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**THD, ST. FRANCIS UNITE FOR COVID-19 VACCINATIONS** See Page 8

# BROKEN ARROW EXPRESS

One of Six Greater Tulsa Reporter Newspapers

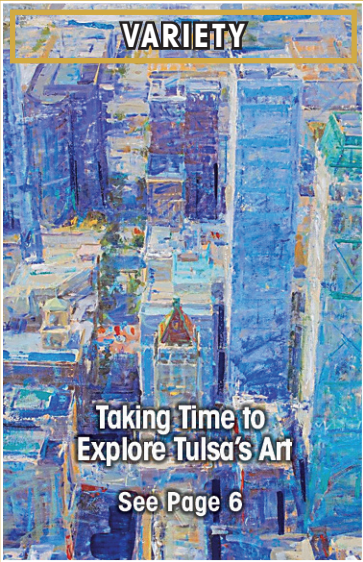
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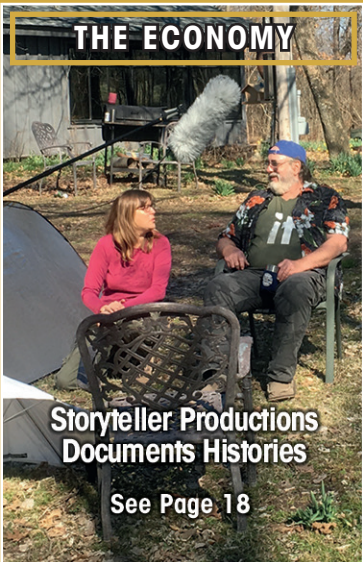
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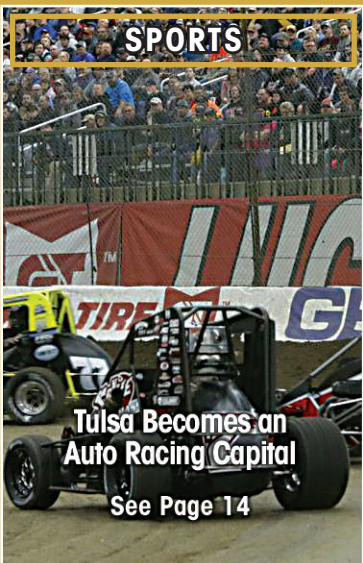
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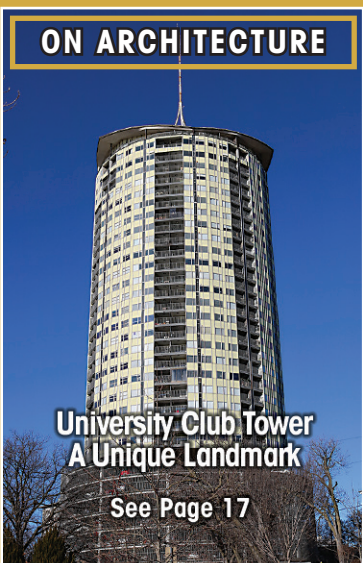
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# Positives Continued in Greater Tulsa Through the Historic Pandemic Year

By **BOB LEWIS**  
Contributing Editor

Without question the biggest news story of 2020 – and perhaps the most widely covered event since World War II – was the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating impact it had on all aspects of business and human life.

Even with new vaccines now available, experts say it could take most of 2021 before the coronavirus is considered under control and life can return to normal.

Another blockbuster national story was the election of Joe Biden as President of the United States. The campaign that pitted him against incumbent Donald Trump was one of the most bitterly fought political battles in history and continues to generate diverse opinions and media attention.

While these two events captured the attention of both the news media and millions of Americans, they were not alone in generating headlines during the year. Drawn from the pages of all six Greater Tulsa Reporter newspapers are some of the major events that helped shape the area we are proud to call home.

### JANUARY

**Fighting Parkinson's:** The Ready to Fight Parkinson's Specific Boxing Program became the official therapy-boxing program utilized and endorsed by the National Governing Body for Olympic-style boxing. CEO Aaron Sloan developed the program in 2016 to use traditional training techniques to aid more than a million Americans with Parkinson's disease.

**Parkside Hospital:** The Parkside Psychiatric Hospital and Clinic opened at 1239 S. Trenton. The facility has 80 single-occupancy patient rooms to enhance treatment of children, adolescents and adults with acute mental health issues.



**LIGHTS ON:** Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum, Tulsa City and County officials, and leaders of the Route 66 project raise their hands in glee as the lights are turned on for the signs along historic Route 66 in southwest Tulsa.

### FEBRUARY

**Pearl Ridge:** Tulsa-based Noria Corp. and Noria Properties LLC announced plans to build Pearl Ridge, a mixed-use development at 10th Street and Peoria Ave. When completed, the project will consist of 80,000 square feet of mixed-use Class A office space and ground floor retail and restaurant facilities.

### MARCH

**AA Commitment:** American Airlines cemented its long-standing relationship with Tulsa by confirming its investment of \$550 million to expand and upgrade its maintenance facility at Tulsa International Airport. More than 5,500 employees at the massive plant conduct about half of the overall maintenance work required by the airline.

### APRIL

**Closing the Gap:** Citing a national skills gap in jobs like manufacturing, HVAC repair and informa-



**OPENING DAY:** Milo's Tea Company CEO Patricia Wallwork gets ready to cut the ribbon for the company's new production and distribution facility at the Cherokee Industrial Park in North Tulsa County. From left are Tulsa County Commissioner Stan Sallee, Oklahoma Lt. Governor Matt Pannell, Wallwork, Tulsa Regional Chamber President and CEO Mike Neal, Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum and Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr.

tion technology, Tulsa Tech teamed with OK2GROW to tackle the problem head on. The partnership began working with five different high schools to train students start-

ing with an entry-level manufacturing program called Skills2Grow. It focuses on the skills needed to land a manufacturing job.  
(Continued on page 2)

## KUDOS of the MONTH: CMCA

Children's Medical Charities Association (CMCA), formerly Children's Medical Center Auxiliary, has awarded \$59,054 in grants to 17 local non-profits benefiting children 18 years old or younger.

This total is generated from the 2020 sales from CMCA's resale shop, The Market at Pearl, located at 1020-F S. Rockford in The Pearl District. The shop is open Tuesday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Any 501(C)(3) organization benefiting children 18 years and under may apply for a 2021 grant using the website [cmcatulsa.org](http://cmcatulsa.org).

Since the inception of the grant program in 2005, CMCA has

awarded approximately \$1.4 million to agencies "Helping Kids Get Better."

All donations are tax deductible and may be brought to the shop during business hours. For additional information, call 918-779-6332.

**Grant recipients are:** A New Leaf, City Year Tulsa, Community Action Project, Community Food Bank, Counseling & Recovery Services, Emergency Infant Services, Happy Hands Education Center, Iron Gate, Operation Hope Prison Ministry, San Miguel Middle School, Sistema, St. Catherine School, TFI Foster Care, The Little Light House, Town & Country School, Tulsa Ballet and Youth Services.



**BENEVOLENT TEAM:** Members of the Children's Medical Charities Association team, from left, Carolyn Vandevier, Deniece Linn and Beth Palmer delivered grant recipient checks for an early Christmas present to 17 Tulsa-area non-profit organizations.

# Greater Tulsa Positives Continued in 2020

(Continued from page 1)

**MAY**

**Golden Campaign:** An array of shiny new cars surrounded Tulsa's Golden Driller as the community rolled out a "Golden Campaign" in hopes of attracting a new Tesla manufacturing plant to the community. While the company elected to locate the facility in Texas, the aggressive and creative campaign was a success in attracting the attention of the auto maker and the national business media.



GTR Newspapers photo

**RIBBON CUTTING TEAM:** The ribbon cutting team for the Muncie Power Products facility at the Peoria-Mohawk Business Park included, from left, Josh Miller, Justin McLaughlin, Ray Chambers, Vanessa Hall-Harper, and Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum.

**JUNE**

**Tiger Hill Plaza:** With a rising steel framework serving as the backdrop, the City of Broken Arrow, the Chamber of Commerce and the BA Economic Development Corporation conducted ceremonial groundbreaking ceremonies for an \$11 million retail complex now known as Tiger Hill Plaza. When completed, it will contain some 30,000 square feet of retail and business space.



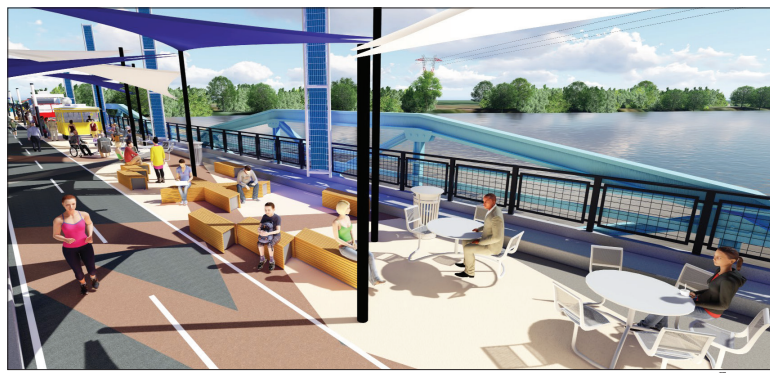
Courtesy Walman Commercial Real Estate Services

**B.A. PROGRESS:** The \$11 million Tiger Hill Development is being constructed at the southwest corner of Kenosha and Lynn Lane and will contain some 30,000 square feet of retail and business space.

**20-Year Commitment:** IC Bus and the City of Tulsa signed off on a 20-year agreement that will keep the manufacturing company here. With some 1,600 employees, IC Bus has an annual payroll of \$160 million and contributes another \$750 million to vendors, 100 of whom are in the Greater Tulsa area.

**AUGUST**

**North Tulsa Redevelopment Cornerstone:** Muncie Power Products broke ground for a new facility at Peoria and 36th Street N. in the Peoria-Mohawk Business Park. Situated on 120 acres, officials call the new plant a cornerstone of planned redevelopment efforts in North Tulsa.



Courtesy

**HARMONY BRIDGE:** Work is underway to complete the renovation of one of Bixby's most endearing landmarks by this summer.

**SEPTEMBER**

**Brio on the Rose:** Broken Arrow officials began showing off commercial and residential spaces available at Brio on the Rose, the largest single project in the history of the city's award-winning Rose District. The \$20 million four-story mixed-use building at 305 N. Main, has 31,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor and 96 apartments in various sizes on the top three floors.

**OCTOBER**

**Union Centennial:** When parents of students in four, rural, one-room schoolhouses - Alsuma, Central, Sunnyside and Union—voted in 1919 to merge and form the Union Consolidated School District, they actualized the community's intent to provide education opportunities that could surpass even the latest offered by city schools for generations to come. The first Union Pub-

**NOVEMBER**

**Honoring Creativity:** Work began on the new Brown-Kimbrough Center for Arts, Innovation & Creativity in Broken Arrow. Designed to be a regional resource, the 15,500- square-foot facility will feature multiple classrooms, flex space, gallery space, and indoor/outdoor areas to host events. The Brown-Kimbrough family, owners of AVB Bank, donated the downtown property to the city.

**Long Time Coming:** For many of its alumni, students and faculty members, it seemed to take "forever" for the facility now known as Will Rogers College Junior High and High School to gain its own football stadium. That wait came to an end in November when the Ropers took on the Nathan Hale Rangers in the brand-new Will Rogers facility.

**More Classrooms:** The Educare-Celia Clinton campus officially opened solidifying Tulsa's reputation as a leader in early childhood education. Tulsa is the only city in Oklahoma to have four such facilities.

**Growth Continues:** A new \$60



GTR Newspapers photo

**HONORING CREATIVITY:** AVB Chairman of the Board Kelley Kimbrough-Rash makes opening remarks before the official groundbreaking for the Brown-Kimbrough Center. Also shown are Councilor Johnnie Parks, Councilor Christi Gillespie, Mayor Craig Thurmond and AVB Bank President and CEO Ted Cundiff.



Courtesy photo

**PEARL RIDGE:** The mixed use property will be located at 10th Street and Peoria Avenue.



GTR Media Group photo

**STATE OF THE ART:** The new Parkside Psychiatric Hospital opened at 1239 S. Trenton Ave. It is immediately south of the Hillcrest Medical Center and Oklahoma Heart Institute.

million Milo's Tea Co. production and distribution center was added to the Owasso business family. The 100,000-square-foot complex is expected to create 100 direct and 177 indirect jobs while adding \$16.4 million annually to the local economy.

**DECEMBER**

**New Aerospace Jobs:** Northeast Oklahoma received an early Christmas present when Broken Arrow-based CymSTAR LLC announced it is adding 80 plus aerospace jobs over the next three years. The firm has been awarded multiple training system contracts in support of various mili-

tary weapon systems. With them comes the need for the new positions. The immediate priority is to add 7-10 software and electrical engineers, in both entry level and senior grades

**Harmony Bridge:** Work continues on the renovation of one of Bixby's most endearing landmarks. Harmony Bridge opened in 1939 and served as a conduit into and out of the community into the 1990's. Phase I of the face lift focused on cleaning, painting and adding new fencing. Phase II, which is scheduled to be finished in the summer of 2021, will deal with decking, seating, awnings and lighting needs.

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# YWCA Tulsa Partners with Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission to Launch Year

Courtesy Tulsa YWCA

The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission (1921 TRMCC) has partnered with YWCA Tulsa and John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park to host the launch event for the centennial anniversary year of the Tulsa Race Massacre.

The event was held on Jan. 1 at John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park located at 302 N. Elgin Ave. in Tulsa. In keeping with Tulsa County Health Department guidance for public gatherings, the event was live-streamed on Facebook.

The community heard from several prominent speakers as they commemorated what took place 100 years ago and called the community to action and engagement with the Centennial Commemorative events for 2021.

