

*Stitt Administration*  
ANNUAL  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
REPORT  
*2021*

## DEAR OKLAHOMANS,

When I took office in 2019, I cast the vision to make Oklahoma a Top Ten state.

I committed to raising our standard and making improvements across Oklahoma.

Last year, I announced the People's Agenda which focused on three critical goals: becoming a Top Ten state for business, delivering taxpayers more for their money, and investing in our fellow Oklahomans.

One year later, I am proud to report that those were not just promises made but promises kept.

We worked hard to make Oklahoma a Top Ten state for business. My administration oversaw legislative achievements impacting education, cutting red tape and lowering taxes for every citizen in the state.

Our economy recovered at a faster pace than most other states, and Oklahomans got back to work. In fact, we ended 2021 with the lowest unemployment rate in state history.

Our energy, aerospace and defense and cybersecurity industries experienced rapid growth and innovation.

We proved Oklahoma is a Top Ten state for business by recruiting and securing major economic development projects like electric vehicle manufacturer Canoo, whose manufacturing plant will bring 2,000 jobs to the Tulsa area when it opens in 2023.

We also delivered on getting taxpayers more for their money as we improved government efficiency by modernizing and reforming the operations of our state agencies and repealing obsolete entities.

I signed legislation that will modernize our state employee workforce and allow state agencies to retain and reward talented workers in addition to recruiting strong candidates.

My administration continues to bring a fresh set of eyes to all aspects of state government. In 2021, we protected taxpayers from wasteful spending by shuttering four unnecessary and outdated government entities.

We also invested in Oklahomans by signing a state budget that maintains all core service funding, cut taxes, saved \$800 million and included a record \$3.2 billion in funding for education.

Our strong management of the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with fiscal responsibility led Oklahoma to a budget surplus during 2021.

The decision to fully reopen our economy in June 2020 continues to pay dividends by leading to the largest savings account in state history at \$1.8 billion and protecting essential services Oklahomans depend on like education, roads and bridges, and health care.

I am personally proud of signing the Sarah Stitt Act into law to prepare and equip those leaving incarceration to reenter the workforce and society.

While I celebrate and recognize the achievements of 2021, our work is far from over. I remain more committed than ever to improving Oklahoma and maintaining my pledge to make our state Top Ten.

And during a time when so many leaders are willing to sacrifice individual liberties and freedoms, as your governor, I promise to protect the freedoms of all 4 million Oklahomans.

May God bless you, and may God bless the great State of Oklahoma.



J. Kevin Stitt  
Governor

# Table of Contents

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## GOVERNOR'S OFFICE REPORT

CREATED JOBS AND SUPPORTED ECONOMIC GROWTH	5
PROTECTED OKLAHOMANS AND THEIR FREEDOM	6
DELIVERED TAXPAYERS MORE FOR THEIR MONEY	7
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS	8
EDUCATION	9
CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM	9
AGRICULTURE	10
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT	10
MILITARY AND VETERANS	11
CONSTITUENT SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS	11
CULTURE/COMMUNITY	11

## AGENCY ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2021

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	14
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES	18
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	21
OKLAHOMA ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT	24
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND FORESTRY	27
OKLAHOMA HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY	30
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	32
OKLAHOMA TURNPIKE AUTHORITY	34
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE	35
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH	36
OKLAHOMA MEDICAL MARIJUANA AUTHORITY (OMMA)	41
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE	43
OKLAHOMA OFFICE OF JUVENILE AFFAIRS	46
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS	48
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY	51
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY	53
OKLAHOMA OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES	56
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND RECREATION	58
OKLAHOMA PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD	60
OKLAHOMA TAX COMMISSION	61
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS	63
SECRETARY OF STATE	65
OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION	66



GOVERNOR'S  
OFFICE  
REPORT



# CREATED JOBS AND SUPPORTED ECONOMIC GROWTH

## Diversified Oklahoma's economy through historic electric vehicle manufacturing investment.

Governor Stitt and Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development Scott Mueller personally secured a commitment from Canoo to create 2,000 jobs and build its first mega microfactory on a 400-acre site at the MidAmerica Industrial Park in Pryor. Canoo CEO Tony Aquila praised Oklahoma and said it was "head and shoulders above other states because of its leadership, energy forward initiatives, strategic location and the hardworking ethic of its people."

**Strengthened Oklahoma's economy and protected core state services.** Governor Stitt successfully built the largest state savings in Oklahoma history at \$2 billion while signing a budget that funded state services, increased funding for roads and bridges and expanded Medicaid for low-income Oklahomans.



**Kept Oklahoma open for business and Oklahomans employed.** Oklahoma finished 2021 with the lowest unemployment rate in state history at 2.3% and the third lowest in the nation. Over 40,000 more Oklahomans ended 2021 in the workforce than when Governor Stitt took office in 2019.

**Signed legislation cutting taxes on all Oklahomans and providing extra support for low-income working families.**

- Reduced individual income tax rates by 0.25% and lowered the top rate from 5% to 4.75% (HB 2962, Speaker McCall & Pro Tem Treat)

- Lowered corporate income tax rate from 6% to 4% to remain competitive while recruiting businesses. (HB 2960, Speaker McCall & Pro Tem Treat /HB 2961 & HB 2963, Rep. Wallace & Sen. Thompson)
- Restored refundability of Earned Income Tax Credit. (HB 2962, Speaker McCall & Pro Tem Treat)

**Continued enacting policies that make it easier to do business in Oklahoma.**

- Implemented groundbreaking Administrative Rule Reform to cut more unnecessary red tape. (SB 913, Sen. Daniels & Rep. O'Donnell)
- Created the Universal Licensing Recognition Act to make it easier for people moving to Oklahoma to use their occupational licenses that were earned in other states. (HB 2873, Rep. Wallace & Sen. Leewright)



**Increased investment in new businesses to further expand Oklahoma's economy.**

- Appropriated \$15 million for an Oklahoma Accelerator Program to increase business development by leveraging private capital with startup companies to drive business talent and investment opportunities. (SB 1082 Sen. Thompson & Rep. Wallace)
- Encouraged remote workers to move to Oklahoma through the Oklahoma Remote Quality Jobs program. (HB 2860, Rep. Wallace & Sen. Thompson)
- Supported additional investment into qualified Oklahoma-based startups through the "Back a Business Program." (SB 915, Sen. Howard & Rep. T. Caldwell)
- Increased opportunities to invest in Oklahoma-based venture capital funds. (SB 922, Sen. Howard & Rep. Kendrix)

**Capitalized on the Oklahoma film industry’s momentum.** Governor Stitt signed the Filmed in Oklahoma Act to offer \$30 million in tax incentives to fuel film industry growth. 2021 was a record year for film and movie production in Oklahoma, including “Killers of the Flower Moon” starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert DeNiro.

## PROTECTED OKLAHOMANS AND THEIR FREEDOM



Governor Stitt has an unwavering commitment to protecting the freedoms and rights of all 4 million Oklahomans. In 2021, he kept this promise by pushing back and standing up against federal overreach from the Biden administration.

### **Appointed John O’Connor to serve as Attorney General following the resignation of Mike Hunter.**

Attorney General John O’Connor has served Oklahomans and fought to protect the freedoms of all 4 million Oklahomans. He has played an integral role in the legal battle that has faced the state since the 2020 Supreme Court *McGirt* ruling and has pushed back against the Biden administration to help Governor Stitt protect Oklahomans from federal overreach and unconstitutional COVID-19 mandates.

### **Took action to address challenges caused by the growing medical marijuana industry.**

Governor Stitt appointed Adria Berry to serve as the executive director of the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority and work with legislators, law enforcement and stakeholders to identify ways to ensure laws are being enforced and Oklahoma’s medical marijuana program is not being exploited by bad actors.

### **Visited the U.S. southern border and called on President Biden to take federal action to stop the drug and human trafficking crisis.**

Governor Stitt and eight other governors received a law enforcement briefing from Texas officials regarding the border crisis that has impacted the use, trafficking and distribution of illicit drugs in Oklahoma.

### **Signed legislation to further support and protect the 2nd Amendment.**

- Made Oklahoma a 2nd Amendment Sanctuary State. (SB 631, Sen. Hamilton & Rep. Sean Roberts)
- Allowed Self-Defense Act license holders to bypass background check requirements when purchasing a firearm. (SB 106, by Sen. Allen & Rep. O’Donnell & HB 1630, by Rep. David Hardin & Sen. Pemberton)
- Prohibited municipalities from banning air rifles. (SB 926, by Sen. Jett & Rep. Eric Roberts)
- Permitted the transport of firearms with a round in the chamber. (SB 672, by Sen. Murdock & Rep. Patzkowsky)
- Allowed bar and liquor store employees and owners to carry firearms in their place of business and permits the carry of firearms in restaurants where alcohol sales are not the primary purpose of the business. (SB 646, by Sen. Bergstrom & Rep. Steagal)



### **Protected the sanctity of life by signing strong pro-life legislation into law.**

- Restored Oklahoma’s prohibition on abortion if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. (SB 918, Pro Tem Treat & Rep. Echols)
- Added performance of an abortion under state statutes for “unprofessional conduct,” with exceptions for the life or significant physical impairment of the mother. (HB 1102, Rep. Olsen & Sen. Daniels)

- Required abortionists to be board certified in obstetrics and gynecology. (HB 1904, Rep. Roe & Sen. Garvin)
- Prohibited an abortion once a fetal heartbeat is detected. (HB 2441, Rep. Russ & Sen. Daniels)
- Provided safeguards surrounding the use of abortion-inducing drugs. (SB 778 and SB 779, Sen. Daniels & Rep. Lepak)
- Created Lily’s Law requiring birthing centers and other medical facilities to keep a written policy to allow for the family to direct the disposition of the remains of the child who was stillborn or miscarried. (SB 647, Sen. Pugh & Rep. Stark)

**Defended Oklahomans’ freedoms and way of life.**

- Created the state Tribal Litigation Fund to address litigation to protect public safety and the future growth of Oklahoma following the U.S. Supreme Court’s McGirt decision. (HB 2951, Rep. Wallace & Sen. Thompson)
- Promoted law enforcement and expedited the law enforcement certification process by permitting Career Techs to teach CLEET certified law enforcement training classes. (HB 1026, Rep. Worthen & Sen. Montgomery)
- Protected the constitutional worship rights of churches and attenders from infringement. (HB 2648, Rep. Hill & Sen. Bullard; SB 368, Sen. Bullard & Rep. Hill)
- Established constitutional process to challenge federal overreach. (HB 1236, Speaker McCall & Pro Tem. Treat)

**DELIVERED TAXPAYERS MORE FOR THEIR MONEY**



**Appointed the highest number of female cabinet secretaries in state history.** In 2021, Governor Stitt appointed Tricia Everest as Secretary of Public

Safety, Jennifer Grigsby as Secretary of Economic Administration and Susan Winchester as Secretary of Licensing and Regulation. Added to the previous appointments of Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur and Secretary of Science and Innovation Elizabeth Pollard, the Stitt administration features five female cabinet secretaries.

**Appointed Scott Mueller as Secretary of Commerce Workforce and Development.**

Secretary Mueller’s business management, investment and venture capital experience has been incredibly valuable as more companies than ever are considering relocating to Oklahoma. He has helped champion job creators across the state and has played a key role in successfully securing major economic development wins.

**Launched a new Washington, D.C. office led by Director Christina Gungoll Lepore.**

The D.C. office advances state-based initiatives and helps ensure a strong state-federal partnership. This office helped secure additional resources for the state and capitalize on key priorities.

