



OZARKA COLLEGE

September 2025

Campus Connection

Fall Edition

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Honoring the outstanding achievements and community outreach of Ozarka's finest staff. p. 02



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WELCOME BACK BASH

Campus Wide Celebration of Students, Faculty and Staff

The Welcome Back event at all three campus locations was a resounding success, with all campus locations buzzing with excitement as students returned for the new academic year. The day was filled with vibrant energy as students enjoyed a variety of delicious food, engaging activities, and plenty of fun. The enthusiastic turnout highlighted the strong sense of community at Ozarka, setting a positive tone for the semester ahead.

As you dive into your classes and campus activities, don't forget to check MyOzarka regularly for the latest updates, events, and important announcements. Here's to a fantastic year ahead!



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Josh Wilson

As we begin the Fall semester, I want to thank each of you for the tremendous effort, energy, and teamwork that made our start such a success. From preparing classrooms and supporting students, to welcoming new faces on campus, your dedication is what sets Ozarka apart. Together, we create an environment where students feel supported, encouraged, and empowered to reach their goals.

Thank you for all you do, and here's to a rewarding and successful semester ahead. Your hard work and creativity do not go unnoticed. Let's continue to lift each other up, celebrate our successes, and tackle every challenge with the same energy and enthusiasm that makes Ozarka such a special place.



*Photo Caption: Dr. Josh Wilson

STAFF OF THE YEAR

April Killian

April Killian has been selected as recipient of the 2025 Outstanding Staff of the Year award. April will receive recognition for her outstanding achievement during the awards and recognition ceremony at the Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC) annual conference in October.

Killian is Ozarka College's Director of Development for the Advancement Department, a role in which she has made a remarkable impact. April has worked tirelessly to expand opportunities for Ozarka students. She has cultivated meaningful community and business relationships, coordinated impactful Foundation events, and overseen the Foundation Scholarship Program. By working directly with the Foundation Board and pursuing new funding sources, April has ensured that scholarship support will continue for generations of students. Her vision and dedication embody Ozarka's mission of changing lives through education.

April is a credit to Ozarka College and represents the best of the institution. Congratulations April!



STAFF OF THE YEAR

**APRIL
KILLIAN**

MOVIN & SHAKIN

Employee Transitions and New Hires



Lori Coleman – Career Coach – Mountain View School District

Lori brings both teaching experience and a diverse professional background to her new role as Career Coach. With time spent in the classroom and in industries ranging from finance to media, Lori offers a unique perspective to students planning their futures. Her enthusiasm and adaptability will be a valuable asset in guiding Mountain View students toward success. We're excited to welcome Lori and can't wait to see her impact!

Trevor Jones – Flight Instructor/Training Coordinator

Trevor is proof that Ozarka's aviation program truly takes students to new heights, literally! A recent graduate of Ozarka's Commercial Pilot program, Trevor now joins our aviation team as a Flight Instructor and Training Coordinator. His experience as both a student and instructor uniquely equips him to guide the next generation of pilots. We're thrilled to welcome Trevor back in this new role and can't wait to see him inspire others to chase their dreams in the skies!



Gary Thompson – Institutional Services Assistant – Mountain View

Gary joins us with a strong background in maintenance and hands-on skills, paired with recent training in Welding Technology from Ozarka College. In his new role, Gary will help keep our campus running smoothly and support daily operations with reliability and care. His experience and dedication make him a great fit for our team, and we're excited to welcome him to Mountain View!



Wyatt Thomas – Welding Faculty

Wyatt joins Ozarka with a strong foundation in Welding Technology and hands-on experience in the field. From FutureFuels to Electus Industrial Construction, he has honed his craft and is ready to share his knowledge with the next generation of welders. We are excited to welcome Wyatt into this role and look forward to the sparks of success he'll inspire in his students!



