

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Luminaries, the newsletter for OCU retirees!



Luminaries

Newsletter for retirees of OCU

March 2025



Introducing the University Retiree Association: A New Chapter Begins!

We're excited to announce the launch of the University Retiree Association — created with you in mind!

Retirement brings new opportunities for relaxation, exploration, and personal growth, but it doesn't mean leaving behind the connections and community you helped build. This new association is designed to keep those bonds strong while supporting and engaging you in meaningful ways by:

- Building a vibrant network where retirees can reconnect, share experiences, and support one another.
- Creating opportunities for social, educational, and volunteer activities that match your interests.
- Preserving and celebrating your contributions while providing resources to enrich your post-career life.

We know every retiree’s journey looks different — some enjoy social gatherings, others dive into volunteer work or lifelong learning. That’s why we’re shaping this association around what *you* value most.

To help us create something truly special, we encourage you to complete our retiree survey. Your input will guide everything from event planning to ongoing initiatives — ensuring this association reflects the interests and needs of our remarkable retiree community.

Let’s build something extraordinary together. We can’t wait to see where this new chapter takes us, but you don’t have to take our word for it!

A Message from President Evans

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural issue of *Luminaries*, our new newsletter designed specifically for our valued retiree community. Your decades of dedication have helped shape our institution into what it is today, and your continued engagement enriches our university community in countless ways.

This newsletter and the retiree association represents our commitment to maintaining strong bonds with those who have contributed so much to our academic excellence. Whether you spent your career in the classroom, office, or maintaining our beautiful campus, you remain an integral part of our university family.

As we launch this publication, we look forward to sharing university news, celebrating your achievements, and keeping you connected to the vibrant community you helped build.

Warmest regards,
Kenneth R. Evans, President




- **Retiree Inaugural Luncheon** – Tuesday, March 25 | 12 – 1:30pm; Wilson House. Hosted by President Kenneth Evans, retirees are invited to gather to reconnect with each other and the university.
- **An Evening with US Poet Laureate Ada Limon** – Tuesday, April 1 | 7:30pm; Meinders School of Business auditorium. Arrive early for an open mic poetry session at 6:30pm. Preregistration is required and can be made [here](#).

- **Makers Showcase** - Thursday, April 10 | 9:00-10:30 AM Great Hall of the McDaniel University Center. Join us for this annual event where employees and retirees showcase their arts and crafts projects. Come as a visitor and enjoy the exhibits, coffee and bagels, or contact Valerie or 405.208.5983 to reserve a spot to be an exhibitor.
- **Liz Roth: Interpreting Place** - March 10 – May 30 | Nona Jean Hulsey Art Gallery. The artist traveled along the 40th parallel drawing and painting the landscapes she encountered for her 40o North Latitude exhibit. Evening reception 5pm, Thursday, April 3.
- Theatre - **A Soldier's Play** – Thursday, April 3 – Sunday, April 6 | Three 7:30pm evening and two 2pm matinee performances in Burg Theatre.
- Music - **Anything Goes** – Friday, April 11 – Sunday, April 13 | Two 7:30pm evening and one 2:00pm matinee performances in Kirkpatrick Auditorium.
- **Athletics** – Your OCU retiree ID will get you into home games free of charge. View the calendar for spring sports (softball, men's soccer, and golf) schedules [here](#) then come on out to support your favorite Stars team!



We're thrilled to welcome you to this special event marking the launch of the university's newly established Retiree Association — a dedicated space to honor and reconnect with our retired faculty and staff.

 **Date:** Tuesday, March 25

 **Location:** Wilson House

Hosted by President Evans, this inaugural luncheon will welcome retirees back to campus and set the stage for exciting future opportunities to stay connected.

"This luncheon marks the start of a new chapter — one where we celebrate your lasting impact and create new ways for you to remain an essential part of our university community." — President Evans

This event is more than a gathering — it's a chance to reconnect with familiar faces, reminisce, and learn about the exciting plans the university has in store for future collaboration with its retiree community as the association grows.

This luncheon promises to be the first of many gatherings to celebrate and support the university's retirees, creating a vibrant, connected community for years to come.

"Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else." – Fred Rogers

Strengthening Our Community: Message from HR

The relationships you built with colleagues during your time at Oklahoma City University are just as important after retirement. The university remains a home for you, and we encourage you to stay connected through social events, volunteer opportunities, and special programming designed with you in mind. Our HR team is committed to supporting you in this next chapter and ensuring that your ties to the university remain strong.

We value your ideas and welcome your suggestions for workshops, benefits updates, or new ways to engage with the OCU community. Please stay connected — we can't wait to see you at upcoming events and continue building this next chapter together!

Sincerely,
Blythe Benson, CHRO



Bridging Past and Present: A Note from Interim Provost Tom Gamble

Your contributions — both in and beyond the classroom — continue to shape and inspire our university community. The launch of the OCU Retiree Association is an important milestone in honoring the lasting impact of our retired faculty and staff. Your knowledge, experience, and deep understanding of OCU's history are invaluable to our ongoing growth and success. Through this association, we aim to foster meaningful opportunities for continued intellectual engagement, mentorship, and social connection. I invite you to stay involved, share your insights, and remain a vital part of OCU's next chapter.



With appreciation,
Tom Gamble, Interim Provost

Share Your Story

We want to hear from you! Please share your updates for inclusion in our next newsletter:

- Recent accomplishments or activities
- Published works or research
- Travel adventures
- Volunteer work
- Family milestones

Submit your updates to retirees@okcu.edu

Resources & Contacts

- Retiree Association contact: Valerie Robinson, vrobinson@okcu.edu, 405.208.5983
- Retiree Association Website: <https://www.okcu.edu/faculty-staff/ocu-retiree-association>
[OCU FOCUS online magazine](#)

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