**Reformed and removed unnecessary and obsolete barriers for state agencies.**

- Modernized and reformed Oklahoma’s state civil service system by taking the handcuffs off state agencies and doing away with the outdated and broken merit protection system. (HB 1146, Rep. Osburn & Pro Tem Treat)
- Repealed four unnecessary and obsolete entities. (Southern Dairy Compact, Center for Rural Development, Agent Orange Outreach Commission and Gulf War Syndrome Outreach Commission). (SB 844 & SB 705, Sen. Dahm & Rep. Gann; SB 114, Sen. Simpson & Rep. T Hardin)
- Extended virtual meetings to allow agencies, boards and commissions to continue meeting throughout the pandemic. (SB 1031, Pro Tem Treat & Rep. Echols)

**Improved transparency and accountability in technology investments.**

Restructured OSTRAD (OCAST) Board to ensure transparency and accountability, while allowing strategic moves with future technology investments. (SB 487, Sen. Pugh & Rep. Nollan)

### **Addressed challenges obtaining driver's licenses and vehicle filings.**

- Created an electronic filing, storage and delivery system for motor vehicle titles. (SB 998, Sen. Standridge & Rep. Osburn)
- Expanded drivers' examination access by allowing Career Techs to proctor written drivers' examinations. (HB 2465, Rep. Lowe, Dick & Sen. Paxton)
- Addressed issues surrounding driver's license backlogs by creating an eight-year license option and authorizing tag agents to issue REAL IDs and process voluntary downgrades of REAL ID compliant CDLs. (HB 1059, Rep. Boles & Sen. Garvin; SB 1057, Sen. Thompson & Rep. Wallace)

## **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

In 2021, Governor Stitt continued to deliver on his promise to bring the world to Oklahoma and to bring Oklahoma to the world by expanding Oklahoma's presence on the international stage.

**Visited Azerbaijan to promote and expand Oklahoma's strategic partnerships.** Governor Stitt led a delegation on a week-long visit to the eastern European country of Azerbaijan in late July. He met with President Ilham Aliyev in Baku where they discussed Oklahoma and Azerbaijan's shared focus on energy, agriculture and innovation. Gov. Stitt and leaders of the Oklahoma National Guard also met with Azerbaijani defense officials to discuss their strategic partnership that started in 2002. He also joined Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur and Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development Scott Mueller to help finalize a memorandum of understanding between Oklahoma State University and Azerbaijan State Agricultural University to develop joint academic programs and facilitate student and faculty exchanges.



**Promoted access to foreign markets for Oklahoma companies and recruited increased foreign investment in Oklahoma during successful state visit to Mexico.** Gov. Stitt and Sec. Mueller also led an Oklahoma delegation to Mexico City and Monterrey in November to meet with senior executives in the energy and manufacturing industries and create additional economic opportunities. Stitt is believed to be just the third Oklahoma governor to make a state visit to Mexico, joining Gov. Johnston Murray in 1954 and Gov. David Walters in 1994.

*"The purpose of this trip was to open doors and build bridges for Oklahoma companies to do business in Mexico and encourage Mexican companies to invest in Oklahoma," Stitt said. "I am confident the relationships built on this trip will pay dividends for our state long into the future."*

**Secured a Mexican Consulate for Oklahoma City to serve the state's growing Mexican community.** Throughout multiple meetings with Mexican Consul Rodolfo Quilantan, Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Esteban Moctezuma and senior officials with the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Governor Stitt stressed the importance of Mexico opening a consulate in Oklahoma to provide more convenient diplomatic services to Oklahoma's growing Mexican community. The governor also met with U.S. State Department officers in Mexico City to express his support and request any necessary approvals to be expedited.

**Introduced Oklahoma to foreign ambassadors through Meridian International Center fireside chat in Washington, D.C.** Governor Stitt addressed ambassadors and delegates from dozens of foreign countries to educate them on Oklahoma's focus on energy innovation and potential partnership opportunities.

**Received diplomats from Australia, Canada, Mexico, Peru and United Kingdom in Oklahoma.** Governor Stitt also met with Israeli Ambassador Gilad Erdan in Washington, D.C. and met virtually with Indian Ambassador Taranjit Sing Sandhu.

## EDUCATION



**Put students first.** Governor Stitt used the full strength of the bully pulpit to ensure schools in Oklahoma were open to offer an in-person education for every student. He kept his promise to strengthen our education system by creating more choices for parents and putting students first:

- Implemented open transfer policy. (SB 783, Sen. Pugh & Rep. Boles)
- Modernized funding formula by ensuring money is tied to students and not systems. (HB 2078, Rep. Hilbert & Sen. Taylor)
- Created charter and traditional school funding equity with Redbud School Funding Act. (SB 229, Sen. Montgomery & Rep. Hilbert)
- Increased private support for public schools and scholarships for private schools through expanded Equal Opportunity Scholarships. (SB 1080, Sen. Thompson & Speaker McCall)
- Ensured Oklahoma students have diverse class choices by requiring every school to have at least one computer science course (SB 252, Sen. Stanley & Rep. Baker).

**Invested a record \$3.2 billion funding for education.** Governor Stitt made an unprecedented investment in public education this year. Today, education in Oklahoma receives the largest state share of appropriated dollars.

**Protected taxpayers' money.** Governor Stitt made history by requesting the first-ever financial audit of the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The State Auditor and Inspector will identify all revenue sources flowing into OSDE through federal funds, state appropriations, taxes and fees, and determine whether OSDE and Oklahoma school districts are complying with financial transaction reporting requirements.

**Ensured prejudice is not taught in schools.**

Governor Stitt signed HB 1775 to ban teaching that one race or sex is superior to another race or sex. Not one cent of taxpayer money should be used to define and divide young Oklahomans by their race.

**Supported teachers.** Governor Stitt moved teachers up in priority to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in an effort to ensure they could continue teaching in the classroom. He also signed legislation encouraging learning new skills and micro-credentialing (HB 2752, Rep. Baker & Sen. Stanley).

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

**Led on conservative reforms that work.** Governor Stitt continues to push for conservative criminal justice reforms that have proven to lower crime and recidivism rates, lower the state's prison population and reduce incarceration rates in Oklahoma.

**Facilitated inmates rejoining society and reentering the workforce.**

- Expedited process for those in the legal system to get state IDs and find gainful employment through the Sarah Stitt Act. (HB 1679, Rep. Stark, Rep. Hill & Sen. Weaver)
- Cut red tape for Oklahomans trying to have their juvenile records expunged. (HB 1799, Rep. Miller & Sen. Rosino)

**Eased the burden of the criminal justice system on non-violent offenders.**

- Created a program that diverted non-violent offenders to a citizen-led mediation panel to determine punishment and restoration instead of traditional prosecution and incarceration models. (HB 1880, Rep. T. West & Sen. Jech)
- Reduced driver's license suspensions for court fines and fees, allowing those in the court system for non-traffic offenses to keep their license so they can continue to get to and from work. (HB 1795, Rep. Miller & Sen. David)

## AGRICULTURE



**Provided leadership and supported creation of inaugural Cattlemen's Congress which brought a \$50 million impact to Oklahoma City and the cattle industry.** Because Governor Stitt kept Oklahoma open for business, 2,793 exhibitors from 41 states and three Canadian provinces descended upon Oklahoma City and nearly 10,000 head of cattle from Jan. 1-17. The sale of cattle and cattle genetics provided critical stability for the U.S. beef supply and Cattlemen's Congress visitors created crucial revenue for local hotels and restaurants.

**Protected ranchers by ensuring only beef bred, born, raised and processed in Oklahoma could be labeled "Oklahoma Certified Beef."** Governor Stitt also promoted the beef industry by eating the first Oklahoma Certified Beef steak at an event in Oklahoma City. (HB 2364, Rep. Burns & Sen. Murdock)

**Tightened protections for farmers and ranchers** by creating a Livestock Offender Registry for people convicted of livestock theft. (SB 775, Sen. Murdock & Rep. Dempsey)

**Set local farms up for financial success.** Governor Stitt signed a new law that cuts red tape for local farms by expanding the list of documents a County Assessor can use to determine eligibility for the Agriculture tax exemption. (SB 422, Sen. Simpson & Rep. Kerbs)

- He also made veteran and young farmers eligible for grants or loans from the Agriculture Enhancement and Diversification Program. (HB 2930, Rep. R West & Sen. Simpson).

- Protected Oklahoma's farmers, ranchers and energy producers from frivolous nuisance lawsuits. (SB 939, Sen. Taylor & Rep. Pfeiffer)

## ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

**Oklahoma continues to be a pioneer in energy innovation.** In 2021, Oklahoma ranked sixth in the nation for oil production, fourth for natural gas and second in wind energy. Oklahoma generates 40% of its energy from renewable sources and the unique mix of natural gas and renewables has yielded remarkable environmental results and provided the cleanest and most affordable energy in the country.

**Provided relief from historic winter freeze.** Governor Stitt signed two bills that created the Regulated and Unregulated Utility Consumer Protection Acts to help protect consumers from increased utility bills after the historic snowstorms (SB 1049 & 1050, Sen. Thompson and Rep. Wallace).

**Stood up to President Biden's attack on domestic energy production.** Governor Stitt issued Executive Order 2021-03 pledging to defend Oklahoma's energy sector from federal overreach. It also sharply criticizes the Biden administration's attack on energy-producing states like Oklahoma, citing the dismissal of Oklahoma's constitutional ability to properly determine how to best develop its own natural resources.



**Pioneered the new energy frontier.** The Hydrogen Production, Transportation and Infrastructure Task Force produced its first report, studying and identifying hydrogen as a new fuel source for the state. (SB 1021, Sen. David & Rep. McBride)

## MILITARY AND VETERANS



**Named Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Mancino as Adjutant General for Oklahoma and commander of the Oklahoma Army and Air National Guard.** Mancino served as Assistant Adjutant General for the Oklahoma Army National Guard since September 2019. He has been a member of the National Guard for 35 years.

**Supported military children.** This year, we increased support for Oklahoma military-connected children by creating the “Purple Star Campus” designation for public school districts. Schools will now be better equipped to help military-connected students who are facing educational and social-emotional challenges.

- Children of active-duty military are prioritized in the new open transfer process. Senate Bill 783 allows public school students to transfer to any school district at any point in the year.

**Stood with Oklahoma National Guard members.** When the Department of Defense required National Guard members to get the vaccine, Governor Stitt stood by guard members who wanted to opt out. The governor filed a lawsuit to prohibit the Biden administration from withholding pay from Oklahoma National Guard members who choose not to get the COVID-19 vaccine while in Title 32 status.

- Protected National Guard personnel on state active duty from employment discrimination based on their active duty status. (HB 2545, Rep. Burns & Sen. Simpson)
- Ensured Oklahoma National Guard members who die on state-active duty orders will not have to pay for funeral costs by reimbursing families up to \$10,000 for funeral expenses. (HB 2374, Rep. Davis & Sen. Bullard)

**Supported disabled veterans** by allowing Purple Heart license plate holders to park in handicapped parking places. (HB 2271, Rep. Cornwell & Sen. Simpson)

## CONSTITUENT SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Responded to more than 264,000 messages from Oklahomans via website submissions, emails and letters.
- Assisted over 3,700 Oklahomans with constituent cases.
- Redesigned the governor’s website with new user-engagement features, helpful resources, and a section solely dedicated to constituent services.
- Held 17 press conferences and posted over 1,100 social media posts. Dozens of video messages directly from Governor Stitt cataloged 1.1 million views across all channels.
- Governor Stitt made nine judicial appointments in 2021. Since taking office in 2019, the governor has made a total of 26 judicial appointments.
- The Office of the Governor fulfilled over 330 proclamation requests as well as 706 commendations and citations recognizing Oklahomans for notable contributions to the state.



## CULTURE/COMMUNITY

**Continued tradition of running in Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon Relay.** As the 2021 Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon took place just a few days before the 20th anniversary of the start of Operation Enduring Freedom, Governor Stitt used his relay team to honor veterans of the war in Afghanistan and Oklahoma Gold Star families. The team included Capt. Jeff Morefield, Sgt. 1st Class Jedd Flower, Staff Sgt. Christopher Black and Krysten Isenhower, whose brother Sgt. Bret Isenhower was killed when his team was ambushed while on a dismounted patrol.



**Honored Oklahomans for their heroism and bravery by presenting inaugural Oklahoma Medal of Valor and Oklahoma Purple Heart awards.** Governor Stitt presented the Oklahoma Medal of Valor to Oklahoma Army National Guard Sgt. Pedro Gonzales, III, and the Oklahoma Purple Heart to Tulsa Police Sgt. Craig Johnson, Tulsa Police Officer Aurash Zarkeshan and Oklahoma City Police Officer Zachary Barby. These are the first state-level awards for heroism given through the Oklahoma State Awards Program. Recipients were determined by a nine-member committee of state public safety officials and chaired by Lieutenant Governor Matt Pinnell.

