



# Echoes from the Hill

Southwestern Oklahoma State University Office of Institutional Advancement and Alumni

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# ECHOES from the HILL

SWOSU™ Foundation and SWOSU™ Alumni Magazine



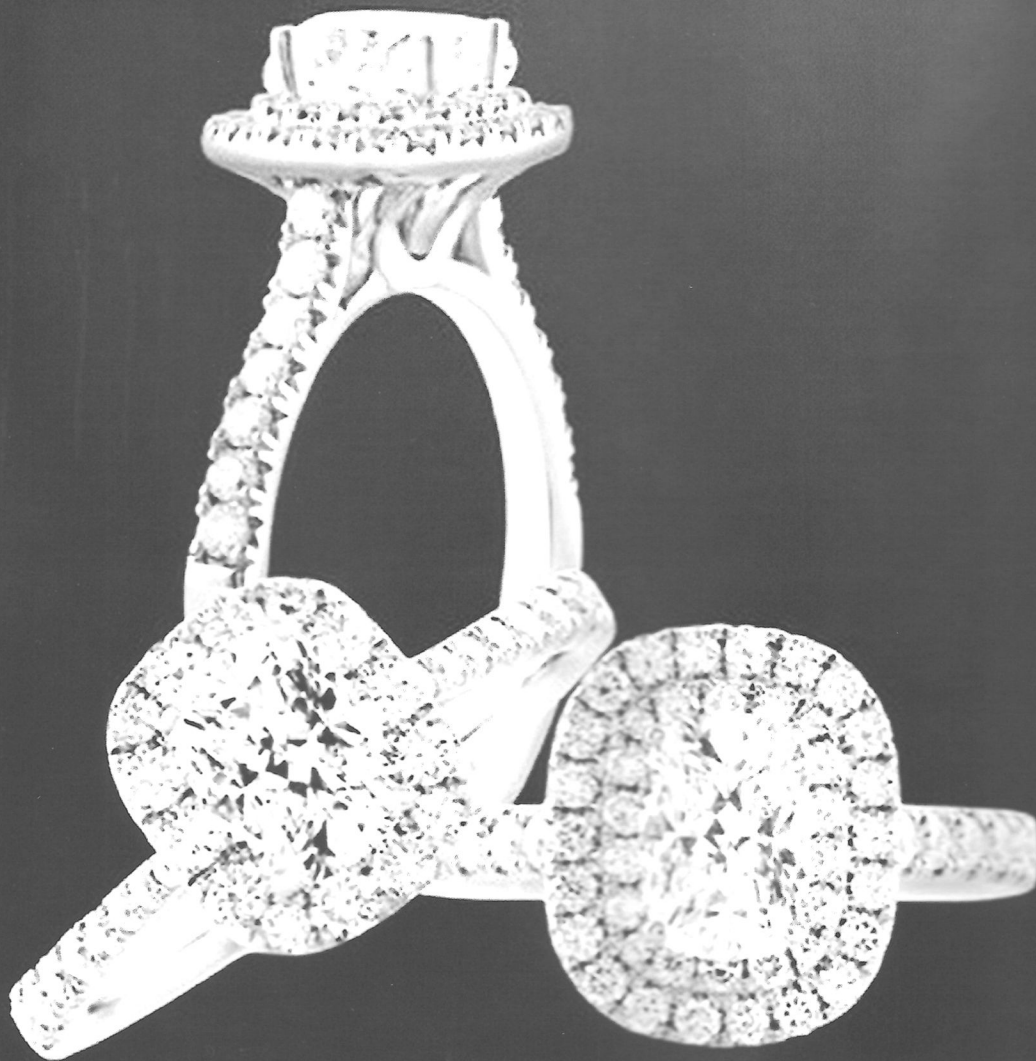
Fall 2016

2016 Homecoming  
Schedule  
Inside!





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Senior wide receiver, D.J. Jones  
turns up field against Southeastern  
Oklahoma State University.  
Photograph taken by SWOSU  
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# ONCE A BULLDOG ALWAYS A BULLDOG





## FROM SWOSU PRESIDENT RANDY L. BEUTLER

Many have heard me say this before, and it holds true as SWOSU heads into the Fall 2016 Semester: “There is no better place to be than a college campus in the Fall.”



