



# DEGREES OF PROGRESS

eNews from the State Regents for Higher Education



Volume 8, Issue 3 | Summer 2023

## PUBLIC COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY GRADS LEARN HERE, EARN HERE

By Chancellor Allison D. Garrett

In my experience in both the public and private sectors, investing in the right team is crucial to success. Oklahoma’s investment in higher education, whether through the appropriations process, donors, or student scholarships, is critical to workforce development. Oklahomans’ choices to attend college here define the future of our workforce.

Nearly 90% of Oklahomans who graduate from our state system colleges and universities — and almost two-thirds of nonresident graduates — remain and work here one year after graduation, serving in the state’s labor force and contributing to our economy. Five years after graduation, nearly 88% of Oklahomans and over 60% of nonresident graduates from a public college or university are still working and earning here.

How do we know? Unique to a handful of states, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education’s **employment outcome rates** reflect a data match between records from the State Regents, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and Oklahoma Tax Commission. Data are used to determine the percentage of state system graduates who are employed in the state one year and five years after graduation.

Our employment outcomes clearly show that public higher education is growing and attracting an educated workforce for Oklahoma. Considering critical STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, bachelor’s degree production in STEM disciplines increased 42% over the last 10 years. Of STEM graduates from our state system institutions,



88% of residents — and almost two-thirds of non-residents — remain and work in Oklahoma one year after graduation. More than 85% of Oklahomans and over half of our nonresident state system STEM graduates still work and earn here five years after graduation.

We thank our governor and Legislature for increased support that enabled the State Regents to allocate \$44 million over the last three years to expand the STEM pipeline. To incentivize college and university investments in STEM programs, a portion of this funding is subject to reallocation based on degree production in those fields.

For Oklahoma college graduates, U.S. Census Bureau data reveal a substantial difference in employment rates and annual earnings. The unemployment rate for individuals with a college degree is 4% lower than for those with only a high school diploma, and median annual income for associate and bachelor’s degree holders is 17% and 59% higher, respectively, than for those with only a high school diploma.

*Continued on page 2*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Higher Ed, CareerTech Collaborate to Support Workforce Development.....2
- Oklahoma Higher Education News.....3
- OneNet Rolls Out a Refresh.....3
- 2023-24 College Planning Publications .....4
- Quarterly News.....4
- Did You Know? .....5

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# HIGHER ED, CAREERTECH COLLABORATE TO SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

By Chancellor Allison D. Garrett and CareerTech Director Brent Haken

Nearly everyone has heard the saying, “teamwork makes the dream work.” While the saying is overused and feels trite, there is truth in the sentiment — when we’re pulling in the same direction to meet a common goal, our chances of success are much higher. That’s why our State System of Higher Education and CareerTech system collaborate to provide an educated workforce to strengthen Oklahoma’s economy.

Oklahoma’s CareerTech system includes a network of 29 technology centers and 391 school districts across the state focused on ensuring that students are both career and college ready, so they can go right to work to meet labor market demands and are prepared to move into a college or university to earn a postsecondary degree in a wide range of technical fields.

Through 25 colleges and universities, Oklahoma public higher education offers courses and programs of study leading to academic degrees and credentials designed to prepare graduates for success in job fields including business, education, nursing, computer science, and engineering, to name a few.

Unified in purpose, we offer a variety of aligned pathways to meet both student and employer needs.

CareerTech students can earn college credit through direct course transfer to one of our state system institutions. Students who successfully complete technology center work may earn college credit for courses or programs listed in the statewide technical course articulation matrix on the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education’s [Show What You Know website](#).

Additionally, there are many examples of innovative course transfer partnerships to meet specific workforce needs, such as expedited nursing associate degree arrangements between Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College and Northeast Technology Center and Murray State College and Southern Technology Center. Similar arrangements between colleges, universities and technology centers include transfer course credit in subjects from accounting to information technology to manufacturing.