**Designated award-winning actress Kristin Chenoweth as the seventh Oklahoma Cultural Ambassador and U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo as the 14th Oklahoma Cultural Treasure.**



**Hosted exhibit to feature artwork of legendary Mexican sculptor Jose Sacal.** Governor Stitt and the Oklahoma Arts Council celebrated National Hispanic Heritage Month and the 200th anniversary of Mexico's independence from Spain in a September ceremony at the State Capitol.



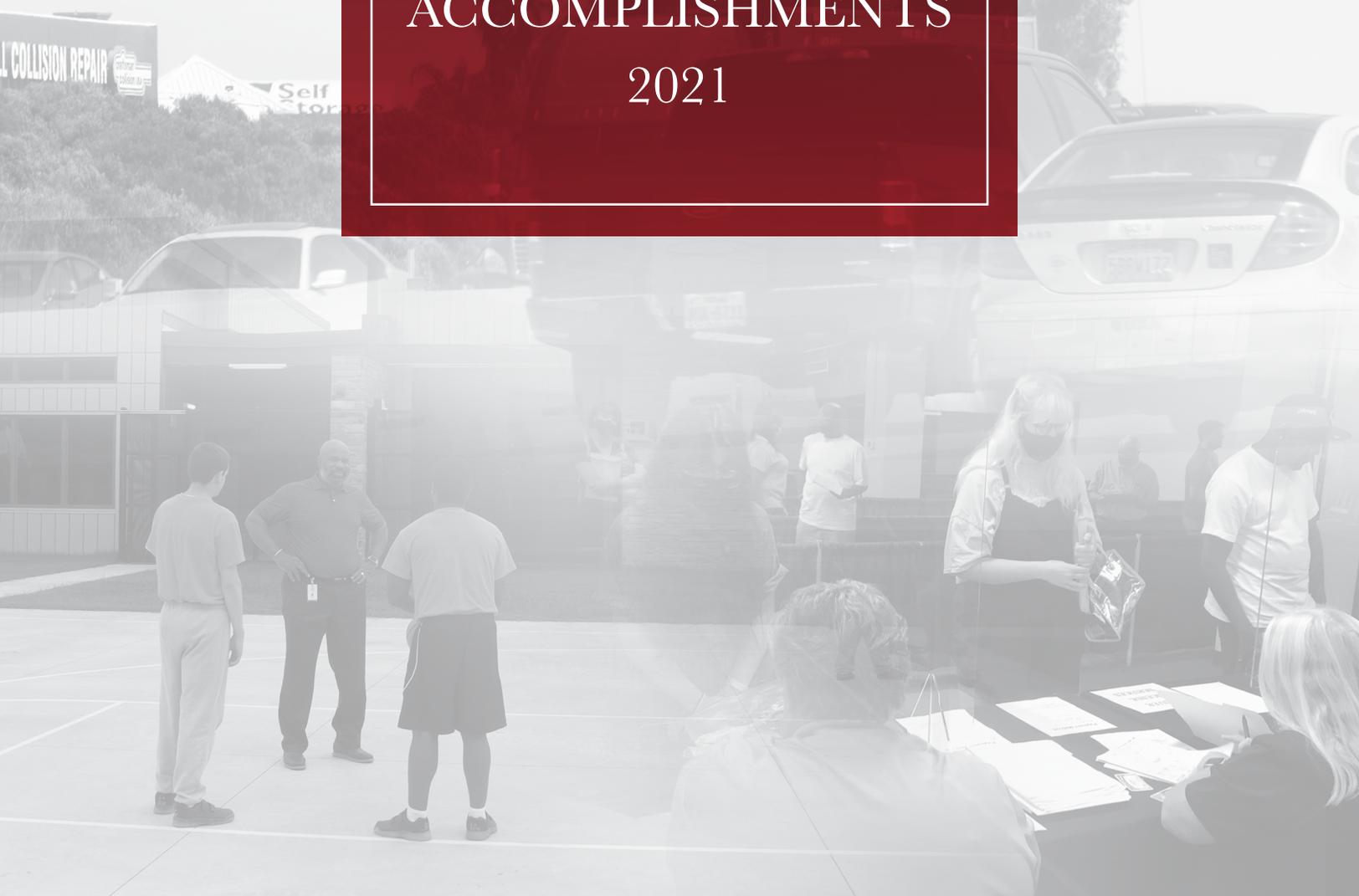
**Recognized excellence in state government at third-annual Governor's Agency Summit.** Governor Stitt continued to make sure all state agencies are aligned around the core purpose of changing Oklahomans' future for the better and presented awards to agencies that are moving the needle in key areas. The 2021 summit's theme was "Leading with Hope" and featured remarks from First Lady Sarah Stitt and Dr. Chan Hellman, founder of the University of Oklahoma's Hope Research Center.



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# AGENCY ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2021



# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Executive Director: Brent Kisling | Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development: Scott Mueller

## Unprecedented unemployment

- Oklahoma's total employment has increased by nearly 2% or 30,557 jobs, from Jan. 1 to Nov. 30, 2021.
- Since April 2020, during the pandemic, Oklahoma's employment has increased by 19% through Nov. 30, 2021, adding 289,059 jobs to the state's economy. Comparatively, in the same time frame, U.S. employment increased 16% adding 21,772,000 jobs.
- Oklahoma's unemployment rate has decreased each month since February 2021, while the national unemployment rate fluctuated up and down over the spring and summer.
- Since June 2021, Oklahoma's unemployment rate has been in the top 10 every month. It has been in the top 20 all year.
- Oklahoma ranks as the fourth best state in improved unemployment since before the pandemic (November 2019). Since November 2019, Oklahoma's unemployment has decreased by 18.6%.

## Sector-based recruiting

- The Business Development team transitioned their recruiting efforts to focus on six key sectors: Aerospace, Automotive, Agriculture, Energy, Bioscience and Manufacturing. This narrow focus allows the team to be agile in their recruiting efforts to get a return from the industries that most benefit Oklahoma's economy.
- This bold approach to business recruitment created over 300 projects (up 141% from 2020) that led to over 7,500 jobs and \$1.8 billion in private investment.

## Launched a Statewide Economic Development Portal

- In an effort to level the playing field for economic development organizations across Oklahoma, Commerce launched an Economic Development Portal. This portal allows local economic development organizations to have visibility to all projects and creates opportunities for them to compete for all projects.
- Feedback on the portal has been very positive, particularly from the rural organizations. They appreciate the transparency the portal provides for all opportunities in Oklahoma.

## Established as Oklahoma's International Protocol Office

- In November, Commerce established the Oklahoma Chief International Protocol Office. This office was moved from the Secretary of State's office. In this role, Commerce will be responsible for Oklahoma's global affairs.
- The Office of International Protocol provides country-specific briefings, and expert protocol assistance, including oversight and technical assistance to Oklahoma officials receiving foreign guests or to officials travelling on behalf of Oklahoma outside the United States.

## Leveraged Oklahoma's business-friendly environment and strong workforce to recruit quality jobs to Oklahoma

- Canoo – In June 2021, Canoo—a manufacturer of breakthrough electric vehicles (EVs) that are reinventing mobility—announced Oklahoma as the site for its U.S. manufacturing facility. The new “mega microfactory” will locate at a 400-acre site at the MidAmerica Industrial Park complex in Pryor. It will

house a paint shop, body shop and general assembly plant. Canoo will create an estimated 2,000 high-paying jobs and invest more than \$1 billion dollars into the state economy. In November 2021, Canoo announced it is relocating its headquarters from California to our neighbor Arkansas and will expand its Oklahoma partnership to include new R&D, software development and customer support and financing centers. The investments are expected to bring at least 700 additional high-paying jobs to the state.

- Limco – TAT Technologies is a strategic global partner to leading players in the aerospace industry and specializes in innovative commercial, defense, OEM and MRO solutions. TAT is the parent company to TAT LIMCO located in Tulsa, which is recognized as a world leader in thermal management solutions with a primary focus on the Aerospace industry. In 2021, TAT announced it is relocating its headquarters from Israel and co-locating with Limco in Tulsa. The move will result in more than 200 new jobs and an investment of over \$17 million.
- Carvana – In 2019, Carvana—a leading e-commerce platform for buying and selling used cars—unveiled its newest car vending machine in Oklahoma City. The eye-catching, all-glass tower stands eight stories high and holds 27 vehicles. In September 2021, Carvana announced plans for a new distribution and inspection/reconditioning facility in Oklahoma City. Carvana will add approximately \$45 million in new investment and up to 500 new jobs in Oklahoma. The nearly 200,000-square-foot auto detail shop is under construction, where used cars will be reconditioned and made ready to sell. It’s one of 10 inspection and reconditioning centers Carvana has going up across the country.
- Lyseon – In late 2019, Lyseon Co. Ltd., parent company of Lyseon North America, was established as the joint venture between TOPIA Co. Ltd. from Japan and ECSF POWER SL from Spain to target the Japanese automotive market. Then in September 2021, Lyseon announced plans to set up a plant and commence operations at the Tulsa Port of Catoosa in Rogers County. The company will make a \$6 million investment and plans to add 80 employees over the next three years, increasing employment as the production ramps up. The company, which offers a broad range of services in engineering, metal stamping, welding and coating mainly for the US automotive industry, will serve as a supplier to Tulsa’s Navistar Bus and bring another automotive and electric vehicle supplier to our state.
- Mint Turbines – Mint Turbines is an independent turbine engine maintenance, repair and overhaul facility located in Stroud. The company celebrated its 40th anniversary in May by dedicating a \$5 million expansion. The expansion, which will add up to 30 jobs to its current staff of 42, was announced in January after signing a deal to become a restricted category and public-use markets T700 licensed maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) provider for General Electric. Now, of the 600 engines operating under restricted class in the world, Mint Turbines will be able to service all of them.

### **Announced new network level for Main Street Center program**

- The Oklahoma Main Street Center added another tier to the statewide Main Street program: network community. After realizing a gap in some communities’ ability to participate in the full Main Street program, the network level lowers the barrier to entry to access some of the program’s valuable services.
- Benefits of the network level include: an annual contracted agreement with the Oklahoma Main Street Center; education on the four points of historic commercial district revitalization; consultations with the Main Street Center staff; and ongoing training and workshops, among other benefits.

### **California and Illinois campaigns**

- The second installment of the California campaign started in May and concluded in September 2021. The campaign was able to reach over 11 million Californians and generated result metrics well above industry standards and our campaign goals.

> The campaign messaging encouraged Californians to “Leave the coast to get the most – In

Oklahoma,” highlighting Oklahoma’s pro-business policies, low cost of living and high quality of life.

- > Outdoor boards were featured on major thoroughfares in Los Angeles and San Jose. Digital ads targeted C-Suite users in the aerospace, energy and manufacturing industries in San Francisco and Los Angeles.
- California campaign metrics
  - > Average digital display click-through-rate of 0.30% – double the goal of 0.15%.
  - > Average social media click-through-rate of 2.36%, well above the industry standard of 1.3%.
  - > Average time on page grew from two minutes, 31 seconds to two minutes, 47 seconds at the end of the campaign. Industry standard is 52 seconds. This indicates a high level of interest and engagement.
- The Illinois campaign began in July and concluded in October. The campaign was able to reach over 10 million Illinoisans.
  - > The campaign messaging leveraged Oklahoma’s distinction of the lowest cost of doing business as well as our low tax burden compared to Illinois.
  - > Outdoor boards were featured on major thoroughfares to O’Hare Airport before, during and after a large manufacturing trade show.
  - > Digital ads targeted C-Suite users in the manufacturing industry in the greater Chicago area.
- Illinois campaign metrics
  - > Average digital display click-through-rate of 0.29% – nearly double the goal of 0.15%.
  - > Average social media click-through-rate of 1.19% – just short of the industry standard of 1.3%.
  - > Average time on page concluded at over three minutes, indicating high levels of interest in Oklahoma.