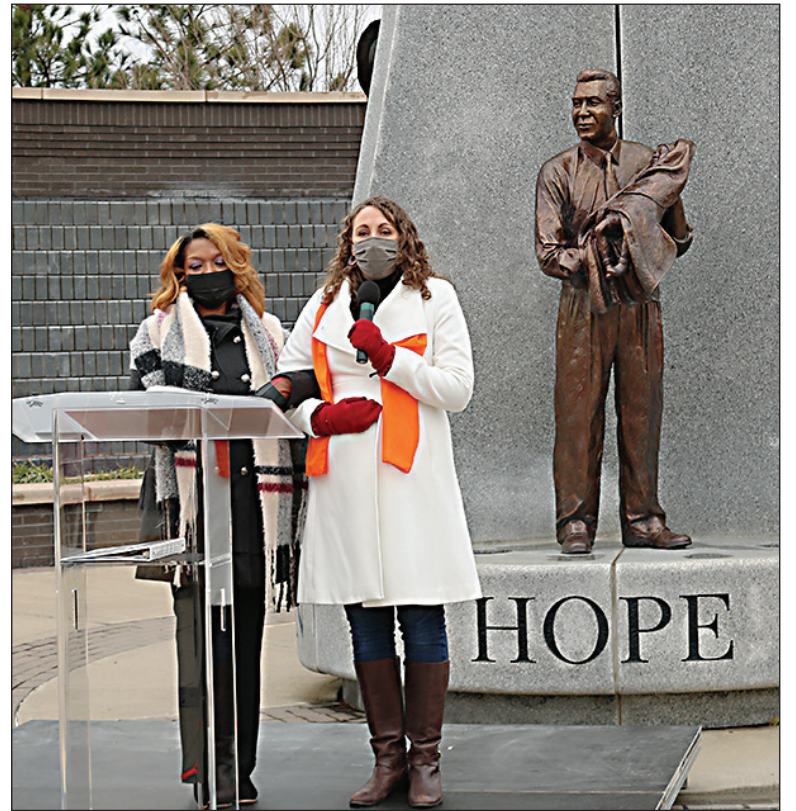
Speakers at the event included United States Senator James Lankford; State Senator Kevin Matthews, founder/chair of the 1921 TRMCC; Phil Armstrong, Project Director of the 1921 TRMCC; Onikah Asamoah-Caesar, owner of Fulton Street Books and Coffee; Alfre Woodward, social activist, actress, and Tulsa native; Maggie Hille-Yar, executive director of the Hille Foundation; Julie Davis, executive director YWCA Tulsa

Armstrong, acknowledged the significance of the event.

"This moment is the culmination of an incredible amount of work and community input. To stand at the threshold of 2021 and partner with an organization like the YWCA is a testament to all the collaborative work since the inception of the Centennial Commission in 2015. This event marks the journey as we make our way to the 100th Anniversary of the Massacre and a turning point for racial equity and social justice."

Matthews, chair of the Tulsa Race Massacre Commission, spoke to how this moment helps the community address race equity. "As we enter the year 2021, the spirit of Black Wall Street is alive and well 100 years after the tragedy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. This year, we are commemorating the tenacity and grit of our ancestors, while crossing over into a cultural and entrepreneurial revival that affirms a triumphant Tulsa. Through the work of the commission and all of our local, regional and national partners, we are committed to honoring our history and working together to pave the way for the next generation of world changers."

The YWCA is proud to ally with the 1921 TRMCC. YWCA CEO Julie Davis emphasizes, "We are stronger together, and our community needs to reconcile with its past." She continues, "100 years



GTR Media Group photo

**SOMBER CENTENNIAL:** YWCA CEO Julie Davis gets the Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Year underway at John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park on Jan 1. With her at the lectern is Carmella Hill of Carmella Hill Entertainment.

ago, YWCA Tulsa was providing meals and shelter for the victims of the Tulsa Race Massacre. Today, we invite the community to remember, engage, and commit to change."

As part of the Centennial launch, YWCA Tulsa is inviting the people of Tulsa to make a tangible commitment to eliminate racism and work towards reconciliation in 2021. The YWCA campaign,

#TulsaTriumphs, will invite people to make commitments on their website at www.YWCA Tulsa.org, and their team will be working to help connect people to events happening with the Centennial, ways to support people and businesses on Black Wall Street and Deep Greenwood, and resources to learn more about the history of the Race Massacre and ways to eliminate racism.

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The Union Boundary, the Jenks District Gazette, the Owasso Rambler, the Broken Arrow Express and the Bixby Breeze are distributed monthly to select homes in the Union, Jenks, Owasso, Broken Arrow and Bixby school districts. The Midtown Monitor is distributed to selected neighborhoods in the Tulsa school district. All six papers are distributed to news stands and other outlets in more than 700 locations throughout the Greater Tulsa area.

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**CIVICS**

# Looking Forward to 2021 as We Look Back

## From Tulsa's Mayor

By **G.T. BYNUM**  
Mayor of Tulsa

As we look ahead toward 2021, it's important to look back at 2020. A roaring pandemic hasn't stopped our goal to make Tulsa a globally competitive, world-class city, and the work that was put in over the past year in the midst of these unprecedented times has been remarkable.

2020 started off on a high note in February when American Airlines announced they were investing \$550 million into its Tulsa Maintenance Base; the single-largest capital investment in Tulsa's history.

A few weeks later in March, we were quickly thrown into responding to COVID-19. We responded early on with a Safer at Home order to give our hospitals enough time to get the personnel and personal protective equipment they needed so they wouldn't be overwhelmed. Around that same time, we instituted a hiring and travel freeze at the city, and in May, we made the difficult decision to institute furloughs for city employees so we could bridge the budget deficit.

The summer of 2020 was one of the most trying and historic times in Tulsa's history. June 29, 2020, will forever be a day to remember in Tulsa, as Tulsa Police Sergeant Craig Johnson was shot in the line of duty following a traffic stop, passing away the following day.

Officer Aurash Zarkeshan, who accompanied Sergeant Johnson and was critically wounded in the same incident, showed courage and strength over the course of the next few months in his recovery. Officer Zarkeshan is now back on light duty, and from here on out, October 15 will be known as Officer Aurash Zarkeshan Day in Tulsa.

Over the summer, we also conducted our first test excavation for potential mass graves for the 1921 Race Massacre at Oaklawn Cemetery. Then in October, we went back to Oaklawn to conduct our second test excavation, which yielded the finding of more than 11 coffins in a single grave shaft, which is consistent with a mass grave. Our work to uncover what happened in 1921 continues as we approach the 1921 Race Massacre Centennial in 2021.

In July, Tulsa was the first city in the metro to pass a mask mandate to help slow the spread of COVID-19. The mandate worked, as many municipalities without such mandates showed higher rates of infection. I'm thankful for the Tulsa City Council's broad support of that measure, and for the amendments they made to the mandate to continue to support public health as our battle against COVID-19 continues into the new year.

In 2020, even in the midst of the pandemic, we hired new police and fire chiefs, broke a city record by completing \$320 million in street projects while bidding out nearly \$240 million in capital construction projects, hosted Oklahoma's first drive-in natu-



**SECOND TERM INAUGURATION:** Judge Bill LaFortune administers Mayor G.T. Bynum his oath of office on Monday, Dec. 7, 2020, swearing him in as Tulsa's Mayor in a virtual swearing in ceremony.

ralization ceremony at Tulsa's historic Admiral Twin Drive-In theater, broke ground on the Zink Dam modification project to create a lake in the Arkansas River, competed at the highest levels when we tried to attract Tesla's

new Cybertruck Gigafactory, used CARES Act funds to help with Tulsa's COVID-19 recovery, and so much more.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the Tulsans who supported me in my second mayoral campaign in 2020.

I'm honored to serve Tulsa for the next four years in this capacity, which has truly been one of the largest joys of my life.

I invite you to read my 2020 Annual Report, which is available at [www.cityoftulsa.org/Mayor](http://www.cityoftulsa.org/Mayor).

## Sen. Dave Rader to Serve As Majority Caucus Chair

State Senator Dave Rader was selected by his peers to serve as the majority caucus chair for the 58th Legislature, one of the Senate's highest leadership positions. The announcement was made during organizational day at the Capitol where formally elected Senate leadership and adopted rules for the 58th Legislature.

In this position, the Tulsa Republican will help set the legislative agenda for the Republican caucus. His responsibilities will include setting the agenda for and chairing weekly caucus meetings. Rader will also assist the presiding officers on the Senate floor oversee parliamentary procedures.

"It's an honor to be chosen to lead our Republican caucus during the 58th Legislature," Rader said. "As we continue to deal with COVID-19 pandemic, it's im-

portant that we work together to address the needs of our health care systems, small businesses and schools across the state. I'm looking forward to collaborating with my colleagues and passing effective legislation that will improve the lives of all Oklahomans."

Rader was first elected to the Senate in 2016 and began his second term in November. He previously served as the majority caucus chair during the Second Session of the 57th Legislature. He was appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat, R-Oklahoma City, last month to serve as the chairman of the Finance Committee. Rader will also sit on the full Appropriations Committee, Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Regulatory Services, Public Safety and Energy Committees.

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# Legislative Process Should Rebound in 2021

Due to the COVID 19 public health emergency, the Oklahoma Legislature was not in session for at least seven weeks last spring.

As a result, very few important pieces of legislation were acted on, including those supported by Tulsa County. With the 2021 Session set to begin Feb. 1, we will bring back legislation which we believe will improve county government operations and services to the citizens of Tulsa County.

## From Tulsa County



By COMMISSIONER RON PETERS

is outside the code enforcement jurisdiction of the cities in Tulsa County. Therefore, Tulsa County is responsible for the adoption and enforcement of the building and property codes. To provide Tulsa County's Division of Inspections with the necessary code enforcement tools, legislation will be introduced which will provide enforceable penalties for those who violate these codes.

### Hazard Mitigation

Following the horrific flooding of 2019, the legislature convened a special panel to conduct an "after action" review of all the damage that resulted and what could be done in the future to be better prepared. It was clear from this review that an insignificant amount of resources to mitigate and prevent damage from

natural disasters is available. While some funding is available after the disaster, more could be done before disasters strike to protect citizens and their property. In that effort, the Hazard Mitigation Assessment District bill has been introduced. This would provide counties with the option of presenting to the voters, for their approval, a small assessment on their property in order to fund the capital improvements necessary to protect lives and property.

### Misdemeanor Drug Diversion

It is all too common for law enforcement to engage with a person who is under the influence of drugs or has a small amount of drugs in their possession.

Currently, what follows is an arrest and detention in the county jail. A tremendous amount of law enforcement time and costs are expended on these minor offenses.

With the growing number of alternative treatment options now available for minor drug possession offenses, the District Attorney and Sheriff are proposing legislation which would allow them to collaborate on developing a misdemeanor drug diversion program.

Under this legislation, the law



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enforcement officer who encounters this individual would have the option of transporting the person to an evaluation center where medical and mental health professionals would intervene to development an appropriate treatment response.

### Exempting Police Officers From Jury Duty

Each month, hundreds of citizens are summoned for jury duty for the District Courts. Unless a citizen is exempt by law from jury duty, they must report and serve.

Often times, included in the group summoned are law enforcement officers. Currently, law enforcement officers are not exempt from reporting to court once they

receive a jury summons.

This places an undue operational and fiscal impact on the city where the officer works. In reality, due to their profession, a police officer is seldom, if ever, actually picked to serve on a jury due to the perceived bias they would have. This bill would allow the law enforcement officer to be excused from reporting to jury duty.

Unlike cities in Oklahoma which have broad self-governing powers, counties are still dependent upon the legislature to provide the permission for governing reforms and the means by which these reforms can be implemented even when there is no fiscal or operational impact upon the state.

### Property and Building Code Enforcement

There are tens of thousands of citizens who live in the unincorporated areas of Tulsa County. This means that the enforcement of the health and safety codes on these properties

special panel to conduct an "after action" review of all the damage that resulted and what could be done in the future to be better prepared. It was clear from this review that an insignificant amount of resources to mitigate and prevent damage from

# Tulsa County CARES Dedicates Funding for Fire Departments

By JARREL WADE  
Tulsa County

The Tulsa County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) recently approved \$1.2 million to reimburse seven Tulsa County municipalities for fire department overtime costs.

"Firefighters across Tulsa County do more than put out house fires," said Tulsa County Commissioner Ron Peters. "They are a critical first responders who are in many cases cross-trained to pro-

vide paramedic support. We need to support them as much as possible as COVID-19 cases continue to spike, and frontline health care staffing continues to be a priority. We're proud to support frontline workers and the municipalities they protect."

Tulsa County CARES funds will reimburse the following amounts for fire department overtime during the pandemic:

- City of Tulsa: \$877,427
- City of Broken Arrow: \$114,000
- City of Glenpool: \$97,508

- City of Collinsville: \$22,577
- City of Jenks: \$19,855
- City of Sand Springs: \$18,486
- City of Bixby: \$14,114

CARES funds have also purchased personal protective equipment through Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency (TAEMA) for various county fire departments. For example, Tulsa Fire Department received 2,400 protective masks through TAE-MA, and Turley Fire Department received 300 N95 masks, 148 face

shields, 650 protective masks, 15 respirators and extra filters, and other equipment.

Berryhill and Keystone fire protection districts have also received \$42,147 and \$25,461, respectively, for COVID-19 related expenses and equipment.

"On behalf of firefighters, I want to thank Tulsa County Commissioners Ron Peters, Karen Keith, and Stan Sallee, their dedicated staff, County Clerk Michael Willis, and the CARES Review Committee members for supporting first responders

on the frontlines of this pandemic fight," said Tulsa Fire IAFF Local 176 President Matt Lay. "For our firefighters, the COVID-19 mission has included everything from providing medical treatment in the field for confirmed positive patients, to assisting in contact tracing, creating and performing new decontamination methods, and ongoing COVID testing."

For more information about how Tulsa County CARES is spending federal CARES funding in Tulsa County, visit [tulsacountycares.org](http://tulsacountycares.org).



GTR Media Group photo

**REVERSE PARADE:** Due to the COVID-19 situation, Tulsa's 2020 Christmas Parade, called "A Christmas Joyride," was different from the first 93 events in that it was a drive-through event with visitors driving up Boston Avenue and looking at exhibits rather than watching from the sidewalks. This year's Christmas parade was sponsored by American Waste Control.



