



We're Focused on Your Future!

Otero College
President's Report
April 2023
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Transform the Student Experience

Otero College's Jazz Ensemble, led by Dr. James Lind, performed an evening of smooth jazz tunes that you wouldn't want to miss. The performance was scheduled for Tues., April 25 at 7 p.m. in Ed Stafford Theatre. April is National Jazz Appreciation Month, what better way to celebrate than with a night full of music from local talent.

Community members as well as employees and students enjoyed the timeless sounds of hits like Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water," Duke Ellington's "C-Jam Blues," and John Green's "Body and Soul." The ensemble will also treat listeners to contemporary favorites like "Cantaloupe Island" by Herbie Hancock and Jimmy Webb's "MacArthur Park." You'll feel alive listening to the energetic rhythms of Don Menza's "Groovin' Hard" and Marty Gold and Saul Feldstein's "Groovin' Easy."

The Otero College Choir will present a concert of patriotic and regional music to be performed on Monday, May 1. The concert, entitled "The Pride of America", will take place at 7:00 pm in the Ed Stafford Theater on the Otero College campus. There is no admission charge.

After a group representing the American Legion Post 8 presents the American colors, a Native American segment begins the concert: first, the "Eagle Dance" will be performed by members of La Junta's own Koshare dancers, and then the choir will sing "Spirit of the Winding Water", a piece based upon a Navajo text. Both presentations recognize the primacy of the "first peoples" on this land and their belief in the oneness and interrelatedness of the land, animals, and people.

A portion of the concert will present music from different regions of our country. "We'll Shout and Give Him Glory" comes from the American Shape Note tradition of the Northeast and South. "Westward Ho!" features familiar tunes from our part of the country. Next comes the gorgeous spiritual "Deep River", encapsulating the deep

sorrow felt at one time by the slaves of a wide region of America. "Deep River" is followed by a setting of a poem by one of the foremost African American poets, Maya Angelou. That piece, named "United in Purpose", reminds us that people are stronger when they work together rather than against each other. The words "we are greater!" ring out again and again, "greater than the sum of our parts...United!"

Other choral pieces include "Battle Hymn of the Republic", "America (the Beautiful)", "The Folded Flag", and an extended tribute to our armed forces that features the traditional songs of each branch. There will be a performance of "God Bless the USA". There will also be a George Cohan medley. Dr. James Lind will play his trumpet for several of the choir's numbers.



Create Education without Barriers through Transformational Partnerships

The Otero Dance Studio is excited to announce they will be presenting "From Page to Stage" April 29th and April 30th in the Ed Stafford Theatre. Our talented dancers will of course be showcased, along with music from musicals or movies that were created from stories that were first books! It's a fun twist on the way they chose their music and hopefully got some of their dancers reading some new stories!

Members of the Otero College NTSO are selling t-shirts that are graduation themed. Five designs are available with different color options. They also held fund raisers, "Floats for a Cause," with a portion of the proceeds donated to Pawsitive K9 Solutions in March and April. Even though the weather did not cooperate when the fund raisers were held, it turned cold both days of the event, NTSO raised enough money to donate

\$75 to Pawsitive K9 Solutions. This money will support purchasing enough dog food for their program for 60 days.



This spring, six local students took part in the Arkansas Valley Regional Science Fairs and were then selected to participate in the Colorado State Science and Engineering Fair April 13 through 15.

The students who attended and competed in CSEF are:

- **Bryce Bickel and Drake Coffield-Bamber**
Title: "3D Printed Fly Trappas"
- **Adam Ouattara**
Title: "Fires in the Comanche Grasslands"
- **Terra McClure**
Title: "Oh Snap!"
- **Zoey Montoya & Everett Ediger**
Title: "How Qualities of Soil Affect Where Aphonopelma Hentzi Burrows in the Colorado Grassland"

The Otero College AIM Grant brought Lex Nichols, a guest performer to campus on Wed. April 12 at 10:30 a.m. in the Ed Stafford Theatre in the Humanities Center on the Otero College campus. All community and campus members were invited at no cost.

Lex Nichols was born and raised in Rocky Ford, Colo., Lex's musical journey took off when he began playing the guitar at the age of nine. After 42 years of playing, Lex had developed a musical ear because he could not read music. As Lex Nichols continued with his music, he learned how to play drums and bass and has sat in as a session player for many different bands. Nichols also is a self-taught Native American flute player and maker. In 2014, Nichols was the only non-Native American flute player to win a Native American Music Award for his album The Long Road. Though Nichols plays

many instruments, his passion is Finger Style acoustic guitar. Lex's music has been featured on Echoes Radio, NPR and the PBS Documentary "The Arkansas River". In 2019 Nichols released his 9th album titled Turning Point, a percussive Finger Style acoustic album. Lex is also a professional photographer whose passion is capturing lightning and the landscapes of the Southwest. Lex's work has been featured in numerous prominent publications, more notably; Cowboys and Indians, Balloon Life, and Outdoor Photographer. Lex studied portrait and landscape photography through Professional Photographers of America and was a photography and Photoshop instructor at Otero College.



Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

Otero and the entire community have come together to work as a team this year. Our slogan was Year of Building Community and we really have accomplished so many things related to this part of the Strategic Plan. We have encouraged athletes to go out into the community, held events that encouraged the community to come to our campus and had great buy in from the faculty and staff. It has been a transformative year and we are grateful for all of the experiences and connections made.