



*We're Focused on Your Future!*

Otero College  
President's Report  
April 2024  
Kimberly Zant, Ed.D.

### **Transform the Student Experience**

Otero College had four students represented at the Student Excellence Awards on April 10<sup>th</sup>. The Inclusive Excellence Champion award, sponsored by SSAC, recognizes students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion on their campus; The Rising Star award, sponsored by the State Student Advisory Council (SSAC), recognizes students who have increased the level and quality of student engagement on campus; and The Phi Theta Kappa All-Colorado Academic Team award recognizes the academic accomplishments of high-achieving student members of the Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society from across the state of Colorado.

Here is a little bit of information about Otero's winners. Kristen Sharp and Rhoman Eyere were named Rising Stars. Brooke Harris is this year's Inclusive Excellence Champion and the Otero representative for the Phi Theta Kappa All-Colorado Academic Team was Adam Adler.

**Kristen Sharp**, a native of Fowler, CO, is currently pursuing her passion for cosmetology at Otero College. She is a member of the President's Leadership Program and is very involved in campus life. Beyond her studies, Kristen also serves as the volleyball manager for the Lady Rattlers, showcasing her dedication to both academics and extracurricular activities.

Kristen comes from a family of five, including her twin sister who also attends Otero. She has a passion for creativity and art. In her limited free time, Kristen enjoys painting and drawing.

While Kristen will walk at graduation, she will finalize the program over the summer. This will prepare her for the licensure exam to officially become a cosmetologist. She

plans to rent a booth at a local salon, with a primary focus on nails, where she can unleash her talent and creativity in a professional setting.

Kristen is grateful for being selected for this award, as the cosmetology program is brief, spanning only a year, and it marks her sole year in college.

**Rhoman Eyere** (ee-air-uh) is a sophomore at Otero College from Spanish Fork, Utah. He currently holds a 3.9 GPA while balancing playing for the school's basketball team and working two jobs. He works as a math tutor for the school, helping several students with various classes and assignments, while also posting payments for a medical supply company. Rhoman plans to graduate from Otero in May of this year with his Associate of Arts degree. After, he plans to further his education at a university in hopes of getting his Bachelor's degree and possibly his MBA. Rhoman has always had a passion for the game of basketball and wants to stay involved with the game. He hopes to work for a basketball organization in their business department.

Rhoman is determined to stay involved with the sport he loves, that is what drives him to work so hard in school. This determination is what won him the Freshman of the Year award at Otero College in 2023. Outside of school, Rhoman enjoys spending time with friends and family, listening to music, traveling, and working out. He is also the co-host of a podcast called the "Swishlist Podcast" discussing the game of basketball, primarily the NBA. Rhoman is a dedicated, passionate, and hardworking leader in his community and has very high hopes for his future.

**Brooke Harris** is from Strasburg, Colorado. She is the third born in a family of four kids. Brooke is creative and loves meeting new people and gaining new experiences. She enjoys painting, reading, the outdoors, and cats.

While she was in high school trying to figure out where life would take her next, mention of going to a community college came up. She thought it was so silly to go from a small-town high school to a small-town for college. Later, the opportunity arose to play volleyball at a community college, and she took up the offer. Choosing to attend Otero College was one of the best decisions she had ever made. She grew so much as an individual, got to meet people from all around the world, learned so many new things, and got to play the sport she was passionate about.

Brooke graduated from Strasburg High School in 2022. She is a sophomore and is the volleyball team captain at Otero College. She maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout high school and has continued her streak into her first two years of college, landing her on the President's List. Brooke is working towards earning an Associate of Arts degree and will be graduating in May 2024. She is not fully sure what is in store for her future, but she is interested in psychology and leaning toward studying human behavior and the mind.

**Adam Kent Adler** is from Colorado Springs. For the past two years he has had the privilege of attending Otero. The staff and professors have inspired him to achieve his

goals in education as well as becoming a role model on campus and in the community. He is looking forward to the challenges ahead of him at CSU Pueblo. He feels it is important to always chase your dreams. With hard work they can become a reality.