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VARIETY

# Taking Time to Explore Tulsa's Art

Knowing well that we are looking forward to better days, I wish you a most Happy New Year. So much in the entertainment world is on hold until at least late spring. Many extraordinary efforts have been made by venues and organizations to find ways of connecting to their audiences. Several have been successful. All have been challenging.

While live entertainment is taking an intermission, many Tulsa museums and galleries continue to showcase art. The First Friday Art Crawl has been a favorite of mine since the early days when there were maybe 100 people who happily wandered from one end of the Tulsa Arts District to the other. In years past, I tried to get an early start looking at art, and timed my outings to catch a show at the PAC, or the second set at Duet Jazz. I do miss all the entertainment options, and also the people. In some ways, the First Friday Art Crawl is like a monthly party.

How are the Tulsa Arts District galleries faring? The Zarrow Center is closed. TAC Gallery has closed for the time being, but will reopen in February. TAC's popular annual "5 x 5" fundraiser show will return in May. Living Arts will host an exhibition titled "Project Hope, Unity and Compassion," Jan. 8-22. On display will be the painted boards promoting unity and understanding that popped up around downtown during the Trump rally last June.

Specializing in art, craft and design, 108 Contemporary always provides a heightened experience. Anyone who enjoys fiber arts or who would like to know more about the genre will be engaged by the work of East coast artist Diane Savona. Her show "Art and Archaeology" (through Jan. 24) transforms everyday items — including those related to fiber work, like pincushions and sewing scissors — into fiber-covered, historically preserved works of art. Opening Feb. 5 at 108 Contemporary will be Jonathan Hils' exhibition "Facets," incorporating 3D printing and CNC routing technologies to explore a coded and digital interpretation of our environment. Admission to 108 Contemporary is free. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m., Wednesday through Saturday.

Ahha brings together artists, cultural organizations and the public to explore, celebrate, and elevate art. Private labs and lessons are available in Darkroom, Metals, Printmaking, Woodshop, Lighting, and Digital Media. The public may choose to rent the labs for independent work for as little as \$10 an hour. "The Experience: Imagine" at ahha features six Tulsa-based artists, each of whom has designed a zone with interactive arts elements. "Trajectories" by Fred Villanueva (Jan. 8-Feb. 21) examines common ground among contemporary indigenous art forms. "Expressing Your Voice Through Photography," with photos created by the Phoenix Rising Alternative School, can be viewed



**FINE ART CONNOISSEUR:** Tulsa native Derek Penix was ranked first by "Fine Art Connoisseur" in the Oil Painter of America Awards. He is represented by Royce Myers Gallery.

## Show Buzz



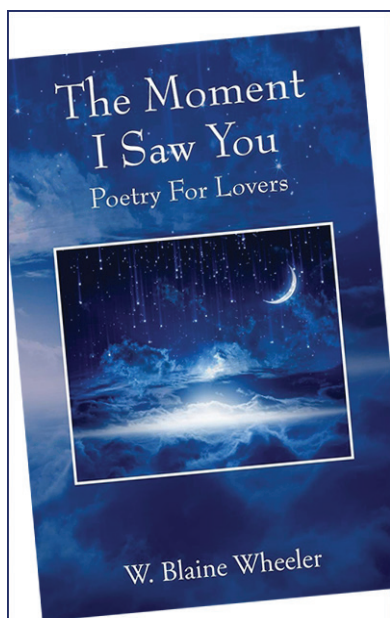
By NANCY HERMANN



**SQUAW:** The second segment of "Weaving History Into Art, The Enduring Legacy of Shan Goshorn" opens at Gilcrease Museum, Jan. 15. Pictured is "Squaw," 18"x10"x22"; archival watercolor paper splints printed with archival inks, artificial sinew, copper frame. Photo by Scott Miller



**GIEREK FINE ART:** The art of James Andrew Smith, Kevin Hardin, Suzanne Mears and Ross Myers on display at Joseph Gierek Fine Art, open 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Tues. through Saturday.




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through Mar. 22. Reserve tickets in advance.

If you are interested in purchasing art, Tulsa is fortunate to have several galleries where you can browse and also receive expert assistance. The M. A. Doran Gallery, 3509 S. Peoria, has been in business for decades. The gallery (Continued on page 7)



**M.A. DORAN GALLERY:** Located at 3509 S. Peoria, the gallery represents local and celebrated nationally known artists. Mary Ann Doran first opened a gallery with partner Sheila Golden in the 1970s.




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# Freak Juice Delivers Sound and Substance

Tulsa guitarist and self-proclaimed “juice-ologist” Torri Ruffin is garnering some well-deserved national buzz for his innovative infusion of genres and bold, invigorating sound.

No, it’s not his fictional band Sexual Chocolate from the 1988 Eddie Murphy Movie Coming To America that has Ruffin on the music industry’s radar. It’s his current band, Freak Juice that has earned the Detroit native and Tulsan since 2003 a spot on National Public Radio’s Emerging Artist Spotlight’s list of artists to watch in 2021.

Emerging artist is a little misleading, as Ruffin’s resume includes touring and recording with legends like Prince, Aretha Franklin, Michael Jackson, Smokey Robinson, Morris Day, Lenny Kravits, Snoop Dogg, Dr. Dre and more. But it’s the 2020 album “They Call Us Juice,” available at hortonrecords.org, that marks Ruffin’s emergence as more than a sideman.

Ruffin is using his decades of experience as a touring musician playing various genres of music to blend rock ‘n roll with hip-hop, jazz, funk, reggae and blues into a unique and meaningful album. Meaningful in the sense that Ruffin speaks out on multiple issues through his music, initiating and expanding dialogue on topics that impact our communities far more than music and entertainment.

From calling out two-faced politicians on the track Hypocrite, to declaring that systematic racism is our country’s affliction on the track Hands to the Sky, this album is more than hard-driving, funky riffs and tight rhythms.

As we near the 100-year anniversary of the Tulsa race massacre, no track on the album is as relevant as Dirty Little Secret, a song with a powerful guitar lead and an even more powerful message that brings the 1921 attack on the Greenwood District

in North Tulsa into the light. “Shine a light on darkness, let love show us the way,” the song pleads. I expect to hear that song a lot

this year as it provides a poignant soundtrack for the centennial commemorations of the May 31 attack.

Joining Ruffin in Freak Juice are Chris Simpson, vocals; Stanley Fary, drums; Charlie Redd, bass; and Christopher Mason, bass. They Call Us Juice also features an impressive list of guest musicians, including Tulsans Jesse Aycock, Paul Benjamin, Seth Lee Jones, Austin Stunkard, Ryan Wayne Tedder and more.

## Searching for The Sound



By BRYAN CANTRELL

### Juicemaker

Live music has been hard to come by since winter weather has deprived us of outdoor concerts that allow for safe distancing, but I truly believe that we are in the home stretch of this pandemic.

As more people receive vaccinations, our slumbering music scene is poised for an awakening. For Ruffin’s business venture, Juicemaker Lounge on 35th Street and Sheridan Road, that awakening can’t come soon enough.

Ruffin opened the club in 2018 to feature multiple genres, establishing a venue that was enticing to musicians.

Juicemaker provides instruments and a PA so musicians can just show up and play. The interior is designed with acoustics and comfort in mind, with sound-dampening walls and couches that create a laid-back atmosphere.

As with all music venues, COVID has hurt business significantly since March 2020. The venue has survived by implementing safety measures and hosting live stream virtual concerts, but that is surviving, not thriving. Hopefully, some of my readers will be vaccinated by the time they read this, and to you I say, go check out Juicemaker Lounge

## Tulsa Galleries Represent Local, National Artists

(Continued from page 6)

represents both celebrated local artists and vaunted nationally known artists. Currently, the gallery is open 11 a.m. until 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and by appointment. The number of guests is limited, and face masks are required. Plan ahead for Doran Gallery’s annual Group Valentine’s show in February and the National Contemporary Realism show in May. “We can’t wait to get back to large openings to celebrate our artists, and look forward to those days again,” says Mary Ann Doran.

Those sentiments are shared by Joseph Gieriek, the owner of Joseph Gieriek Fine Art, 1342 E. 11th Street. Gieriek is a congenial and knowledgeable guy who has been in the art business for 35 years. He also is looking forward to hosting art show openings again when that becomes possible. I always enjoy attending his exhibition gatherings, seeing thought-provoking art and

chatting the night away with art lovers and friends.

Other local art galleries include Exhibit by Aberson, 3524b South Peoria, and Royce Myers Galleries, 1706 S.Boston. The Aberson Gallery is focused on contemporary art. Royce Myers features a variety of styles. If you are interested in commissioning art, you can work with Myers’ gallery in exploring that option.

Regarding Tulsa’s largest art museums, Philbrook will close its doors for the month of January, and reopen Feb. 10. The Thomas Gilcrease Museum hosted the most extraordinary exhibition this fall, “Weaving History into Art, The Enduring Legacy of Shan Goshorn.” I knew Shan and was saddened by her death in 2018. I did not appreciate the depth of her talent and the strength of her artistic voice until I spent an afternoon with this stunning exhibition. Shan used printed splints woven into ves-



Courtesy Horton Records

**PUT IT IN THE BLENDER:** *They Call Us Juice* by Freak Juice and Friends was released by Horton Records on Nov. 13, 2020. It’s currently available for purchase at hortonrecords.org.

as you begin to safely ease back in to life that we used to call normal. Visit facebook.com/juicemakermusic for upcoming shows.

Freak Juice will perform live at The Shrine on Feb. 5 as the opening act for Indigenous, a blues and rock band featuring guitarist Mato Nanji, a member of the critically acclaimed Experience Hendrix Tour. If you can attend safely, I highly recommend going.

As winter gives way to spring, vaccinations will ramp up, venues will schedule more shows, and we will rejoice with the

joy of a thousand shots of dopamine as we are finally able, without restrictions, to keep searching, keep listening.

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## HEALTH & WELLNESS

# Tulsa Health Department, Saint Francis Partner for Administration of COVID-19 Vaccine in Tulsa County

The Oklahoma State Department of Health recently announced the first shipment of COVID-19 vaccines manufactured by Pfizer have been delivered across the state. The Tulsa Health Department in partnership with Saint Francis Health System has confirmed the safe arrival of the vaccine in Tulsa County, and has begun administering the vaccine in accordance with the OSDH priority population framework to individuals in phase one.

“The arrival of a safe and effective vaccine to prevent COVID-19 in Tulsa County is historic. I want to thank our partners at the state and local level for their collaborative efforts to coordinate the logistics of the vaccine distribution, and for their continued efforts as more doses become available,” said THD Executive Director Dr. Bruce Dart. “While this announcement is good news, it’s important to remember that distributing this vaccine will take time. We have lost 28 Tulsa County residents to this virus in the last week, and active cases and hospitalizations continue to remain dangerously high. It is critical for our residents to continue to follow public health guidelines to stay safe.”

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has rigorous scientific and regulatory processes in place that ensure the safety, effectiveness and quality of COVID-19 vaccines. On December 11, the FDA issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in individuals 16 years of age and older. On December 12, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Di-

rector Robert Redfield approved the recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

The Tulsa Health Department has worked closely with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, State of Oklahoma, OKC-County Health Department and numerous state and local community partners to develop vaccination plans. There were 5,850 doses allocated for Tulsa County in the initial shipment, with more doses expected on a weekly basis.

“Saint Francis Health System is grateful to have been selected as a vaccine distribution partner for our region,” said President and CEO Jake Henry Jr. “While today is certainly a day of excitement for the arrival of the vaccine to this region, it is also a day to reflect on how far we have come in the past 10 months. It is a time to commend the researchers, scientists and public health professionals who made this day possible. It is a day to mourn those we have lost. And it is a day—like every day—to thank and honor the heroes on the front lines of the fight against this virus. This vaccine is not a cure, it is a call to recommit ourselves to working together. Hope is on the horizon, but we must remain vigilant.”

Individuals who meet the criteria for phase one distribution will be contacted by staff from THD or Saint Francis Health System to make an appointment for the first dose. Instructions for receiving the vaccine, including directions to the confidential location where vaccines will be administered, will be provided at the time the appointment is made.

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine requires two doses admin-



**SAINT FRANCIS TEAM:** Members of the Saint Francis Health System with vaccines for COVID-19 elimination are, from left, Jacob Dunlap, pharmacy operations supervisor; George Raptou, pharmacy purchasing supervisor; Brian Kaske, pharmacy IV room supervisor; and David Donald, director of pharmacy services.

istered 21 days apart. There is no out-of-pocket expense for vaccine recipients. In late-stage vaccine trials, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has shown to be 95% effective.

“I want to thank the State of Oklahoma for providing Tulsa with its first phase vaccine supply today that will begin to be distributed to our essential healthcare workers immediately,” Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum said. “I know Tulsa’s healthcare and long-term care facility communities are exhausted from this response, and I’m hoping the initial distribution of this vaccine will provide them some comfort in knowing more help is on the way to protect our neighbors. Although the distribution of a vaccine is welcome news, we still have a long road ahead as a community and each of us must do what we can to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Washing our hands, watching our distance, and wearing a mask remain the best things we can do to support our healthcare heroes.”

“It’s a relief to know that a vaccine to actively fight against COVID-19 is finally in our county,” said Tulsa County Commissioner Karen Keith. “I encourage all eligible, frontline health

care workers to take advantage and get immunized. Vaccinations protect more than just the person getting inoculated, and for health care workers — especially those working in nursing homes, it protects the many people they care for.”

“The arrival of the vaccine today is a culmination of months of collaboration between the State Department of Health and partners across the state. I’m excited to see the vaccine plan put into motion today,” said State Commissioner of Health Dr. Lance Frye. “It’s important to remember, though, that these first doses are reserved for those Oklahomans most at risk. To truly protect one another, we need Oklahomans to continue wear a mask, wash their hands, watch their distance and wait for the vaccine.”

There is currently a limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, but supply will increase in the weeks and months to come. More information regarding vaccine availability in Tulsa County can be found at [www.tulsa-health.org/COVID-19-vaccine](http://www.tulsa-health.org/COVID-19-vaccine). For information regarding the Oklahoma COVID-19 Vaccine Plan, including the priority population framework for Oklaho-

ma, please visit [oklahoma.gov/covid19/vaccine-information](http://oklahoma.gov/covid19/vaccine-information).