Here on “the Hilltop” we’re in the midst of an exciting season of learning and growth. Enrollment for the Fall 2016 semester once again shows an increase in students for both the Weatherford and Sayre campuses. SWOSU enjoyed an increase of 4.1% from the Fall 2015 semester and 2016 is the third straight year for a fall semester enrollment increase. I’m delighted that the focus of our faculty and staff on recruitment and retention is yielding positive results. We’re not resting on our laurels, though. Far from it. All members of the SWOSU Community are working hard to make sure that this institution is a place that impacts our students’ lives for the better. We have a vision for a university that is a positive force for the betterment of society. Our strategies, tactics, and goals are all oriented towards helping SWOSU meet its mission and overcome the challenges that lie ahead.

As 2016 begins to come to a busy close I want to thank you for your support of Southwestern. As you consider your year-end giving please be sure to visit [www.GiveToSWOSU.com](http://www.GiveToSWOSU.com) to make your most generous gift in support of our university, and be sure to pay us a visit on campus whenever you can. My door is always open.

Go Bulldogs!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads “Randy L. Beutler”.



## FROM SWOSU FOUNDATION & ALUMNI ASSOC. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GARRETT KING

Champions of all kinds—academic, athletic, and more—are returning to SWOSU on November 12th for our 2016 Homecoming! This will be an exciting opportunity for current students, faculty, and staff to reconnect with our many alumni, emeriti, and friends from around the world. Please be sure to look inside this issue of *Echoes From The Hill* and also visit [www.SWOSUHomecoming.com](http://www.SWOSUHomecoming.com) to view up-to-the-minute information on the schedule of fun activities and things to do.



SWOSU champions are featured in this issue of *Echoes*. Lori Harper and Blaine Boyd are but two fantastic examples of the finest ideals of what it means to be a SWOSU Bulldog. I'm also delighted that we're highlighting the activities of the Southwestern International Students Association (SISA). This issue also tells the story of a true "SWOSU blue" champion of quiet, consistent voluntary service, Ms. Linda Redinger, who recently retired as Alumni Treasurer after a record 30 years in the role. We're also celebrating the many remarkable SWOSU Bulldogs who were champions of the United States space program and asking for your help in "Launch!"-ing the next generation of SWOSU Physics Stars! Additionally, we've included information on next year's 47th Annual SWOSU Jazz Festival and on the SWOSU Alumni Association's 2017 trip to the Canadian Rockies.

Be sure to visit [www.GiveToSWOSU.com](http://www.GiveToSWOSU.com) or call 580-774-3267 to make your annual gift to SWOSU, with our sincerest thanks! Your generosity is what keeps *Echoes* going.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garrett King".





# SWOSU Student Wins 2016 Homecoming Logo Contest

Southwestern Oklahoma State University introduced the logo for the 2016 Homecoming festivities scheduled November 10-12 on the Weatherford campus.

The logo design is in keeping with the 2016 SWOSU Homecoming theme, "Return Of The Champions." The Homecoming theme, in turn, follows the theme of the recently-held 10th annual SWOSU Athletic Auction, which was themed "A Night Of Champions."

The logo was designed by SWOSU Communication Arts and Graphic Design student Maggie (Nhu) Tran of Vietnam. Tran's design won out over other submissions, and she received a \$250 cash prize furnished by the SWOSU Alumni Association. In addition to her studies, Tran serves as a news editor for *The Southwestern* student newspaper.



*SWOSU Alumni Association Executive Director Garrett King awards SWOSU student Maggie Tran.*

"Maggie Tran's creativity won the contest in a field of very good design submissions; we are so thankful that Ms. Tran took the time to offer up her gifts to help us celebrate SWOSU's homecoming."

- Mr. Garrett King  
Chair

2016 Homecoming Committee



# Southwestern Oklahoma State University™

## www.SWOSUHomecoming.com

### 2016 Homecoming Weekend Schedule

Schedule subject to change - visit [www.SWOSUHomecoming.com](http://www.SWOSUHomecoming.com)

#### **Thur. Nov 10<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 - Panorama Event - Mike Super, Magic & Illusion at SWOSU Fine Arts Center (*Tickets required*)

#### **Fri. Nov 11<sup>th</sup>**

4:00 - SWOSU Basketball Classic - Washburn vs East Central

6:00 - SWOSU Basketball Classic - SWOSU vs Augustana

7:00 - Jazz "A" Performance at Music On Main at the Stafford Air & Space Museum

8:30 - Bonfire following games - location to be announced

#### **Sat. Nov 12<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 - ROTC Reunion - Wellness Center

10-11:30 - Pharmacy Alumni Recognition Ceremony/Brunch

11:30-12:30 - Pharmacy Open House

Noon - SWOSU Basketball Classic - Augustana vs East Central

12-5:30 - Tailgate Party Pit & Food Truck Alley Rally

1-4:30 - SWOSU Cook-off Challenge

1:30 - Parade

2:00 - SWOSU Basketball Classic - SWOSU vs Washburn

4:30 - 50 Year Alumni Reunion & Awards Reception

5:00 - Senior Day Program

5:15 - SWOSU/High School Massed Band Performance

5:30 - SWOSU Football vs. Northwestern

5:30 - Alumni & Athletic Association Watch Party - Wellness Center

Fireworks Display after the Football Game







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# SWOSU Physics is “go for LAUNCH!”



The Southwestern Oklahoma State University physics program in Weatherford has begun a new scholarship campaign – “LAUNCH!” The campaign is sponsored by the SWOSU physics faculty and the SWOSU Foundation to help raise money for more scholarships to be given to students pursuing a degree in physics at SWOSU.

The SWOSU physics program has many notable alumni that helped shaped America’s space exploration history.

In the early 1960s, SWOSU Physics Professor J.R. Pratt saw a newspaper clipping for employment opportunities at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The newly formed space agency was looking for employees to run a communications office on the ground called “Mission Control.”

Several SWOSU physics graduates followed their professor’s suggestion of applying and joined NASA to become some of the first employees in Mission Control. Some of these graduates include John Aaron, Tommy Weichel, James Bates and Gilbert Carman.

Each of these men made history as it was unfolding around them.

James Bates, Class of 1962, was one of the very first Mission Control analysts to assist in the flights of the first space mission, Mercury, and the Gemini and Apollo missions. Bates was inducted into the SWOSU Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in 1993.

John Aaron, Class of 1964, was a flight controller during the Gemini and Apollo programs. He is credited with saving Apollo 12 when shortly after launch it was struck by lightning. He was also a crucial part in the efforts of saving Apollo 13, which earned him the highly regarded nickname of “steely-eyed missile man.” Aaron was inducted into the SWOSU Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in 2006.

Tommy Weichel, Class of 1964, was a flight controller during the Apollo missions and was part of the team that reconstructed the equipment to be used on board Apollo 13, saving the astronauts while using the Lunar Module as a lifeboat.

Gilbert Carman, Class of 1967, joined NASA shortly after graduating and became a NASA mission planner during the Apollo and Space Shuttle programs. He was trained in the specialized field of mechanics and quickly became an expert in the maneuvers that would get the Lunar Module to the surface of the moon and back. He then worked with the Space Shuttle and became the acknowledged expert in Shuttle entry guidance and trained many controllers who were responsible for the landing of the Shuttle. Carman was awarded the SWOSU President’s Award of Merit in 2015.

Now, there’s a new generation of SWOSU physics students who hold the same promise. The SWOSU physics program is one of the most comprehensive in the state and region. The “LAUNCH!” campaign will help fund scholarships to help encourage more physics students and help “launch” a new generation of SWOSU scientists and engineers.

To make a gift or pledge to the “LAUNCH!” SWOSU physics scholarship campaign, go online to [www.GiveToSWOSU.com](http://www.GiveToSWOSU.com). For more information, call Brandi Rizzi at 580-774-3156.



# Linda Redinger Retires After 30 Years

SWOSU Alumni Association Treasurer Linda Redinger, SWOSU (Class of 1976) has retired from the treasurer's post after a record-setting 30 years of service in the role.