### **Modernized incentives through legislative wins**

- Commerce had 29 request bills and 24 were signed into law in the 2021 legislative session that modernized many incentive programs to make them easier to understand. The request bills were created at the recommendation of the Incentive Evaluation Commission.
- With both the move of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office and the Tourism Development Act, Commerce can engage with communities on more varied projects, all tied into economic development.

### **Launched Connex, an Oklahoma supply chain initiative**

- In April, Commerce, in partnership with the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance, launched Connex. This online portal matches manufacturers with other manufacturers based on need.
- In October and November 2021, Connex Oklahoma was used to source metal fabrication suppliers for an out-of-state buyer in the semiconductor industry. Eighteen Oklahoma manufacturers responded to the posting and have completed the first phase of information collection to narrow down the supplier pool. The buyer was so impressed with the response, they have contacted Connex Oklahoma staff to identify metal plating suppliers in Oklahoma.
- An international company with a location in Tulsa, Oklahoma used Connex Oklahoma in November to find potential suppliers for a vital component that had previously been sourced from an international supplier. Within one week of posting, the buyer received multiple responses from Oklahoma manufacturers. While the responses were unable to compete in cost, the buyer was able to identify suppliers who may be able to serve them in other areas with other components.
- Since the Connex Oklahoma platform launched in Q2 2021, 360 Oklahoma manufactures have

requested and joined the platform, over 102 RFPs have been posted from national, regional and in-state companies – including one international company searching for a supplier. Forty companies responded to opportunities posted in the Exchange Center. Nine Oklahoma companies received interviews with large national prime manufacturers, and more interviews are expected in early 2022.

### **Adopted the Oklahoma Film + Music Office into the Department of Commerce**

- The Oklahoma Film + Music Office, previously under Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation, moved over to Commerce July 1, 2021. At Commerce, OF+MO will have the opportunity to not only attract productions, but also build infrastructure and the workforce to establish the industry in the state.
- With the passing of the Filmed in Oklahoma Act, OF+MO successfully administered the incentive program. This program was exceptionally popular in the film industry and is estimated to bring in over \$100 million in spending.

### **EDA grants for infrastructure**

- Commerce was awarded a \$1 million grant through the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). The purpose of the grant is to provide support and funding to Oklahoma communities to increase economic development opportunities throughout the state, particularly in rural communities.
- Commerce will make 28 awards of up to \$24,000 to local economic development organizations for the following:
  - > Identify available sites' capabilities.
  - > Identify what industries' sites can support.
  - > Identify quantified site gaps and limitations.
  - > Conduct competitive capability assessments.
  - > Make recommendations for investment in infrastructure gaps.
  - > Additionally, the grant will fund an interactive site location panel which Commerce will use at domestic and international trade shows and in business recruitment meetings, a site location app for communities to promote their sites, and an online training platform that will allow rural communities to received customized economic development training on-demand.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Secretary of Human Services: Justin Brown

## **Prioritizing services and workforce, launched a new plan to deliver world-class customer service**

- In the fall of 2021, OKDHS announced Phase Two of the agency's Service First strategy to better serve the needs of Oklahomans. This plan will further transform services through a modern real estate footprint ensuring the agency realizes their new Executive Leadership True North goal of creating a World Class Customer Experience. OKDHS will begin trading large and obsolete administrative buildings in favor of three types of smaller, more strategically located and thoughtfully designed locations. Modernization will also help the agency further reduce costs by harvesting savings through reduced square footage statewide, as well as reduced maintenance and technology costs.
- OKDHS also piloted virtual intake for benefits for the first time in 2021, laying the ground work for reduced wait times for office visitors and an improved customer experience.

## **Continued to build a prevention and permanency-focused Child Welfare division**

- Child Welfare Services received approval for and launched its Family First Prevention and Services Plan, heralded immediately as a national model, allowing the state to utilize federal matching dollars for specific parenting and mental health supports for families whose children are at risk of entering foster care. The agency also partnered with the Department of Health's Office of Child Abuse Prevention to conduct a biannual meeting with stakeholders on family strengthening efforts, as well as partnering with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, OU and the Arnall Family Foundation to launch an evidence-based program to support new moms with substance abuse challenges.
- The Pinnacle Plan commentary from the co-neutrals, covering the period of July 1, 2020, through Dec. 31, 2020, represented the first time since the inception of the plan in 2012 that the agency achieved good faith efforts to achieve substantial and sustained progress in all 30 of the measured target outcomes.

## **Improved service delivery to more effectively assist Oklahomans in need**

- In 2021, OKDHS processed almost \$700 million in additional federal funds with no additional staff. This included a Pandemic-EBT program, providing over \$140 million to school-aged children for the 2019-2020 school year.
- Adult and Families Services staff made improvements to the agency's contact centers to ensure customers were able to effectively reach the agency for assistance. This resulted in thousands more calls being answered in a timely manner over the course of the year.
- In order to further support Oklahoma children and families, OKDHS also expanded child care subsidy with no income limits for families searching for jobs due to COVID-19-related losses of employment from 60 days to 90 days.
- For the first time since 2009, there are more people with developmental disabilities receiving services (5531) than waiting for services (5499).
- Child Support Services achieved Top Ten status for the federal performance measures of Paternity Establishment, Medical Order Establishment and Medical Order Enforcement.
- Community Living, Aging and Protective Services (CAP) improved public access by deploying an online application for in-home services through either the ADvantage waiver or State Plan Personal Care benefit, resulting in an increase in the number of applicants.

- CAP was further awarded one of only eight competitive five-year federally funded Lifespan Respite Grants to expand respite access and provide support to grandparents and other relatives raising children, siblings of individuals with special needs, and access to additional respite providers.
- The Adoption Unit within OKDHS Legal Services achieved a milestone by assisting with over 500 adoptions since its establishment. This group of attorneys are specifically dedicated to achieving finalized adoptions for children in state custody whose parents are no longer legally responsible for them but who do have an identified family with which to be placed.
- OKDHS Legal Services also established the Office of Administrative Hearings for Appeals to unify and more efficiently conduct the myriad number of administrative appellate matters for which the agency is responsible.

### **Prioritized partner support and technology upgrades**

- In October 2021, OKDHS staff volunteered their time to assist the State of Louisiana with their Disaster SNAP Response Project, answering 2,500 calls, reviewing 3,000 applications and approving \$1 million in DSNAP benefits for Louisiana's communities in need.
- In order to bolster foster care in the face of the pandemic, OKDHS provided pandemic relief support to foster families, agencies, child advocacy centers and other key partners in efforts to ensure stability across the child welfare system.
- OKDHS facilitated vaccines for more than 300 homebound individuals and their caregivers, in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Health, as recipients of 2021 Administration for Community Living COVID-19 Vaccine Access Supplement Funding Grant.
- OKDHS provided benefits to the state's youngest children and their families through numerous funding supports for the child care industry throughout the pandemic, including:
  - > Coverage of subsidy co-payment for families, paid directly to providers.
  - > Business training and resources to build expertise in planning and budgeting to prepare for the ongoing impact of COVID-19.
  - > Provided training opportunities through CECPD at no cost to the workforce.
  - > Provided sanitation payments to licensed and permitted programs;
  - > Sustainability payments to child care programs to fund a variety of key operating expenses, including wages and benefits, rent and utilities, cleaning and sanitization supplies and services, and many other goods and services necessary to maintain or resume child care services.
  - > Distributed \$28 million dollars in ARPA funds to child care providers through stabilization grants.
- In partnership with child care providers from across the state, OKDHS also conducted a 100-day review of the agency's Child Care Rules and Regulations in order to remove any unnecessary burdens on programs, while simultaneously protecting child safety.
- OKDHS also invested \$27 million in organizations supporting low-income Oklahoma families utilizing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant funds. These contract awards were the result of a TANF Investment Strategy created by the agency to receive and review proposals and deploy reserve TANF funds to nonprofit organizations with family stability as a component of their mission through collaborative, public-private partnerships.
- Retroactive rate increases were approved for contracted provider agencies providing community-based long-term care to mitigate workforce challenges as they provided critical services and supports to Oklahomans.
- In 2021, OKDHS laid the foundation for significant digital transformation utilizing state reference architecture through Human Centered Design.

## **Set a bold goal to eliminate the DDS Wait List**

More than 5,800 people are on the waiting list to receive home- and community-based waiver services, constituting a more than 13-year wait. In 2021, OKDHS developed a three-pronged strategy, including a comprehensive assessment of everyone waiting for services, a new case management system, and a provider reimbursement rate study, to understand the challenges and create a solution to serve everyone on the wait list. With the information that will be gathered through these initiatives, OKDHS will be able to present cost projections to the Legislature to end the wait.

## **Improved workforce supports**

- The Employee Assistance Program was expanded to include:
  - > Immediate Support sessions were made available for all employees, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by voice or Zoom.
  - > Group Support sessions were also made available for all employees. These sessions were designed to support individuals who are exposed both personally and professionally to highly stressful situations.
  - > The agency further announced that annual EAP visits to LPC/LMFT/LCSW would increase from six visits annually to 12.
- In July 2021, OKDHS Human Resources created the first Retention Unit focused specifically on retaining existing employees by examining turnover and exit survey results to help agency leadership make data-driven decisions regarding employee retention with a goal to help reduce turnover costs, therefore saving the state money by also maintaining a fully trained workforce.
- Talent Management developed, implemented and trained staff to use an onboarding application for new hires, cutting back on cumbersome paperwork and creating efficiencies.
- Human Services established a partnership with Google and Coursera to provide professional development opportunities for the agency's workforce and customers. Grow with Google is a self-paced certificate program powered by Coursera and Google that empowers program graduates to jump-start their career in one of the following prospective fields: IT, Project Management, UX Design and Data Analytics.
- In collaboration with the HOPE Research Center at the University of Oklahoma (OU), OKDHS continued a multi-year strategy to transform the agency by creating HOPE-centered policies, programs and practices that positively impact systems and communities throughout our state. The HOPE project is led by Dr. Chan Hellman and Dr. Angela Pharris and incorporates assessment, consultation, training and research in each division within the agency. OKDHS is honored to be the lead agency tasked by Governor Stitt to build a HOPE-centered state and infuse HOPE into 15 the cabinet areas in the state's executive branch and their corresponding organizations.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Executive Director: Scott Thompson | Secretary of Energy and Environment: Kenneth Wagner

## DEQ Accomplishments for 2021

### **Emergency response**

DEQ responds to emergency situations throughout the year, but the historic winter weather event of February 2021 created a unique set of challenges. An unprecedented number of drinking water systems throughout the state experienced significant issues. Approximately 250 drinking water and 30 wastewater facilities were impacted and more than 80 drinking water systems issued precautionary boil advisories. In the lead-up to the storm, the Oklahoma Strategic Alliance, a partnership of several state organizations designed to pool resources to provide assistance to water systems, began making preparations for emergency response. The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Oklahoma Rural Water Association (ORWA), two of the Alliance partners, were in constant contact to prepare for various disaster scenarios. Once the storm hit, DEQ and ORWA immediately sprang into action. Staff from the two partners worked around the clock to help secure alternate water supplies for towns experiencing water loss. The two organizations investigated system leaks outside in sub-zero temperatures, and in many cases, provided hands-on assistance installing pumps and other equipment. They helped with precautionary boil advisories in the late night and early morning hours, interfaced with water system staff to troubleshoot issues whenever needed, talked to the media constantly, created social media messaging to communicate with the public and provided creative solutions to problems caused by weather not seen in Oklahoma in 100 years.

### **COVID-19 testing in wastewater**

DEQ and the Department of Corrections (DOC) Project: The CDC, in partnership with the Water Environment Federation (WEF) and Hach Corporation, have developed a pilot project to test new virus monitoring technology – LuminUltra qPCR. This technology gives results in three hours versus two to three days, which allows for a quicker response time. Secretary of Energy and Environment, Ken Wagner, on behalf of the State of Oklahoma, signed an agreement to field test this technology. Secretary Wagner and the Secretary of Public Safety entered into agreement for five DOC facilities to use the equipment to conduct monitoring and for DEQ to provide technical assistance to the certified wastewater operators at the facilities. DEQ and DOC staff from five facilities attended training on the equipment in early August 2021. Oklahoma is the first state to test the new equipment, and when the pilot project ends, DEQ will receive the test equipment for its use. Ownership of this equipment will allow DEQ to be ahead of most laboratories moving forward assuming the pilot testing is successful.