WELCOME

MOVIN & SHAKIN

Employee Transitions and New Hires



Jason Blankenship – English Faculty

Jason brings a wealth of teaching and counseling experience to Ozarka, along with a passion for student growth and success. With degrees from the University of Arkansas and a career spanning both academics and counseling, he offers a unique perspective that will enrich our classrooms. We're excited to welcome Jason home to Melbourne and look forward to the impact he'll make on our students.

Mark Manry – Part-time Fitness Center Coordinator

Mark is stepping in as our new Fitness Center Coordinator, and he's ready to help students, staff, and community members make the most of their workouts. With a passion for health and wellness, Mark will bring both energy and encouragement to the gym, making fitness feel approachable and fun. We're excited to have him join the team and can't wait to see the positive momentum he'll inspire!



Colton Berger – Part-time Fitness Center Assistant

Colton joins the team with an eagerness to create a supportive and motivating environment in the Fitness Center. In this role, he will be helping students, staff, and community members feel comfortable while working toward their fitness goals. We're excited to welcome Colton aboard and look forward to the encouragement he'll bring to every workout!

Carla Mabry – Part-time MVTC Administrative Assistant

Carla joins Ozarka with a warm spirit and a dedication to keeping things running smoothly behind the scenes. Her attention to detail and helpful nature make her a perfect addition to the team. We're excited to welcome Carla and look forward to the positive energy and efficiency she'll bring to MVTC!



Jay Mabry – Skilled Trades Instructor, Mountain View

Jay joins Ozarka with a passion for hands-on learning and preparing students for real-world success. Jay will be guiding students in skilled trades, helping them build both technical knowledge and confidence in their craft. His expertise and approachable teaching style are a perfect fit for Ozarka's mission of empowering students through practical education. We're excited to welcome Jay to the team and look forward to the impact he'll make in Mountain View!

BATTLE OF THE BEADS

Welding Competition

Get ready to spark some excitement at Ozarka as we gear up for the welding competition Battle of the Beads on October 24, 2025 at our Melbourne Campus. This hands-on challenge will have divisions for high school students, non-secondary center training, and secondary center training, with the action starting bright and early at 9:00 a.m.

Presented by Bad Boy Mowers, it's the perfect chance to show off your skills, learn from others, and join in on a little friendly welding rivalry. Don't wait too long to sign up because the deadline to enter is September 19. Grab your gear, bring your creativity, and get ready for a day full of sparks, fun, and competition!



SCHOLARSHIP RECEPTION

Guest Speaker

The Foundation will hold its annual Scholarship Reception on September 16 at 6:00 p.m. in the Melbourne Student Services Center. At the beginning of the fall semester, all new scholarship recipients are invited to attend a light reception where we not only honor them for their achievement, but celebrate with them. The reception is an event that recognizes both academic achievement and donor generosity, bringing together student scholarship recipients and benefactors.

This year's student speaker, Patrick Moody, a 2025 Ozarka College Culinary Arts graduate, is now Head Chef at Nature's Market. In his last year at Ozarka he taught as an adjunct instructor while receiving the Townsend Spice Scholarship. Growing up as a C.O.D.A. (Child of Deaf Adults) to Michelle and Daniel Moody, they instilled perseverance he brings perseverance and creativity to his craft. Patrick is a devoted husband to Caryn and father to Daniel, Maddison, and Hudson. Thank you, Patrick!



HARDING UNIVERSITY

Articulation Agreement

In partnership with Harding University we have announced a new articulation agreement creating a pathway for students pursuing a career in education. Students can transfer their coursework directly to Harding University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Education. This 2+2 collaboration ensures students complete both degrees in a streamlined, affordable manner, with specific credits guaranteed to transfer and no loss of time toward graduation.

“This partnership is truly significant,” said Jill Sandlin, Director of Education at Ozarka College. “It allows our students to continue their educational journey at Harding, opening doors to greater opportunities in the field of education.” Representatives from Harding University also expressed excitement about the collaboration’s potential to strengthen education pathways in north central Arkansas.



EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

April - June

We are thrilled to give a big shout-out to Tiffney Miller of Melbourne, Arkansas, Ozarka’s Employee of the Quarter! As our superstar registrar, Tiffney keeps student records in perfect order, makes course registration a breeze, and guides graduation processes with precision and care. Since joining Ozarka in 2014, she has been a powerhouse of support and dedication, making a real difference for students and colleagues alike.

Tiffney’s experience as a career advisor for the Perkins program and facilitator for Career Pathways shows her unwavering commitment to student success. Her leadership, positivity, and tireless dedication make her incredibly deserving of this recognition. Congratulations, Tiffney you make Ozarka shine brighter every day!

She has earned the Employee of the Quarter recognition for the period of April through June 2025. Congrats Tiffney!



CONGRATULATIONS

*Photo Caption: (L-R) Tiffney Miller, Registrar, Zeda Wilkerson, vice president of student services

TASSEL FOR YOUR HASSLE

Surgical Technology Pinning Ceremony

Five students in the Surgical Technology program at Ozarka College received their pins in an annual pinning ceremony held July 29, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Lecture Hall of the Ozarka College Mountain View Campus.

“We are proud to recognize the accomplishments of our Surgical Technology graduates. Their commitment, skill, and resilience have prepared them to thrive in the operating room and beyond,” said Felicia Sisk, Ozarka College surgical technology program director. “As they take on vital roles within the healthcare team, we are confident they will make a lasting impact in the lives of others.”

The five students who received their pins were: Haily Carlisle, Lory Hernandez, Larissa Isaac, Kandy Simmons, and Kate Stewart.



TRIO GRANT EXTENDED

Funding for next 5 years

On July 3, Ozarka College received notification that the TRIO Student Support Services federal grant was funded for an additional five years, totaling \$1,723,455. TRIO SSS provides academic, financial, and personal support to eligible students, helping them succeed in their educational endeavors.

“The TRIO program is a hallmark of Ozarka’s student support programs,” said Dr. Josh Wilson, Ozarka president. “This new award assures critical support and a way forward for many of our most vulnerable students for years to come. This extension is a huge win for Ozarka, our students, and our communities.”

Services offered include academic advising; financial or supportive counseling referrals; guidance on educational and career choices; college tours; help with admissions, financial aid, scholarships, and transfers; peer tutoring; workshops; cultural events; and activities designed to foster student success.



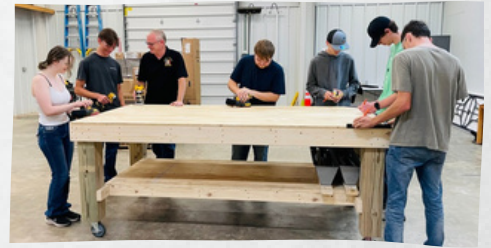
STARTING STRONG

Classes kick off for Melbourne Skilled Trades

The Skilled Trades program at Ozarka College is starting the semester strong with hands on projects that showcase real world skills. Our talented students recently designed and built a mobile work unit from the ground up on a project that demonstrates both craftsmanship and teamwork. With training in areas such as HVAC, Electrical, Plumbing, and Construction, these students are preparing for meaningful careers that are in high demand.

Projects like the mobile work unit highlight the value of applied learning and the opportunities available through our Skilled Trades program. By combining technical knowledge with practical experience, students gain the confidence and ability to succeed in the workforce.

We are proud of the dedication and innovation our students continue to show, and we look forward to sharing more of their achievements as they progress through the program.



STEP INTO OUR FUTURE

Summer Kids College a Hit

We recently hosted our annual Kids College July 7–10 at both our Mountain View and Melbourne campuses, and it was a huge success! This year's theme, Habitats, gave first–sixth grade students the chance to dive into ecosystems through exciting hands-on activities, STEM projects, creative art, trivia, and even a Wiffle Ball game to wrap up the week. From slime and snake keychains to a polar bear blubber experiment and personalized ID badges, our young learners left with projects (and memories!) they'll never forget—plus a swag bag and themed t-shirt.