The Tulsa Health Department continues to offer specimen collection for COVID-19 testing by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled online. Call 918-582-9355 to speak to a public health professional. For more information, please visit [www.tulsa-health.org/COVID19](http://www.tulsa-health.org/COVID19).

### About Tulsa Health Department

Since its establishment in 1950, the Tulsa Health Department serves as the primary public health agency to more than 600,000 Tulsa County residents, including 13 municipalities and four unincorporated areas. The agency is one of two autonomous local health departments in Oklahoma, with statutory public health jurisdiction throughout Tulsa County and the City of Tulsa. THD’s mission is to improve the health and well-being of all Tulsa County residents, in order to make Tulsa County the healthiest county in the country. THD was among the first health departments in the U.S. to receive national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. For more information, visit [tulsa-health.org](http://tulsa-health.org).

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# New Vaccines Helping Make the Light At the End of the Tunnel Shine Bright

*But the Pandemic Isn't Over And Practicing the 3Ws Remains Essential*

## Special To GTR Media Group

By **DR. BRUCE DART**  
Executive Director,  
Tulsa County Health Department

Over the last several months, COVID-19 has affected all of us. It has drastically changed the way we go about our daily lives. It has created hardship for businesses. Worst of all, some of us have lost a loved one – and to those of you who have I offer my sincere condolences.

2020 was a hard year for us all, but the unfortunate reality is we can't leave this virus in the past just yet.

Throughout November and December, cases increased consistently and exponentially. After the first one was announced in March of 2020, it took six months to reach 10,000 cases. In November alone, we had over 10,000 cases.

When all is said and done, it is likely that COVID-19 will be 2020's sixth-highest cause of death for Tulsa County residents. I say all this as a reminder that we cannot stop taking precautions. We all need to continue practicing the 3Ws – wear your mask, watch your distance and wash your hands – to slow the spread and lessen the strain on our healthcare system.

Testing, quarantine and isolation remain critical to slowing the spread of COVID-19. Completing the entire duration of your quarantine and isolation is vitally important. If you feel sick or think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, please seek testing. The Tulsa Health Department continues to be here for resources, information and testing. If you have questions or would like to make an appointment for testing, call us at 918-582-9355 or visit [tulsa-health.org](http://tulsa-health.org).

Safe and effective vaccines are being distributed in Oklahoma right now. These vaccines have

gone through a rigorous scientific and regulatory process, and you should feel confident in them.

I encourage all of you to receive it when it becomes available to you. While this is an important step, we know that it will take time until all Tulsa County residents can receive the vaccine, so we must stay the course and continue to practice the 3Ws.

Together, the vaccine and other precautions will offer you the best protection from being infected with COVID-19.

Thank you to all of you who are playing your part in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Thank you for sacrificing important life events and time in-person with your loved ones. I know many are tired, but the light at the end of the tunnel has never been brighter.

### About the Author

Dr. Bruce Dart has served five local health departments in three states during his 36-year career in public health. Currently, he



**DR. BRUCE DART**

is the executive director of the Tulsa Health Department, a local public health agency of 340 team members.

Dart serves in a leadership role as a member of several National Association of County and City Health Officials work committees and is a NACCHO past president and former board member and serves on the Public Health

Accreditation Board's Accreditation Review Committee.

The recipient of numerous industry awards, he received his BA in Biology from Drury University in 1977, his MS in Administration (Health Services) from Central Michigan University in 1989 and his PhD in Health Services from Walden University in 2005.

## Federal Funding Approved for Tulsa VA Hospital

A Federal law was passed in December 2020 approving \$120 million in federal funding for a new Veterans Hospital in Tulsa (VHiT). It will be the first hospital to be built under the Communities Helping Invest through Property and Improvements Needed for Veterans Act of 2016 (CHIP-IN Act).

The legislation began developing when the Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System (EOVAHCS), VA Rocky Mountain Network and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) began discussing plans for building a state-of-the-art inpatient medical-surgical hospital in downtown Tulsa under authority of the CHIP-IN Act.

"We are extremely grateful for the strong support received from U.S. Senators James Inhofe and James Lankford along with U.S. Representatives Markwayne Mullin and Kevin Hern," said Ralph Gigliotti, director of the VA Rocky Mountain Network. "Our VA team set a goal with the state of Oklahoma, City of Tulsa, the Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation, and Oklahoma State University and we achieved it. I am so impressed with the collaboration in the name of America's heroes. This is a huge win for Veterans of

Eastern Oklahoma who deserve nothing less than the best possible care."

Pete Peterson, chairman of the Oklahoma Veterans Council, offered praise for the project.

"The Oklahoma Veterans Council is pleased to see that the VA Hospital is included in the Mil-Con VA Appropriations Bill for FY 2021," he said. "This hospital will not only provide exceptional service in the heart of our largest market it will also stand as a testament to what we can accomplish as a community when we work together for the benefit of our veterans."

The VA hospital will be located in downtown Tulsa at 7th Street and Houston Avenue on the expanded OSU Medical Center Campus. The effort will convert the existing Kerr-Edmondson Buildings on the site into a modern 275,000 square-foot, 58-bed medical-surgical hospital for veterans.

More than two-thirds of the 47,000 veterans who receive services at the current Jack C. Montgomery Medical Center in Muskogee come from the Tulsa metro area. Of the 115,400-plus veterans in the Eastern Oklahoma VA area, approximately 68% are closer to Tulsa than to Muskogee,

leading planners to estimate the new hospital could serve up to 30% (or 14,000) more veterans annually.

"The new VA hospital in Tulsa is a historic victory that will offer long lasting and far-reaching benefits for our Veterans, the VA, and our community," said Mark E. Morgan, MHA, FACHE, director, Eastern Oklahoma VA Health Care System. "By expanding services in Tulsa, EOVAHCS will be strategically positioned to provide the highest level of care to our Veterans for decades to come. This monumental expansion will also allow us to repurpose the Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center in Muskogee into a much-needed community living and behavioral health center with expanded services that are not currently offered in this area."

The project, scheduled for completion in 2024, will have an estimated \$130 million total cost of construction - \$120 million federal appropriation and \$10 million in philanthropic support.

The state of Oklahoma has finalized transfer of the Kerr-Edmondson property valued at \$35 million, and the city of Tulsa has committed \$8 million toward a parking garage for the veterans hospital.



**VETERAN DESTINATION:** The new Veterans Administration Hospital will be built in downtown Tulsa at 7th Street and Houston Avenue on the expanded OSU Medical Center Campus with a scheduled 2024 completion date. It is being designed by GH2 Architects.

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# EDUCATION

## TCC Announces Spring Semester Learning Strategies

Following a successful fall 2020 semester balancing safety protocols and in-person learning, Tulsa Community College is working to increase the number of face-to-face classes and on-line live for the spring semester, scheduled to start Jan. 19.

TCC will continue delivering courses in four delivery methods: face-to-face, online live, blended and online courses.

“We had nearly 40% of our students in the classroom during the fall semester between face-to-face classes and blended classes which is a mix of face-to-face and online. Our students are telling us they want more face-to-face options for spring as daily life has adapted in the pandemic and we are working to increase those options,” said Dr. Leigh Goodson, TCC president & CEO.

Students have also responded enthusiastically to the online live option, where the course meets online in a web-conference style at designated times and students are required to be present online, live at that time. It has the benefit of immediate feedback from the faculty member and classmates, as well as being interactive.

TCC will maintain safety protocols including a face mask policy and physical distancing for all classrooms. Additional information on procedures and public health measures taken by TCC can be found in the TCC Return to Campus plan at [tulsacc.edu/returnplan](http://tulsacc.edu/returnplan).

In addition, TCC will proceed with Spring Break with no classes the week of March 15-21. However, the College is building a schedule to allow

for virtual classes following spring break from March 22 – April 4.

“Our plan builds in flexibility for students and their families who may travel during Spring Break and need to self-quarantine. In addition, we acknowledge our students and employees, who are parents, may see an increased absenteeism due to additional family responsibilities during that time based on the schedule of our local public schools,” said Goodson.

Metro Campus will remain open during spring break, as it has in recent years, providing access to student services, computers and academic resources, while all other campuses will be closed March 15 – 21, 2021. Following spring break, all campuses will be open March 22 – April 4.



Courtesy TCC

**CLASSROOM DISTANCING:** This photo is from one of the areas TCC has transformed into an academic classroom for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. The square footage of this former event space at the McKee Center for Creativity on the TCC Metro Campus allows for physical distancing of desks and students.

## Adjunct Faculty Member Designs TCC Holiday Card

Cristiana Prado learned the art of watercolor from her mother. While she prefers to work in ceramics, she is influenced by watercolor even with glazing ceramics. She entered the 2020 TCC Holiday Card Design Competition with a watercolor that was selected as this year’s TCC Holiday Card.

Prado’s watercolor piece titled, “Share Your Light” shows two candles, with gold highlights, lighting the way.

“I love candles and was inspired by the quote, ‘A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.’ We’ve been through so much this year, and like a candle, it takes nothing from us to be kind, compassionate and pass on love,” said

Prado, an adjunct faculty member at TCC who has taught Art Appreciation and Foundation 2D Design for the past seven years. In addition, she teaches Art part-time for Tulsa Public Schools.

“Teaching art makes me a better artist. When I help students learn how to express their creativity, I unlock my own creativity. I enjoy teaching because I love to encourage, instruct and inspire others,” said Prado.

Selected as this year’s TCC Holiday Card design, the cards were emailed to TCC students, faculty, and staff, and mailed to community members and TCC Foundation members by TCC President & CEO Leigh B. Goodson, Ph.D. As

the winner, Prado received 50 printed cards and \$500 from the TCC Foundation, the sponsor of the annual competition.

“The TCC Foundation supports developmental opportunities for students and faculty outside of the classroom. The Holiday Card Design Competition is a favorite allowing the selected winner to see their artwork printed and representing TCC in the community,” said Kari Shults, vice president for advancement and president of the TCC Foundation.

Prado’s winning watercolor design was unveiled at the TCC Board of Regents November meeting and she was presented with her check and cards.



Courtesy TCC

**WINNING DESIGN:** The design of the 2020 TCC holiday card was unveiled. From left are Kari Shults, vice president for advancement and president of the TCC Foundation; Cristiana Prado, card designer and TCC adjunct faculty; and Dr. Leigh Goodson, TCC president & CEO.

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# Building the Path to a Skilled Workforce

When was the last time you used trigonometry? If you ask that of 2017 Tulsa Tech graduate David Patrick, he would tell you almost daily. Patrick is not boasting. It is just part of what it takes to run Computer Numerical Control or CNC machines.

“When you are making parts, you have to do the math,” Patrick said with a grin. “You can’t pretend you know what you are doing because if you make a mistake, it can cost the company a lot of money.”

Patrick works for Baker Hughes in their small parts division, making intricate pieces for proprietary safety valves. Each complicated part must meet exact specifications, and it is up to Patrick to make sure each component is right.

“Everything from the original idea to the engineering to the machining, requires layers of science and mathematics,” Patrick said. “A lot of the material that I cut are designed not to be cut, so I need to make sure my ‘feed and speed formulas’ are spot on.”

Tulsa Tech students can now learn not just the math skills,

but all aspects of manufacturing in a new state-of-the-art facility. The 18,000-square-foot machine and mechatronics space is the latest shining example of the world-class facilities Tulsa Tech offers students.

“I walked around the corner and saw the new shop, and I was blown away,” Patrick, a 2017 graduate, said. “My jaw dropped; everything in here is set up just like it is at Baker Hughes.”

Students learn how to design and create high-tech precision parts in the Certified Machine Operator and Certified Machine Technician programs from manual to computer-aided machines.

“When I arrived at Tech, I was thrown into a new world, and I got a taste of everything I needed to know,” Patrick said. “Tulsa Tech prepared me to go into the workforce.”

These programs available to high school and adult students open doors to great jobs. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average machining job pays around \$46,000. That number is even higher in Broken Arrow, with an average salary topping \$60,000.

Patrick says he owes a lot of his success to instructor Aaron Runk.

“Every time I run into him, I tell him ‘thank you,’” Patrick said, smiling. “When I graduated and got my job, I had to go and get him a gift card to say thanks for helping change my life.”

Patrick went on to joke that he would continue sending cards of thanks, if it would not become a nuisance. Having completed his time before the new space was opened, he was amazed by the transformation.

“The shop I learned in was awesome, but this, this is top-notch,” Patrick said. “Walking in here, I was able to see that everything from the machines to the layout and the safety requirements match what I see every day at Baker Hughes. To me, this space is all about mimicking industry.”

An accolade any institution would gladly take, especially with our mission of Educating people for success in the workplace. A mission Patrick gets to live out every day in his job at Baker Hughes.

“Being able to go into my job and be an expert, it is like being your own boss,” Patrick said. “I can’t thank Tulsa Tech enough for preparing me for this career.”

If you are looking to for a new career or want to get ahead in your current field, look no further than Tulsa Tech. With more than 80 full-time career training programs and hundreds of part-time options, we have the training to fit your needs. Log onto [tulsatech.edu](http://tulsatech.edu) today and see how we can help you Make Your Own Path.

## News From Tulsa Tech



By DR. STEVE TIGER  
Superintendent



Courtesy Tulsa Tech

**MACHINE DEMONSTRATION:** Tulsa Tech graduate David Patrick shows a student a new way to use a machine while taking a tour of the new manufacturing program space at the Broken Arrow Campus. Patrick called the newly remodeled space “awe-inspiring.”

## NSU Early Childhood Education Program Ranks Among Affordable Degrees

Northeastern State University’s early childhood education degree has been ranked No. 27 out of 85 by Discover Early Childhood EDU as the most affordable bachelor’s degree.

“The Early Childhood program at NSU prepares students to work in diverse and inclusive early childhood settings and demonstrate cultural competence and sensitivity as early childhood practitioners in grades PreK-3,” Dr. Anita Ede, program chair for early childhood education, said. “Coursework is taught

by experienced faculty who integrate a strong theoretical foundation in early childhood with practical hands-on experiences in the classroom.”

In addition to learning to work with children, graduates are prepared to work with administrators, community members and parents.

