

SWOSU Building Renamed Dr. Joe Anna Hibler Education Center

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University's Education Building has been renamed the Dr. Joe Anna Hibler Education Center. Hibler (front) was honored at a dedication ceremony November 30 on the Weatherford campus in conjunction with the regents meeting of the Regional University System of Oklahoma. Pictured with Dr. Hibler are (front left to right): NSU Acting President Kim Cherry; Regent Ann Holloway, Ardmore; Regent Chair Belva Howard; Regent Jan Gordon, Tulsa; and Northwestern President Janet Cunningham. Back from left--Southeastern President-Elect Michael Turner; Southeastern Interim President Jesse Snowden; Regent Richard Ryerson, Alva; East Central President Richard Rafes; Regent Harold Jackson, Chickasha; SWOSU President John Hays; and UCO President Roger Webb.

Dr. Joe Anna Hibler is surrounded by friends, family and regents during a reception held in honor of the renaming of the Education Building on the SWOSU campus. The building is now known as the Dr. Joe Anna Hibler Education Center.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University's Education Building has been renamed the Dr. Joe Anna Hibler Education Center in honor of the 15th president of SWOSU.

Hibler was honored at a dedication ceremony November 30 on the Weatherford campus. The event was held in conjunction with the regents meeting of the Regional University System of Oklahoma.

The Education Building holds special memories for Hibler. When she first came to SWOSU as a student 50 years ago in 1957, her very first class was in the Education Building. She remembers that general psychology class because of what happened when Dr. Billy J. Fullerton called roll that first day.

Students would fill out their name on a 3 X 5 card. Fullerton got to her card and called out "Joe A. Hibler", the name she had used all her life. Fullerton was surprised when Joe Anna answered the roll call; he was expecting a big football player. He immediately asked her middle name and told her she better starting using it. "That's when I became Joe Anna," Hibler said.

The building is also special because her parents earned their master's degrees at SWOSU and attended classes in the Education Building. Plus, the building was renovated while she was president of SWOSU.

"I am both humbled and honored with this recognition," Hibler said.

RUSO chair Belva Howard of Tulsa made comments at the dedication ceremony.

"Joe Anna is a tribute to the educational arena," Howard said. "She has been an inspiration to so many people and we are thrilled that SWOSU and President Hays (John) have renamed this building on the SWOSU campus."

Hibler retired June 30, 2001, as president of SWOSU. She served 11 years as president of SWOSU and completed an impressive 41-year career in Oklahoma education. Thirty-seven of those years were spent on the SWOSU campus.

Hibler came to SWOSU as a scholarship student in 1957. She completed a Bachelor of Science degree in business education in 1960. She then earned her master's degree in business education from Oklahoma State University in 1961.

She taught her first four years at Altus High School and served as an adjunct instructor at Altus Junior College. In 1965, she returned to her alma mater as an instructor in the Division of Business. She completed her doctoral degree in 1971 at the University of Oklahoma.

Hibler later chaired the Office Administration/Business Education Department at SWOSU before becoming dean of the School of Business. In 1986, Hibler was named executive vice president for academic affairs. Four years later, Hibler was appointed SWOSU's 15th president.

When she assumed her duties on July 1, 1990, Hibler became the first woman in 55 years to serve as president of a university in Oklahoma.

Hibler was appointed as a regent of the RUSO in June 2004 by Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry.