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## SGA president visits Israel with other student leaders

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When Claire Carter made the decision to attend an eight-day leadership seminar in Israel, she had only a vague notion of the impact the journey would leave on her.

Carter, president of OSU's Student Government Association, was among a group of 14 student body presidents asked to make the trip to the Middle East.

"A group called Project Interchange brings different groups to Israel for seminars," Carter said. "These seminars examine regional conflicts and explore the future of the region from different perspectives."

The group arrived in Jerusalem on Dec. 27 and witnessed a rare event that has not occurred since 2004 in Israel. . . snowfall. The first day's events also included a discussion with a retired Israeli colonel about the country's strategic role in the region, a walking tour of Jerusalem and a tour of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"Speaking to the student government, it was not the differences that surprised me as much as the similarities," Carter said. "At the same time, students in college are older in Israel because after high school everyone is drafted into military service for two years.

"Many have families and jobs in addition to going to college," she said.

The Project Interchange experience also included a visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and the Western Wall, considered by many to be the holiest place in Israel.

"The children's section in Yad Vashem contains a memorial to the millions of nameless children lost during the Holocaust. Seeing that exhibit and realizing the hatred that motivated those acts was troubling," said Carter.

Seeing the physical locations of biblical events also affected Carter.

"I did not know how much going to a land to study other's beliefs would strengthen my own," Carter said. "The group toured areas documented in the Bible, and I came to the realization that it did not matter to me if an event took place on this hill or that hill."

"It matters to me that the event happened. Where it occurred is irrelevant," she said.



OSU Student Government Association President Claire Carter (at center, in hat) visited Israel during winter break with 14 other college and university student body presidents as part of Project Interchange. Oklahoma was heavily represented on the delegation with Kenah Nyant from the University of Oklahoma (at left of Carter in large photo) and Michael Goodman (with Carter, inset photo) from the University of Central Oklahoma.

"Coming to that realization really strengthened my faith."

While topics such as Israel's economy, its immigration and absorption policies and the United States' role in the region made for insightful discussions, it was the interaction with fellow college students in Israel that Carter found most enriching. A tour of Sapir College was an eye-opening experience.

"Many students speak different languages, and others can communicate only in Hebrew," Carter said. "I observed a Hebrew class and sat by one person who spoke Spanish and one who spoke German."

Located near the Israel border, the campus is subject to sporadic missile and mortar fire from the neighboring Gaza Strip.

"Seeing these students attend class, knowing that they could be injured or killed, really made me appreciate the true value of education," Carter said. "We cancel class when snow accumulates on the ground while these students are literally risking their lives to attend class."

### OKLAHOMA STATE *Portraits* Celebrating the Centennial: OSU contributions



Following distinguished service in World War II, Billings farmer Henry Bellmon was elected to the Oklahoma House of Representatives in 1947. He became Oklahoma's first Republican governor in 1962 and ran successfully for the U.S. Senate in 1968 and 1974 and the state's top office again in 1986.

Reasoned positions and a straightforward approach to issues and people earned Bellmon, a 1942 Oklahoma A&M College graduate, respect in his home state and the nation's capital.

Bellmon's political legacy is highlighted in an exhibit on Oklahoma's 26 governors and their first ladies that opened this week at the Oklahoma History Center. It's also detailed in "Oklahoma State Portraits: Celebrating the Centennial of Oklahoma Statehood."

### Study Abroad opportunities

With the university's emphasis on diversity and because of their own increased awareness of the value of international experience, more students are taking advantage of growing opportunities for study abroad, says Gerry Auel, OSU Study Abroad coordinator.

Credit bearing, short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs offered by every college outreach office are now complemented by countless other education abroad programs, as well as opportunities to volunteer, intern and work in an international setting. OSU is helping students meet the financial challenge of studying abroad with substantial increases in assistance.

Students interested in an international experience can talk to their adviser or start by visiting web sites such as the Study Abroad office's homepage at <http://studyabroad.okstate.edu/> or <http://iiepassport.org>.