Redinger was honored October 26th at a surprise reception held at First National Bank coordinated through the efforts of the First National Bank employees and the SWOSU Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Redinger has witnessed many changes on the SWOSU landscape during her tenure in the volunteer position. She has served under three university Presidents; Dr. Joe Anna Hibler, Dr. John Hays and Dr. Randy Beutler, all of whom were in attendance to express their thanks for a job well done.

She was presented with the first-ever "SWOSU Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award" by Garrett King, SWOSU Alumni Association Executive Director. The award will be named for Redinger when made in the future.

"The SWOSU Alumni Association is very fortunate to have a rich tradition of financial prudence and discipline guiding its mission to keep SWOSU's alumni, emeriti, and friends meaningfully connected to 'the Hilltop,'" said Garrett King. "Linda Redinger set the bar very high."

Redinger currently serves as senior vice-president & human resources director of the First National Bank & Trust Company of Weatherford.



*SWOSU President Emeritus, Dr. Joe Anna Hibler with Linda Redinger (seated).*



*Linda Redinger (seated) and her family.*



*SWOSU Alumni Association Executive Director, Garrett King presents award to Linda Redinger.*





## Lori (Wallace) Harper, SWOSU Class of 1993

Ms. Lori (Wallace) Harper is a 1993 SWOSU Alumnus. A Weatherford native, Lori was, like so many other Bulldogs, a nontraditional student in that she began her education at SWOSU in 1981 and returned later in life to complete her degree in Business Administration.

“When I began my education at SWOSU in 1981 I knew I was going to solve world hunger,” laughed Harper during a recent interview with *Echoes* held at Ingalls Shipbuilding’s offices in Pascagoula, Mississippi. “I had grown up in an environment that said ‘you’re great and you have what it takes to save the world’ and I really thought I was going to do that.”

Life unfolded with different plans for Lori. She married Gary C. “Bull” Harper (SWOSU Class of 1983 and SWOSU Athletic Hall of Fame 2015 Inductee) and left Weatherford, continuing her education in multiple locations around the country. During this period Lori began working in government contracting in Dallas supporting the aircraft industry; she would also work at NASA’s Stennis Space Center in Mississippi where she was involved with the space shuttle program.

When Lori resumed her studies at SWOSU in 1993 twelve years had passed, and she had become a divorced mother with two sons, Marcus and Justin. In more ways than one SWOSU welcomed Lori back to “the Hilltop” with open arms—a fact for which she is still very grateful.

“In 1981 as a high school senior, I was awarded a full scholarship to SWOSU, and when I made my return, the university, no questions asked, honored that scholarship,” Lori remembers. “SWOSU was, and is, a place where people really care about you. It made a tremendous impact on me knowing that the SWOSU community cared about my success. What I remember most about my SWOSU



experience is how helpful the administrators and instructors were; that made a huge difference in my education, especially since, when I came back in 1993, I was a mom as well as a student.”

After graduating from SWOSU, Lori went on to hold leadership positions with several Fortune 500 companies in the aerospace and defense, petrochemical, and services industries. She also earned a Master of Business Administration from William Carey University.

In 2002 Lori joined Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Ingalls is a leading producer of ships for the United States Navy and is the largest private employer in Mississippi. Ingalls Shipbuilding is a division of Huntington Ingalls Industries.

Lori served in several capacities at Ingalls including Director, Production Control; Material Director



for both the LHD 8 and LPD 17 ship programs; Supply Chain Compliance Manager; and Gulfport Operations Material Site Manager before being named Vice President, Supply Chain Management. In this role Lori provides leadership to all supply chain management functions, including sourcing, procurement, inventory control, and material warehousing.

“Of all the things I’ve done professionally, this has been the most rewarding. I have a passion for what we do and find it to be quite noble. It’s very fulfilling to go out on the dock and see the ships we’re building for our country,” Lori said when asked about her role at Ingalls. “There’s something very profound when you see the men and women aboard these ships after we deliver them and you know that they are depending on us. They never question that we’ve built a quality product. So, this is a great responsibility we take upon ourselves at Ingalls, and a source of great pride.”