Kids College is about sparking curiosity, building confidence, and showing that learning can be fun while also giving students a glimpse of the college experience. We are so proud of the connections made with families, the creativity sparked in classrooms, and the energy that filled both campuses all week long. A big thank you to our staff, community partners, and local businesses who helped make this year's Kids College unforgettable!



STEM NIGHT HEROES

ICC Stem Night

There's nothing better than watching students light up with curiosity, and that's exactly what happened at IZARD County Consolidated's STEM Night! Our Admissions team joined forces with Career Pathways to be part of this community-wide celebration of learning and discovery.

With the theme "Underwater STEM Adventures," families explored interactive activities that made science, technology, engineering, and math come alive. From creativity to problem-solving, the night was filled with opportunities for students to learn by doing—and have a blast while doing it.

We loved being part of such an inspiring event that showcased the future of education right here in our community. A big thank-you to ICC for letting Ozarka be part of this exciting journey!



Izard County
STEM School



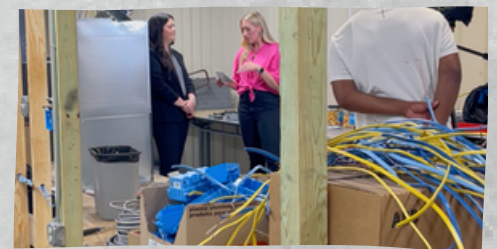
GOOD MORNING ARKANSAS

Ozarka Takes the Spotlight

Mark your calendars! On October 6, KATV will be featuring Ozarka College during College Week, and you can catch all the action on Good Morning Arkansas.

This was a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase the dynamic spirit and achievements of our college. The segments will highlight the many aspects that make Ozarka unique and reflect the enthusiasm and dedication of our entire community.

This time, we are especially excited to highlight our Surgical Technology program, Skilled Trades, Academics, and Workforce opportunities. The exceptional work in showcasing our high-demand programs and the exceptional quality of education at Ozarka truly makes a difference. Their interviews are a testament to the incredible opportunities available here. Be sure to tune in on October 6 to see all the excitement and success that make Ozarka so special!



SUMMER ESCAPES

Staff/Faculty Summer Adventures

Many are known for their zest for life and love to use their summers to experience things unknown. These are the dedicated professionals who indulge in the greater pleasures in life and love to flaunt their adventures upon their return. They are members of an elite squad known as the Ozarka Adventure Unit. These are their stories.

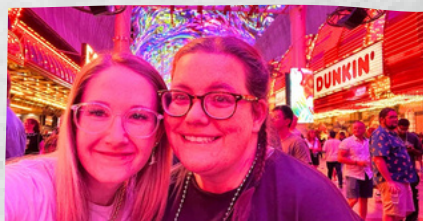
Brioney Edwards and Kiley Petty, Culinary Department

Move over, Ratatouille...Ozarka's culinary duo just cooked up an adventure!

Kiley and Brioney traveled to Las Vegas for the American Culinary Federation Convention, where they dove into olive oil tastings, harvest lessons, sous vide sessions, and even met the owner of Dumpling Daughter.

Outside the convention, they kept the flavor rolling—dining at Gordon Ramsay Burger, Café Americano, and the famous “Meats and Roadkill Grill.” They also stopped by the Sherry Rooftop on the Eiffel Tower for a one-of-a-kind view of the city. Along the way, they taste-tested Coca-Cola flavors from around the world and explored the Bellagio gardens in full bloom.

These chefs proved that what happens in Vegas doesn't stay in Vegas...it comes back seasoned and ready to inspire at Ozarka!