For more information on NSU’s early childhood education degree, contact the College of Education at [coe.nsuok.edu](http://coe.nsuok.edu) or call 918-444-3700.



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**MAKE YOUR OWN PATH**



# BROKEN ARROW EDUCATION

## B.A.'s Anna Turner Named NSU Outstanding Graduate Student

Anna Turner of Broken Arrow was selected as the Fall 2020 Northeastern State University Outstanding Graduate Student. Turner graduated this fall with an M.Ed. in Mathematics Education.

This award recognizes graduate students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship and leadership, and a demonstrative impact on fellow students, NSU, their profession or the community. Candidates are nominated and selected entirely by the graduate faculty at NSU.

Turner's scholarly contributions during her final capstone semester demonstrate her creative approach to a complex issue as described in her capstone research, Making Meaning: Implementing Authentic Design in a Developmental Mathematics Classroom.

"I applied ideas related to authentic design to a developmental mathematics course that I currently teach with the hope of supporting deeper mathematical learning and the development of more positive dispositions toward the study and use of mathematics," Turner said.

Turner's work was guided by faculty mentors Dr. Martha Parrott, professor of mathematics and Dr. Richard Hasenauer, associate professor of mathematics.

With a B.S. degree in Deaf Education and a minor in Applied Mathematics, Turner has served students in a variety of teaching environments through the years. Her experiences include teaching high school mathematics at the Kansas School for the Deaf, special education math classes at Sand Springs Schools, online math

courses for credit recovery, ACT preparation and developmental mathematics at Tulsa Community College, and tutoring numerous math students of all ages and math subjects.

With special interest in reaching medical homebound students, Turner served on a committee for supporting students in transitioning back to school after long-term absences from school and is currently coordinating methods to provide support to students who are learning in virtual environments. Turner says she remains passionate about her desire to make math relevant, meaningful and interesting to her students.

Turner is a wife and mother of three boys who, now more than ever, readily run to her for their math help.



ANNA TURNER

## Allison Shaw of B.A.H.S. Receives Achievement Award

*Senior Will Use Scholarship To Attend OSU*

Allison Shaw, a senior at Broken Arrow High School, has been selected as the recipient of the First National Bank & Trust Co.'s First Achievement Award for 2020-21.

One of this year's top BAHS students, Shaw says she plans to use the scholarship to attend Oklahoma State University where she will study biology pre-med sciences and take the first step in fulfilling a lifelong dream of being a doctor.

Shaw carries a 3.91 cumulative grade average, is a member of the

National Honor Society and served as secretary of both her junior and senior class boards. She was also a member of the nationally recognized Pride of Broken Arrow Marching Band and was named a leader of its flute section.

Away from the classroom, she was a member the Broken Arrow Youth City Council and with her fellow councilors traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a National League of Cities conference.

She is the daughter of Michael and Beth Shaw, both of whom are captains in the Broken Arrow Police Department.

In addition to its \$20,000 yearly commitment to Broken Arrow Schools, First National annually presents a high school senior a renewable scholarship it named the First Achievement Award. Since the program was launched in 1989 Broken Arrow's first bank has paid more than \$250,000 to deserving local students.



Courtesy Photo

**WINNER:** Allison Shaw is joined by her parents, Michael and Beth Shaw, in showing off her First Achievement Award scholarship certificate.



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**BROKEN ARROW SPORTS**

# Josh Blankenship Becomes B.A. Football Coach

Rumors that began swirling around Broken Arrow High School athletics at the first of the year have been proven true. Josh Blankenship is now the Tigers' head football coach.

The son of legendary Owasso coach Bill Blankenship, he was an all-state player for his dad at Union, and then followed him to the University of Tulsa where he became the second member of the Blankenship family to play quarterback for the Golden Hurricane. After three seasons at TU, he transferred to Eastern Washington, where he was the Big Sky Conference Offensive Player of the Year and a second-team All-American.

During the 2003 preseason, Josh Blankenship was on the

Miami Dolphins' training-camp roster and later played for the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League and the Tulsa Talons arena football team.

His coaching resume includes service as a quarterback coach at TU, head coach at Muskogee High School and, most recently, head coach at Adams State University in Alamosa, Colorado where his 2017 Grizzlies were No. 2 nationally in passing yards and 11th in total offense.

At 39, he succeeds former BA, TU and professional star David Alexander who coached at Broken Arrow for seven years and brought the school its first, and to date only, state championship with an undefeated 2018 team.



**MEETING THE PRESS:** Josh Blankenship answers questions from Tulsa area media at his introductory press conference at the Broken Arrow indoor practice facility Jan. 8.

# B.A. Boys Look to Rebound After Slow Start

*2-3 Tigers Have the Experience to Turn Season Around*

By **MIKE MOGUIN**  
GTR Sport Writer

Broken Arrow has one of the more experienced teams in Class 6A basketball. The Tigers are a senior-loaded team and are expected to make some noise on the hardwood this year.

However, at this writing, the Tigers were 2-3, not off to the start they desired before Christmas break.

"This is not where we thought we would be at this point. I thought we would be 4-0 going into this next game or at least 4-1," Broken Arrow coach Beau Wallace said.

"Even though we have a lot of guys back, we have a new team and there are some things we need to clean up. We're not getting the inside scoring that we have been getting. We're missing one of our key guys right now. So that has hurt us."

The Tigers lost the season opener at Union, 56-48, on Dec. 8.

"We had a chance to win that game in regulation, but we turned it over late, went to overtime and didn't make any shots. The only thing we did well was we made free throws."

Broken Arrow played in the Edmond Open the following weekend, going 2-1. The loss came in the second round to Edmond Santa Fe by three points. The Tigers responded with an 80-51 win against



**READY FOR ACTION:** The Broken Arrow boys look forward to a successful finish in the 2020-21 season..

Oklahoma City Casady. Then came a 30-point loss at Sapulpa on Dec. 15.

"We had some mental mistakes and missed assignments," Wallace said. "We have to get better production inside and outside. It starts inside for us," he added.

Wallace said that his team has been without its top two rebounders from last year. One is Jaiell Talley, who also played football. A 6'5" senior forward, Talley had almost 200 rebounds last year. He is currently adjusting to basketball playing form, Wallace said. Anthony Allen, a 6'5" junior forward who had 100 rebounds last year, has also been out.

"Missing those two guys is huge as far as rebounding and second-shot attempts," said Wallace, who hoped that time off over the holidays would give his players time to rest and heal their bodies.

Other key players are Ian Golden (6'1", senior, guard), George McCurdy (6'2", senior, guard), Jared Barnes (6'3", senior, guard), Simon Blair (6'6", senior, forward) and Tyler Pinder (6'0", senior, guard).

"Ian is a kid who has played a lot for us," Wallace said. "Jared is just that kid that does everything we need him to do. He takes charge, blocks out, rebounds, he can play all five positions for us. Simon is another kid that came off the bench last year. Right now, he is starting for us."

From the bench, Wallace is excited about Aaron Johnson (6'2", junior, guard), Connor Dowd (6'4", sophomore, guard) and Ethan Ellison (6'5", sophomore, center).

"Aaron is probably one of our best rebounding guards," Wallace said. "I think he has great potential and is going to be good for us."

"Connor is a kid who can really shoot the ball, and Ethan Ellison plays inside for us. He's athletic and is figuring out where he fits in, the puzzle every time he gets in," Wallace said.

When it comes to COVID-19, Wallace agrees it's the question of the year.

"Everybody has had to deal with it differently," Wallace said. "You just don't know when you're going to get that phone call that someone is quarantined and can't play. We try to structure practice a little bit differently as far as which kids are always playing together. We try to mix them up a lot more. I tell them everybody has to be ready and that you never know when your time is going to be called."

Broken Arrow resumed action Jan. 5 at Booker T. Washington. Through the remainder of the

month, the Tigers will play in the Skiatook Tournament (Jan. 7-9), will host Jenks (Jan. 12), travel to Owasso (Jan. 15), host Muskogee (Jan. 19) and finish the month with back-to-back road games against Bartlesville (Jan. 26) and Bixby (Jan. 29).

"Based on who they have back, I think Owasso is going to be really tough this year," Wallace said. "They have a lot of guys back and they're athletic. I've told people they're a lot like us and they can break you down. Then you have Jenks with Chase (Martin) and Bixby is also picking up. I don't think there are ever any easy games in our conference."

"One thing I try to tell the kids is when we step on the floor, every team wants to beat you and if you don't want to beat them as bad as they want to beat you, it ends up being a long night," Wallace said.

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## SPORTS

# Tulsa Becomes an Auto Racing Capital of America Due to the Legendary Leadership of Emmett Hahn

## *Chili Bowl Listed as World's Number 4 Race*

By **GLENN HIBDON**  
GTR Sports Writer

This is a love story. It's a passionate tale between a city and an event, fans and a sport, a man and his vision.

Eighty-year-old Emmett Hahn has become a rich man thanks to an indoor motorsports extravaganza known as the Chili Bowl Midget Nationals. For the last 35 years, the second week in January has transformed Tulsa into the racing capital of America. Just like Elvis Presley and The Beatles, Hahn was in the right place at the right time with the right idea.

Now, as they say, the rest is history.

"USA Today listed the top 10 most prestigious races in the world and the Chili Bowl was No. 4 and the only dirt track race," said Hahn, co-promoter of the event held at the River Spirit Expo Center. "Billy Boat's car owner said it's easier to win the Indy 500 than the Chili Bowl.

"We have a good track and the race is held in the second week in January when nobody else is racing. We're 25 miles away from being the central spot in population in the country. We get people from other countries coming here because they know we won't be rained or snowed out. They can come from a long way off and there is no other facility like this in the USA."



**PACKED HOUSE.** The Chili Bowl draws sellout crowds to Tulsa's Expo Square. This year's seating will be limited due to COVID-19.

No brag. Just fact. Racers from up to 35 states and five countries compete annually for the \$10,000 top prize. Almost 350 cars show up to compete on the quarter-mile dirt surface constructed on the building's lower level, the size of three Astrodome playing fields. More than 52 miles of cable hold up the roof.

Hahn said some racers and fans show up for the Lucas Oil Tulsa Shootout in the last week of December, the world's largest micro midget race, and remain in town the

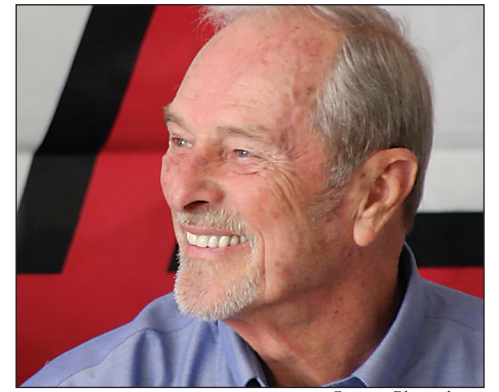
following week waiting for the Chili Bowl. People in the racing business seem to notice such things.

"Three or four years ago NASCAR brought seven officials to watch what we do. How many have Tony Stewart helped with the main race track?" Hahn asked. "When Tony came on the scene he had a midget car and he loved this race. When Tony's name came up it boosted the race and this year Hendrix Motorsports had Kyle Larson, Chase Elliott and Christopher Bell here."

With NASCAR drivers showing up more frequently, popularity among average fans continues to increase. After the first Tulsa Shootout took place, the green flag fell for the Chili Bowl. It was slow rolling at first after Hahn and original co-promoter Lanny Edwards polished the plan.

"He promoted World of Outlaws shows and knew the Kinsers and Wolfgangs. I told Lanny I think we can run midgets," Hahn said. "At first we ran sprint cars and midgets. There was very little cross over and a rivalry developed. Bob Berryhill, owner of Chili Bowl, was a big midget fan and he liked what we were doing. He called us and gave us \$6,000 in sponsorship, but we butted heads with the Super Bowl.

"I would go to businesses and give away tickets to customers who came to see what's going on. We finally got people from outside states like Wisconsin and California who wanted to come see these cars go two to three wide. Word of mouth was instrumental in making this thing grow and now this racing is like the 3/8-mile track at the old fairgrounds."



EMMETT HAHN

With a record 16,000 fans for one event, the Chili Bowl was always a sellout – until COVID-19 came long. The 2021 race was limited to 2,400 fans and would not have taken place without the help of some race-loving friends. Lucas Oil remains the title sponsor.

"With the virus limiting us to 25 percent capacity, it would have cost us millions to put the show on," said Hahn. "Mark Andrus, Tulsa Expo Square CEO, and Ray Hoyt of the Tulsa Regional Chamber gave us money to put in on. We won't be losing money."

And Tulsa businesses will continue to benefit as well. Hahn said it was reported that the Chili Bowl brought in \$33 million to the local economy in 2020. Conservative estimates indicate Hahn's show has brought in 180,000 fans and \$132 million in the last 12 years with 70,000 cars over 35 years.

"I'm not on welfare," Hahn quipped.

Fans are also rich in racing history, excitement and entertainment. It's a win, win, win situation for fans, drivers and the city.

"These are real race fans. They know what's going on. They know good racing when they see it," Hahn said. "Stewart said it's a lot of fun and the race is almost like a reunion. Lanny and I had the philosophy that we're not smart enough to make this work, just smart enough not to mess it up.

"When we first started getting big, for the first time they ran out of rental cars and the only other time that happened was when the PGA Tour came to Southern Hills. When that happens you know you're pretty good."

Of all the memories over 35 years, Hahn said one that stands out is a race in the 1990s featuring P.J. and Page Jones, sons of Parnelli Jones.

"The two kids started up front," Hahn recalled. "P.J. hit his kill switch on the third lap and had to go to the back. He came up through the field and caught his brother in 20 laps. The way P.J. made that drive was unbelievable.

"I ain't going to quit this until they throw dirt in my face. The only regret I have is that didn't start this earlier."

A motorsports romance was born in 1987 and there have been hugs and kisses between Hahn, midget racing and the city ever since.

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# Holland Hall, Metro Celebrate Championships

By MIKE MOGUIN  
GTR Sports Writer

Holland Hall won its first ever state championship in football as it beat Lincoln Christian, 35-7, in the Class 3A final Dec. 11.

