

SWOSU Wins Grant for Assistance with Jazz Festival

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Dr. Richard Tirk, assistant professor in the Department of Music at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, recently received a \$5,000 grant from the Oklahoma Arts Council to help fund the 44th annual SWOSU Jazz Festival in 2014.

The mission of the Oklahoma Arts Council is to cultivate and support a thriving arts environment in Oklahoma by supporting opportunities that encourage Oklahomans to create, perform or attend arts activities.

The 44th Annual SWOSU Jazz Festival is planned for February 6-7 on the Weatherford campus. The visiting artists for the event include Allen Vizzutti and his trio. Attendees will have the opportunity to experience high-level jazz, and members of the SWOSU Jazz Band will have the chance to perform alongside these internationally known artists.

The SWOSU Jazz Festival was first held in 1971 after the realization that jazz activity west of Oklahoma City was very limited, according to Tirk. The event was originally set up to host performances by high school and junior high stage bands. Since then, the community as a whole has become more interested in jazz, and the festival continues to reach individuals who might, otherwise, rarely experience live jazz.

The 44th annual Jazz Festival will be planned by Tirk with the help of SWOSU faculty members Dr. Keith Talley, chair of the Music Department; Dr. Robert Chambers; and David Bessinger. In all, over 100 SWOSU students and faculty members will be involved with the event.