

SWOSU Foundation, Inc. Celebrates 40th Anniversary

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In 1977, five Southwestern Oklahoma State University supporters each wrote a \$100 check to establish the SWOSU Foundation, Incorporated, a non-profit organization with a mission to raise, steward, and disburse private funds that would help the university achieve levels of excellence beyond what is possible with only state funding.

Four decades into this important work, the SWOSU Foundation in Weatherford is stewarding over \$23 million in assets for the benefit of SWOSU thanks to the vision and insight of its five original incorporators and the generosity of thousands of SWOSU alumni, emeriti and friends who have given and are giving back to the Hilltop.

The original five incorporators of the SWOSU Foundation, Inc. included: the late Ed Berrong, Sr.; the late Leonard Campbell; Lamar Crall; the late Paul Flick; and the late W. W. Ward.

Recently, a celebration of the Foundation's founding 40 years ago was held in the SWOSU Memorial Student Union on the Weatherford campus. Present and former trustees of the Foundation gathered and heard comments from former SWOSU presidents Joe Anna Hibler and John Hays and current SWOSU President Randy Beutler about the important role played by the Foundation over the last four decades of SWOSU's history.

Those present were also honored to be addressed by the last living Foundation incorporator, Lamar Crall. In his remarks, Crall praised his fellow incorporators and offered his

gratitude to the many individuals and businesses that have been crucial partners over the last 40 years. Crall commended the Foundation as an important resource that SWOSU has been able to consistently rely upon to provide much-needed student aid, faculty and staff support, and capital raising efforts.

Crall thoughtfully and creatively provided the Foundation with the original returned \$100 check (dated May 1977, the same month as the Foundation's incorporation) he provided as his 1/5 share of the \$500 used to incorporate the SWOSU Foundation. The 40-year-old check has been beautifully framed by Marsee's Fine Art & Framing and will hang in the Foundation's offices in the historic Burton House on the Weatherford Campus.

As a part of the special commemoration, Crall and former Foundation Trustee Eddie Tom Lakey of Sayre were inducted as the 30th and 31st members, respectively, of the SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit by President Randy Beutler. Crall's historic tenure on the Foundation Board spans from the organization's founding to 2009. Lakey (SWOSU Class of 1969) served a record-breaking decade-plus as the chair of the Foundation Trustees.

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 SWOSU Foundation 40th Anniversary Celebration was made possible by the support of the following generous underwriters: Evans & Davis Attorneys; Philip and Heather Busey; and David and Dianne Hunter.

For more information, please visit www.SWOSUFoundation.com or call 580-774-3267.