

S E M I N O L E S T A T E C O L L E G E



A N I N E T Y - Y E A R R E T R O S P E C T I V E

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MISSION STATEMENT

90 Years of SSC



NOTHING BUT THE HITS



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Empowering people for
academic success,
personal development
and lifelong learning.



Introducing your **HOST WITH THE MOST**

Celebrating Seminole State College's 90th Anniversary

**SSC President
Lana Reynolds**



This year we celebrate 90 years as an institution. From the very beginning, the College was entwined with the surrounding community. When what was then Seminole Junior College welcomed its first students in September of 1931, it did so as an extension of Seminole High School. Classes met at the high school and were taught by high school faculty until 1969.

In that year, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education recommended the development of a state-supported junior college, separate from the high school.

Seminole citizens responded to the challenge. They worked with local leaders to develop the College. For the first year following the separation, classes were offered at the First Presbyterian Church in Seminole.

The community continued its support by approving a \$250,000 bond issue by an 8-to-1 margin for construction of a college administration and classroom building (now known as Tanner Hall) and donating 40 acres for a new campus. In March 1971, the

citizens of Seminole approved a one-cent sales tax to help support the College until 1975 when SJC became a fully state-supported institution. At the time, Seminole was the only community in the state to ever impose a sales tax on itself for the support of a college.

While so much has changed over 90 years, the partnerships with our community, the dedication of our staff and the drive of our students remain steadfast.

I continue to be impressed by the faculty, staff and students on this campus. We have faced many challenges throughout this past "pandemic" year, but we have worked harder, and we have been more intentional in creating a dynamic and flexible educational environment. We have prioritized helping students be successful and collaborated with business and community partners to extend the reach of this institution.

Our employees continue to be passionate about finding ways to educate and encourage students on our physical campus and through online

instruction, counseling and advising. They work diligently to help students find their passion and provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to have a bright future.

I take great joy in being a part of this campus community – a place I hold near and dear to my heart. As I reflect on our 90 years of serving students, I am grateful for the vision of those who came before, and I am proud of how our employees expand on that vision every day.

I also want to express my gratitude to the ongoing commitment and dedication to Seminole State College by our Regents, Trustees, alumni, parents and friends. As you turn the pages of this commemorative publication, I hope you share my pride in what we have accomplished.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lana Reynolds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cranking up the **WAY WAY BACK MACHINE**

The Birth of Seminole Junior College



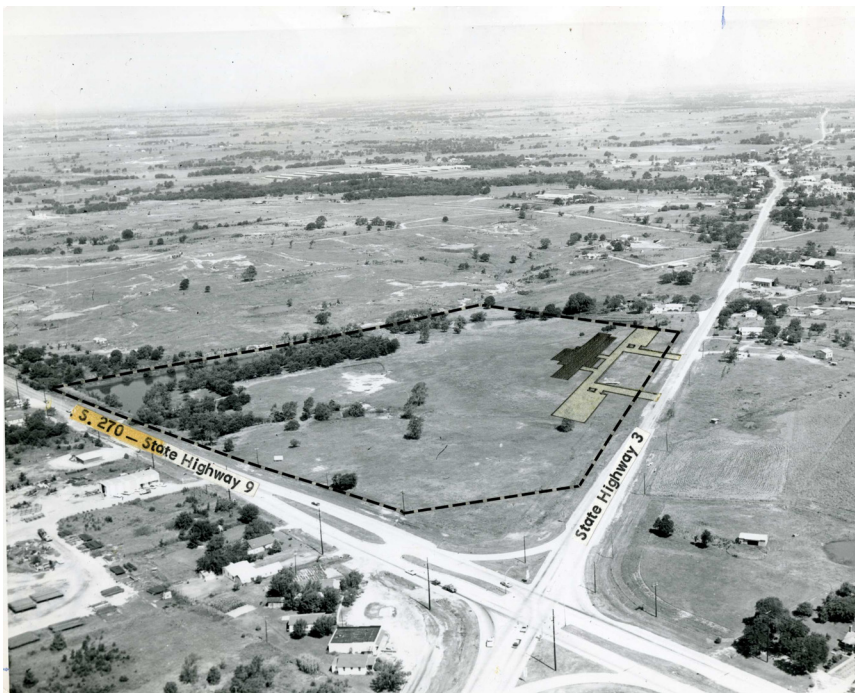
Thanks for the Memory

Seminole State College, established in 1931 as Seminole Junior College, was organized as an extension of Seminole High School (pictured). The college was considered the 13th and 14th grades of the school, and classes were taught by high school faculty.