Eight days later, Metro Christian repeated as champions with a 48-37 win against Washington in the Class 2A state championship game. Both games were played at Wantland Stadium at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond.

## Total Domination

Holland Hall won as it did in every game in 2020, by a rout. But it didn't start that way. The Dutchmen had the ball first and were forced to three and out. Lincoln Christian, the 2019 3A champion, moved to the Holland Hall 36-yard line, but as it went for it on fourth down, Nunu Campbell intercepted a pass to set up the Dutchmen's first TD.

Quarterback and University of Oklahoma baseball signee Wallace Clark threw a 17-yard touchdown pass to Marc Gouldsby to make it 7-0, where it stood at the close of the first quarter.

Holland Hall led 21-7 at halftime.

"It was a great feeling just knowing that we were the first group to do it at Holland Hall, and just winning in general," Clark said. "It was the goal from the beginning of the year and we put that in our minds, and when we finally accomplished it, it was just super satisfying to achieve what we were striving for."

Clark had a phenomenal night, throwing three touchdown passes (17, 32 and 30 yards) and running for two others (three and five yards). He was 15-of-23 attempts for 268 yards and 15 carries for 130 yards. Gouldsby caught five passes for 130 yards. On defense, Army signee Owen Ostroski overcame being double-and-triple teamed, making eight tackles with



Photo Courtesy of Jared McCoy

**DUTCH CELEBRATION:** Holland Hall celebrates its first state football championship after winning the Class 3A final.

three for losses. Zane Woodham and Matt Doyle recorded 18 and 11 tackles, respectively. Doyle also had 1 1/2 sacks.

"It was super lively and exciting just because in every single game of the season, we didn't know if it was going to be the last game of the season based on what was happening with the whole COVID protocols and everything," Clark said. "So just being able to go out there and play for a state championship, let alone winning it, was very special."

Clark said he sees a bright future for Holland Hall football.

## Back-to-Back 2A Champs

Metro Christian got behind Washington early by a field goal, but dominated the rest of the game, which was not as close as the score suggests.

The Patriots (11-2) got the go-ahead touchdown at the end of the first quarter with a seven-yard TD pass from sophomore quarterback Kirk Francis to Breck Nauman.

Metro raced to a 28-10 advantage at halftime and was up 34-10 in the third quarter before the Warriors put up some points in the last two quarters.

Metro was able to celebrate winning a gold ball for the second straight year.

"It was great (to win state for a second straight year)," senior linebacker Cade Gibson said. "Not knowing if we were going to play this year and be able to make it all the way, this was about as good as it can get. So it was wonderful."

"We were in control pretty much the whole game, except the first two drives," Gibson said. "We made a few mistakes and had a couple of penalties late in the game, but other than that, we had pretty much won. We played an almost-perfect game."

Gibson was the key defensive player of the game with 24 tackles, with 10 solo, 7 1/2 for loss of yardage.

"I couldn't have done it without everybody else," Gibson said. "I

came in there knowing it was my last high school game and I was going to try to take advantage of every opportunity I got. With the help of great play calling, it set me up for the right places to be successful."

Francis and teammate wide receiver Junior Sampson impacted the offense with incredible numbers. Francis threw for five touchdowns and 367 yards on 29-of-44 attempts. Sampson caught eight passes for 144 yards and two TDs. "They were quite the duo on offense," Gibson said. "It felt like they couldn't miss. Kirk was on the money with every pass he threw and Junior was hauling in huge plays, one after another. I'm really proud of them."

Gibson is also excited about the future of Metro football.

"They're going to be really good," Gibson said. "I'm going to be excited to come watch them play these next couple of years. We have a great team and a lot of talent that can do great things."



Photo Courtesy of Wallace Clark

**PATRIOT GOLD:** Metro Christian linebacker Cade Gibson holds the gold ball after the Patriots won its second straight state football title in Class 2A.

# Lincoln Christian Celebrates Volleyball Crown

By MIKE MOGUIN  
GTR Sports Writer

Defensive specialist Abby Cunningham has been a force for Lincoln Christian volleyball since starting her freshman year. Her contributions helped her team win a third straight state championship back in October in Moore.

Lincoln Christian won the title at the Class 4A level for the second straight year. Its 2018 championship was in Class 3A.

The Lady Bulldogs won the 2020 title by sweeping Christian Heritage in three sets. "It was really special," Cunningham said. "It was awesome because we had so many seniors and the way we won, like no one can look back on that game and feel like they didn't do their all to get their best. I feel like we all played so clean and cohesive that it was just a great way for all seven of us to go out."

Cunningham, who was named Pinnacle All-Conference and All-State this season, is also committed to play collegiately at Division-II Seattle Pacific, said her team never saw victory clinched until the match was completely done.

"We never realized until the last point, because for the past two years there were such crazy games," Cunningham said. "We would be up, then all of a sudden we would be down and we thought we had it in the bag. All of us were in the mindset that it's not over until it's over. I think it was really when that last ball dropped, it was like 'oh my gosh, we just did this again.'"

Other senior standouts who graduate for Lincoln Christian are outside hitters Micah Clayton and Hope Keitner. Both also made Pinnacle All-Conference. Keitner was also a captain who made All-State. Clayton is committed to Southwest Baptist to play basketball.

The rest of the seniors are middle hitter Bayleigh Smith, along with defensive specialists Raena Maerick, Eva Trompler and Naya Ross.

The most challenging aspect going into the final, Cunningham said, was knowing that this would be the last time this senior class would be playing together.

"That was the hardest part, rather than the game itself was the mental aspect," she said. "It was like this is the last time we're going to do this."

Most challenging moment for Lincoln Christian this season came in late September, when the Lady Bulldogs got a big win against Jenks, then followed up with a loss to NOAH.

"Because we were so overwhelmed by the fact that we beat that team and it was such a hard game, that after that we got comfortable a little bit, it was a wake-up call," Cunningham said. "We realized that just because we beat (Jenks) that we can't get comfortable and settle in. So at mid-season, we hit a rough patch of eye-opening games where we really need to keep going, keep pushing."

They did and it paid off.

## Private School Quick Hits

Bishop Kelley and Victory Chris-



Courtesy Lincoln Christian Athletics

**CHAMPIONS:** The Lincoln Christian volleyball team celebrates winning the 4A state championship in October.

tian also won state titles in their respective classes: Bishop Kelley beat Mustang, 3-2 (25-21, 25-16, 18-25, 25-27, 15-13) in the Class 6A championship final. It was Kelley's second in three years and 19th since 1989.

Victory Christian won a fourth consecutive title by taking the Class 5A championship by sweeping Oklahoma City Mt. St. Mary's in three sets (25-18, 27-25, 25-17). It's titles in 2017 and 2019 also came in 5A, while its 2018 title came in Class 4A.

Bishop Kelley won the Class 5A state championship for a fourth straight year back on Nov. 4 in Edmond with 70 points. Noble was runner-up with 86 points. Highest finisher was senior Liz Campbell, who took fifth with a time of 19:45.65. Behind her was junior Ella Eureste (sixth, 19:50.51), who

was the individual state champion in 2018 and 2019.

Regent Prep won its fourth state championship in its athletic history as it captured both the team and individual championships in Class 3A girls' cross country back on Nov. 4 in Edmond. Senior Natalie Cleveland won the meet with

a time of 12:08.36. Freshman Micah Dickens also contributed with a runner-up finish with a time of 12:12.21. The Lady Rams won the team championship with 104 points. Cascia Hall was second with 109 points. Regent's other state titles came in volleyball (2014) and boys' golf (2018, 2019).



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# Marcia Manhart Remembered at Philbrook

*Susan Green Named Inaugural Marcia Manhart Associate Curator of Contemporary Art & Design*

Marcia Manhart (1943-2020) was a beloved and long-tenured director of Philbrook, serving the institution for 40 years before retiring in 2003. Before her passing in March of 2020, The Judith and Jean Pape Adams Foundation created an endowment supporting a new curatorial position in her honor. Susan Green, most recently Philbrook's Associate Curator of Special Collections, Archives, and Research, is the inaugural Marcia Manhart Endowed Associate Curator of Contemporary Art & Design.

"We are honored to recognize and celebrate the legacy of long-time Philbrook Director Marcia Manhart through the support of this new, and critically important curatorial position," said Philbrook President and CEO Scott Stulen. "Susan Green's deep knowledge and reverence of Philbrook's history, love of our local arts com-

munity and passion for learning perfectly embodies Marcia's spirit and the belief in the transformative power of art."

This exciting and focus-expanding position is dedicated to building engagement with and support for the local and regional artist community. In this capacity, Green will regularly rethink and reinstall permanent collection galleries along with developing interpretive materials related to contemporary art and design.

"I grew up in Tulsa. Visiting Philbrook was always a greatly anticipated pleasure," she says. "Even then, without understanding what it really meant, I knew that Marcia Manhart ran Philbrook. I understood that a strong and creative woman was in charge, and her passion and vision made Philbrook the place that was so incredibly special. Her legacy of devotion to our community, to the arts, and to Philbrook continues today. It is an extraordinary privilege to hold a position named in her honor."

Green's first curatorial project working within this new capacity will be the special photography exhibition, Views of Greenwood (March 2021). This exhibition is one component of the Museum's planned programing commemorating the centennial of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.

"I had the pleasure and honor to serve as board chair of Philbrook during Marcia Manhart's final year at the Museum," said Roxana Lorton. "We were in the final stages of a \$20 million fundraising campaign to complete major



**TALENTED LEGACY:** Susan Green follows Marcia Manhart's contributions at Tulsa Philbrook Museum of Art.

renovations of the gardens and villa along with raising funds for a three-year Exhibition Series. Marcia was such an intelligent person and talented-creative artist. Her passion in life was Philbrook. That passion made my job as chair one of the highlights of my life."

**About Philbrook Museum of Art**

The Philbrook Museum of Art is committed to being Tulsa's most welcoming and engaging cultural institution. Through bold action and strategic investment, Philbrook creates a space for new ideas, diverse stories and perspectives, and social connection. Housed in the former midtown home (built 1927) of Genevieve and Waite Phillips, the Philbrook collection has grown to over 14,500 objects with a focus on American, Native American, and European art. Philbrook Museum of Art opened on



**MAGNIFICANT MUSEUM:** Home of great art and beautiful grounds, Philbrook is located at 2727 S. Rockford Road in Tulsa.

October 25, 1939, with the goal of being an institution "housing, preserving, and displaying therein works of art, literature, relics and curios, including those representative of the native North American

Peoples." Serving over 160,000 visitors annually, Philbrook shines a light on Tulsa's storied and complex past while building a diverse and creative vision of the city's future.

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**WINTER WONDERLAND:** Gathering Place is home to year-round fun and activities. Winter Wonderland is always a highlight. This past season's event Winter Wonderland was located at and around the ONEOK Boathouse and QuikTrip Great Lawn with socially spaced zones. Guests walked along the pathways experiencing thousands of twinkling lights, strolling entertainment, and a holiday market with delicious food and seasonal gifts from local small business owners, all located in open, socially distanced areas of the Park.

GTR Media Group photo

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# University Club Tower a Unique Tulsa Landmark

## 1960s Building is Region's Only Totally Round High-Rise Structure

Of the many high-rise structures in Tulsa, there is only one totally round building: University Club Tower. This building was the brainchild of real estate developer Ainsley Perrault and a group of other investors. It was conceived in the early 1960s. The original architects were Jack Butz and V.M. Piland. They designed the building on computer. It was considered the first CAD (computer aided design) produced project in Oklahoma. The repetitive circular flat slab design allowed for rapidly produced construction documents. This economy carried through into a low construction cost of \$7 million.

In 1962, twin circular high-rise apartment buildings opened in Chicago. Nicknamed the "Corn Cobb Towers", these buildings

combined parking garages on the lower levels and pie shaped apartments on the floors above while located on Chicago's downtown river. The Marina Towers, as they were formally called, were a big influence on the University Club Tower design. The Tulsa project was begun in 1964 but stood as an unfinished skeleton on Tulsa's urban skyline for several years due to what is assumed were financing issues. The building was finally opened in 1968.

Located at 1722 S. Carson Ave. in one of Tulsa's early residential areas (a half block from my great-grandparents, the A.J. Rudd's house), the University Club Tower is 377 feet tall, it contains ground floor lobbies, staff office space, a tenant lounge /

reception room and other auxiliary spaces, and five floors of covered parking. Above are twenty-three floors of one, two, and three-bedroom apartments of 700 to 1,900 square feet. Of course, each unit is pie shaped and serviced by a central core which contains fire stairs, elevators, and mechanical/janitorial closets. Most units have an exterior balcony which is achieved by an open recess flush within the circular shaft of the building. The top floor originally accommodated a radio station and a private club for the alumni of the University of Tulsa. Hence the name: University Club Tower.

The exterior site of the UCT includes various surface amenities such as a swimming pool, tennis courts, and generous guest parking. The building skin is a combination of aluminum curtain wall and metal porcelain panels in a light yellow-green color. Views of the Arkansas River and downtown Tulsa are dramatic and outstanding.

Is it possible that another round high-rise building will be built in Tulsa in the future? Only time will tell. As land and premium views become more and more scarce, it is certainly possible.

### On Architecture



By ROGER COFFEY, AIA



STANDING TALL: Tulsa's University Club Tower building is located at 1722 S. Carson Ave. Built in the mid-1960s, the circular building gives the beautiful Tulsa skyline a unique look.

# Chuck Lamson, Longtime Leader of the Tulsa Drillers, Announced as New CEO of the Tulsa Botanic Garden

Chuck Lamson, best known for his long tenure with the Tulsa Drillers, has been announced as the new chief executive officer of the Tulsa Botanic Garden.

"We are thrilled to announce that Chuck is joining our staff. He is known to be a visionary and a sheer force within our community. We welcome his energy and drive in bringing Tulsa Botanic Garden's vision to fruition," said Janice Chevaillier, chair of the non-profit's board of directors.

Lamson's career at the Tulsa Drillers began in 1979 as a player. His 30-year front office career started as a groundskeeper and culminated as president and majority owner. He was instrumental in helping to get ONEOK Field built in downtown Tulsa in 2010. He sold his interest in the team at the end of that year.