### **Water loss audit and leak detection**

DEQ's Capacity Development Section performs water loss audits for water systems across Oklahoma. These audits are free to the system and identify water loss and leak detection. In 2021, 32 water loss audits were completed. From those 32 audits, we were able to identify potential savings of 1.432 billion gallons per year. The cost of the water losses identified from the audits was \$2,680,997, and the return on investment was \$5.61/\$1 in value-added GDP once losses are corrected. Through DEQ's partners in the Oklahoma Strategic Alliance, we are able to work together to find solutions for these systems.

### **Rule reduction efforts**

DEQ began implementation of its five-year strategic plan, Leading the Way (LTW), in July 2018. One of the tasks under LTW was to systematically review all state statutes directly relevant to, or implemented by, DEQ and all DEQ regulations to develop a list of those statutes or rules that needed clarification, streamlining or

elimination. DEQ staff formed internal workgroups to conduct a comprehensive review of agency rules to meet the objectives of both LTW and the Governor Stitt's Executive Order. The workgroups identified 153 DEQ rules that were costly, ineffective, duplicative, outdated, or unnecessary.

- Costly – 4.
- Ineffective – 26.
- Duplicative – 29.
- Outdated – 88.
- Unnecessary – 77.

As of September 2021, DEQ has achieved the following:

- Amended or eliminated 22 subsections and one Appendix.
- In the process of amending or eliminating four subsections.
- Worked with Legislature and stakeholders to develop four pieces of legislation to further reduce unnecessary regulatory burden.

### **Telework Benefits**

DEQ's long-term telework policy went into effect June 1, 2021. Currently, 301 employees are teleworking two to three days per week. Based on data we've collected, the policy is having a tremendous impact for employees and the environment.

- Employee benefits.
  - > Greatly increased morale.
  - > Gas money saved - \$138,573/year in total.
- Environmental benefits
  - > 1,150,163 miles saved per year.
  - > Reduced emissions.
    - 1,202,494 pounds/year CO<sub>2</sub>.
    - 12,574 pounds/year CO.
    - 803.22 pounds/year Hydrocarbons.
    - 788.06 pounds/year NO<sub>x</sub>.
    - 17.87 pounds/year CH<sub>4</sub>.
    - 4.64 pounds/year N<sub>2</sub>O.
    - 25.21 pounds/year PM<sub>2.5</sub>.
  - > Oklahoma receives credits in its Ozone Advance Plan.

More information on the benefits of teleworking for DEQ employees may be found at: <https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/Telework-final-updates-1.pdf>

### **Mercury Cleanup**

On Nov. 5, 2021, DEQ's Residential Mercury Program staff responded to a Mercury pick-up request in Choctaw. Staff arrived at the resident's garage and picked up thirteen bottles of Mercury packaged in the original containers. Once back at DEQ, the containers of Mercury were placed in a secure storage drum and weighed. The Mercury totaled 81 pounds. Our Residential Mercury Program employees continue to help keep Oklahoma residents safe by properly detecting, cleaning and disposing of Mercury.

## **Solid Waste Grant Program**

DEQ's Solid Waste Grant Program helps fund Environmental Officers across the state who curtail illegal dumping. In 2021, the program boasted over 296 dumpsites cleaned, including over 877,604 pounds of garbage, 1,706 tires and 2,845 miles of roadside.

## **Oklahoma Meds and Sharps Disposal Committee**

DEQ formed the Oklahoma Meds and Sharps Disposal Committee in 2021.

OMSDC was created to bring stakeholders together to make disposal of unwanted pharmaceuticals and medical sharps generated in the home safer for people and the environment. Its non-regulatory approach is stakeholder-led and paid for through existing solid waste fees.

Associated outputs this year included the creation of a guide for municipalities called Building a Municipal Program for Home-generated Medical Sharps, and the implementation of a pilot project for free disposal of home-generated sharps at five locations across Oklahoma. The pilot project includes both drop-off and mail-in disposal options. Data from the project will be evaluated to assess user preference; cost and other metrics are used to inform the design of future sharps collection programs.

## **Lead Testing in Schools**

In the past, lead was a common component of faucets and plumbing. Most new plumbing is considered to be lead-free, but there are many homes, businesses, and schools that still have lead-containing plumbing components or lead solder. Most of the time, lead-based plumbing does not impact the water that flows through it. However, when drinking water becomes corrosive, lead can leach out of the pipes and fixtures and cause contamination.

DEQ currently regulates over 1,300 Oklahoma public water supplies for lead via implementation of EPA's Lead and Copper Rule. However, the Lead and Copper Rule is primarily focused on testing for lead in residences; it does not require testing in schools or daycares. To address this issue and to protect our children in the places where they learn and are cared for, DEQ has started a program to offer free sampling and testing of school and child care center drinking water for lead. Public schools and public or private child care centers who participate receive free sampling materials and laboratory testing, and guidance on what steps to take to eliminate lead from the drinking water being served at their facilities.

In 2021, DEQ has assisted 37 schools and two daycare facilities with lead testing. Currently, 20 faucets and five water coolers have been replaced to help ensure safe drinking water for these schools and daycares.

# OKLAHOMA ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Secretary of Energy and Environment: Kenneth Wagner

## Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority

- Achieved better than actual budget performance by 4.8% and rewarded employees for suggested expense reduction/revenue generation measures totaling over \$100,000.
- Kept power plants operational during the extreme winter event of February helping to keep power flowing to Oklahomans. Performed bond refinancing and utilized cash reserves after winter storm Uri to address the high cost of fuel and avoid rate increases to member cities.
- OMPA continues to bring added value to its member utilities, by purchasing and providing a digital engagement platform. The online Energy Advisor, its suite of energy analysis tools and energy marketing materials helped, and continues to help our members learn ways to save energy and money in their home. Through the pandemic, this tool has allowed OMPA to continue to provide our rebate programs and services to end use customers, through its virtual platform.

## Oklahoma Department of Mines

- Through a contract with OCI, the Oklahoma Department of Mines (ODM) has begun digitizing archived minerals (non-coal) permit files. This will assist agency staff and citizenry in efficient review of old mining records for research and open records requests.
- ODM's Minerals Program permitting processing times were reduced by 15% in 2021.
- ODM successfully revoked three obsolete, outdated, or unnecessary regulatory restrictions, and are taking final administrative steps to submit an additional 13 more for legislative approval.

## Oklahoma Geological Survey

- The Oklahoma Petroleum Information Center Working remained open, including boosting its online service options, and is deficit free through collaborations with the University of Oklahoma and industry partners.
- OGS education and outreach efforts increased, with monthly "ask a geologist" office hours held in our new education-and-outreach conference room and several visits by OGS staff to public secondary schools.
- Funding from the Department of Energy, National Science Foundation, and United States Geological Survey supported research in critical mineral distributions in Oklahoma, carbon capture and storage efforts and oil-and-gas bearing shales.
- Workshops and publications increased, with topics on critical minerals, carbon capture and storage and geological salt formations in Oklahoma.
- Advised Oklahoma Corporation Commission, Department of Environmental Quality, and Oklahoma Commerce Department on carbon capture and storage, critical mineral distributions and earthquake hazards, the latter monitored by the OGS seismic network.

## Grand River Dam Authority

- Financial Stability.
  - > No base rate increase for sixth consecutive year.
  - > Utilized cash reserves to finance extraordinary impact of Winter Storm Uri. Cash reserve policy

updated to reflect risk-based reserves. Existing debt analyzed to seek interest savings, which can be shaped to offset critical rate impact years. Capital budgeting and planning structured to align potential bond financing to supplement cash reserves.

> Fitch affirmed GRDA A+ rating.

- Economic Development.

> GRDA is well situated and prepared to fulfill the electrical requirements of the Canoo automotive assembly/manufacturing facility. This commitment includes, a 161 kV transmission line owned by GRDA. GRDA will build and install a substation for Canoo adjacent to the site location. The substation will be 161 kV in/out construction, providing dual feed to the site.

- Operations.

> Prepared long-term coal waste storage facility for final closure and reduction of precipitation influences on secondary treatment.

> Demonstrated resiliency during the most extreme circumstances to keep the lights on for served communities and customers. The “One GRDA” culture has been tested with exceptional results during winter storm Uri and more recently, with the unexpected base load operation of GREC Unit 2.

> Completed an analysis of the winter storm event and produced an updated and comprehensive winter storm preparedness plan for all GRDA owned generation assets.

> Achieved 97% availability and 99.3% start reliability across the Hydro fleet.

- Asset Management.

> Major Transmission substation projects completed: Miami-Freehauf, Stillwater 69 Upgrade.

> Received the American Public Power Association RP3 designation again in 2021. This designation recognizes high achievement in reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement, even amid a global pandemic.

> Completed the Salina MOD switch replacements during the reservoir drawdown.

## **Oklahoma Water Resources Board**

- Surpassed \$5.3 billion in water infrastructure financing while maintaining AAA bond ratings. Approved 66 loans and grants for over \$394 million, with \$61.3 million in estimated savings to borrowing entities. Processed five bond issuances in 2021 for a total of over \$278 million, while maintaining OWRB’s AAA rating resulting in the lowest available interest rates for Oklahoma’s communities.

- Improved safety of Oklahoma dam inventory. Modernized design and inspection standards, completed prioritized dam inspections, and digitized all available breach maps to improve hazard identification and ensure dams are operated in a safe manner.

- Completed interstate negotiations to reconfirm protection standards for Illinois River through a collaboration with Arkansas DEQ, Oklahoma DEQ, and Office of the Secretary of Energy and Environment to draft rules to determine phosphorus limit compliance

- Improved and secured online ArcGIS mapping products through new engagement with University of Oklahoma Center for Spatial Analysis to move applications and databases, update system and increase efficiencies.

- Optimized mobile operations and online products and services, including online permitting, testing and education; administrative transactions and assistance; virtual public meetings and mobile workforce configuration.

## **LP Gas Administration**

- Digital Transformation: Project commenced May 2021 to scan all historical records to reduce footprint and storage costs.
- Cost Savings:
  - > Returned 18 pieces of leased IT equipment back to the Office of Management and Enterprise Services and worked with vendors to reduce the costs of various contracts upon renewal.
  - > Internal office staff was reduced by 40% in the fourth quarter of FY21. We are working to continually find ways to do more with less and be more intentional with the work that is performed.
- Technology: Acquired iPads and mobile printers for the officers in the field to use for Truck Inspections, Citations, and Storage Inspections to increase efficiencies and remove the need for paper to be transported between the officers in the field and the main office.
- Safety: Converted Law Enforcement Officers over to the AT&T FirstNet program, so they will have priority cellular access during emergency situations when network traffic is high.

## **Oklahoma Energy Resources Board**

- Cleaned up 495 orphaned and abandoned well sites at no cost to landowners, including the removal of surface equipment associated with the former Capitol #1 (Petunia) well.
- Successfully piloted a First Responder Training program to provide free flammable liquids and flammable gas training for paid and volunteer firefighters. Because of the pilot program's success, the OERB will continue this program.
- Awarded 41 scholarships to students pursuing careers in the energy industry and provided science and math equipment and training to 706 Oklahoma educators.
- Hosted 19 free educational events that reached over 600 local oil and natural gas producers across the entire State of Oklahoma. One workshop effectively achieved participation from industry professionals in all four quadrants of the state. The 2021 classroom instruction brought forth new industry education, continuing education and introductions of new technology.