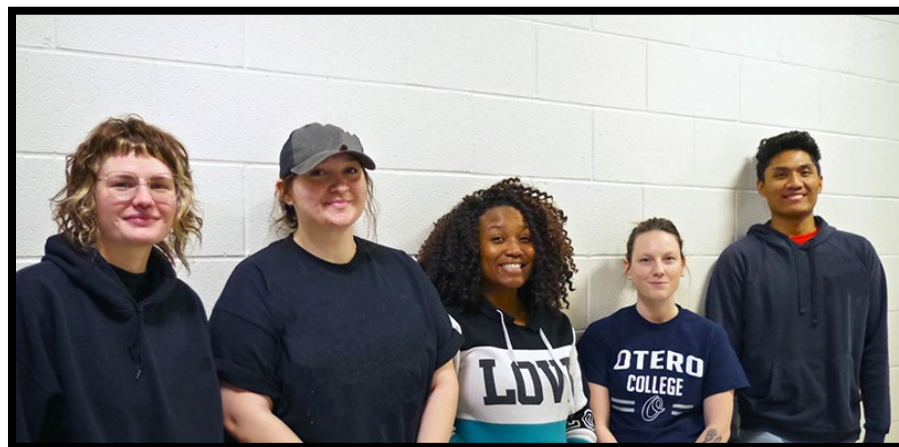


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Otero's Medical Laboratory Technician program (MLT) participated in a national trivia contest to showcase their knowledge of laboratory medicine. The contest was sponsored by the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science.

This event was not just a competition but also a unique opportunity for networking, learning, and fun. By participating, the students had a chance to showcase their skills and connect with professionals in their field and gained valuable knowledge.

The preliminary competitions were on Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET. As of writing this report, the outcome was not known, but if Otero's team wins the preliminary rounds, they'll have the opportunity to attend the Joint Annual Meeting (JAM) in Pittsburgh, PA, from July 8 to July 12 to play in the in-person games.



The Otero College Choir will present a concert of familiar music arranged by great arrangers on Monday, April 29, at 7 p.m. The program will take place at the Ed Stafford Theatre on the Otero College campus and admission is free.

Entitled “Familiar Tunes, New Takes: Songs Interpreted by Great Arrangers”, the choir will present a plethora of fun and entertaining music that highlights the role of the arranger, i.e. the person who takes a given musical piece and transforms it into something new and sometimes startlingly new! Mr. Rees, Otero College Choir director, has chosen some of his favorite arrangers to demonstrate this idea. He’s selected music both familiar and popular.



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### **Create Education without Barriers through Transformational Partnerships**

The 68th annual Otero Arts Festival was held on campus from April 2 through April 4 at the Student Center Rizzuto Banquet Room. The Otero Arts Festival showcases creative writing, sculptures, pottery, paintings, drawings, and other works of art submitted by middle and high school students from throughout southeast Colorado.

Beginning as an art contest for elementary and secondary school students 68 years ago, the Otero Arts Festival is the longest running event for public school students that is continuing to be sponsored by the college. Over the past several years, the writing and art contests have drawn over 1600 entries annually. The entries are showcased in the Student Center Rizzuto Banquet Room, filling the entire room.

Over the years, judges have included outstanding professional artists, published authors and art and creative writing professors from Colorado's leading colleges and galleries.

Area students, grades 7-12, entered the Otero Arts Festival this year. Entries for the art contest were accepted on Friday, March 30 from 1 – 5 p.m. at the Student Center Rizzuto Banquet Room on the Otero College campus. Students could enter one entry for each medium/technique with a maximum of six entries total per student. Judging took place on Saturday, March 30 for visual arts.

Creative writing entries were accepted through March 1, sorted, logged, and sent to be judged by the Colorado State University Pueblo's President's Leadership/Honors Program in conjunction with their sponsor Dr. David Volk. All entries were on display during the festival.

The art and creative writing professionals who served as jurors for the arts festival awarded over 600 ribbons in the contest that annually draws entries from middle school and high school artists and writers throughout southeastern Colorado. They also chose the recipients of visual arts Best of Show High School and Middle School and Outstanding Senior Portfolio ribbons. Creative writing top awards included Judges Best Representative Work High School and Middle School and Outstanding Senior Creative Writing Portfolio.

There were several opportunities for the public to view the artwork. The awards ceremony and reception were held Thursday, April 4 at 7 p.m. in the Student Center Conference to recognize this year's major ribbon winners.



The Otero Dance Studio is thrilled to announce their upcoming spring show, "Hello.... My Name Is". The show will feature songs with names in them, from songs such as, 'Gloria', 'Hey There Delilah', and even 'Cotton Eyed Joe'.

This exciting new theme brought a great amount of fun to the group while they were choosing the songs. Additionally, new, debuting choreographers will be presenting their own creations on stage. These dancers were part of the Choreography class and spent the semester building their own dances from the music to the choreography, to the costumes, and hair style. Arkansas Valley dancers of all ages, from 2 to High School, have worked tirelessly to bring these dances to life for the audience to enjoy.

These dedicated studio dancers have worked diligently to create these performances and eagerly look forward to sharing them. The audience is encouraged to sing along and enjoy the variety of music genres this theme brought to the stage.

The performances will take place on Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27 at 7 p.m. in the Ed Stafford Theatre.

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