Lori’s grasp of the complexities of her job at Ingalls is most impressive. She describes it for *Echoes*:

“My team is responsible for providing our shipbuilders with quality materials and services on time and within affordability targets. We source, procure, and store everything from safety supplies to steel to main engines and diesel generators. And we do all of this in support of four classes of ships. Balancing quality, cost, and schedule is sometimes challenging but we always remember why we’re here and that’s to build and deliver a quality product for our service men and women.”

And how does a young lady who grew up on College Avenue in Weatherford, Oklahoma, just across the street from SWOSU, handle this massive task of building these massive ships for the mightiest navy in the history of the world?

“You know, I wager that if you spoke with any of my classmates at Weatherford High School or at SWOSU they would tell you I’ve always been a different kind of thinker. During my time at SWOSU we were always encouraged to think through issues and not to settle for the status quo.

SWOSU taught me so much about bringing others to the table and bringing out the best in them. The ‘Bulldog virtue’ of diversity—of respecting and valuing the perspective of others who thought differently and who had experienced the world differently—has served me so well. The skill sets I picked up at SWOSU have guided me in relating to our customers and discerning their needs as well as their wants.”

“SWOSU gave me such a great foundation. When I began there in 1981 it helped facilitate a beginning to my life as an adult, and when I returned there in 1993 it helped motivate and inspire me.”

Though she has already achieved much—in 2015 she was named one of Mississippi’s Top 10 Women in Business by the Mississippi Business Journal—Lori is a believer in lifelong learning and progress. She has completed leadership training at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business, is a 2008 graduate of the Mississippi Economic Council’s Leadership Mississippi Program, and is a certified Six Sigma Green Belt. Lori also believes in giving back to her community—she sits on the Corporate Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast, and sponsors Ingalls’ Women in Shipbuilding Enterprise (WISE) employee resource group.

Through it all, Lori has been encouraged and supported by her husband, Raymos McMillon.

When *Echoes* asked this amiable, relaxed, soft-spoken SWOSU Bulldog what recognition she values above all others, she smiled, gently, and simply said, “Momo.”

It’s the name her grandchildren have given her.

What advice would Lori offer the SWOSU students of today? Simple, really:

“Never quit.”

Clearly, Lori “walks her talk”. And SWOSU will never quit being proud to call her one of our own.





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## Boyd Receives SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit

Blaine Boyd of Washington, D.C. has been named the 29th member of the Presidential Order of Merit at SWOSU in Weatherford.

Boyd was recognized during a surprise ceremony recently at the White House where Boyd currently serves as Director of Correspondence for First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama.

SWOSU President Dr. Randy L. Beutler presented the honor to Boyd, a SWOSU Class of 2014 alumnus who studied English and Finance.

“Blaine Boyd was an exemplary student during his time at SWOSU. His personal integrity and selfless commitment to helping others saw him elected SWOSU’s Student Body President, and those same admirable qualities have marked his time of service in the Obama Administration,” Beutler said. “We are very honored to call Blaine one of our own, and so proud of the way he has represented the ideals and values of SWOSU in the public sphere.”

Boyd is a native of Weatherford. He is the son of SWOSU Assistant Professor Dr. Allen Boyd and SWOSU Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Ruth Boyd, and the grandson of Bud and Dody Boyd and Millie and the late Bob Maynard, all SWOSU alumni. Blaine’s brother, Brady, is currently a student at SWOSU.

Boyd is the second-youngest individual to have ever been inducted.

“I’m forever grateful to be part of the SWOSU family, and I’m incredibly humbled by this recognition,” said Boyd. “President Beutler has been a guiding influence and mentor for many



years, and it meant so much that he’d take the time to make this recognition in person. It’s with great pride that I’ll always say I’m a SWOSU Bulldog.”

The SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit is an honor bestowed upon an individual who has shown outstanding achievement, on the state, national or international level, in the arts, sciences, business, industry, the professions, sports, social service or public service. The prestigious award represents recognition of significant distinction that a member of the SWOSU family has attained. SWOSU President Dr. John Hays introduced the award in 2004. The SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit is the highest honor in the personal gift of SWOSU’s chief executive.





