











# **TOGETHER WE'RE MORE**

COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE



College Freshman Year Initiative

THE GOAL OF THE COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE (FYI) IS TO CREATE A COMMUNITY AMONG CHOCTAW STUDENTS, THEIR COLLEGE CAMPUS, AND OUR STAFF WHEREIN FRESHMAN STUDENTS ARE EMPOWERED TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS AND DEVELOP ACADEMIC AND LIFE SKILLS TO BECOME CONFIDENT, PROACTIVE, AND ACCOUNTABLE PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR COLLEGE EDUCATION.

#### OUR VISION:

LIVING OUT THE CHAHTA SPIRIT OF FAITH, FAMILY, AND

#### OUR MISSION-

TO THE CHOCTAW PROUD, OURS IS THE SOVEREIGN NATION OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH AND PROSPERITY.





# SENIOR MANAGER

Jamie Inwin is the Senior Manager of College
Freehman Year Intitative, Barnie is Archoctaw
Nation Tribal Member from Hartshorne, Oklahoma,
She necelved her associate degree form Eastern
She necelved her second to the Senior Manager
Oklahoma State College, She then were done
East Central University Jamie worked in the public
eact control university Jamie worked in the public
eactequing a position with Choctaw Nation in the
Nation Success Senior Manager
Nation Success Coach at Eastern Oklahoma State
College before being promoted to Senior Manager
College before Senior armonized to Senior Manager

Nation Success Coach at Eastern Oklahoma State
College before being promoted to Senior Manager

Seni

Top Photo: Jamie attended a presentation from the author, David Grann, of "Killers of the Flower Moon" and attended a book signing.

Middle Photo: Paula Harp, Jamie Irwin, and Amanda Lee provided an informational booth at the OKJOM Conference at River Spirit.

Bottom Photo. Jamie is featured with Jennifer Woods, District 6 Tribal Councilwoman, and Armanda Johnson, Executive Director of Education, celebrating Jennifer Woods receiving the honor of Distinguished Alumni.



JAMIE IRWIN









# Highlights











TOGETHER WE'RE MORE





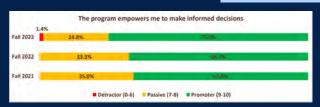
College FYI staff does their best to improve the program year-afteryear and meet students needs. Each semester. College FYI students participate in surveys to gauge their satisfaction of the program.

#### Fall 2021-Fall 2023 Overall Program Satisfaction









College FYI strives to connect students with valuable resources, foster a community on campus, help adjust to campus life, and empower students to work hard to reach their goals.







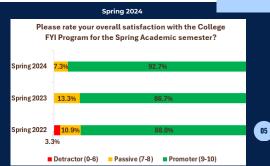
Through communication efforts, College Counselors require accountability for the students. This is the highest GPA average (3.27) that the College FYI program has seen for a group of students during the Spring semester. The satisfaction survey results for Spring 2024 show a direct correlation with GPA increase across the three campuses.

Please rate the communication level with your College Counselor (Katie, Melissa or Taylor) since the start of the academic year.



Southeastern OK State Eastern OK State College Carl Albert State College University (SEOSU) (EOSC) (CASC)

Passive (7-8) Promoter (9-10)





### PROGRAM MANAGER I

Lindsey Henry is the Program Manager for College Freehman Year Instable Lindsey is a Choctaw Freehman Year Instable Lindsey is a Choctaw Tribal Member from Antiers Okiahoma. She received her backhedr's degree in psychology from Southeastern Okiahoma State University in Mor Southeastern Okiahoma State University in Mor Southeastern Okiahoma State University in Mor Joseph Southeastern Lindsey has been with Choctaw Nation of Okiahoma since March 2011 and College PSI since Pebruary 2014.

Top Photo: Lindsey received her Toksalechi badge through Choctaw Nation Learning and Development. Associates who are awarded this badge have completed three. 6-hour classes focused on enhancing their supervisory skills and knowledge.

Middle Photo: Lindsey, along with all of the College FYI staff, attended Chief Batton's 10 Year Anniversary Celebration.

Bottom Photo: Lindsey attended the Southeastern Homecoming game with SE College Counselor, Taylor Olive, Senior Manager 2, Jamie Irwin, and Senior Director, Paula Harp.



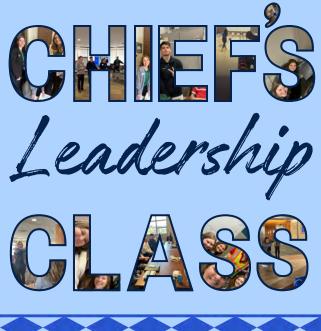
LINDSEY HENRY





CHIEF BATTON'S
10 YEAR CELEBRATION







College Freshman Year Initiative

#### 2023 - 2024



**GROUP PHOTO WITH CHIEF** AND ASST. CHIEF! JANUARY 2024



Back Row (L-R): Michaela Michalk Evan Piovesan Havden Workman Chief Batton Cordell Palmer Justice Spears Asst. Chief Austin

Front Row (L-R): Taylor McGill Chevenne Lewis Mariah Byrd Ashley Daney

The Chief's Leadership Class is a one year only program designed to advance leadership skills, cultural knowledge, and personal/professional development. College FYI is working diligently with Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma leaders and associates to provide a valuable experience for our outstanding Choctaw college students.

Students must have a minimum 2.5 GPA Junior or Senior status, participated in the College FYI program, and enrolled full time for the fall semester at an accredited university. Students receive \$1000 scholarship upon attending summer and winter retreats



































#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

"Being in headquarters, being able to see how work is done within the Nation, gives an insight I haven't had before and has shown me how to act and what to expect in a professional environment."

-CLC Student Survey





TOGETHER WE'RE MORE







#WhyApply for college] Day is sponsored by the American College Application Campaign an initiative of ACT's Center for Equity in Learning, Various events in partnership with approximately 6000 high schools across the country are hosted, to support students through the college application process. This is in hoppe to inspire all students, but especially first-generation college students and those from powincome families.

Every September, ACAC encourages everyone to wear their college merchandise and share why you believe students should apply for college and/or why you applied. These photos are shared to social media with the hashtag it/



AMERICAN COLLEGE APPLICATION CAMPAI



























































TOGETHER WE'RE MORE





Choctaw culture is filled with a rich, oral history that reflects our values and unique worldview. One such story, told by Chahta Wiheha (Choctaw People) tells of the Evni Lusa (Black Squirrel), who tries to eat the sun, thus causing a solar eclipse. A total solar eclipse crossed Choctaw Country on April 8, 2024, bringing thousands to a rare celestial event where viewers can see afternoon skies darken and an illuminated halo appear.



























#### TOGETHER WE'RE MORE .















COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE































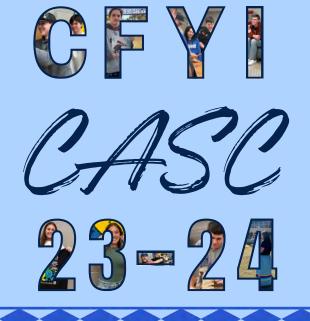




#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

I was already excited about Camp Chahta because likeny expole who had went through it. When I went to II. It was even better than I expected. My favorite part was making new connections. I've stayed friends with those people throughout my time at Caff Albert Weve even made a study group to get through Chemistry class. I would highly recommend Camp Chahta. It is a really great way to get to know the staff on campus and get comfortable with college life before everyone starts getting here for classes."





TOGETHER WE'RE MORE

































#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

'Katte and the people here are going to make you feel confident coming into college. I was nerous coming in .1 didn't know what to do about work school or how to make friends. They solve all of that Everyone is nice, and you're going to make friends every quick. I came into this program very nerous and came out very the confidence of the commend it is only only one commend it is only only one commend it is only only one commend it is only only only one commend it is only only only one continued to the confidence of the confidenc





# COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Katie Herris the College PIT College Courselor at Carl Albert State College (CASC) Katie is a Choctaw Nation of Oklahorna Tribal Member from Poteau Oklahornas. She graduated with Her associate degree from CASC, then went on to earn her bachelor of stat in psychology from Northeastem State University in Nay 2013. Katie previously worked in the mental health field for four years and has been in her current position with Choctaw Nation since June 2017.

Top Photo: Camp Chahta Family Night is the kick-off event for the College FVI program. It gives students and their families the opportunity to learn about resources available to them and hear inspirational words from Leadership as they start their college iourney.

Middle Photo: Choctaw College Connect is one of the many promotional events that College FYI attends to recruit incoming freshmen to Camp Chahta and the College FYI program. Partnering with CASC at this event gives Katie the opportunity to show her Viking pride!

Bottom photo: The most rewarding part of the College PVI program is watching current and former students unlock their potential and reach their goals. Katie is pictured with Hayden Workman and Mariah Bydt. Vwo former CASC College PVI students, who were selected to participate in 27-24 Chiefs Leadership Class



**KATIE HERR** 







UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Carl Albert State College hosted Choctaw Tribal Member and Artist Bobby Von Martin in November 2023. Bobby shared his inspiring life story, journey with mental health, and use of art as a positive coping skill. His art depicts Native American culture and brings awareness to current issues. Yakoke for all you do to make a positive impact on choctaw youth!



#### MAKE A DIFFERENCE #NATIVENOVEMBER



LIVING OUT THE CHAHTA SPIRIT!



Native American Heritage Month at CASC is an exciting time to celebrate and share Native American culture! This year, students were able to participate in activities including stickball, beaded earings, traditional games, and various make & take activities. In addition, the Native American Club hosted a movie night and the Joe E. White library hosted an Art Exhibit. We even taught CASC Mascot, Vike Albert, a thing or two about stickball.

Yakoke Chito (big thank you) to the Choctaw Nation Cultural and Historic Preservation Departments for partnering with

us to make these events a success.











# Ambassadors









CARL ALBERT STATE COLLEGE







2023-2024 **AMBASSADORS** 







SAM MARKWARDT







CARNIVAL

**STUDENT QUOTE -**

"I loved being an Ambassador and would recommend it 100%. My favorite part of being an Ambassador definitely was Camp Chahta because classes haven't started vet and you get to have fun with so many new people. I personally loved getting to help students with their new college career because it is scary coming into college. You get to be there to help with whatever they need and encourage them to keep going. -Sadie Bridges





# 2023-2024 CASC COLLEGE FYI



Joshua Anderson



Alexis Ball



Jadon Billinaslev



Kinley Branscum



Brennan



Bryson Brown



Mina Butterfield



Harley Calhoun



Javen Christenberry



Ethan Clav



Danielle Cook



Nathan Couch



Weston Cox



Makadyn Dominguez



Kaelbi Duvall



Madison Edwards



Gist



Grogan



Herell



Lyons







Trever Lyons



David Moore



Jacie Perry



Paige Perry



Jordan Podest



Zackery Putman



Jaxon Remy



Tyler Rorie



Connor Schaffer



Hope Spears



Pyper Stalsworth



Cheyenne Stewart



Brayden Stovall



Havyn Summers



Abby Taylor



Joshua Waddles



Summer West



# STUDENT WORKER

Due to her hard work and commitment to College PVI as refernman Crazy was selected as the CFVI Student Worker upon completion of the program Crazy played a crucial role in helping with CFVI events including Camp Chahta promotional events, and weekly meetings. She also worked behind the scenes, preparing glifbags giving advice to current freshmen, and completing various office tasks. Crazy's help throughout the year was truly appreciated and made a



**GRACYN THOMPSON** 

Psychology Major











#### TOGETHER WE'RE MORE ◆















COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE































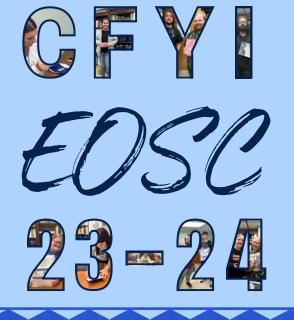


#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

in earlip chaftia you get to learn a not about the culture and what it's all about My favorite part about Carnp Chaftia was playing stickball. We also got to look at the Wellness Center facilities and receive a free access card. I would definitely recommend Carnp Chafta to students. It really helps you get started with collegs and meet people before college begins."

-Asher Kauk





TOGETHER WE'RE MORE

































#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

"There are a lot of benefits of being in College FII. The gas vouchers really help since I don't like on campus. We also had so many speakers that really drose home important things like opportunities we have and different things we may sencounter in our college and sold till like. I will be sent to be a long to be a long to be sent to be





# COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Melissa Juarez is the College Cournelor at Eastern Oklahoma State College (EOSC) Melissa is a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Tribal Member from Panola, Oklahoma. She earned her associate degree from Eastern Oklahoma State College, then went on to obtain a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a master's degree in clinic degree.

and a master sogree in clinical rehabilitation/clinical mental health counseling from East Central University. Melissa previously worked in education and has been in her current position with Choctaw Nation since January 2017.

Top Photo: The College FYI staff gathers together multiple times throughout the school year to encourage each other and have fun.

Middle Photo: Melissa works various events at Eastern. College FYI always participates in the areawide Trunk-or-Treat.

Bottom Photo: Melissa visits multiple venues throughout the school year to discuss the College FTJ program and motivate students to pursue their goals.



**MELISSA JUAREZ** 









## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### First Gen Day

EOSC College FVI students participated in the First-Generation College Celebration Day on November 8. First Gen Day is a national celebration that occurs every year on or around November 8 to acknowledge and elevate first-generation college students



#### FIRST GEN DAY NOVEMBER 2023



COMMUNITY SERVICE
PROJECT

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Easter serves as the time of year when Eastern College Freshman Year Initiative completes a community service project. This year, students provided a handwritten note to the elders of Choctaw Nation District #6. The cards were distributed to 59 Choctaw households.





# Ambassadors



EASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE COLLEGE



## 2023-2024 Ambassadors







**ALEXIS GREEN** 



MURPHY PETERSON



MELISSA WREN



HOT COCOA BAR



DENMARK STUDY
ABROAD STUDENTS



TRADITIONAL BASKET MAKING

#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

Two benefits of being an Anthassador were receiving a bookstore out-the that was able to use for textbooks for the following semester and being able to mentor incoming feethmen. My favorite part was interacting with the incoming students. Seeing them in your classes and already having the Camp Chahta experience with them is really valuable. Being an ambassador has not only helped me to grow personally but with others as well.





# 2023-2024 EOSC COLLEGE FYI



Calib Adams



Alisa Baker



Kacie Baldwin



Kendalyn Basden



Cyrena Bull



Kylee Busby



Samantha Craig



Shelby Fitzer



Brionna Fryer



Tristan Garvin



Caden Goodson



Ruthie Goodson



Madeline Gray



Payton Gray



Grace Hulsey



Elizabeth Jeffcoat



Isaac Johnson



Kauk



Kelley



Brennan Kuykendall











Danielle Martinez



Kylie Mote



Rylie



Jenna Owens



Stetson Peek



Katie Richmond



Katelyn Shannon



Sage Smallwood



Madeline Sorrells



Thomas





#### ◆ TOGETHER WE'RE MORE ◆









COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE































#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

This program has been very helpful in informing us on all of the things that the Choctaw Nation has to offer us. Taylor has been extremely helpful to answer all questions that we may have, and is always a smiling face and someone we can talk to about anything!

-CFYI Student Survey



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#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

"My favorite part was how helpful my instructor/ counselor is! Taylor definitely goes above and beyond for his students, and genuinely helps us succeed."

-CFYI Student Survey

# COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Taylor Olive is the College Counselor at Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SE). Taylor is a Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Tribal Member from Durant Oklahoma He obtained a bachelor's degree in Recreation and a master's degree in Sports Administration from Southeastern Taylor previously worked in education and has been in his current position with Choctaw Nation since July 2023.

Top Photo. Taylor participated in the 'Walk a Mile in Her Shoes' event in April by wearing red high heels and walking in honor of victim awareness. International Denim Day is a worldwide movement to honor sexual assault victims and raise awareness about sexual violence.

Middle Photo: The College FYI staff attends multiple events throughout the school year to discuss the program and encourage students. Si Live gives Taylor the opportunity to meet with potential SE students.

Bottom Photo: Taylor along with Program Manager, Jamie Irwin, and Senior Director, Paula Harp, are shown tailgating the SE Homecoming Football Game.



**TAYLOR OLIVE** 



SE LIVE NOVEMBER 2023





### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### Future Leaders

SE College PVI students participated in the LEAD Academy. The LEAD Academy is a partnership between Choctaw Nation and SE that allows the students to listen to Chief Batton speak on leadership and the importance of being a leader. The students were also able to network with managers of their desired fields.