Higher education and CareerTech have developed [cooperative agreements](#) that help students leverage coursework completed at a technology center toward a college degree. For example, students can earn an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) in Occupational Therapy Assistant from Southwestern Oklahoma State University by completing coursework both at SWOSU and at Caddo Kiowa Technology Center. Connors State College has a similar arrangement with Indian Capital Technology Center for the AAS in Physical Therapist Assistant.

Our existing partnerships are just the start. While we already meet regularly to advance workforce development efforts and recently met jointly with executive leadership from Canoo, Enel, and Google, the State Regents’ new strategic plan, [Blueprint 2030](#), reflects expanded collaboration with CareerTech to serve Oklahoma students. Strategies include growing the student pipeline by aligning standards and assessments for college readiness and working with CareerTech and the business community to facilitate more career exploration opportunities for middle and high school students.

Cooperation and connection between public higher education and CareerTech are key to producing more skilled workers for critical industries in our state. As collaborators, we will continue to work together to move students through the education pipeline as seamlessly as possible to build the workforce-ready graduates Oklahoma needs today — and tomorrow.

## LEARN HERE, EARN HERE

*Continued from page 1*

The State Regents’ new strategic plan, [Blueprint 2030: Innovating and Elevating Oklahoma Higher Education for Tomorrow’s Workforce](#), focuses on producing workforce-ready graduates by aligning academic programs with employer demand, strengthening communication with the business community, and increasing internships to connect students to the workforce faster. Inspired to Teach, which incentivizes Oklahomans to both learn and earn here as public school teachers, is an excellent model for occupation-specific programs.

States with higher educational attainment have higher per capita incomes and stronger, more diversified economies. Oklahoma has a vital, pro-business economy. Innovative educational partnerships between higher education and the business community will help it continue to flourish.



Photo courtesy of Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College



## OKLAHOMA HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS

- [OSU Dedicates New Drone Research Center in Tulsa, Inks NASA Agreement](#)
- [RUSO Educating Teachers Is Vital to Oklahoma's Future](#)
- [Ground Broken on New NSU Optometry Facility](#)
- [NWOSU, NOC Enid Campuses Develop Partnership Program for Nursing Students](#)
- [Award to Fund Innovation at SEOSU](#)
- [Middle School Girls Dive Into World of Aerospace at CU](#)
- [MSC Lifetime Alumni Members Contribute, Complete Chickasaw Nation Scholarship Challenge](#)
- [OCCC, BancFirst Launch Program to Address Workforce Development Challenges](#)
- [Rose State to Offer Four-Year Cybersecurity Degree](#)
- [TCC, OSU-Tulsa to Add Engineering to College Park Partnership](#)

## ONENET ROLLS OUT A REFRESH



OneNet is rolling out a new logo and focus on its role as Oklahoma's research and education network (REN). As our state's REN, OneNet provides the high-speed internet service required to connect Oklahoma's teachers with students, doctors with patients, and research scientists with colleagues around the globe.

RENs are state or regional networks that focus on deploying and operating advanced cyberinfrastructure to enable research and education initiatives in the areas they serve. Like OneNet, RENs can be a part of the state's higher education system or state government. **Many RENs are also classified as non-profit organizations.** Most states across the U.S. have a REN like OneNet that serves their communities.

As Oklahoma's REN, OneNet deploys research-grade connectivity for research and higher education institutions, which need ultra-high-speed internet service for national and worldwide research collaborations that involve large data transfers. OneNet also facilitates large data transfer across the state for small institutions without local access to research computing resources.

OneNet is connected to a national network of RENs across the country through [The Quilt](#), the national organization for RENs. OneNet also provides access to [Internet2](#) for our state's higher education institutions and K-12 schools. Internet2 is the nation's largest and fastest coast-to-coast research and education network. Regionally, OneNet is connected to the [Great Plains Network](#). GPN connects RENs in the southcentral region.

Many RENs, including OneNet, partner with local telecommunications providers. In Oklahoma, these providers make the local connections from OneNet's network to subscribers' sites. OneNet partners with approximately 30 telecommunications providers in Oklahoma and paid these providers nearly \$12 million for local connections in the last fiscal year.

OneNet's team is proud to serve as our state's REN and that pride is reflected in OneNet's new mission statement.