# The International Student Experience at SWOSU

SWOSU prides itself on being a warm, welcoming university with a friendly atmosphere and comfortable feel. These are important qualities all students value, whether they grew up in Oklahoma, out of the state or out of the country. SWOSU's international students also find a close-knit and accepting community at SWOSU, both on campus and within the Weatherford community.

Currently, SWOSU has about 250 international students (5 percent of the total campus population), and every year the numbers increase. Diversity within the student body is essential to broadening perspectives and fostering acceptance. International students are integral to bringing a diversity of cultures and attitudes to SWOSU's campus and enriching the college experience.

SWOSU President, Randy Beutler, recently expressed the importance of the university's international students. "They bring diversity to the university. We want all our students to have that experience in their education."

SWOSU has many different clubs for international students, including the African Students Association, Saudi Arabia Club, English as a Second Language Club, and Asian American Students Association Club.

But the largest and most diverse organization is Southwestern International Students Association, or SISA. The organization's purpose is to provide students with a supportive community for their academic and social needs. SISA events include trips to the Oklahoma state capitol building, museums, and historic sites, all as a way of introducing students to Oklahoman and American cultures.

The biggest SISA event of the year is a spring formal called the International Banquet. The Banquet almost feels as if the United Nations had an annual prom, complete with each student's



dress, music, and culinary delights transplanted from the many represented nations.

Students cook dishes specific to their cultures and present them to the other guests. Because certain ingredients may be hard to track down, students take trips to other parts of Oklahoma to fill their international cupboards.

It's easy to imagine how scary and exciting the life of an international student is. There's leaving your family, friends, and all that's familiar to go to a university in a new country. However, there's also the excitement of meeting new people and broadening your experience. Many students return home during breaks, but others don't get the chance. It's easy for loneliness to set in. Staying busy can really help. Organizations like SISA can help fill time and the absence of family.

At SWOSU, international students and their families can find help for the application, admissions, and enrollment process through the International Student Affairs Office. For more information contact Dr. Randall Beckloff at [randy.beckloff@swosu.edu](mailto:randy.beckloff@swosu.edu) or (580) 774-6172.





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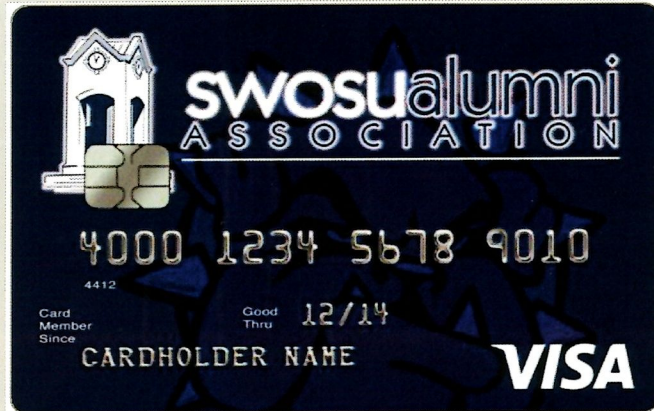
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## PANORAMA 2016-17



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MEMORIES.

## SWOSU Panorama series during the 2016-17 “Music, Magic and Memories”

SWOSU's Panorama series is partially supported by an endowed lectureship sponsored by SBC. Additional information about the Panorama series is available by calling the SWOSU Public Relations & Marketing Office at (580) 774-3063.

*All events will be at 7:30 p.m. Comedian Mike Birbiglia will appear in the Pioneer Cellular Event Center with the remaining three events taking place in the Fine Arts Center.*

2016

Comedian Mike Birbiglia  
10.27.2016

Magician Mike Super  
11.10.2016

2017

The Gentlemen of Hip-Hop  
2. 2.2017

Taj Express: The Bollywood Musical  
Revue  
4.5.2017



# EVENTS

**NOVEMBER 29**

EMERITI RECEPTION

**FEBRUARY 11**

ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME BANQUET

**APRIL 6-8**

45TH RODEO

**MAY 6**

CONVOCATION

**JUNE 18**

ALUMNI PICNIC



**For updated information on SWOSU events  
[www.swosu.edu](http://www.swosu.edu)**



# > THE PREMIER ENTREPRENEURIAL CLUB TO CREATE, CONNECT AND GROW



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