



We're Focused on Your Future!

Otero College
President's Report
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Transform the Student Experience

The National Western Stock Show added an invitational Collegiate Challenge to the Horseman's Challenge event in 2022. The Collegiate Challenge was created to engage local college equestrian programs and offer additional scholarship opportunities. Five Colorado higher education programs will each select two representatives to compete on Jan. 17 and 18 in the CINCH Arena in the Events Center. Colleges included in the 2023 event included Colorado Mesa University, Colorado State University, Northeastern Junior College, Otero College, and the University of Colorado.

The ten collegiate competitors competed in the open Individual Rounds with all competitors on Tuesday and created a team for the Team Challenge Wednesday morning. Otero's competitors: Bella Ayers of Pueblo West and Lorah Jacobson of Pagosa Springs finished first in the team challenge paired up with NJC's Ranch Horse Team competitors Zoey Boos and Colton Bashor. Ayers also took home The Collegiate Challenge title. Ayers received a \$2,000 scholarship provided by the National Western Scholarship Trust and other awards.



On Sunday, Dec. 11., three new Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) members were inducted into the Delta Rho Chapter at Otero College. Aspen Crus-Racette, Monique Gonzales, and Jadon Lockwood were the new inductees present at the ceremony as well as several of the current members. The Delta Rho chapter at Otero College extends membership invitations to students who are currently enrolled at Otero College and have a 3.25 GPA. Faculty advisors for this chapter are Dr. Jeffrey Reed and Dr. James Lind, both faculty members in the Arts and Humanities Department.

The Otero College Choir presented a concert to encourage kindness and empathy with others titled, “Try a Little Kindness.” It was held on Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. in the Humanities Center. Some of the musical selections were, “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother”. “Meet Me Here” “Treat People with Kindness” (Harry Styles), “Humble and Kind” (Tim McGraw), “Lean On Me with We Shall Overcome” (Bill Withers), “Count On Me” (Bruno Mars), and “Try a Little Kindness” (Glenn Campbell).



Otero College graduated its 8th class of Medical Laboratory Technicians on Dec. 12, 2022, in the Rizzuto Banquet Room. Three semesters are spent at the Otero campus and two semesters are partially spent in clinical rotations at an affiliated clinical facility. Otero’s MLT program began in 2013 and has graduated 27 Medical Laboratory Technicians. Students who graduate from the MLT program at Otero can go on to achieve a bachelor’s degree and their Medical Laboratory Science certification.



Create Education without Barriers through Transformational Partnerships

Otero has recently partnered with two different companies that enrich student's education: Parker Dewey and Forage.

Parker Dewey - Otero's partnership with Parker Dewey provides an opportunity for our students and recent graduates to take part in short-term, professional, paid work experiences through Parker Dewey Micro-Internships.

Through these short-term, paid, project-centered experiences, our students and recent graduates can demonstrate their skills, explore career paths, and expand their professional networks. Unlike a traditional internship, these paid opportunities typically range from 10 to 40 hours of work and are deadline-driven as opposed to set during specific hours.

Not only does this help companies across various industries and departments who are looking for the skills our students and graduates possess, but it also allows our students to build real-world experience. Additionally, by engaging these companies early in their college careers, our students can make themselves more experienced and appealing candidates for future internship and career opportunities.

Forage - Forage is an online resource that offers virtual experience programs designed by leading companies. Students develop skills and gain a real understanding of different roles and sectors by working through these self-paced modules, with tasks similar to those they would undertake during a traditional internship.

Forage empowers educators to integrate scalable project-based learning from world-leading companies into their curriculums and internship programs for free. Forage helps students connect their classroom experience to their careers in practical ways, allowing them to build the skills employers seek. Forage is free for the institution, projects are infinitely scalable, access is equitable for all students, and projects are available quickly. A customized landing page can be set up for an instructor in 30 minutes or less. Instructors can stand Forage projects up as a "choose your own adventure" or they can select one project that all students complete.



The 67th Otero Arts Festival is pleased to announce the 2023 contest categories and dates. The annual festival plans to host the public viewing of visual arts and creative writing from Tues., April 4 through Thurs., April 7 in the Student Center on the Otero College campus. Area students grade 7-12 will be able to compete in several categories: Visual Arts, Creative Writing, Music, and Theatrical Contests. Ribbons will be awarded at each level of the competition with Otero Scholarships being awarded to the top senior (grade 12 graduating high school senior) competitor in each category. The Otero Arts Festival is the longest running event for student's grades 7 - 12 that is continuing to be sponsored by a college, Otero College.



Transform Our Own Workforce Experience

On Thursday Jan. 12, the Otero College Classified Staff held their annual Silent Auction in conjunction with our All Staff Meeting. The group raised \$1,455 that will go toward student scholarships. Some of the items donated came from campus employees, but several more were donated by local businesses. From gift certificates and coffee to oil changes, and even a couple sets of corn hole boards, they had something to interest everyone!

***Half a Lifetime of Drought*, written by Otero College Recruiter, Andee Leininger**, is now available for purchase on Amazon.com. This is Leininger's first published work. This 132-page book starts out with Leininger's own experiences as a sixth-generation rancher. After noticing a gap in literature that relayed drought management practices, Leininger wrote this book to be a resource for ranchers and landowners. She shares her knowledge and experience to guide others in the management of their own businesses. In the book, Leininger uses scientific knowledge from her schooling and previous positions to connect the dots between why soils and plants do what they do during a drought and how ranchers or landowners can adapt to maximize their resources. She also shares animal science facts and how to apply this knowledge in an easy-to-understand way. She really focuses on breaking the science down and translates it into uncomplicated terms so that all are able to use it in their own management.

Having grown up on a ranch outside of La Junta, Colo., Leininger knows first-hand the ins and outs of running a cow/calf operation during an extended time of drought. This was her motivation to pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from the University of Wyoming. After college, she took a position with the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Rangeland Management Specialist. She now works at Otero College as the recruiter and is currently teaching Animal Health and Livestock Practicum courses. If that wasn't enough, she owns and operates her own business, SECO Ranch Planning and is a Certified Professional in Rangeland Management.

Books purchased at the event will be \$15 or can be purchased on Amazon as a paperback for \$13.99 plus shipping and tax, or in the Kindle format for \$9.99 plus tax.