"The Tulsa Botanic Garden is a great community asset. I am excited about the opportunity to continue the vision of the founders in making the Garden a world-class attraction for Tulsa and the sur-

rounding region," Lamson commented.

Since 2011, Lamson has served as president of Southpaw Sports Consulting, which works with buyers and sellers of minor league baseball franchises across the country. Also, he currently is an Executive in Residence at the University of Tulsa, where he oversees all marketing and management internships at the Collins College of Business as well as teaching sports management classes.

The Botanic Garden is developing on 170-acres northwest of downtown Tulsa with a master plan including a total of 60 acres of gardens planned and 100 acres of native prairie and forest. In 2015, the first garden from the master plan, the A.R. and Marylouise Tandy Floral Terraces was opened. The following May, a two-acre Children's Discovery Garden opened. The J.E. and L.E. Mabee Grange, a 2,400 square-foot building for Garden activities as well as private events, was completed in late 2017.

The Garden recently announced plans for the Bumgarner Lotus Pool, a water garden which is slated to go under construction in early 2021.

The Botanic Garden hosts thousands of visitors each year for educational programming and seasonal events including the holiday festival Garden of Lights, Tulsa Botanic BLOOMS, one of the largest spring bulb displays in the region, and Autumn in the Garden.

### About the Tulsa Botanic Garden

Tulsa Botanic Garden is an all-season oasis blooming in the Osage Hills northwest of Tulsa. The A.R. and Marylouise Tandy Floral Terraces feature over 8,000 plants with seasonal beds, beautiful art deco designs and water features, and a spectacular spring display of over 100,000 bulbs. The Children's Discovery Garden is a wonderland of interactive fun for the whole family including the iconic Spring Giant, spitting animal fountains, carnivorous plants,



CHUCK LAMSON

Sensory Walk, whirligigs, and the Tree Fort where the canopy provides a natural backdrop for storytelling and imaginative play. The Lakeside Promenade gracefully encompasses a seven-acre lake, and the Cross Timbers Trail provides a 1.5 mile hike through the trees. Tulsa Botanic Garden is a

501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to promote the beauty and importance of plants and nature to create a more sustainable and harmonious world. The Garden is located at 3900 Tulsa Botanic Drive, Tulsa, 74127. For more information, call 918-289-0330 or visit tulsabotanic.org.

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THE ECONOMY

# Tulsa-Based Video Production Company Believes Everybody Has a Story to Tell

## Innovative Storyteller Productions Documents Histories

By CHARLES COLEMAN  
Contributing Writer

"I'm always looking for the untold story," says documentary filmmaker Beth Turner. That search led Turner and her husband to launch Storyteller Productions in 2018.

The Tulsa-based video production company specializes in personal history, capturing people's memoirs on camera and turning them into slick, professional documentaries.

"When someone's famous, we get to see their story told in crisp HD with clean audio and graphics," explains Turner. "What about everyday people? I think everyone's story is worthy of that level of production."

Turner says one of her most prized possessions is a video of her late grandmother, shot on grainy, VHS video in the 1980s. "Having her voice and laughter after she was gone was such a treasure," says Turner. "I want everyone to have that kind of treasure."

While valuable, Turner knows that a little bit of technical skill and knowledge could have vastly improved the video of her grandmother. "I know they started the interview at 12:34 because the

time code covers her forehead."

Before starting Storyteller Productions, Turner, a graduate of the University of Arkansas' documentary film program, served as video producer for the Union School district. "I worked with alumni at Union a lot and I really enjoyed getting to know people and learn their stories," recalls Turner. A video project for the class of 1958 reunion particularly piqued Turner's interest. "Learning that history and seeing how their successes led to where Union is in the present was an eye opener."

In 2017, Turner began a side project that would grow in scope into what is now a feature-length documentary titled, "Randy Crouch: Survival of the Fiddlist," which is currently in post production. As that project grew, Turner realized she was making a film and, therefore, needed to create a production company. "Originally, Storyteller Productions was created just for the Randy Crouch documentary," explains Turner. "But then we started getting little jobs here and there until I eventually had more work than time."

That led to what Turner says was a difficult decision to leave her job at Union. "I loved Union," says Turner, "so it was really

tough to leave. But I'm so excited about the work I'm doing now. Hearing people's stories has given me such a better understanding of Tulsa's history."

While posterity has been the driving force behind Storyteller's business plan, the process of interviewing clients to get their stories has revealed some unexpected benefits, especially to the company's older clientele. "Reliving your favorite memories brings joy to the present that you didn't know was missing," says Turner. "I've seen clients become mentally stronger over the course of an interview. They become more present, more engaged."

Serving an older clientele has presented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Turner says that Storyteller Productions lost a significant amount of work in 2020 due to safety concerns, but she chooses to focus on the positive and use 2020 as a learning experience. "This pandemic taught me how to do this work more safely, now and in the future," says Turner. She also believes the pandemic makes Storyteller's service more poignant than ever. "We've lost so many of our loved ones to COVID. I feel like we are all mourning together,



Courtesy Storyteller Productions, LLC

**ON SET:** Beth Turner of Storyteller Productions interviews a client at his home in 2019. Storyteller specializes in telling individual's stories with top-level production value.

and I feel passionate about recording our stories while we can. We just aren't promised tomorrow."

That increased sense of urgency might not compel everyone to green light their own personal documentary, but Turner says the company can work with a wide range of budgets and needs. "Some people just want their old photos scanned and retouched or their home movies digitized," says Turner. "That can be the first step in a larger production, but if not, it's still important to capture those keepsakes in digital format before they fade and deteriorate."

Turner certainly has a passion for posterity, but it's her passion for teaching that shapes Storyteller's long-term goals. "I would like to connect and build partnerships be-


tween retirement centers, alumni groups and educational systems to provide hands-on training for young people to learn, not just the technical skillset, but the heart behind what I do," explains Turner. "That way, elders can pass on their wisdom to the younger generation, and the next generation will better appreciate where we are today, and carry that into our future."

For now, Turner feels fortunate to be where she is. "If COVID has taught me one thing it's appreciation for the people I love," says Turner. "Seeing the faces of our loved ones is precious. This work builds on that."


To learn more about Storyteller Productions, visit [storytellerproductionsllc.com](http://storytellerproductionsllc.com) or call 918-346-3230.

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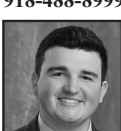
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# A Salute to America's Energy Workforce



As we begin 2021, I believe it is fitting that we salute America's energy workforce. It amazes me that every time I need to have lights turned on in my home, air conditioning or heating running, gasoline in my tank for travels, check emails on my i-phone and many other daily uses and needs, there are men and women working around the clock so that I can have access to these things. Using petroleum-based products, such as medicines, toothbrushes, toothpaste, clothes, hair brushes, eyeglasses and all the hundreds and thousands of petroleum based products, every person in the United States is touched by America's energy.

America's Energy, I include an energy prayer that reflects on the energy workforce. "A decade ago, Nancy Huff of Broken Arrow, met then-Secretary of State Colin Powell at the National Prayer Breakfast. During their meeting, Secretary Powell asked Nancy to pray for Oklahoma to produce more oil because he believed our country needed that oil. When Nancy returned to Oklahoma



By MARK A. STANSBERRY

from Washington, D.C., she became active in The Energy Advocates and wrote a special book of prayers for the oil and gas industry. She prayed with a group every Thursday night for Oklahoma, the U.S., and the industry. I share with you one of those energy prayers: "Father, I come to you and I ask protection for every drilling site, pipeline, refinery, production site, oil truck, tanker, or any other means of obtaining and transporting oil in the United States. Protect all

those who work in the industry, and give them safety and wisdom about every potentially dangerous situation. I ask, as the oil and gas industry in this country grows, that the environment would be protected. I ask for the development of new technology that will enable those in the energy industry to drill efficiently while protecting the environment. Thank you for your hand of safety on the industry and the land that has helped to make the country great. Amen."

According to a recent report, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) employs more than 4,600 Veterans. In 2020, one in every three new DOE hires has been a veteran, and DOE consistently receives "exemplary" ratings from the Interagency Council on Veterans Employment.

What will the workforce look like post COVID-19? A work-

force will be needed to build, adapt, provide technology and innovation in the energy sector, involving power generation, transportation, and other uses. The oil and gas industry will continue to lead the way in providing jobs and opportunities.

All forms of energy, which include solar and wind, will all play a pivotal role. The energy revolution is moving forward. The energy workforce is needed more than ever as we strive for energy efficiency and environmental preservation. Together we can create a strong energy future for America. Thank you to each worker in the American energy industry!

America needs America's energy! Join our effort by visiting Facebook: National Energy Talk.

Mark A. Stansberry is Chairman of the GTD Group, an award-winning author and energy advocate.

## Rodger Tucker Named 2020 HBA Spirit Winner

### Homebuilder Recognized for New Home Construction

In 1989, the Home Builders Association of Greater Tulsa began honoring builders who made the best use of HBA Associate member companies to complete their homes. The Spirit Award is one of the HBA of Greater Tulsa's most prestigious awards symbolizing the relationship between contractor and subcontractors, emphasizing how important this relationship is when constructing a home and using the most qualified craftsmen and suppliers.

Each year, many worthy builder companies enter projects for award consideration which are analyzed by an accounting firm to determine the greatest percentage of work by HBA Associate members involved in project completion.

Rodger Tucker, CGP, owner of Cobblestone Homes, was selected as this year's Spirit Award recipient in recognition of his new home construction which was also selected as the VIP location at the 2020 Greater Tulsa Parade of Homes.

The home was built to appear much larger due to effective and efficient space planning which incorporated an open floorplan, high ceilings, enhanced lighting, and luxury amenities in every room. Several rooms in the home were designed for multi-purpose use to accommodate the homeowner's individual needs and circumstances, and the outdoor living space is a sanctuary unto itself. Rodger Tucker utilized 62 HBA Associate members in the project's completion demonstrating his commitment to the collaborative nature of the home building industry.

Tucker has served as a HBA board of directors member for nearly a decade. He has actively been engaged as Home & Garden Show committee member for almost 20 years and has been a participating builder in the Greater Tulsa Parade of Homes for more than 10 years. Tucker's commitment to the residential construction industry is demonstrated

by financial support of the Total Resource Campaign, the HBA's largest sponsorship drive, and by generous contributions to the HBA Charitable Foundation, funding housing and workforce development initiatives throughout the community.

Since 1976, Tucker has specialized in quality, new home construction. Every home is built to stringent Energy Star standards that typically make them 50-60% more efficient than standard homes. Personalized service is a priority to Cobblestone Homes. As company president, Tucker works directly with his customers throughout every stage of the building process - from concept planning to final completion. Cobblestone Homes may currently be found in Wind River Crossing, Berwick South, and Wood Hollow Estates subdivisions.

A Cobblestone Homes representative can be reached at 918-232-1611 or cobblestonehomes@cox.net.



PRESTIGIOUS AWARD: Rodger Tucker, left, owner of Cobblestone Homes, holds his HBA Spirit Award as he is congratulated by Mike Fournier, 2020 HBA president.

## TulsaGo to Host 100 Local Business Market

TulsaGo, an up-and-coming dynamism of interactive projects that focus on the virtue of Tulsa, will launch its first project in March: TulsaGo Market. This one-day event allows small local businesses the opportunity to showcase their products to a widespread audience that supports buying locally made and traded products. In celebration of

this year's premier event, the first 100 attendees will receive a free TulsaGo Market shopping tote bag.

Encompassing a diverse group of merchants from various trades and backgrounds, TulsaGo Market seeks to present a well-balanced event that offers local food, clothing, accessories, jewelry, gifts, novelties, and art. To provide an

equal opportunity to all made in Tulsa brands, the marketplace development team has created an integrated model that incorporates both brick-and-mortar and home-based businesses into the event. Not only does this contribute to the overall trade mix, but it also gives home-based businesses a distinctive opportunity to generate equity for their brand.

The 2021 TulsaGo Market event will take place on Saturday, March 20 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Central Park Hall at Expo Square. Admission is free and open to the public. Special edition reusable TulsaGo Market shopping totes can be purchased upon entry for \$5.

For more information, visit [tulsa-gomarket.com](http://tulsa-gomarket.com).

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# Rodrigo Rojas Named Mayor Bynum's Office Deputy Chief of Staff

Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum has named Rodrigo Rojas as his Deputy Chief of Staff effective Jan. 19. Rojas will serve in Mayor Bynum's cabinet with a focus on community development and engagement.



RODRIGO ROJAS

Rojas most recently served as the Director of Community Relations at Gathering Place where he provided leadership and coordination for their community-based strategies, communications, partnerships and engagement efforts.

"Rodrigo has done so much for the Tulsa community and is well respected among his peers. I am incredibly grateful he has chosen to join our team and lead community development projects in underserved communities, continue the work of our New Tulsans strategy and develop partnerships to better serve Tulsans," Mayor Bynum said.

Rojas has 10 years of experience in community relations, public relations and marketing and has served in leadership roles such as Director of Development and Communications at Teach For America and Director of Operations at La Semana, Oklahoma's Spanish-English Newspaper. He is also the founder of Festival Americas, a free multicultural festival that celebrates Tulsa's Hispanic community and inspires the next generation of leaders through college scholarships.

Rojas has a passion for community service and developing partnerships to help build thriving communities while celebrating diverse cultures. He said he is excited to bring that passion for service to City Hall.

"I am extremely honored to join Mayor Bynum's team and serve the people of Tulsa," Rojas said. "I am eager to work alongside a dynamic team that strives to create opportunity and growth for all Tulsans and its communities."

Rojas was born in Argentina and raised in Tulsa. He holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Arkansas in Marketing Management and currently serves as a trustee for South Tulsa Community House and as the Vice President for the Hispanic American Foundation. Rojas, his wife and twin boys are all proud to call Tulsa home.

## BUSINESS & PEOPLE NOTES

**Housing Solutions**, the lead agency for Tulsa's Continuum of Care which focuses on housing and homelessness, has announced **Becky Gligo** as Executive Director of the organization. Gligo has served as interim Executive Director since February of 2020.



