

Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

Class XVII

Scribe Notes

Seminar 1

August 20 - 22, 2014

“Launch of the OALP Experience”

Wednesday Aug. 20

Scribe: Crystal Cowan

Introductions to Introductions – Edmond Bonjour, Director OALP

The seminar started with several ice breakers to get everyone acquainted.

This is Who I Am

Kristin Alsup, grew up in Choctaw where she bred, raised, and showed pigs. Kristin attended Southeastern Oklahoma College in Wilburton and then OSU. Kristin works for the Oklahoma Pork Council as the Communications Specialist; she does newsletters, youth camps, and loves to tell jokes.

Christy Combs is from SE Oklahoma. She and her husband Ray have two daughters ages 15 & 17 who are both active in Canadian FFA. Christy is the Coordinator and Administrator for Service Departments at Grissom’s John Deere.

Crystal Cowan is from Shawnee and now lives in Guthrie with her husband, Derek Thralls. Crystal is a graduate of OSU. She is employed by the Bureau of Land Management and works with the Wild Horse & Burro Program. Derek farms wheat, canola, milo, soy beans and has a cow-calf herd in the in Garber/Billings area. Crystal helps as much as she can at the farm and hopes to one day quit her day job and join Derek at the farm.

Patrick Crouch is originally from a NW Missouri corn, soy bean, and wheat farm. Patrick was involved in sports and FFA in high school. His Ag teacher was a graduate of OSU and encouraged him to attend OSU. While in Stillwater, Patrick worked for Stillwater National Bank. Currently, he is employed by Purple Wave Online Auction and lives in Broken Arrow.

Brian Forester is from Miami. He attended NEO on a football scholarship; later an injury ended his football career. After NEO, Brian went on to Pittsburg State where he earned a degree in management. Brian is married with two kids, ages seven and four. He likes to restore old cars. His passion is children and he serves on the Ottawa Child Advocacy Board and City Council. He is a non-traditional farmer. His wife’s grandfather started JM Mushrooms where Brain has worked his way up. He likes to operate equipment and learn how things work. JM Farms produces 27 million pounds of mushrooms annually and employs 250 people.

Jared Grissom is from Earlsboro. He’s a third generation farmer who was active in FFA. Jared is the Corporate Parts Administrator and Coordinator for Grissom’s John Deer. Jared is married to Candice and they have a 4 year old son and a 5 month old son.

Janlyn Hannah grew up in Oklahoma. Her parents were educators and they moved around throughout the state. She graduated from Broken Bow High School and earned a degree in Ag Business from OSU. She is married and lives outside of Lawton. Currently, Janlyn is a County Director for FSA.

Chad Hartin lives in Stuart and his day job is at the U.S. Army Ammunition Plant. When he is not at work, he and his wife run a cow-calf operation and hay-baling business. They have two children who show livestock.

Amanda Horn grew up in Chickasha and now resides in Oklahoma City. She earned a degree in nutritional sciences from OSU and is now a registered dietitian working for OSU Extension. She is excited to learn more about agriculture in Oklahoma.

Brad Lyle was born in Clovis, NM and grew up in Guymon, OK. Brad graduated from West Texas A&M University with a degree in accounting. He now works for Hitch Enterprises and is the Chief Accounting Officer. Brad has a passion for the agricultural industry and has a 9-year-old daughter.

Bob Mulligan grew up south of Valentine, NE and likes to rodeo. He married his wife of 26 years at the age of 19. Bob and wife have a 17 year old daughter and a seventh grade daughter. He earned a degree from Chadron State College in accounting. Bob has worked in accounting and as a banker. Currently, he is the General Manager of Farmers Cooperative Association in Tonkawa. Bob is an active member of his community and serves on several boards.

Susan Murray came to Oklahoma at the age of 8 or 9 and earned a Bachelor's and Master's degree from OSU. Currently, she works for Dr. Lusk in Ag Econ. Susan likes to travel and run. She ran her first half marathon in April.

Bryan Nichols is from Cordell where his family runs cattle and farms wheat. Bryan played baseball for Carl Albert High School and Cameron University and he went to grad school at Montana State University. Currently, Bryan is employed by the Noble Foundation and helps cattlemen with beef cattle nutrition. Bryan is married and usually takes his vacation days to farm.

