming of an autonomous robot they created for the 2016 Colorado Space Grant Consortium’s Robotics Challenge. Both students were members of Dr. Joel Gray’s Robotics course last spring semester, and Dr. Gray acted as their mentor on this project.

Throughout the conference day, both students were able to attend cutting-edge industry presentations in topics including Unmanned Ariel Systems (UAS), the international collaboration in Aerospace, and the status of Mars exploration: the efforts of human travel to, exploration of the surface and subsurface, and returning safely to the Earth. Later in the day, Marcus Wolfram was also able to meet with a top researcher and tour a laboratory at the Solar Engineering Research Facility, part of National Renewable Energy Lab, which is also based in Golden, Colorado.

STEM Students present at AIAA Annual Technical Symposium

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STEM Day is Monday, December 12, 2016

Monday, December 12, 2016 will again see 6th—12th grade students on campus for STEM Day workshops. OJC faculty and staff are already planning for the day’s offerings. We are looking forward to building on last year’s successes, and make this year’s STEM Day even more engaging for students. The popular Maker Space will again be part of the day’s activities for students with several new stations being added to the Maker Space this year. Be watching for registration to open November 14th. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the OJC STEM office. Susan Goettel—Grant Director, 719-384-6868 susan.goettel@ojc.edu

2016 OJC STEM Summer Camp Recap:

- 96 campers attended over the 4 week period
- 23 different STEM camps were offered in June and July
- 1 helicopter visit - Flight: Wings Over the Rockies campers were treated to a helicopter visit. Kids were able to climb inside and suit-up!
- 3 gallons of white glue was used in the Ew & Goo Seeds camp. Mess and fun were had by all!

Registration for next summer’s camps will open in May, 2017. Watch for information...
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Tuesday, November 8, 2016 .................. Last Day to Withdraw from Fall Classes earning a “W”
Friday, November 18, 2016 .................. Thanksgiving Vacation Begins at 5 p.m.
Monday, November 28, 2016 ............... Classes Resume
Wednesday, December 7, 2016 ............ Last Instruction Day of the Fall Semester
Monday – Wednesday, Dec. 5-7, 2016 Final Exams
Friday, December 9, 2016 ................. Final Grade Reports Due
Sunday, January 8, 2017 ..................... New Student Orientation
Monday, January 9, 2017 ..................... First Day Spring Classes
Tuesday, January 24, 2017 .................. Last Day to Drop Classes and Receive a Refund
Monday—Friday, March 20-24, 2017... Spring Break
Monday, March 27, 2017 ..................... Classes Resume; Early Registration for Summer/Fall Begins
Friday, April 7, 2017 .......................... Last Day to Withdraw from Classes Earning a “W”
Friday, April 28, 2017 ....................... Last Day of the Semester
Saturday, April 29, 2017 ..................... Graduation
Tuesday, May 2, 2017 ....................... Final Grade Reports Due
Monday, June 5, 2017 ...................... Summer Session Classes Begin

Visit the complete OJC Campus Calendar where you can see all campus and community events.

Events, dates, times, locations and detailed information is available at: www.ojc.edu

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