## **Oklahoma Corporation Commission**

- Collaborative effort to avoid widespread collapse of Oklahoma's energy system during February 2021 Polar vortex.
- OCC's regulation of oil and gas industry cited as a key reason for Oklahoma being named in top two for oil and gas investment in 2021.
- Greater stakeholder and public access to information, data, and services through video streaming, website improvements and digital services in the new customer service center.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY

Secretary of Agriculture: Blayne Arthur

## Animal Industry

- AIS will be the official state agency for the U.S. SHIP (Swine Health Improvement Program). This will allow participants in the swine industry to become African Swine Fever, Classical Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease certified free.
- AIS participated in a successful national Foot and Mouth Disease exercise this year. Plans developed and exercised during this event will allow us to respond to foreign animal disease threats not only for FMD but also African Swine Fever.
- AIS participated in regional Foreign Animal Disease drills with our neighboring states to align response strategies amongst our states to allow for continuity of business to continue as close to normal as possible for industry during a FAD outbreak.
- AIS has successfully distributed over 103,000 free RFID tags to Oklahoma producers and veterinarians.
- AIS received supplemental funding from USDA to purchase RFID wands that will be distributed to Oklahoma State University extension, OSU CVM, vet tech programs and accredited veterinarians to support the use of the free RFID tags.
- AIS approved the emergency authorized use of the RHDV2 vaccine for use by veterinarians to begin vaccinating rabbits against Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease.
- AIS and our USDA Colleagues completed 14 Foreign Animal Disease investigations.
- AIS and our USDA Colleagues worked with four Oklahoma cattle herds to follow up on Bovine Tuberculosis exposures and determine that TB was not present in the herds.

## Market Development

- The Made in Oklahoma Program producer participation grew by 46.4% in 2021 (astronomical compared to the growth rate of previous years: 2018: 2.4%, 2019: 14.2%, 2020: -5.7%).
- The MIO Store at the OK State Fair had record setting sales - \$7,528 greater than our previous year.
- Distributed \$1.4 million in federal funding to support the growth of the specialty crop industry through research and promotional products.
- Healthy Food Financing Initiative, which began in January 2021, has awarded \$64,267.
- Farm to School established 7 school gardens across the state.
- Craft Beer Trail was launched highlighting 60 breweries. More than 25,000 brochures have been sent out to tourism destinations and individual consumers since June.
- Made in Oklahoma products made available for military bases commissary.
- Made in Oklahoma jelly company entered into Australian market.
- Awarded \$500,000 grant for rural mental health services in OK.

## Administrative Services

Efficiencies gained in teleworking:

- > Implementation of a receipts lockbox with the anticipation to expand the number of programs using this payment method in 2022.

- > Implementation of electronic signatures for the procurement approval routing process.
- Human Resources reorganized their offices to be more user friendly.
  - > Changed the main entrance/exit door from the east side of the office to the west side.
  - > Cubicles were reconfigured so that HR staff can easily be seen by employees as soon as they enter the office.

## **Forestry**

- As of Dec. 1, responded to nine wildfires, which burned 58,441 acres
  - > OFS also responded to 21 fires outside of the designated Protection Area at the request of local fire departments.
- Increased National Wildfire Qualifications for 20 Oklahoma Forestry employees.
- Wrote 61 Forest Stewardship Plans covering 18,482 acres.
- 3,749 landowners were provided land management assistance.
- Grew over 7,500 containerized seedlings in our greenhouse facility that will be distributed throughout the state. Additionally, grew roughly 10,000 educational loblolly pine seedlings in our greenhouse facility that will be handed out for educational purposes at local, county and state events.
- Hosted more than 100,000 guests at the Forest Heritage Center Museum to learn about sustainable forestry.
- Established a partnership with law enforcement through the “Ready, Set, Go” initiative.
- Harvest and processed about 3 million seedlings for the 2020-2021 seedling sale. Generated \$409,151.50 in seedling sales revenue.

## **Food Safety**

- Hired five new meat processing inspectors, to keep up with the increased processing capacity from the CARES Act dollars of 2020.
- Assisted FDA in investigation with the recall in chocolate milk. Protected public health by finding positive listeria in unpasteurized milk products.

## **Executive Office**

- Redesigned a new website, abiding by new state branding guidelines.
- Hosted the first AgHER Conference and sold-out the high school conference.
- Created the Ag on Lincoln event for Made in Oklahoma vendors to sell and share their products with the public.
- Traveled to Azerbaijan and established an Oklahoma business in their market.
- Completed the third class of the Agriculture Youth Council.
- Received the Team Player Award at Governor’s Leading with Hope Summit.

## **Investigative Services**

- Arrested three serial arsonists this year, which all resulted in convictions. We are currently leading the Southeast Region Law Enforcement Arson Task Force with serial wildland arsonist arrests in 2021.
- \$2.33 million dollars in personal property recovered so far for 2021.

## **Consumer Protection**

- Moved our insect/disease trapping and sampling data to an ARC GIS Platform in 2021.
  - > This simplified the process we were using by eliminating the need to collect the GPS points of insect/disease traps/samples using a Garmin and recording the information in an Excel spreadsheet. The ARC GIS system allows the inspector to use their phone to collect the GPS point of the trap and all the data. This is stored in the cloud and available to office staff real time. It also is easier to upload the information to the USDA. Hemp and Pesticide complaints have also been added along with the following six insect trapping programs:
    - Imported fire ant
    - Forest pest
    - P. ramorum
    - Karnal bunt
    - Japanese beetle
    - Sweet potato weevil

## **Agriculture Environmental Management Services**

- Implementation of online inspection program that allows all inspections to be performed in the field on an iPad, saving paper and reentry into a database.

## **Office of General Counsel**

- Implementation of GovQA to streamline the open records process and saving staff time in processing requests.

# OKLAHOMA HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

Executive Director: Kevin Corbett | Secretary of Health and Mental Health: Kevin Corbett

## Expanded Medicaid coverage for adults

- As a result of State Question 802, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority expanded Medicaid benefits to more than 230,000 low-income adults ages 19-64 years old.
- From June 2021 to December 2021, more than 80,000 Oklahomans were reprocessed for eligibility. This resulted in projected state savings of approximately \$30 million by transitioning certain existing members from traditional Medicaid to expansion to capitalize on higher federal matching rate, reducing the state's financial obligation.
- From July 2021 to Dec. 2021, more than 145,000 newly eligible Oklahomans enrolled.
- Conducted targeted outreach and provided education throughout the State of Oklahoma using traditional and non-traditional advertising methods to reach eligible members.
- Transitioned new members into SoonerCare Choice helping members work directly with their chosen provider to create a healthy lifestyle by identifying and treating common conditions, providing preventative care, and offering referrals to specialists.

## Launched implementation of Health Information Exchange

- Implementation of a statewide health information exchange (HIE) was launched to increase access to patient information at the point of care and enable greater sharing of health information between authorized doctors, hospitals and patients.
- Contracted with Orion Health to partner with Oklahoma in delivering the new HIE platform.
- The HIE will improve patient safety and drive improvement in health outcomes by enhanced coordination of care and understanding of patient needs, reducing medication and medical errors, prevent the duplication of tests and redundant collection of information from the patient and improve public health reporting.

## Increased focus on quality health outcomes

- Designated a Chief Quality Officer to design and operate a comprehensive quality strategy for implementing best-practice improvements against targeted health outcomes.
- This strategy guides evidence-based decision-making regarding patient care and agency-wide interventions and highlight opportunities and accountabilities for partner agencies to participate for best results in serving collective populations.
- Health equity has been prioritized by adding ethnicity stratification and analysis in the agency's analysis of Chronic Condition Reports as well as prior authorizations to ensure members receive appropriate access to care.
- Engaged contractors for an unprecedented level of member experience measurement to actively improve service to members.
- Doubled the capacity for peer review of outpatient and inpatient quality of care concerns.
- The first Social Determinants of Health survey of SoonerCare members will be distributed in January to collect and analyze data contributing to health outcomes outside the traditional provider setting.

### **Added additional dental benefits for adult SoonerCare members**

- As a result of statewide investment by Governor Kevin Stitt and the Legislature, SoonerCare now covers preventive dental care, including cleanings, fluoride, and periodontal scaling; exams; x-rays; restorative care; and partial and full dentures for all adult members.
- These dental benefits will be crucial to improving oral health outcomes, and by extension, overall health outcomes throughout Oklahoma and reduce economic and social disparities.

### **Increased coverage for opioid treatment programs**

- Became the first Medicaid agency in the nation to submit and receive federal approval to provide Medicaid coverage and reimbursement for all FDA-approved medication-assisted treatment prescriptions through opioid treatment programs and office-based opioid treatment settings.
- This will increase access to care for opioid disorder treatment services for SoonerCare members and reduce unmet needs and overdose-related deaths.

### **Achieved operational efficiencies**

- Total savings in FY 2021 is almost \$40 million with over \$3 million in recurring future savings:
- A change in methodology to reporting drug rebates allowed the agency to realize a one-time cash savings of \$24 million.
- Re-evaluated the covered 90% FMAP Family Planning program procedures/drugs and realized an initial savings of \$12 million and future annual savings of \$3 million.
- Through enhanced oversight, negotiation, and performance management, achieved \$2 million in savings from cancellation or rate negotiations of third-party contracts.
- Removed Xerox printers due to lower volume of staff in office because of telework resulting in annual savings of \$30,000.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Executive Director of ODOT: Tim Gatz | Secretary of Transportation: Tim Gatz

## Increased Top Ten state ranking by reducing structurally deficient bridges

- Climbed to No. 7 from No. 9 nationally for good bridge conditions by reducing structurally deficient bridges to less than 67, or less than 1% of highway system bridges.

## Transportation Modernization Initiative report made public

- Completed the first phase of the Transportation Cabinet Modernization Initiative providing a Current State Assessment report to employees and the public in June. Guidehouse, a consulting firm, provided the assessment, identifying a future structure and six areas of immediate initiatives. Three of the six initiatives are in the implementation phase and more will come on line during 2022.
- E-construction technology and systems in combination with paperless processes and management practices is streamlining the project delivery process and reducing costs.
- ODOT and Oklahoma Turnpike Authority align on project specifications and combines the bid letting process, which provides contractors a one-stop shop for bidding projects.
- OTA is piloting new Construction Management technology beginning in 2022 with ODOT to adopt later in 2022.

## Economic growth and tourism initiatives

- ODOT worked to boost tourism and help travel enthusiasts with new signage, highlighting access to communities and tourism destinations.
- Route 66 Signage: Route 66 enthusiasts now have an easier way to spot the historic Mother Road in Oklahoma thanks to nearly 400 updated historical markers installed along highways and turnpikes. ODOT worked with the Route 66 Centennial Commission and several Route 66 organizations on the new signage design, which also is available to cities for their use on the route.
- Fishing Trails Signage: In partnership with the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation installed 815 roadside signs across the six fishing trail loops statewide to showcase prime fishing spots at the state's lakes and rivers.

## Received major federal grants for upcoming projects

- A \$50 million grant to improve more than 7 miles of I-35 across the Texas and Oklahoma state line. The Red River Bridge project will have significant positive impacts in both Oklahoma and Texas, including within the Chickasaw Nation. This section of interstate was built in the 1960s, and no longer accommodates current traffic volumes of 50,000 vehicles a day. This project adds an additional river crossing, providing a relief route for emergencies.
- A \$50 million grant for an interchange improvement project at I-40 and Douglas Boulevard near Tinker Air Force Base. These upgrades will improve safety and efficiency for more than 50,000 vehicles each day, of which 15% are commercial trucks. These crucial grant funds will help advance this critical project's timetable by five years.

## Progress on significant projects

- The first of five construction phases, at an estimated \$90 million, is underway at the I-44 and US-75

interchange in Tulsa. The project widens I-44 to six lanes and replaces five bridges between the Arkansas River and Union Avenue. This phase begins the much-needed replacement of this critical interchange. The entire interchange reconstruction is estimated at \$221 million.

- Crews continue upgrading US-69/75 corridor near Durant at an estimated \$150 million, which includes one of the largest federal grants awarded to the department. This project will improve accessibility on and off the highway, protect key interchanges, create one-way frontage roads and add a much-needed rail crossing to the four lanes of traffic.
- The \$105 million reconstruction of the I-235/I-44 interchange nears completion with two new flyover ramps opening to traffic, which eliminates conflict points. ODOT expects to open the full interchange in early 2022.