Shawn Norton is from Mangum where his family farmed cotton, hay grazer, and wheat. He was active in FFA, attended Altus Junior College and OSU where he studied plant and soil science. Shawn is employed by the Noble Foundation in Ardmore where he is responsible for small plot research, oversees forage and waste, and rotational crops. He is married with two active sons ages 11 and 6.

Josh Payne is a Razorback who works as a Waste Management Specialist for OSU Extension. After graduating from the University of Arkansas, he went on to earn a doctorate from North Carolina State University. Currently, Josh works with lawsuits in the poultry industry as well as designs new ways to trap pollutants off poultry farms.

Robert Rana grew up in Red Oak on a cow-calf operation. He was very active in FFA. Robert earned a degree in Ag Econ with a minor in finance. After college he went back to the farm and is also employed by Farm Credit Services and travels across the state doing farm appraisals. Robert and his wife of 8 years welcomed a daughter in June.

Matt Sandmann grew up in Lane/Atoka. He graduated from OSU and experienced an internship in Washington, D.C. during an exciting time of historical events. His family owns and operates Three Rivers Pecans and he manages a store in Calera specializing in Amish goodies. Matt is

married, a Will Rogers fan, likes terrible jokes, loves people, loves agriculture, and he makes over 55 flavors of fudge.

Bambi Sidwell grew up in Goltry raising and sheering sheep. She earned a degree in Ag Business from OSU. After graduation, Bambi took a job with Boeing and moved to California where she gained crucial management experience. Currently, Bambi has a crop insurance agency in Piedmont and farms on the weekends.

Preston Simic grew up in Garber on a wheat and cattle operation. Preston played sports and was active in FFA at Garber High School. Preston graduated from OSU and took a job with the Williams Company in Tulsa where he traded electricity on an hourly basis. A few years ago, he and his wife moved back to Garber to farm full time. Preston and his wife have three children.

Kirby Smith is from Elk City. She loves southwestern OK and is a proud aunt. She praises FFA for bringing her out of her shell in high school. Kirby started her writing career at age 16 by writing a column for the local paper called, "In the Halls with Kirby Smith." During her time at OSU, Kirby learned the most as a graduate assistant working in Residential Life. She graduated in May 2011 with a Master's and is currently the Public Information Office for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. Kirby serves as the spokeswoman for the agency and Ag industry.

Bill Steinert is from Covington and went to OSU, where he studied chemistry, biology, and weed and brush control in grad school. Bill has been married to the same lady for 41 years and they have four children. Currently, Bill is transitioning the farm over to the next generation.

Justin Street is from Carter where he grew up on a cattle and wheat operation. He was active in sports and FFA in high school. He attended SWOSU and then OSU studying Ag engineering and plant and soil science. Currently, SST Software employs Justin where he builds software to help farmers. He works with farmers in Australia, Brazil and South Africa.

Coleen Thornton grew up in an urban setting and attended the Ohio State University where she studied Japanese and nutrition. She earned an MBA from the University of Texas – Arlington and worked for American Airlines with multi-million dollar contracts. She is married to an aerospace engineer and has a 60 acre farm producing beef, pork, lamb, goats, goat's milk, honey, yarn and honey soap. Coleen markets her products at local farmers markets and has products at 90 stores. She believes in some organic practices and does advocacy work as well as consulting.

Josh Widener is from Ponca City and enjoys making wine, fishing and hunting. Josh is the farm manager for Silvertop Farm & Vineyards and specializes in cattle, sheep, grains, grapes and pecans.

Photography Session – Todd Johnson took individual and group photos.

Overview of OALP and Class XVII – Edmond Bonjour

The Ag Leadership Program was started at Michigan State University. The Kellogg Foundation was the first sponsor for the first class in Oklahoma and donated \$200,000. OSU began this program in 1982.

Why we are here? To develop future leaders for Oklahoma agriculture, help understand yourself and others, understand economics and government, and become better problem solvers for Oklahoma agriculture. Several sponsors make this class possible.

OALP class responsibilities: gifts for speakers, jackets, logos, Facebook and blogs were all discussed.

The schedule of seminars was also discussed.

Reflections on OALP Experiences

Tammi Didlot from Class XIII, Amy Dronberger from Class XV, and Justin Whitmore from Class XVI shared their experiences and where they are today.

We adjourned and checked in to the hotel.