#### CHOCTAW L.E.A.D ACADEMY



FOOTBALL GAME NOVEMBER 2023

#### Touchdown!

Every November, SE College FYI partners with Southeastern to host a celebration of Native American heritage. This year, students were recognized during Southeastern's Native November football game. In addition, the SE College FYI program participated in tailgating prior to kickoff.

We appreciate Southeastern for partnering with us to make these events a success!











# Ambassadors











SOUTHEASTEN OK. STATE COLLEGE



# 2023-2024 Ambassadors



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HAILIE PITTMAN



ANNA RITTER





**CHOCTAW PROUD!** 



#### **STUDENT QUOTE -**

The benefit of being a student ambassador is that you learn basic leadership skills, you get to have that mentor role with the incoming freshmen and that allows you to connect with the program a little bit more than you could as just a member of the program.





# 2023-2024 SE COLLEGE FYI



Bryanna Barcus



Payden Battle



Jayln Broadrick



Augustus Brown



Maggie Burleson



Shalin Cockerham



Eralee Ginn



Jesse Grimes



Cheyenne Hood



Olivia Kemp



Reagan McCortney



Karma McDonald



Coleman Meshaya



Jacob Miller



Caiden O'Brien



Palmer



Mya Parish



Bryleigh Pilgreen



Rymel



Cody Scrivner











Drake Smith



Vaughn Stachmus



Colours Starsick



Amaya Thompson-Marrow



Riley Waitman

"College PYI is an amazing program that helped me transition from high school to living on my own in college. When I had questions about scholarships, classes, or anything college related I knew where to find the answer. I would recommend the College PYI program to all Choctaw students."

-Vaughn Stachmus









## STUDENT WORKER

Angelica participated in the College FYI program at Southeastern. She was selected as SE Student Worker due to her hard work and friendly attitude. Angelica helped with weekly CFYI events including taking photos, preparing gift bags, giving advice to current CFYI students, and other office duties. She was a huoe helo throughout the vear!



ANGELICA RAMIREZ

Psychology Major









# Congratulations!



TOGETHER WE'RE MORE



# CONGRATULATIONS TO PAST PARTICIPANTS OF THE COLLEGE FYI PROGRAM!



































### TOGETHER WE'RE MORE







The College Freshman Year Initiative would like to extend a special thank you to our leadership -

Paula Harp - Senior Director, School Programs

Amanda Johnson - Executive Director, Education

Stacy Shepherd - Executive Officer, Member Services

Teresa Jackson - Senior Executive Officer, Tribal Services

Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.

Chief Gary Batton

Tribal Council Members:

Thomas Williston - District 1

Tony Ward - District 2

Eddie Bohanan - District 3

Jess Henry - District 4 Ron Perry - District 5

Jennifer Woods - District 6

Joey Tom - District 7

Perry Thompson - District 8

- - - - - - - -

James Dry - District 9

Anthony Dillard - District 10

Robert Karr - District 11

We are extremely thankful for the leadership throughout the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma for making this program available to our Choctaw Tribal Members.

#### Yakoke!

College Freshman Year Initiative







918-465-1705





# COLLEGE FRESHMAN YEAR INITIATIVE

The goal of the College Freshman Year Initiative (FYI) is to create a community among Choctaw students, their college campus, and our staff wherein freshman students are empowered to make informed decisions and develop academic and life skills to become confident, proactive, and accountable participants in their college education. In order to achieve this goal, we've placed Choctaw College Counselors on the campuses of Southeastern Oklahoma State University-Durant, Carl Albert State College-Poteau, and Eastern Oklahoma State College-Wilburton to closely assist Choctaw students throughout their freshman year and foster success through graduation.

If you are a first-time freshman, a Choctaw Tribal Member, and are considering attending one of these schools. please call our office today.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 800 522 6170











# **CAMP CHAHTA**

An orientation camp for first-year students at CASC, SOSU, or EOSC,

Let us help you get started!

- Access campus communications
- Experience Cultural Events
- Earn orientation credit
- Develop new friendships
- Resolve any enrollment and financial aid issues
- Learn about college life
  - Be part of a close-knit community of Choctaw students

First-year Choctaw tribal member college students attending CASC, SOSU, or EOSC are eligible.









Sponsored by Choctaw Nation College Freshman Year Initiative Program (FYI)











# **Choctaw Nation**

College Freshman Year Initiative

# FOLLOW USI



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