Come Together

In 1969, Seminole Junior College was required by the State to break away and become an independently governed college. The City of Seminole donated 40 acres of land at the intersection of Highway 9 and Highway 3 to begin construction on a dedicated site for the college.





Changes

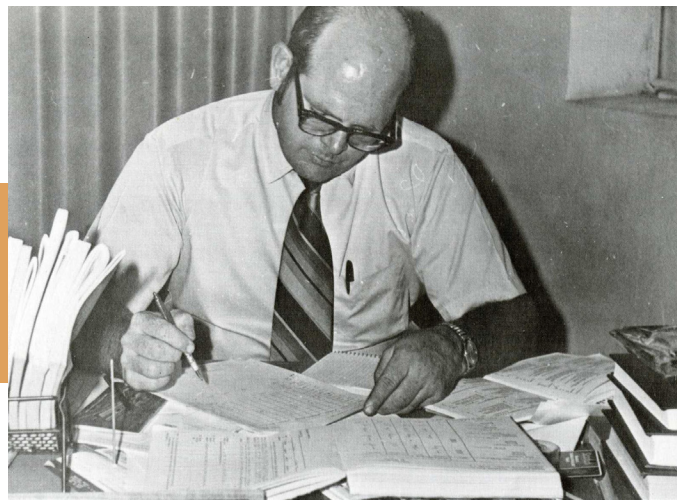
Bottom Photo - Local officials pictured breaking ground on the new campus were (left to right): Trustee Emery Magruder, Trustee Clarence Clark, Seminole Mayor Waldo Lilly, Oklahoma Chancellor of Higher Education E.T. Dunlap, Seminole Junior College President Elmer Tanner, Trustee Dr. Hubert Callaway and SJC Student Government President Richard "Dickie" Dollar.

Top Photo - The first building to be constructed on the current site of the College was an all-purpose classroom building later named Tanner Hall in honor of the first President, Elmer Tanner. Construction was completed in the summer of 1971.



Imagine

Tanner addresses community and campus leaders at a meeting in the E.T. Dunlap Student Union Mirror Room. Pictured left to right, at the head table, are: former Oklahoma State Senator Jeff Johnston, former Regent Ted Phillips, former Oklahoma State Representative Kelly Haney, President Tanner, former College Regent Frank Seay, Sr., and Chancellor for Higher Education E.T. Dunlap. Pictured in the foreground are former Dean of Students Wayne Day and Seminole civic leader Cecil Sullivan.



Takin' Care of Business

Two early-day Seminole “Junior” College administrators carry on the work of the College at their desks in the early 1970s. Both were among the first administrators to lead the new campus following the college’s separation from the local high school. Pictured are Dean of Student Personnel Services Don Gill (left) and Academic Dean Jim Colclazier (right). Both men had long associations with SJC, also serving as classroom instructors.



Cementing a LEGACY

How the College’s Crest Was Created

During the first years of then Seminole Junior College’s rebirth as an institution separate from Seminole High School, the Dean of Student Affairs Don Gill was instrumental in the design of the College’s crest. Gill described the meaning of individual aspects of the crest as representing both the history and the future of the institution.

Along the side of the Trojan’s helmet runs a laurel. “It’s a representation of excellence — both athletic and academic,” Gill said in an interview in 1996.

Below the Trojan on the crest is a shield that has four parts. The lower right quarter of the shield bears the ancient symbol of “the athletic” to represent the physical part of self. In the upper left quarter of

the crest is a depiction of an open book and torch that represents “the academic” part of self.

The other two quarters of the shield are dedicated to the community and heritage that was so instrumental in the survival of the institution. The map of Oklahoma marks the location of Seminole, and the oil derrick represents its growth and industry. The depiction of the Native American in headdress symbolizes the area’s indigenous heritage that is a cornerstone of the community and the College.

The banner below the shield boldly reads “Seminole,” and the year of founding of the College as a portion of Seminole High School is reflected on the crest as 1931.

When Seminole Junior College’s name was changed to Seminole State College in 1996, Hope Pickering, the graphics lead at TS & H Embroidery, Screen Printing and Advertising Specialties, volunteered to update the original crest. She was able to preserve the original illustration of the crest as she updated the name.

The College crest will continue to remind Seminole State students and staff of the heritage of the institution that, with the help of individuals throughout the state and community and with innovative and progressive leadership, began as an extension of the local high school and became a two-year education leader in the state.

Leaving It All **ON THE FIELD**

Athletic Leaders



We Are the Champions

Leaders of Seminole Junior College athletic programs pose with the College's first President Elmer Tanner (center). Pictured from left to right, are long-time Athletic Director Dr. Thurman Edwards, Trojan Baseball Coach Lloyd Simmons, Belles Basketball Coach Dixie Woodall and Trojan Basketball Coach Jim Kerwin. Simmons, Woodall and Kerwin established many of the College's records for wins, championships and producing outstanding athletes during the "golden age" of men's and women's sports in Oklahoma two-year colleges



Ninety Years of Progress

1931

Seminole Junior College Established

Seminole Junior College was established as the 13th and 14th grades of Seminole High School. The community junior college opened in Sept. 1931.

1969

College Separates from Seminole High School

Under a recommendation from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, SJC develops a state-supported junior college. Classes met in the First Presbyterian Church of Seminole for the first academic year.

1971

Tanner Hall Constructed

Tanner Hall, the College's first administration and classroom building, was completed in the summer of 1971. The citizens of Seminole approved a one-cent sales tax to support the College until 1975, when SJC became a fully state-supported institution. At the time, Seminole was the only community in the state of Oklahoma to ever impose a sales tax on itself for the support of a college.



College Presidents



Dr. Elmer Tanner
1969 - 1981



Gregory Fitch
1982 - 1987



Dr. Jim Cook
1987 - 1996



Dr. James Utterback
1997 - 2017



Lana Reynolds
2017 - Present

1996

Becoming Seminole State College

The Board of Regents passed a resolution requesting that the Oklahoma legislature and the Governor change the name of the institution to better reflect its mission. The state legislature and Gov. Frank Keating approved the change of name to Seminole State College in May of 1996.

2017

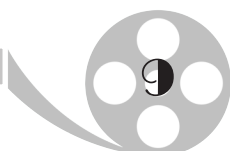
First Woman Appointed as College President

Taking office on July 1, 2017, Lana Reynolds became the College's first female President. Prior to being named to the office, Reynolds served as Executive Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Reynolds brought more than 30 years of experience in higher education to the position.

2021

The Expansion of Virtual Learning

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SSC bolstered its online course offerings to accommodate student needs. For the spring and summer semesters of 2020, courses were conducted completely online. In April of 2021, the Virtual Learning Lounge was opened. The facility provides ample technology to help students complete coursework. The space coincides with the launch of three fully online degree programs.



SJC's Rebirth Like **PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES**

By Robby Trammell (story originally printed in the *Seminole Producer*, Aug. 24, 1980)

The story of Seminole Junior College is the story of a virtual modern-day miracle of joint community cooperation between a community and the State Regents for Higher Education – a cooperation that resulted in the rebirth of SJC in 1969.

Organized in 1931 as the 13th and 14th grades of the local public school, it had never had more than 150 students, and in 1968 was faced with loss of accreditation.

Three retired public-school teachers were the faculty. Courses for college credit were being taken with high school students, and the state regents could no longer afford to provide even state accreditation.

After a warning in 1968, notice was given in 1969, and everyone thought the school was dead. Everyone except a few, that is, and it was that “few” including then State Rep. David Boren and Milt Phillips, publisher of the local newspaper.

To make a long story short, the state regents agreed to allow one more year at SJC – if a series of steps were undertaken to change the institution to one more representative of Oklahoma higher education.

Then followed a series of events which proved how badly the Seminole community desired a community college.

- A 40-acre tract of land was donated by the City of Seminole and nearly \$300,000 was dedicated for utilities to the site so the college could have its own campus.

- Seminole citizens voted a

\$250,000 public school bond to finance SJC's first building on its new campus. The bond issue was approved by an 8 to 1 margin.

- The Seminole Presbyterian Church donated its building for two years: the college held classes reaching an enrollment of 605 students during the second year.

- Seminole voters approved an additional one-cent sales tax earmarked for the junior college by a two-to-one margin, and it ultimately provided nearly a million dollars before the college achieved full state funding in 1975.

- The community raised \$400,000 to build a physical education building and provides \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually for scholarships, SJC is currently engaged in a \$600,000 drive for a dormitory.

Since entering its first building in the fall of 1971, nearly a building a year has been added to the campus, thanks to Seminole citizens, the State Legislature, and Governors David Boren and George Nigh.

The Administration Building was the first structure completed on campus. It consists of seven classrooms, a reading laboratory, a home economics room, two science laboratories, a talkback television classroom, faculty and administrative offices, the college business office and the Office of Student Personal Services.