GLIGO

"When Becky came to Tulsa in 2018 she brought years of experience and success in housing policy and homelessness prevention to our community," said A Way Home for Tulsa (AWH4T) Leadership Council Chair, Jeff Hall, "She's the perfect person to lead our A Way Home for Tulsa strategic plan at the helm of our lead organization, Housing Solutions."

Gligo spent the past 18 months as the City of Tulsa's first housing policy director; while there she has worked with a diverse advisory board to develop the City-wide Affordable Housing Strategy that will guide the city's housing work for the next four years, established the city's first Affordable Housing Trust Fund and launched Build Tulsa and other inclusive development initiatives.

"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve on Mayor Bynum's team," said Gligo. "I am proud of the Affordable Housing Strategy and am excited for the ongoing impact it will have on Tulsa. Going forward, I will be focusing on homelessness and eviction prevention as the executive director of Housing Solutions. The solution to homelessness is housing and the ongoing collaboration between the City of Tulsa and Housing Solutions will allow us to achieve the goals of the A Way Home for Tulsa strategic plan to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring."

In February of 2020, year AWH4T completed strategic planning and a governance restructure. As a result, Gligo was selected as the interim executive director of Housing Solutions, the newly incorporated lead organization. The board of directors intended to conduct a national search for the new director but voted to hire Gligo full time during a board meeting in November.

"We want the best person for this crucial role," said Becky Frank, chair of the Housing Solutions Board. "As we began the process for the national search, we realized the perfect person was right under our noses. We're glad that Becky will be bringing her skills and strategy to our team full time."

Housing Solutions is a non-profit organization dedicated to building systems that make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. It is the lead agency for the Tulsa County HUD funded Continuum of Care (CoC) and as such, oversees and leads the implementation of Tulsa's housing and homelessness strategic plan.

**Hall Estill**, Oklahoma's leading law firm, announces that **Isaac B. Helmerich** has been elected a Shareholder in the Tulsa office and **Jared R. Ford** has been elected a Shareholder in the Oklahoma City office.



HELMERICH



FORD

"The selection and appointment of shareholders within Hall Estill is met with great anticipation," said Mike Cooke, managing partner. "Isaac and Jared have earned this status through their commitment and care for our clients and their embodiment of our core values."

Helmerich joined Hall Estill in 2018 and represents clients in the areas of business and corporate law, estate planning, commercial transactions, complex commercial litigation and insurance company liquidations. He began his career at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce before moving to the private sector.

Helmerich earned his J.D. from the University of Oklahoma College of Law and has been named a Best Lawyers: One to Watch for Corporate Law. He is active in the Tulsa community and currently serves on the board of directors for the Tulsa Region of Junior Achievement of Oklahoma.

Ford joined Hall Estill in 2017 and represents clients in the areas of commercial real estate, working capital, asset-based and acquisition financing, complex business transactions, and general real property law with a particular emphasis on the energy sector.

Ford earned his J.D. from the University of Oklahoma College of Law. He is a member of the Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico Bar Associations and is an active participant in the Oklahoma City chapters of the Urban Land Institute and Commercial Real Estate Council.

Hall Estill is a full-service business law firm with locations in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Denver and NW Arkansas. Hall Estill attorneys represent clients in 70 Practice Areas. More than 150 top lawyers and legal professionals represent clients in matters at the local, national and international level. For more information, visit [hallestill.com](http://hallestill.com)

The **Red Cross Northeast Oklahoma Board Chapter** announces the appointment of **Tralynna Sherrill Scott** to its board of directors.



SCOTT

"Now more than ever, the necessity for organizations that are ready and willing to help others in times of need is evident," said Scott. "No organization does this better than the Red Cross. Whether it be a natural disaster or a global pandemic, the Red Cross is always there to help prevent and relieve suffering around the world. I am excited to join this talented team of volunteers and employees in hopes that I too can provide assistance during a time when we all need a helping hand."

Scott was nominated to serve in the cabinet-level position of Cherokee Nation Treasurer by Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. and was unanimously confirmed by the Council of the Cherokee Nation in 2019. In this role, she oversees Cherokee Nation's \$1.5 billion annual budget as well as a financial resources staff of more than 100 employees.

Prior to government service, Scott served Cherokee Nation Businesses for more than 14 years, most recently as director of corporate tax, where she was responsible for all aspects of corporate taxation within CNB and its 48 subsidiaries, which generates more than \$1.4 billion in revenue and conducts business in all 50 U.S. states and 26 countries.

At CNB, Scott held various positions including investment analyst, where she evaluated and presented growth and diversification opportunities. She also served as in-house council focused on corporate and tribal taxation, employment law, tribal gaming protections and compliance issues.

While working full-time with CNB, Scott jointly earned her Juris Doctor and a master's degree in taxation from the University of Tulsa. Prior to her work at Cherokee Nation, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Notre Dame. In her free time, Scott enjoys spending time with her two daughters and husband.

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**A-LIST** 2018

# B.A. EDC Launches Career & Workforce Center

The Broken Arrow Economic Development Corporation (BAEDC) has launched a new program designed to provide physical and virtual space for connecting businesses and talent in Broken Arrow.

The BA Career & Workforce Center, located at the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce, provides local workforce intake, assessment and career counseling and referrals to support local citizens and displaced workers searching for jobs.

Funded by the City of Broken Arrow and Tulsa County CARES, the center has created a shared workspace to host various education and workforce-related orga-

nizations. Each partner organization provides quality services to connect participants with career opportunities and advancement. To serve as a one-stop-shop, it is equipped with a lab space where job-seekers can access supervised computer and video equipment to assist with:

- Job Search
- Remote Career Counseling
- Soft Skill Training
- Browse Open Positions
- Career Assessment
- Referral for Training and Upskilling

"This was an opportunity for our city to join forces with Tulsa

County to address the workforce needs of our businesses and also help our citizens find the employment they need to sustain their families," said City Manager, Michael Spurgeon.

"We are thrilled to put these dollars to work for Tulsa County businesses," said Tulsa County Commissioner Stan Sallee. "The economic health of Tulsa County is vital for recovery and putting people to work in quality jobs is imperative."

"We look forward to providing our employers with the talent they need to address this changing economy," said President and CEO of the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce Jennifer Conway.



Courtesy photo

**CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION:** Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Jennifer Conway holds the Work in BA Certificate of Appreciation with Tulsa County Commissioner Stan Sallee.

# HollyFrontier Kicked Off Giving Season with Iron Gate

Seven hundred Tulsa families had a happier holiday thanks to HollyFrontier Tulsa. The refinery spread holiday cheer by donating \$15,000 to Iron Gate. The gift provided enough groceries to feed 700 Tulsa families, which was 50% of Iron Gate's food pantry budget for December.

"This is one of those calls you never expect to get, but you're so thrilled when you do," said Iron Gate's Executive Director Carrie Vesely Henderson. "I was just tallying the bills for our grocery program, when I got this call from HollyFrontier Tulsa. I mean it was right on time."

In addition, the Tulsa refinery employees put together 2,500 kid-friendly packs filled with healthy snacks for Iron Gate's youngest guests. The agency gave one to every child who took part in the daily community meal, and every parent who visited the grocery pantry received one for each child in their home. Iron Gate distributed nearly 12,000 kids packs this past season.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially hard on our most vulnerable families and that is why we partnered with Iron Gate," said Skipp Kistler, vice president and refinery manager, HollyFrontier Tulsa. "We wanted to bring a ray of hope to people in need this holiday season, beyond our regular contributions to local causes. This year, we dug deeper. Along with our employees, we decided to donate the funds we had set aside for our holiday activities."

### Hunger Doesn't Take a Break

Since the pandemic struck, demand for food assistance has

grown exponentially. As Tulsa's largest stand-alone soup kitchen and grocery pantry, Iron Gate is providing grocery assistance for 90% more households than last year.

"We continue to see the line for groceries stretch down the block," Henderson said. "I check-in every family that comes to us for groceries and every week there are new faces."

As demand has increased, so have costs. Iron Gate is purchasing more food to make sure every household has the basics covered. Additionally, Iron Gate has temporarily suspended its volunteer program to prioritize the health and safety of everyone involved, cutting its workforce in half. That means the organization is buying more food to serve more people, with less staff who are working more hours.

"Iron Gate really prides itself on the fact that we have served every day of this pandemic without interruption," Henderson continued. "But that's only possible because of the generosity of our supporters and corporate friends, like HollyFrontier."

### About Iron Gate

Iron Gate is Tulsa's largest stand-alone soup kitchen and grocery pantry. Iron Gate has served throughout the Coronavirus pandemic without interruption.

The organization pivoted to a carry-out meal every morning from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and hosts a drive-through, low-contact grocery pantry three times a week.

Iron Gate has served 251,667 meals, provided emergency groceries to 16,015 Tulsa households,



GTR Media Group photo

**BENEVOLENT PRESENTATION:** HollyFrontier Tulsa's Vice President Skipp Kistler, right, presents the \$15,000 check to Iron Gate Executive Director Carrie Vesely Henderson

and distributed 480,450 pounds of groceries so far this year.

Iron Gate is providing groceries to 90% more families than this time last year. Iron Gate was founded in 1978 and became an independent 501c3 nonprofit in 1984. It moved into its new building on Archer in late August of 2019. The new six-million-dollar facility features an expanded dining room, covered patio, and a dedicated grocery pantry.

### About HollyFrontier

HollyFrontier Corp., headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is an independent petroleum refiner and marketer that produces high value light products such as gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel and other specialty products.

HollyFrontier owns and operates refineries in Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Utah and markets its refined products principally in the Southwest U.S., the Rocky Mountains extending into the Pacific Northwest and in other neighboring Plains states. In addition, HollyFrontier produces base oils and other specialized lubricants in the U.S., Canada and the Netherlands, and exports products to more than 80 countries.



GTR Media Group photo

**COFFEE BUNKER DONATIONS:** Tulsa's Coffee Bunker is trying to outfit veterans who will be on the street this winter because the shelters have limited capacity. In December Humana Health was at the Bunker delivering 50 sleeping bags, 25 tents, and other winter gear. In January veterans were invited to come to the Bunker and receive the items. Located at 6365 E. 41st St., the 3,500 square foot facility is set up for veterans and their families to get together, use computers, access Wi-Fi, enjoy games and group activities, watch TV or movies and just get together.

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# Broken Arrow Names Norman Stephens Assistant City Manager of Administration

Norman Stephens, the city's current economic development manager and retired deputy chief of police, has been promoted by City Manager Michael Spurgeon to the position of assistant city manager of administration. In his new role, Stephens will oversee the administrative division of the organization, which includes the Finance, Maintenance Services, Human Resources, City Clerk, Information Technology and Economic Development departments.

"I look forward to this wonderful opportunity" Stephens said. "Serving the citizens of Broken Arrow has been my passion for the last 37 years."

Stephens' career with the city began in 1984, working in the Police Department. After 27 years with the agency, Stephens retired as deputy chief of police and began

working as economic development manager for the city in 2011.

Stephens holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Northeastern State University. He also is a graduate of the 171st Class of the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Va.

As economic development manager, Stephens is responsible for numerous projects that have brought millions of dollars to Broken Arrow. This includes planning and implementation of the award-winning Rose District, bringing the Warren Theater to the Shoppes at Aspen Creek and continued involvement in the redevelopment effort of New Orleans Square. Stephens has recruited and negotiated economic development agreements for retail, restaurants, and multifamily housing that increased growth in the Rose District by \$40 million.

"Norm is an experienced servant-leader with extremely valuable organizational knowledge and someone who is well respected within the community," said Spurgeon. "The relationships and respect he has built over his career will serve our citizens, businesses, and the administration division of the organization very well."

Stephens' appointment as assistant city manager of administration is effective Feb. 1. He replaces long-time employee Russell Gale, who announced his retirement in late 2020.

"Norm is a terrific public servant and will continue to be highly-regarded within Broken Arrow in this new position," said Mayor Craig Thurmond. "I've never had anything but the highest respect for Norm, from his time with the Police Department and his role in economic development. On behalf of the City



Courtesy photo

**IN SERVICE:** Norman Stephens has served Broken Arrow for more than three decades.

Council, we look forward to working with him in a new capacity."

"Filling the shoes of someone like Russell Gale is a tremendous task," Spurgeon said. "Russell has been with the organization for over 40 years and is well-respected with-

in the community and will surely be missed. However, I have no doubt that Norm is ready to go and will do an outstanding job in his new role."

The city will begin recruiting for an economic development manager immediately.

# Broken Arrow Public Schools Educators to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine on Higher Priority

Educators from across the state, including Broken Arrow Public Schools, have been moved up in prioritization in the national vaccine rollout in order to better combat the COVID-19 virus.

All Pre-K-12 teachers and support staff now fall into Level Two of the distribution plan.

"We know our kids are struggling without being able to attend school in person," said Gov. Kevin Stitt. "Our teachers are so important to our children and to our state,

I know they battled through many challenges this year to change how they teach to try and make sure their students don't fall through the cracks. That's why I'm so proud to work with Commissioner Frye and the Oklahoma State Department of Health to prioritize our educators for the COVID-19 vaccine and help get our kids back in the classroom."

Increased vaccination priority for teachers coupled with the recent decision by the Centers for Disease Control to reduce quarantines to 10

or seven days under certain circumstances should give schools multiple tools to fight COVID-19 in the spring semester.

"In a semester where everyone was forced to shift paradigms and pivot at a moment's notice, our teachers have shown how much perseverance they possess and how much sacrifice they can make to keep our students learning in person," said Dr. Janet Vinson, superintendent of Broken Arrow Public Schools.

"They've gone above and beyond and stayed the course this school year, modifying lesson plans and straddling the line between distance and in-person learning—all while maintaining passion and a love for students. We continue to give the utmost praise and thanks to our teachers for staying the course, and this opportunity for them to choose to be immunized more quickly is a light at the end of the tunnel."

"Our Board of Education has been instrumental in supporting

our educators through this challenging semester—something we are so grateful for as a district. We also cannot express our gratitude enough to Gov. Stitt for making our educators a high priority in a long-fought battle during this pandemic."

In addition to moving teachers up in priority for the vaccine, the state health department continues to offer schools access to testing to provide frequent monitoring for COVID-19.



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