### Williams funds diversity program

Forty-five students from OSU and 35 from high schools in Oklahoma City and Tulsa are participating in the Inclusion Leadership Program, a new OSU diversity initiative funded through a \$75,000 gift from the Tulsa-based Williams Foundation. In January, the students visited Williams (pictured here) and interacted with company executives on the job.

Based on the experience and what they learn in meetings and workshops this semester, including a session with Stedman Graham titled, "The New Diversity" on Feb. 22 from 3-5 p.m. at the Student Union Theater, they will write concept papers on inclusive leadership and vie for awards to be presented during a banquet at the program's end in April.

### Water Research Institute to help revise Oklahoma water plan

The Oklahoma Water Resources Board has awarded a \$1.3 million contract to the Oklahoma Water Resources Research Institute at OSU in support of the revision of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan.

The plan is Oklahoma's official strategy for managing and protecting its water resources. While the existing plan, published in 1980 and updated in 1997, includes long-range projections of statewide water use, its revision will address many new challenges posed by increased water usage and competition for available supplies.

The contract includes both research and stakeholder participation components. The Water Research Institute at OSU was awarded the contract due to its reputation for competent and unbiased water research for more than 40 years and the experience of Will Focht, director of WRI, in managing stakeholder involvement in watershed planning.

The research will focus on priority technical issues to support water plan initiatives. WRI will work with its Water Research Advisory Board, the managers and policy leaders of 19 Oklahoma water resource agencies and organizations, to identify research priorities, solicit proposals and award contracts. Project results will be presented at WRI's annual water research symposium in conjunction with the Governor's Water Conference.

According to Focht, the ambitious and intensive stakeholder participation effort will ensure the planning process addresses Oklahomans' concerns and suggestions regarding long-term water resource management.

"WRI is excited to be leading the stakeholder participation portion of this planning process," said Focht, who also heads OSU's Environmental Institute. "WRI and its partners have developed a unique approach that we expect will result in a plan that is both well informed and enjoys broad public support."

## Around the STATE...

### OSU to celebrate Research Week

A proclamation issued by Gov. Brad Henry will kick off the fourth annual OSU Research Week. Dedicated to the arts, humanities and sciences, the Feb. 19-23 event commemorates more than 100 years of OSU research contributions.

For more information on Research Week events, visit <http://www.researchweek.okstate.edu>

### Women outpace men in OSU-Okmulgee program

Of 14 students in OSU-Okmulgee's Orthotics and Prosthetics program this semester, ten are women, a major change in an enrollment that historically has been predominantly male.

Many current students indicate they developed an interest in a career in the field because of a relative or friend who has had a prosthetic limb or orthotic device. Others wanted to make a career change or were attracted to aspects of the job, including using hands-on skills, working with people and improving the quality of patients' lives.

### OSU-Tulsa joins Langston to spotlight African-American heritage

In observance of Black History Month, OSU-Tulsa and Langston University-Tulsa will co-host "We've Come This Far: Advocate for Fairness and Truth" today from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in North Hall 151 on the OSU-Tulsa campus.

The forum will include discussion groups led by Tulsa-area faculty members, authors and historians and focus on past and present education, economic development and race relations in the Tulsa community. The event is free and open to the public.

### DAFFODIL DAYS



OSU System CEO and President David Schmidly joins students (from left) Traci Thomas, Ahmed Amin, Fatima Pina and Andrew Hawkins to kick off the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days at OSU. The flowers are available in bouquets of 10 in a bunch for a donation of \$10, in an etched vase for \$15 or in a collectible Boyds Bear for \$25. Orders will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Feb. 22 for delivery on March 9 and can be placed by calling 744-5145 or by visiting 030B Student Union.

For all these stories and more, go to: <http://osu.okstate.edu/news>

### Sound Advice

Helping retailers create good word-of-mouth among their customers earns Tom Brown, professor of marketing, national recognition.



### Space Oddity

Design contributions by the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering to NASA's 2015 Mars mission puts OSU in the news.