In 1973, the E.T. Dunlap Student Union was completed. The college bookstore, snack bar and cafetorium are housed in this building, which

was named for State Chancellor E.T. Dunlap.

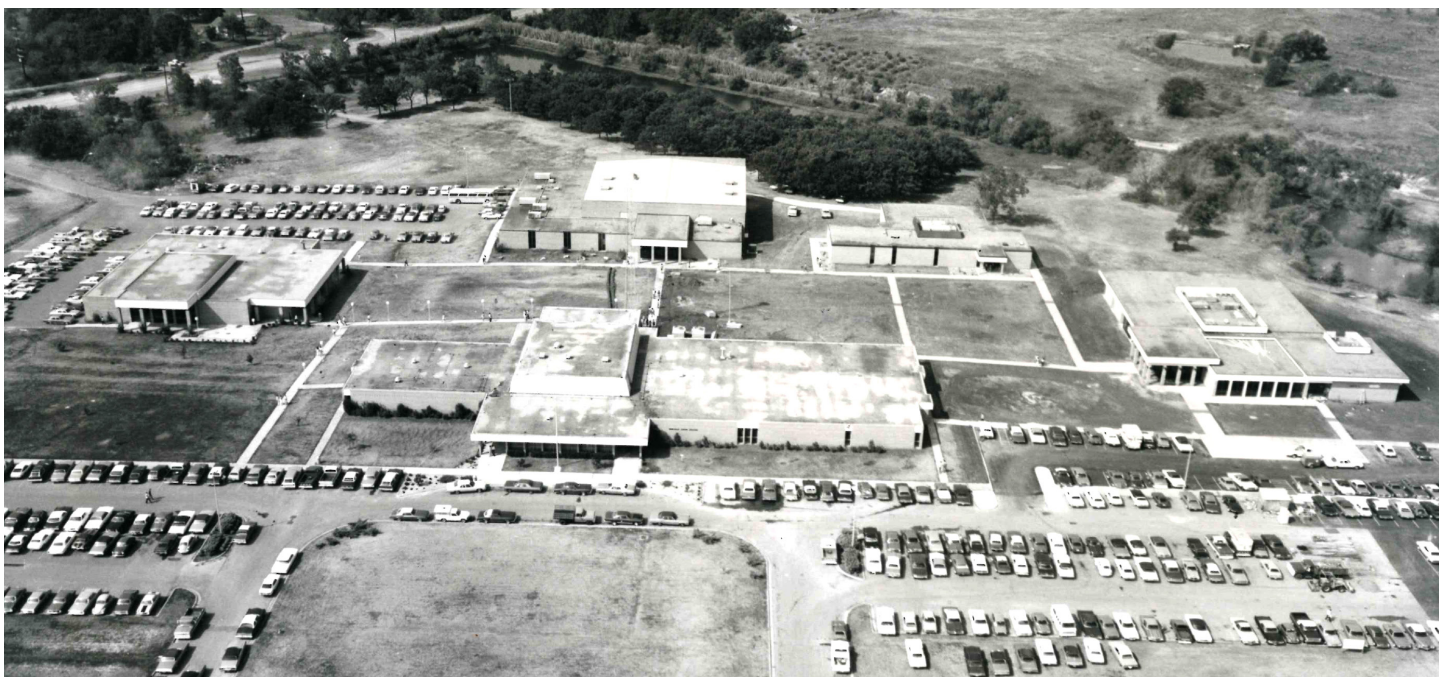
Dr. Dunlap was instrumental in helping Seminole get approval from the state regents in 1969 to continue its college on a probationary status.

The third facility to be constructed on campus was the Center for Cultural and Physical Learning, completed in May, 1974. This building consists of additional classrooms and faculty offices, locker rooms, a weight room, and a gymnasium with a seating capacity for over 2,000 fans of sporting and cultural events. The building has now been air-conditioned.

The Milt Phillips building was readied for the fall semester of 1975. The space in this building is devoted to a large lecture room, two music classroom/laboratories, a physics laboratory, engineering computer lab and faculty offices.

This building was named in honor of the late Seminole Producer publisher, who was one of the college's strongest advocates and supporters. He frequently wrote about the college in his “Cluttered Corner” newspaper column:

“Seminole Junior College might be designated the greatest ONE SINGLE contributing factor to the growth and development of this community.” Phillips wrote on Sept. 12, 1976. “President Elmer Tanner and a faculty nucleus that demonstrated they are ‘Oklahoma’s Finest’ have been the driving power – the energy – that moved us successfully forward. This community owes them a deep debt of



Aerial photo of then Seminole Junior College shot on Aug. 25, 1976.

gratitude.”