Marcus Orf, VP of Advancement and Workforce Development

This summer, the Orfs headed to Orlando, Florida, for the National Beta Convention, where Marcus cheered on his kids as they competed on the national stage. It was a trip filled with school pride, family moments, and plenty of excitement.

Between competitions, the Orf crew made their way to Universal Studios, where rides, butterbeer, and magical mischief awaited. The highlight? Harry Potter World, of course because earlier this year, the kids completed a novel study on *The Sorcerer's Stone*, and now they got to step right into the story they'd been reading.

From classrooms to castles, the Orfs proved that learning doesn't stop when summer starts. Whether cheering at the Beta Convention or casting spells in Diagon Alley, their trip was a perfect mix of hard work, family fun, and just a touch of magic!



PAR EXCELLENCE

Golf Tournament Success

What a day to remember! The 2025 Ozarka College Foundation Golf Tournament was nothing short of record-shattering greatness. Forty teams signed up to play, making this our largest field ever. The atmosphere was buzzing, the competition was fierce, and most importantly, the generosity was off the charts. Every swing, every putt, and every laugh helped raise record-breaking funds that will go directly to supporting Ozarka students.

A huge shout-out to the Townsend Spice & Supply team for taking first place in the Championship Flight. Alicia Thurman nailed the putting contest and walked away with a new golf club.

And of course, this epic day wouldn't have happened without our incredible sponsors, you made history with us. To sum it up: record teams, record funds, record fun. We call that a win all around!



FOUNDATION CORNER

Upcoming Events

The Ozarka College Foundation is looking forward to an exciting fall semester. The best way to get it off to an amazing start is to extend an invitation to you to participate in our upcoming activities. Events are scheduled in several locations, so please consider pitching in when you can fit it into your schedule; your volunteerism is appreciated!

For more information about scholarships or additional opportunities to support Ozarka College students, you may feel free to contact the Advancement Department at foundation@ozarka.edu or 870-368-2059.



FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS

KEVIN'S KRACKER BARS

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup of Sugar
- 1 stick salted butter
- ½ box graham crackers
- ½ cup of chopped pecans
- 1 stick of margarine



*From the Kitchen of
Brenda Holloway*

MAKE

- CUT GRAHAM CRACKERS, PLACE ON COOKIE SHEET WITH 1 INCH SIDES
- MEDIUM SAUCE PAN BRING TO BOIL THE BUTTER, MARGARINE, AND SUGAR FOR 1 MINUTE
- QUICKLY SPOON MIXTURE OVER CRACKERS, QUICKLY PUT IN OVEN.
- DON'T DALLIE AROUND OR IT WILL GET MUSHY!
- BAKE 8 MINUTES
- AFTER COOLING REMOVE FROM PAN
- ENJOY!

GRILLED CHIPOTLE CHICKEN THIGHS

*From the
Kitchen of
Kendra Smith*

INGREDIENTS

- 8 boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 3 tbsp cilantro, minced
- Marinade:**
- 17 oz can, chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- ¼ cup avocado oil
- Juice from one lime
- 5 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp oregano

MAKE

- ADD MARINADE INGREDIENTS TO BLENDER OR FOOD PROCESSOR.
- PULSE MARINADE UNTIL SMOOTH AND WELL COMBINED.
- PLACE CHICKEN THIGHS IN A ZIP-TOP BAG.
- POUR MARINADE OVER CHICKEN, RESERVING ½ CUP.
- REMOVE AIR FROM BAG AND SEAL TIGHTLY.
- MASSAGE MARINADE INTO CHICKEN UNTIL FULLY COATED.
- REFRIGERATE CHICKEN AND RESERVED MARINADE FOR 6+ HOURS.
- PREHEAT GRILL AND SET UP FOR TWO-ZONE COOKING.
- SEAR CHICKEN OVER DIRECT HEAT, 3-4 MINUTES EACH SIDE.
- MOVE CHICKEN TO INDIRECT HEAT FOR SLOWER COOKING.
- GLAZE CHICKEN WITH RESERVED MARINADE WHILE GRILLING.
- CLOSE GRILL LID AND CONTINUE COOKING THOROUGHLY.
- REMOVE CHICKEN AT 180°F INTERNAL TEMPERATURE.
- GARNISH WITH CILANTRO AND FRESH LIME JUICE.
- ENJOY!