### **Completed 373 projects at a value of more than \$1 billion**

- ODOT completed several notable projects throughout 2021, including.
  - > New interchange at I-40 and Frisco Rd. in Yukon.
  - > US-81 Rock Island bridge reconstruction in El Reno.
  - > SH-28 Pensacola Dam bridge rehabilitation in cooperation with Grand River Dam Authority.
  - > New roundabout at the intersection of the I-35 ramps at SH-74 South and a local road in Goldsby in McClain County.
  - > US-70 resurfacing and added passing lanes near Madill in Marshall County.
  - > Structurally deficient bridge replacement and shoulders added to SH-53 near Milo in Carter County.
  - > Shoulders added to 9 miles of SH-29 from Marlow east toward Bray in Stephens County.
  - > Rumble strips, a safety feature, added to 173 miles of highway through southcentral, western and southwestern Oklahoma.

### **Adopted the 2022-2029 Eight Year Construction Work Plan**

- Thanks to continued support for transportation infrastructure investment from the Governor and the Legislature, the Oklahoma Transportation Commission approved the highest value Construction Work Plan in history based on a state and federal funding projection of \$7.4 billion.
- Highways cleared during historic winter storm
- More than 103,000-man hours were worked by ODOT and OTA maintenance crews during the Feb. 7-19 historic polar vortex winter storm. Working around the clock, crews spread 55,000 tons of salt and sand material on highways and turnpikes. The storm event cost nearly \$9 million, and ODOT and OTA kept Oklahoma safe and moving.

# OKLAHOMA TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

Executive Director of OTA: Tim Gatz | Secretary of Transportation: Tim Gatz

## **Cashless tolling begins**

The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority began modernizing tolling by transitioning to a cashless system. PlatePay allows motorists to drive through toll plazas without stopping to pay and decreases crash risks by eliminating many conflict points on the turnpike. OTA initiated PlatePay on the John Kilpatrick Turnpike earlier in the year as an alternative to using a PIKEPASS. Drivers using PlatePay are billed based on pictures taken of their license plate while traveling through toll plazas. While more costly than a PIKEPASS because of administrative costs, PlatePay helps create a free flow of traffic and a safer, more efficient means of travel. The transition to cashless tolling continues in 2022 with the Kickapoo, Gilcrease Expressway, H.E. Bailey, Creek and the Cimarron turnpikes.

## **OTA long-range plan**

The authority's board approved the creation of a long-range plan as a blueprint for future projects, creating a transparent path to further engage community and economic stakeholders as partners in the expansion and development of the turnpike system. The plan may take up to 15 years to implement and encompasses modern, high-speed, interstate-level access and capacity improvements across the turnpike network. New and improved interchanges and reconstructing and widening the full length of the Turner Turnpike, along with segments of the Will Rogers and the Kilpatrick, are included. Also included are several expansions like the Gilcrease Expressway, the northwest segment in the Tulsa area, and the completion of the south loop with access to I-35 in the Oklahoma City area. The turnpike improvements will augment the functionality of our tax-supported highways, help maximize safe and efficient travel and foster economic development and innovation long into the future. In short, this investment will provide travel time reliability and increase the quality of life for citizens.

## **Kickapoo Turnpike opens to traffic**

The Kickapoo Turnpike opened to traffic in January 2021, connecting I-40 in eastern Oklahoma to I-44/ Turner Turnpike. The project opened nearly two years ahead of schedule. The 21-mile-long toll road provides relief to some of Oklahoma City's traffic congestion and increases safety for motorists. Traffic on the Kickapoo is already outpacing projections.

## **Southwest Kilpatrick extension completed**

An extension project to connect southwest Oklahoma City and metro area at large was completed on the John Kilpatrick Turnpike, offering another route for Will Rogers World Airport. The Kilpatrick extension is between I-40 and SH-152/Airport Rd.

## **Gilcrease Expressway work progresses**

Construction continues for the \$330 million Gilcrease Expressway in Tulsa with expected completion in early 2022. The 5-mile project will connect L.L. Tisdale to I-44, completing a western loop around the Tulsa metro area. It is designed to help relieve urban traffic congestion during peak periods and will provide a new and more direct route to city attractions and points of interest in the Tulsa urban core.

## **Turnpike/highway designations**

In August, the authority approved adding highway numbers to several Oklahoma turnpikes. Consistent numbering helps mapping and routing apps provide drivers a logical and continuous route.

# COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

Secretary of the Commissioners of the Land Office: Elliot Chambers  
Secretary of Energy and Environment: Kenneth Wagner

## CLO

- Finance – The agency’s Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the second year in a row.
- Minerals Management – CLO oil and gas lease sales in 2020 brought in \$579,910.32, while 2021 generated \$2,507,217.24. That is an increase of \$1,927,306.92 from the prior year. Our partnership with EnergyNet has helped with this in a very big way. It has not only helped to streamline our sale process, but we are marketing to significantly more people. MMD was also the only state agency to actively market its minerals at the annual North American Prospects Expo (NAPE) in Houston earlier this year.
- Real Estate Management – CLO’s 2021 agriculture real estate auctions garner a record \$900,000 bonus
  - > Bonus amount (\$903,150 X 5 years = \$4,515,750 total bonus) and percent (40%) are the highest amounts in at least the past decade.
  - > Deployed a more robust and detailed pre-auction marketing campaign reaching more than 400,000 potential bidders through the govDelivery system.
  - > govDelivery emails were greatly improved as far as appearance and functionality to potential bidders.
  - > Saw a 26% increase in registered bidders compared to the previous year.
  - > Made a concerted effort to streamline and improve the auction build-up process which resulted in a significantly smoother process with far fewer errors and glitches than in previous years.
- IT – Assisted Real Estate Management Division to disseminate massive electronic notification that increased the number of prospect bidders this year and increased lease competition.

# OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Commissioner of Health: Keith Reed | Secretary of Health and Mental Health: Kevin Corbett

## Managed Oklahoma's comprehensive COVID-19 response

- More than 85,958 (including HIS) doses of monoclonal treatment distributed statewide as a critical tool in reducing the severity of COVID-19.
- First round of antiviral treatment allocated Dec. 17, 2021.
- Implemented SpringML for all labs statewide to report lab results, moving away from manual reports.
- Developed a portal, with IMMY, for online patient test scheduling and reporting.
- Implemented OSDHCI system, a case investigation tool that is a self-serve approach to contact tracing. This tool allows the public to quickly receive test results via text and conduct their own case investigations and contact tracing through an online portal.
- Assisted partners, including but not limited to long-term care facilities, correctional facilities, employers and schools with guidance and testing.
- Distributed 56,928 cases of PPE and maintained an on-hand PPE inventory of 90 days.
- Utilized private, university and state partnerships to enhance response efforts.
- Transitioned OSDH staff, where appropriate, to teleworking.

## COVID-19 vaccination

- Vaccine rollout recognized as one of the most successful in the United States, prioritizing and protecting Oklahoma's most vulnerable.
- There have been 4.2 million COVID-19 vaccine doses administered as of Dec. 20, 2021 - Oklahoma State Immunization Information System (OSIIS). This totals over 5 million when federal sources are included.
- 2,602,348 Oklahomans have received at least one vaccine dose – 65.8% of all Oklahomans.
- 2,111,056 Oklahomans are fully vaccinated (two doses) – 53.4% of all Oklahomans.
- 615,168 Oklahomans have received either a third dose or booster dose.
- 47,242 Oklahoma children aged 5-11 have received at least one dose – 12.6% of all 5-11 aged children in Oklahoma.
- Immunization Service enrolled 1,921 providers as pandemic providers.
- Over 1,600 providers were trained in proper vaccine administration, storage and handling.
- 800 pandemic provider assessments were completed to ensure proper vaccine storage.
- Immunization Service approved grants to 20 community-based organizations to improve vaccination coverage.
- Contracted with local county health departments, Tulsa City-County Health Department, and Oklahoma City-County Health Department for over \$18 million COVID-19 sub-grants.
- Completed an 18-month transition to enhanced OSIIS (confidential, population-based, bidirectional, computerized database) with approximately 5M shot records. 55,000 successful searches through public portal.
- 900 providers now submit data through Health Level Seven (HL7) saving time and effort for facility's staff by entering data once only.

## **Continued to transform OSDH to deliver stronger outcomes for citizens**

- Defined what success looks like
  - > Common understanding of our true north and how OSDH fits into broader eco system.
  - > Better and more efficient service delivery.
  - > Strong relationships with external partners across the eco system.
- Three priorities to transform OSDH
  - > Strengthen Core – redesign core processes, bolster organization and talent, fix technology systems and improve program delivery.
  - > Innovate Public Health – convene and lead stakeholders and launch new program models.
  - > Manage Portfolio – develop portfolio review processes, strategic planning and consider program moves where needed.
- Created a solid foundation for our transformation
  - > Redesigned leadership organization structure fit for purpose.
  - > Redesigned procurement and grant management processes to improve efficiency – 30% reduction in steps to P-card purchase.
  - > Announced five employee experience initiatives, including tuition assistance, professional development opportunities, recognition program, one-time COVID-19 incentive, and leadership and team building programs – \$3 million federal workforce funds allocated to employee experience.
  - > 55+ employees engaged in Transformation working teams.

## **Modernized Vital Records department**

- Vital Records moved away from expensive and inefficient lobby services to a more effective customer-friendly online ordering model in 2021.
- Receipts for online orders increased 555% – \$995,000 in 2019 to \$6.5 million in 2021.
- Online orders represented 14% of receipts in 2019 and 88% of receipts in 2021.
- Online orders increased 407% – 35,000 in 2019 to 177,000 in 2021.
- The number of certified copies issued for online orders increased 556% – 67,000 in 2019 to 439,000 in 2021.
- Online convenience fees for Oklahoma residents were cut 61%, from \$12.95 to \$5.00.

## **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

### COVID-19 response

- Support centers – USDA granted waivers to WIC to temporarily suspend certain program requirements including participant physical presence, height/weight measurements and blood test. The waivers were in place for the 2021 calendar year and allowed WIC to administer the program virtually and by phone. OSDH WIC partnered with contract sites in Oklahoma City and Tulsa to serve as support centers providing certifications and re-certifications to clients statewide, enabling CHD WIC staff to be used for the COVID-19 response. Sixty CHDs used the support centers to provide certifications/re-certifications to 12,338 clients during 2021, translating to approximately 6,194 CHD staff hours saved, to be used for the COVID-19 response and to help cover for staff shortages.
- Central office support – WIC central office staff provided nutrition education and mid-point wellness checks for CHDs and support centers averaging 10,742 participants each month, becoming the largest WIC clinic in the state. This effort also saved significant staff time in the CHD clinic sites.

### **Increased online education efforts**

- During 2021, WIC moved significant amounts of nutrition education material from paper to an electronic format. This now allows our clients to access nutrition education materials at a time convenient to their schedule and reduces the programs paper footprint.

### **Injury Prevention Service**

- Through the naloxone training and distribution program for emergency medical service agencies and fire departments, to date, 286 agencies have been trained and received naloxone kits with 303 usage forms returned, indicating 184 apparent opioid overdose reversals.
- Over 680 Oklahomans across the state have been trained to become instructors and offer Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance classes in their communities, which is an evidence-based fall prevention program.
- Car seat checks and installations have continued at the Central Office and participating county health departments despite the pandemic, resulting in 1,117 children now riding in an appropriate child safety seat correctly installed in their family's vehicle.
- The Injury Prevention Service has trained 399 individuals on child passenger safety and certified 82 new child passenger safety technicians (CPST) in Oklahoma. A certified CPST is now available in every county of the state.
- In 2021, 970 new car seats have been distributed to families. In addition to over 40 counties in Oklahoma with a supply of car seats at the county health department, the Injury Prevention Service has established relationships with five community partners to install car seats and provide education.
- New partnerships have recently launched to distribute home safety supplies (e.g., grab bars, rug tape, and light bulbs) to organizations serving older adults, such as Meals on Wheels–Tulsa and Rebuilding Together Oklahoma City, to reduce the risk of falling among adults 65 years and older.

### **Choctaw Nation flu vaccine partnership**

- OSDH entered into an agreement with Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in 2016 to leverage tribal and state resources to increase flu vaccination rates in southeastern Oklahoma.
- OSDH provided staff resources to store, coordinate and administer flu vaccines to all community members (both native and non-native) while Choctaw Nation purchased and provided the vaccines.
- Choctaw Nation purchased and provided 23,987 doses offered to all Oklahomans in that region.