In a May 26, 1977, column Phillips referred to Dr. Dunlap, calling the Seminole Junior college success story “a miracle in education.”

“There may be other communities who have accomplished ‘Miracles’ in attaining some community goal. But we question that ANY OTHER community ever did a better job than the community of Seminole in building a fine educational institution here. Every citizen who supported the college, either by action or in spirit, can take some individual pride in the building of our Seminole Junior College,” he wrote.

Phillips, in a July 16, 1975 column, said Seminole gave rebirth to Seminole Junior College “because our citizens pulled together for a tremendous institution they recognized as being of great worth now, and that will be of great worth to our children and grandchildren for the next hundred years.”

“Now that we have brought Seminole Junior College to this highest

point in its life since 1931, let’s not sit back and be complacent. There are many things each citizen can do to help our college. One of the things we can do is BOOST it just as we did when its very existence depended on us to come through with very substantial funding,” Phillips wrote.

In the summer of 1976, the David L. Boren Library was completed on the SJC campus. This building houses the Seminole Junior College 16,000 plus volume collection in addition to microfiche holdings.

The building also is the location of a Multi-Media Center, an auditorium and six seminar rooms one of which houses a writing laboratory.

SJC’s Educational Occupational building, finished in the fall semester of 1978, provides faculty offices and classroom and laboratory space for the following programs: art, secretarial science, journalism and printing, computer science, drafting and electronics.

An extension of the Educational-Occupational building was com-

pleted in the fall of 1979 and houses the nursing program and construction management technology program.

This summer, a new maintenance building was opened on the SJC campus.

Funding for phase one of a two-phased addition to the Center for Physical and Cultural Learning was approved by the Oklahoma Legislature and State Regents for Higher Education.

When completed, the addition will house an indoor swimming pool, dressing rooms, and other physical education facilities.

Seminole Junior College serves primarily a five-county area of central Oklahoma, including Seminole, Hughes Pottawatomie, Lincoln and Okfuskee counties.

With the support of citizens in its service area, the administration, faculty and staff, Seminole Junior College has excellent facilities and fine academic programs to offer any prospective student.



Pumping UP THE JAMS

Notable Campus Events



Oklahoma!

Oklahoma State Tourism Director Glenn Sullivan, left, talks with Seminole “Junior” College President Dr. Jim Cook and Governor Henry Bellmon on September 18, 1989 at an “Oklahoma Homecoming 90” program held at the college. Governor Bellmon was on campus to help kick-off a statewide initiative celebrating the State’s history and tourism attractions. Local programs were organized to mirror the State celebration throughout the year 1990.



Push It

Longtime art instructor Kelly Kirk heads for the kiddie pool during an obstacle course race. Throughout the 1980s, faculty, staff and students participated in an annual spring ritual known as “Trojan Olympics.”



Time in a Bottle

In 1994, Seminole “Junior” College President Dr. Jim Cook came up with an idea to honor outstanding former students of the college with induction into an “Alumni Hall of Fame.” Members of the inaugural class, pictured left to right with Dr. Cook, are: long-time Varnum School Superintendent Eugene Warrenburg; retired SJC Reading Instructor Frances Warrenburg; former Wilson Elementary School Principal Bonnie Lee Grisso; former Seminole civic leader and business owner Neil Molleur; and former Trojan basketball player and NAIA National Championship Coach at Oklahoma City University Win Case. Since that time, 25 Annual banquets have been held recognizing over 70 additional honorees whose personal and professional accomplishments have brought pride to the institution.



Nothin’s Gonna Stop Us Now

Local leaders gathered in 2001 to ceremonially “break ground” on the Enoch Kelly Haney Center at Seminole State College. Among those turning dirt at the event (pictured left to right) were: Seminole City Manager Steve Saxon, Chamber President Stu Phillips, Oklahoma State Senator Kelly Haney, Vice Mayor Vickie Spears, Mayor Dr. Mike McCreight, Seminole Industrial Foundation Chair Ernie Willis, SSC Educational Foundation Chair Bob Swearingen and construction manager for the project Mike Owen.



I Just Want to Celebrate

Custodian Christine McKee (left) and President's Office Manager Keesha Mason (right) arrange cupcakes in the shape of the number 90 to celebrate the College's anniversary at the fall in-service event on Aug. 11, 2021.



After All These Years

Senator Zack Taylor (R-District 28) presents SSC President Lana Reynolds with a Citation of Recognition, honoring the College's 90th anniversary on Jan. 13, 2022.





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