

Sooner Shorts

Innovation Hub



Photo provided

Remember high school shop? Now think what it would be like in an ultra-modern facility with cutting-edge, computer-enhanced tools and you will have a feel for OU's Innovation Hub, which opened in September. The hands-on facility was designed to foster the creation and implementation of ideas from OU students, faculty and staff. The hub's digital Fabrication Laboratory features 3-D printers, laser cutters, CNC milling machines, a woodshop and on-site experts. A data visualization zone utilizes virtual reality to take users into outer space or inside an atom. The collaboration zone has spaces for students to meet and work together on projects from woodworking to new technology-based businesses. For more information or to arrange a tour, visit www.ou.edu/innovationhub.html.

Suiting up for success

Nearly 700 OU students are putting their best foot forward as they step into the working world thanks to "Sooner Suit Up," the brainchild of OU College of Arts and Sciences staff member Sharon Alexander. The business apparel shopping spree is sponsored annually by JCPenney and other corporate and individual partners. OU staff members and local volunteers serve as personal shoppers to help students find the perfect career couture at a deep discount. "This is the first suit I have ever owned, and I can't tell you how much I appreciate it," wrote one participant. "Thank you so much for helping me look and feel like the business professional I hope to become."



Jawanza Bassue



Photo provided

Water, water everywhere

OU Professor David A. Sabatini, known as "the clean water guy" around campus, is the recipient of a national award for outstanding contributions in environmental engineering and science outreach to the global community. Sabatini, the David Ross Boyd Professor and Sun Oil Company Endowed Chair of Civil Engineering and Environmental Science in the Gallogly College of Engineering, is known internationally for his work with clean water projects. He received the Steven K. Dentel Association of Environmental Engineering and Science Professors Award for Global Outreach at the Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference in New Orleans in September. Sabatini, far right, works with his Ethiopian Ph.D. student, Teshome Lemma, and colleague Dr. Jim Chamberlain in the Rift Valley of Ethiopia.



Wendy Mutz

So much drama!

The Peggy Dow Helmerich School of Drama in the OU Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts has been named one of the top 10 Bachelor of Fine Arts theatre design and technology programs in the nation by the theatre blog, OnStage. Both private and public colleges and universities are included in the list, although OU is the only school in Oklahoma and the Big 12 to be selected. OnStage noted that the school's facilities include four fully equipped performance spaces and that the school's design degree serves undergraduate students interested in pursuing a career in scenic, costume or lighting design. OnStage also listed numerous places students and alumni have held internships or have been employed after graduation. Above: a scene from OU's production of "Let the Right One In."



Courtesy of U.S. Navy

Anchors Aweigh!

Five students from the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication are working with the U.S. Navy as part of a six-month-long research project monitoring and evaluating the social media and external media efforts for four aircraft carriers. In September, students Whitney Jones, Katie Bishop, Hayley Struck, Savannah Jung and Kate Stake met with public affairs officers from Commander Naval Air Force Atlantic in Norfolk, Va., and spent time aboard the USS George H.W. Bush to get a better understanding of the scope of the project. The goal is to provide a "best practices" report that all carriers can use to standardize and improve their performance in these areas.

OU RETENTION HIGHER THAN EVER

The University of Oklahoma has reached a milestone in academic success by achieving a 90 percent freshman-to-sophomore retention rate. Nine of every 10 students who were freshmen last fall returned to campus for the fall 2016 semester. Retention of first-year students and the graduation rate of those students are used as important measures of success in higher education.

"This is one of the highest academic achievements in the university's history," President David L. Boren said. "The entire university community has reason to celebrate this remarkable milestone for OU." The achievement is even more significant because the rate rose 4 percent in a single year, he said.



Photo provided

Sooner Magazine is published quarterly by the University of Oklahoma Foundation Inc. with private funds at no cost to the taxpayers of the state of Oklahoma. The magazine is printed by the Transcript Press, Norman, Oklahoma, and is intended primarily for private donors to the University of Oklahoma and members of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association. *Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official position of the University of Oklahoma or the University of Oklahoma Foundation Inc.*

Archived copies of Sooner Magazine are available on the University of Oklahoma Foundation Inc. website: <http://www.oufoundation.org>.

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