

# **ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Camp at SWOSU Propels Students to think Beyond the Classroom**

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Middle school students from Oklahoma and Texas ditched their skateboards and dropped their joysticks to spend two weeks at a free camp hosted by Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

The ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp, held July 13-24, brought together 51 sixth, seventh and eighth graders, some of whom had not ever been on a college campus, to learn more about the fascination of science, technology, engineering and math.

The camp was one of 30 held across the nation, and the SWOSU camp was the only one in Oklahoma.

The residential camp gave students a first-hand experience with experiments, role models and innovative programs to encourage their continued participation in math and science courses in school. Wayne Trail, director of the camp, said the students' leadership potential and citizenship skills were fostered along with their abilities to work in teams and think creatively, while spending two weeks in a college campus environment. The ultimate goal was to raise their awareness of career possibilities in science, technology, engineering and math.

A selection committee helped identify those students who would most benefit from the camp and chose the student participants. To attend the camp, students must have demonstrated a high commitment and interest in math and science; be members of a traditionally underrepresented and underserved population; have at least a "B" average in math and science; passed the state's standardized tests; and be recommended by math and science teachers.