FALL VEGETABLE & SAUSAGE BAKE

From the Kitchen of Kelly Cowan

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbs olive oil
- ½ tsp dried thyme leaves
- ½ tsp dried rosemary leaves
- ½ tsp basil
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 3 med sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces (about 4 cups)
- 2 med unpeeled red apples cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 med sweet onion cut into 1-in pieces
- 1 Turkey or Sausage Kielbasa cut into 1-inch pieces



MAKE

- Heat oven to 425
- Spray large sheet pan
- Add all ingredients to bowl or large zip lock bag and mix well
- Spread out into single layer on sheet pan, bake 15 min
- Stir and prick with fork, if potatoes and apples are not tender, cook additional 5-10 min
- Enjoy!



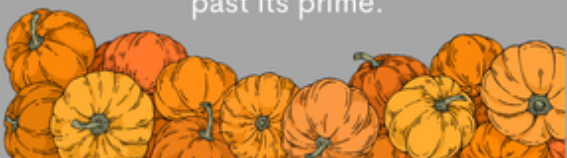
If you would like to submit a recipe for the next newsletter please contact Katie Norris at katie.norris@ozarka.edu

LIFE HACKS...

Fan Requested

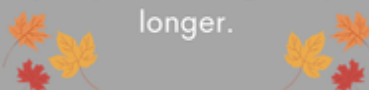
HACK #1

Pumpkin freshness check: Knock on a pumpkin like a door. If it sounds hollow, it's ready to carve. If it's dull or soft, it's past its prime.



HACK #2

Rub the Jack-o'-lantern with petroleum jelly or bleach to prevent drying out and keep your pumpkin looking sharp longer.



HACK #3

Costume repair kit: Keep mini safety pins, tape, and a hot glue stick in a small pouch—fixes rips or broken accessories on the fly.



STAFF COUNCIL CARES

Upcoming Events

Staff Council would like to welcome everyone back! We are looking forward to another great Fall providing fun, engaging opportunities for staff to bond with one another and have unique experiences while at work. Over the Summer, the annual silent auction and jeans days successfully raised funds for festivities and professional development opportunities.

We would like to thank everyone for their participation in fundraising events. This Fall, Staff Council hopes to hold our third annual Fall Chili Cook-Off which has continued to be a great success. We will continue looking at professional development opportunities.

Staff Council Committee is a peer-elected committee entrusted to increase the sense of identity, recognition, and worth of each non-academic staff member in his/her relationship to the College.

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to submit ideas for Staff Council, please reach out to us!



*Photo Caption:
Chrisha Savell



*Photo Caption:
Valerie Long



*Photo Caption:
Cindy Williams

CAREER PATHWAYS

Student Assistance

Career Pathways is now accepting new applicants. CPI will be assisting the upcoming nursing students with the following:

- Nursing supplies (scrubs, stethoscope, etc.)
- Reimbursement for travel to and from campus/clinical sites
- Testing Fees
- Tuition and Fees
- Childcare + MORE



Educational Expense Assistance

Tuition
Books
Fees
Course Required Materials
Certification Fees
+More



Student Support

Childcare
Transportation
Computers/Internet
Student Incentives
+More



Guidance and Counseling

Career Guidance
Connection to Community
Resources
Academic Advising
Mentoring
Tutoring
Work Study Opportunities
Connection to Employers
Case Management Services
+More

Arkansas
Career  **Pathways**



**Providing Life
Changing Experiences
through Education**

