

# NEWSMAKERS

## Muskogee Chamber presents Women in Leadership awards

The Greater Muskogee Area Chamber of Commerce recognized three local women at the 11th Annual Women's Leadership Conference last month.

Melanie Grayson, Julie Dinger and Kathy Hewitt were honored as women who have shown exemplary success and distinguished themselves in their profession and in their communities.



Dinger



Grayson

Grayson, the 2015 Trail Blazer Award winner, is accounting manager of Advantage Controls. This award is given to a woman who is breaking new ground in her industry or area of expertise and empowering women to be leaders where it has not traditionally been easy to do so. Grayson became the first female to reach management ranks at Advantage Controls and has been with the company for nine years.

Dinger, the Spirit of Excellence Award winner, is interim assistant vice president for Academic and Student Affairs-Assessment and Curriculum at Connors State College. This award is presented to an outstanding woman who demonstrates well-rounded and exemplary success in her life and community and is at the peak of her experiences.

Hewitt, the Lifetime Achievement Award winner, is board chair for EAST-AR Health System and owner of Kathy Hewitt CPA. This award is given for contributions and accomplishments made over the term of a career or a sustained period of time. Hewitt owns and manages her business and was the first female elected as Mayor of Muskogee.

Candidates were evaluated by an anonymous committee based on career accomplishments, community involvement, work/life balance, educational accomplishments and other criteria. Other nominees were Sue Godwin, Susan Massey, Dr. J'Dene Rogers, Toni Bradley Smith and Janice Woods.

The purpose of the Women in Leadership Awards is "to recognize women who work hard and have vision for the future," said Treasure McKenzie, president and CEO of the Chamber. "All of these women forge new roles for women,

inspire others, and build capacity for empowerment."

## Chamber board members honored for fundraising efforts

The Eastern Oklahoma chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals announced Isaac Rocha, executive committee member for the Greater Tulsa Chamber of Commerce and immediate former TYPros chair, as the winner of its 2015 Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser award.

The group will honor Rocha and other winners at the annual National Philanthropy Day Awards luncheon in November.

Former chamber board member and Mosaic volunteer Hannibal Johnson received the award for Outstanding Diversity & Inclusion in Philanthropy for his work with Tulsa Advocates for the Rights of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. TYPros received an honorable mention for their efforts in the same category.

## Greg Allen joins the Rausch Coleman Homes team



Allen

Rausch Coleman Homes, the 43rd largest builder in the U.S., hired Greg Allen as vice president of finance.

Allen comes to Rausch after working as CFO at United Bank for 11 years. He oversaw the retail department, IT and secondary market loan divisions.

Andy Wilson, President of Rausch Coleman Homes, said Rausch's responsibilities will include overseeing the finance area and reporting to CFO David Frye.

## ACLU of Oklahoma hires director of investigative communications

M. Scott Carter, an award-winning investigative reporter, has joined the staff of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma, Executive Director Ryan Kiesel said.

Carter will serve as the ACLU of Oklahoma's director of investigative communications, a new position at the ACLU of Oklahoma that will support its work in courthouses and the state Capitol.

"Scott Carter is a gifted journalist and has a deep understanding of Oklahoma

government, law and history and an insatiable determination to find the truth," Kiesel said. "I am confident his work will make Oklahoma's premier champion for civil liberties an even more formidable opponent to those standing in the way of the march towards liberty and equality in Oklahoma."

Carter, a native Oklahoman, was Capitol Bureau Chief for The Journal Record newspaper and was an investigative reporter for Oklahoma Watch, a nonprofit focused on state policy.

In 2013, he was named one of the state's top three political reporters by The Washington Post's blog, "The Fix." Carter is a four-time winner of the Associated Press-Oklahoma News Editors Sweepstakes Award for public affairs and investigative reporting.

## New York writer winner of Tulsa Library Trust's Anne V. Zarrow award

New York Times best-selling author Sharon Draper is the winner of the Tulsa Library Trust's 2015 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature.

Draper has written more than 30 books for children and teens and has taught for more than 25 years in Cincinnati

Public Schools as a language arts teacher. She was selected as Ohio's Outstanding High School Language Arts Educator, Ohio Teacher of the Year and National Teacher of the Year in 1997.

Draper's most awarded book, "Out of My Mind," was published in 2010 and was at the top of the New York Times' bestseller list for nine weeks. Fifth-grade student Melody struggles to overcome the physical limitations from cerebral palsy and communicate her insightful observations.

Draper will accept the award at at 7 p.m. Aug. 28 at Hardesty Regional Library's Connor's Cove.

She also will present awards to winners of the 2015 Young People's Creative Writing Contest awards at the ceremony to culminate the 2015 children's and teen summer reading programs at the Tulsa City-County Library.

The Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature gives formal recognition, on behalf of the Tulsa County community, to a nationally acclaimed author who has made a significant contribution to the field of literature for

young adults.

The award, consists of a \$7,500 cash prize and an engraved crystal book. It is presented as the culmination of the children's and teen summer reading programs.

## ORU board grants five-year contract extension for president

Oral Roberts University president William H. Wilson accepted a five-year contract extension from the university's board of trustees.

Wilson's contract now runs until the summer of 2021 and has an option to extend past that point. The agreement also comes as ORU begins its 50th year.

"We did a thorough review of Dr. Wilson's service over the past two years and have found it to be exemplary," board chairman Rob Hoskins said.

"He has built a strong pathway to the future that we want to see him carry through."

During his first day in office, Wilson established the Presidential Task Force on the Globalization of ORU, and last fall ORU had students from all 50 states and 84 countries.

New global degree programs were added, and ORU now offers a minor in Mandarin Chinese.

## SMG Tulsa wins industry award for venue education

SMG Tulsa was awarded the 2015 International Association of Venue Managers Venue Education Award earlier this month in Baltimore.

The award acknowledges allied organizations, venues and academic institutions that demonstrate active student involvement, excel in available educational opportunities and demonstrate leadership in education. It also honors those actively involved in the education and continuous development of the venue management industry.

The criteria for the awards are key components to the success and vitality of the venue industry. A committee of industry leaders chose the finalists, and winners were approved by the IAVM's board of directors.

SMG Tulsa provides management services for the BOK Center and Cox Business Center.



Wilson



Carter