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News

3 January,
2019



Burchett, Crall, Hays and Sonobe Honored by SWOSU Alumni Association

Photo Caption: Former Southwestern Oklahoma State University employees (from left) John Hays, Stuart Burchett, Les Crall and Blake Sonobe were recently recipients of the SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award during a reception held in Weatherford.

Four former Southwestern Oklahoma State University employees were recently honored by the SWOSU Alumni Association during a reception held in the Pioneer Cellular Events Center on the Weatherford campus.

The Alumni Association Board of Directors voted in 2015 to begin recognizing former SWOSU employees annually and celebrating their contributions to the university.

The 2018 SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award honorees include:

- **Stuart Burchett** – Burchett was introduced at the event by 2016 Emeriti Honoree Joe Anna Hibler. A graduate of Seiling High School, Burchett earned his undergraduate degree from SWOSU in 1962 and his doctorate from Kansas State University. Burchett joined the SWOSU faculty in 1966 and served as chair of the Department of Chemistry from 1989 to 1993.
- **Les Crall** – Crall was introduced at the event by SWOSU President Dr. Randy L. Beutler. A member of the SWOSU faculty for 29 years, Crall served as associate dean of the Everett Dobson School of Business & Technology. Crall earned an undergraduate degree and a Master’s of Business Administration from SWOSU and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Oklahoma. Crall has extensive experience in Higher Learning Commission (HLC) leadership experience both in America and internationally.
- **John Hays** – Hays was introduced at the event by SWOSU President Beutler. A native of Willow (OK), Hays earned his undergraduate and Master’s of Education degrees from SWOSU and his doctorate from the University of Oklahoma. Hays began his service to SWOSU in 1972 and was named president in 2001, retiring in 2010.
- **Blake Sonobe** – Born in Hawaii and raised in San Diego, Sonobe was introduced at the event by 2016 Emeriti Honoree Dr. Dan Dill. Sonobe holds a Bachelor’s in chemistry from the United States Air Force Academy, a Master’s in chemistry from Texas A&M University, and a doctorate in chemistry from the University of California at Davis. Sonobe came to SWOSU in 1990 as a member of the university’s Chemistry faculty and served as vice president for academic affairs & provost beginning in 2005 until he was named vice chancellor for academic affairs with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in 2012.

Previous SWOSU Alumni Association Emeritus Award honorees include:

2017: Jill Jones, Henry Kirkland, Jr. (posthumous), John Loftin and Randall Russell.

2016: Dan Dill, Joe Anna Hibler, Mark Mouse (posthumous) and Bill Seibert.

2015: Lamar Crall, Roger Egerton and Mona Jean Suter.

The SWOSU Alumni Association is a dynamic group of volunteers from all walks of life who are passionate about giving back to SWOSU. The association offers members a variety of benefits and event opportunities. For more information, contact SWOSU’s Office of Institutional Advancement at 580-774-3289 or visit www.SWOSUAlumni.com.

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