At 6:30 p.m., there was a Welcome Dinner and visitation with the Advisory Council, Selection Committee, alumni, and guests – 85 people were in attendance.

Thursday Aug. 21

Scribe: Patrick Crouch

After the morning coffee and energy drinks, we arrived at OSU Outdoor Adventure Challenge Course at 8:00 a.m. ready for the day. The Challenge Course director was our main instructor for the day as well as a few other staff and student workers.

We had several exercises outside that had us running around and getting to know everyone and then moved inside to do a few puzzle-type activities.

After lunch we went outside to do the training for the ropes course. We paired up with partners and then on to the ropes course where we had a challenge of climbing the 60-foot pole to the course and through the wires, log walks and nets to finally jump off for the zip line.

After cleaning up, we headed to the Community dinner. Everyone pitched in and helped out whether it was serving food, washing dishes, helping people to their seats, cleanup or general goodwill.

Edmond and Rose Bonjour had everyone out to their house for dessert after we served the community dinner. The spread was bountiful from fruits, puddings, cakes and punch. A great get-together with good conversations and great sweets!

Friday Aug. 22

Scribe: Brian Forrester

The final day of Seminar 1 started on Friday Aug 22 at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Stillwater at 8:00 a.m.

Chairman Christy Combs started off the morning by introducing Dr. Jonathan Edelson, the associate director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station (OAES). Dr. Edelson spoke in regards to the OAES and how it came about. It was started by Justin Morrill who authored the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, establishing a land grant university to educate people on agriculture and mechanics. A second Morrill Act was developed in 1890 to educate minorities as well.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 was discussed as being a federal law that provided cooperative services connected to land grant universities that helped educate people on agriculture.

Dr. Edelson then introduced us to Dr. Thomas Coon, Vice President, Dean, & Director of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Dr. Coon discussed the history and importance of DASNR at Oklahoma State University. He broke down the DASNR in three sections:

- CASNR - College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- OAES - Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station
- OCES - Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

DASNR is made up of 9 academic departments:

1. Ag Economics
2. Ag Education, Communications & Leadership
3. Animal Science
4. Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
5. Biosystems & Ag Engineering
6. Entomology & Plant Pathology
7. Horticulture & Landscape Architecture
8. Natural Resource Ecology & Management
9. Plant & Soil Sciences

Dr. Coon went on to discuss the funding and responsibilities as well as the different centers and institutes such as the Robert M Kerr Food and Agricultural Products Center.

In closing, the floor was opened up for questions in regards to what we expect from OSU today and in the future.

Our next speaker was Dr. Avery Culbertson - Instructor, Ag Education, Communication, & Leadership. She discussed her passion for the Ag leadership program and opened the class with a skit for what are our goals in life. She expressed when making goals the following should apply:

1. Specific
2. Measurable
3. Attainable
4. Relevant
5. Time Bound
6. Ethical
7. Recorded

As a group we were asked to wright down three goals that are important. We then developed an accountability partner to communicate with throughout the next 18 months.

Dr. Culbertson then handed out a paper with her Ag Leadership Lessons that everyone should take into account. It was stressed to always be early and to never miss!

The next speaker was Dr. Penny Weeks. Dr. Weeks is the Associate Professor, Ag Education, and Communications & Leadership.

Dr. Weeks had the class break down into groups and collaborate our ideas of what one word described a good leader. We then discussed at the table each individuals answer and came up with what we felt is the best answer.

We then performed a group project were each table was given an equal amount of money and two participants auctioned off the top ten leadership characteristics given. It allowed us to place value on what characteristics we thought of the most. The final field was narrowed down to the following:

1. Honest
2. Forward-looking
3. Competent
4. Inspiring

She discussed leadership is learned; either you're task-oriented or relationship-oriented. Dr. Weeks stated a good leader is someone that you willingly follow. We each had to write down what leadership is to us and each group then took their individual definitions and we were challenged to write a definition for leadership.

The last speaker of the day was Ms. Debby Strickland in regards to Dining Etiquette. She gave many great educational tips on the proper techniques of eating, drinking and presenting while dining. I feel everyone in the class gained something from this.

Class XVII then gathered around and discussed all the activities for the past three days. We talked about the likes and dislikes. We discussed how as a whole the class really came together and we all agreed we are looking forward to October.