*OneNet advances research and education in communities across Oklahoma by delivering high-speed, affordable connectivity and technology solutions to research, education, health care and government institutions.*

Read more about OneNet's updated mission and values at [onenet.net](https://onenet.net).

Email OneNet at [communications@onenet.net](mailto:communications@onenet.net) and let us know if you like the new logo!

### Keep in touch with OneNet

[OneNet.net](https://onenet.net)





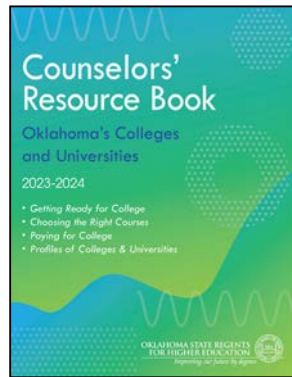
# 2023-24 COLLEGE PLANNING PUBLICATIONS

This fall, the State Regents will offer free online college planning publications for Oklahoma students and counselors.



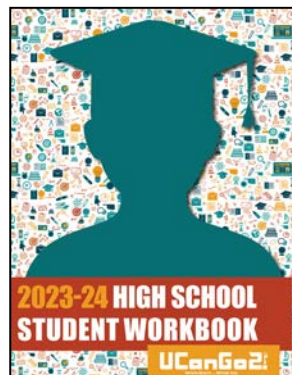
## DO YOU HAVE A PLAN FOR COLLEGE?

These digital brochures for students in grades 8-10 and 11-12 outline the courses they must take in high school to be admitted to an Oklahoma public college or university, as well as financial aid information, estimated college costs, salary expectations for various jobs and information about campus comparison and selection.



## COUNSELORS' RESOURCE BOOK: OKLAHOMA'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

This online publication for high school counselors provides a profile of each college and university in Oklahoma and includes information about preparing for college, college costs and financial aid.



## HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR TOOLKIT

UCanGo2, a college access initiative of the Oklahoma College Assistance Program, offers a digital kit to support educator outreach to students and parents. Each digital toolkit includes an Instructor's Guide, a Plan of Action to help counselors make the most of UCanGo2 materials throughout the year, student tools and FAFSA education resources.



## QUARTERLY NEWS AT A GLANCE

- [Joseph L. Parker Jr. Named State Regent Emeritus](#)
- [Six Oklahoma Higher Education Institutions Awarded Oklahoma Hunger-Free Campus Act Grant Awards](#)
- [Adwon Sworn In as New State Regent](#)
- [State Regents' Council for Online Learning Excellence Honors Outstanding Work of Faculty, Staff, Administrators](#)
- [State Regents Allocate Funds for Oklahoma Colleges, Universities](#)
- [State Regents Continue to Keep Tuition Affordable](#)
- [New Officers Elected to Lead State Regents](#)

## Keep in touch with OCAP

[OCAP.org](https://www.okcap.org)



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ReadySetRepay



UCanGo2



OKcollegestart



OKCollegeAssistance

## DID YOU KNOW?

### OKLAHOMA'S 100 CRITICAL OCCUPATIONS (2021-30)

MORE THAN **50%**

More than half of Oklahoma's 100 critical occupations will require an associate degree or higher.

**29** 

The top 29 highest-paying critical occupations will require an associate degree or higher.

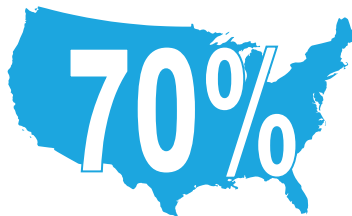
**10**   
OUT OF  
**10** 

All of the top 10 highest-paying critical occupations will require a bachelor's degree or higher.

**8**   
OUT OF  
**10** 

8 of the top 10 critical occupations with the highest growth will require an associate degree or higher.

Source: Oklahoma Works

  
**70%**

Research suggests that by 2027, 70% of jobs across the country will require education and training beyond high school.

Source: Raise the Bar: Unlocking Career Success, an initiative of the U.S. Department of Education supported by the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor



OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS  
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

*Improving our future by degrees*

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