### **Community Engagement and Health Promotion**

- In August 2021, awarded the CDC Community Health Workers (CHW) for Covid Response and Resilient Communities Grant. This three-year, \$3 million funding opportunity will provide the resources and training to build the infrastructure to support the growing CHW workforce across the state. Quarterly training meetings will be held across the state and online training for new CHW's are being created and disseminated.
- The funding will support two positions at Central Office in the Community Development Service area and provide \$730,000 in contracts for best practice CHW training and development for our county health departments, community based and tribal organizations.

### **Office of Minority Health and Health Equity**

- In June 2021, OMHHE was awarded a \$43.8 million CDC National Initiative to address COVID-19 health disparities among populations at high-risk and underserved, including racial and ethnic minority populations and rural communities.
- Community-based, faith-based, and tribal organizations will be able to apply for RFP funding to create

and implement projects for the four overarching strategies of this nationwide initiative – \$21 million.

- During 2021, OMHHE provided Translation and Interpretation Services
  - > Interpretation total – 1,713.
  - > Translation total – 497 with 257 COVID-19-related.

### **Sexual Health and Harm Reduction Services**

- The Ryan White program assisted nearly 600 clients in the transition from the HIV Drug Assistance program to Medicaid. The efforts, months in the planning, ensured that clients experienced no disruption in access to critical HIV medication.
- Partner services responded to a multi-county syphilis outbreak, treating nearly 600 people — including more than 120 pregnant women, preventing this potentially deadly infection from being passed to their unborn children.
- In addition, a new Congenital Syphilis Review Board was created and staff worked to provide in-person and virtual options for participants from across the state to improve and enhance the response of public health workers to congenital syphilis in Oklahoma.
- Using federal Ending the HIV Epidemic funding, the service was able to debut a new program which allows Oklahomans to request free HIV self-testing kits and doubled the number of free condoms provided to Oklahomans to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections.

### **Child Guidance**

The OSDH Child Guidance program celebrated 65 years of serving Oklahomans and played a key role in the COVID-19 response.

- As a result of the impact of COVID-19, a change in service delivery forced by the pandemic, the program expanded services via Telehealth to reach families during the pandemic and provide a bridge to continuity of care.
- Where possible to do so safely, CG staff continued to provide services helping to maintain the sense of connectedness vital for families already vulnerable to stress. They provided a place for families to share concerns about the disruption and changes in their lives being brought about by the pandemic such as changes in routines, the new worries and anxieties about keeping their family healthy, as well as an unexpected increase in financial instability.
- CG staff worked in tandem with their county health department’s response to COVID-19 supporting public health efforts. Many became involved in case investigation and contact tracing, while others acted as couriers, and all worked in whatever capacity they were needed.
- CG staff, when possible and appropriate, engaged in supportive roles within their health departments sharing and placing information about coping during stressful times in prominent staff locations.

### **Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation**

Each year, 7,500 Oklahomans die from smoking-related diseases.

- In 2014, OK set a goal to have 150,000 fewer tobacco users by 2022. In 2021, tobacco use data from 2020 shows that we are on track to meet that goal, with 129,574 fewer tobacco users in 2020 as compared to 2012.
- Over 28,500 tobacco users registered to use the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline in FY 2020; 34.4% quit using tobacco, exceeding the benchmark quit rate of 30%.

## **Cancer Prevention and Control Program**

- The leukemia program started in 2021. Since its inception, 35 Oklahomans received transportation assistance to receive treatment.
- The Oklahoma Central Cancer Registry has received the gold certification from the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) based on quality, completeness and timeliness of data collected from 1997-2018.

# OKLAHOMA MEDICAL MARIJUANA AUTHORITY (OMMA)

Executive Director: Adria Berry

## **Worked to crack down on bad actors operating illegally within the state**

- Developed additional testing measures to determine whether businesses are using unsafe chemical processes to have more potent products.
- Executed an emergency revocation of a licensed laboratory providing inaccurate testing results to businesses.
- Granted authority by the Legislature to recall and embargo products.
- Performed a recall on a processor's products that were deemed unsafe and collected \$50,000 in fines as a result.
- Worked with the legislators to pass House Bill 2646, which granted OMMA the authority to hire more staff and strengthen our enforcement procedures.

## **Strengthened partnerships across state agencies, resource boards and authorities**

- Established an investigations unit to work collaboratively with OBNDD and local law enforcement to swiftly remove OMMA-licensed businesses that are operating illegally from the market.
- Filed over 650 cases and large hearing dockets to revoke business licenses of those who failed to submit a foreign financial interest attestation.
- Hired an agency liaison to work with other state agencies to begin developing creative solutions to real problems facing Oklahomans, especially those in the rural parts of our state.
- Worked with OBNDD to receive foreign financial interest attestations from licensed, active business owners.

## **Prioritized transparency and communication**

- Began a laboratory quality assurance program to compare and rate the accuracy of each lab's testing results.
- Created additional avenues for contacting OMMA with complaints, questions or comments.
- Created detailed graphics explaining the complex rulemaking process to keep Oklahomans apprised of where we are in both the permanent and emergency rulemaking processes.
- Held listening sessions with industry leaders from growers, processors, dispensaries, and labs to help identify gaps in our rules, policies and procedures.
- OMMA leadership provided regular updates to licensees and the general public through town halls, association and organization presentations, social media, website changes, emails and media briefings and interviews.
- Shared historical financial information and reporting data. Compiled all the tax revenue and licensing data onto one webpage to make it easier for Oklahomans to reference.

## **Created and implemented a staff-up plan to hire high-priority positions**

- These critical positions include compliance inspectors, policy analysts, state agency and legislative liaisons, legal support, licensing processors, strategic planning and engagement staff, and an entire investigations unit.

- More than doubled the number of staff members. Having these additional staff members has helped to provide clearer pathways for the OMMA to regulate the medical marijuana industry.

### **Streamlined operational processes to improve productivity**

- Business licensing has cut average wait time by more than 50%.
- Patient licensing zeroed out new & renewal application queues for the first time since March 2019.
- Restructured the Call Center to include tiers of staff that have more training and knowledge, thereby improving the caller experience.
- The turnaround time for sending out notices of violations after compliance inspections has been significantly reduced.
- Completed nearly 2,300 more compliance inspections and operational status visits compared to this time last year.
- The audit department conducted nearly 400% more audits and follow-up visits this year than in 2020.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

Commissioner for the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services: Carrie Slatton-Hodges  
Secretary of Health and Mental Health: Kevin Corbett

## Organizational culture

For two consecutive years, the ODMHSAS was named one of Oklahoma's Top Workplaces by the Oklahoman. The significance of this accomplishment in both 2020 and 2021 cannot be underscored enough because it's based solely on feedback from a privately facilitated employee engagement survey where 70% of employees responded. The results of our participation in the Top Workplaces program confirms that those working at the ODMHSAS are dedicated to improving the emotional well-being of those we serve and help support the communities where we live, especially during the most challenging employment circumstance our world has ever faced. It's our employees living our mission that makes ODMHSAS a Top Workplace in Oklahoma.

## Savings and efficiencies

The ODMHSAS is charged to serve the entire population of Oklahoma through prevention, treatment and recovery support services. Operating in the most efficient and effective way is critical to achieve success around this critical mission. Our efforts to enhance system savings and efficiencies in 2021 included:

- Implemented an Institute for Mental Disease waiver that has increased access to inpatient, residential and crisis treatment services while allowing opportunities for additional third-party billing revenue.
- Increased use of mobile technology to provide services that has led to improved productivity, enhanced billing revenue, decreased no-show rates, and reduced mileage reimbursement to law enforcement.
- Continued to manage the Medicaid behavioral health program growth rate with extreme precision by investing in evidenced-based treatment services that produce desired outcomes such as:
  - > Reduced the use of incessant use of psychiatric inpatient beds by 21%.
  - > Reduced the prevalence of emergency room visits by 14%.
  - > Achieved a net-savings of \$2 million through a shift in outcome-based reimbursement.
- Reduced administrative overhead costs to 2%.
- Analyzed use of statewide vehicles to reduce fleet by 20 vehicles.

## Treatment services

Oklahoma is on the precipice of completely changing the way citizens understand, navigate and receive mental health and addiction treatment services. Through easier access and ensuring more options to treatment services are available, Oklahoma is quickly becoming the model that other states are looking to replicate. In addition, ODMHSAS has begun a transformative process to build a comprehensive crisis response continuum statewide. Significant achievements to date include:

- Created immediate access to residential substance abuse treatment beds through a streamlined Medicaid eligibility process and an electronic bed availability report.
- Increased the number of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services to approximately 6,000 additional Oklahomans and are rapidly increasing partnerships with county jails to expand MAT access even further.

- Integrated over 16,669 mobile technology solutions for Oklahomans which include:
  - > 11,562 iPads for direct client use and 235,382 completed sessions.
  - > 5,129 iPads for first responders use and 16,543 completed calls.
- Developed and launched statewide an alternative to law enforcement transportation service for those experiencing emotional distress helping more than 1,000 Oklahomans safely and respectfully access inpatient treatment beds since Nov. 1.
- Distributed a Request for Proposal to assist with the selection of partnerships that will create the revolutionary 988 Call Center.
- Secured public-private partnerships to add nine additional 24/7 Behavioral Health Urgent Care Centers across the state.

### **Recovery supports**

Recovery from mental health and addiction includes more than just stabilizing the person. Rather, it includes helping the individual thrive to be the best Oklahoman they can possibly be. To achieve long-term success, ODMHSAS assists Oklahomans obtain housing, reunite with family, divert from the criminal justice system, and obtain employment so that they can maintain their treatment gains and become contributing members to communities across Oklahoma. Achievements last year include:

- Reduction of unemployment for persons receiving treatment services, resulting in \$31.6 million new wages earned.
- Reduction of 20.8% in homelessness for persons receiving treatment services, resulting in a cost avoidance of \$31.3 million.
- Reduction of arrests for persons receiving treatment services by 16.4%, resulting in a cost avoidance of \$4 million.

### **Prevention**

Prevention builds on strong communities to protect individuals from declines in mental health. Prevention also reduces substance use, improves education outcomes and boosts work productivity. Because individuals don't get sick and are able to stay engaged in the community, ODMHSAS can be more efficient with resources to help more people. Achievements in 2021 include:

- Increased access to evidenced-based screening and intervention services in primary care settings to include opioid pain management and other prevention services.
- Partnered with more than 70% of the K-12 school system by:
  - > Training more than 13,000 teachers and school personnel in suicide prevention.
  - > Established long-term solutions through partnerships in the Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports framework.
- Established partnerships with faith-based organizations to implement the Strengthening Families program with over 1,000 Oklahomans to prevent and reduce substance use.
- Distributed over 5,000 naloxone kits to first responders and launched additional harm reduction strategies such as distributing fentanyl test strips.
- Increased Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment by 65% to help reduce substance use and suicide rates.
- Launched "Are You Okay?" suicide prevention in the workplace initiative where 73 organizations have already committed to adopting policy recommendations and onboarding strategies.
- Launched the "Just for Now" initiative helping veterans and their families through the challenges associated with increased risk of suicide.

## **Outreach and Education**

ODMHSAS is committed to supporting excellence across the mental health and addiction field and seeks to engage all Oklahomans in accurate information about the best ways to prevent, treat and recover from diseases of the brain. We are quickly expanding our partnerships to connect with more Oklahomans about our mission and strategy to become a premier state for emotional well-being. Achievements last year include:

- Enhanced a digital presence to increase awareness of services available through significant updates to the ODMHSAS website and social media presence. Achievements this year include:
  - > Increased website traffic by 100%, averaging 20,000 hits a month.
  - > Increased organic impressions and engagement with ODMHSAS social media platforms by 24 million and 500,000 respectively.
- Expanded the reach of our virtual training options, adding more than 11,000 accounts and helping Oklahomans register for more than 94,000 courses.
- Provided approximately 3,000 law enforcement officers state-of-the-art mental health education courses.
- Secured that an additional 300 law enforcement officers completed the 40-hour gold standard Crisis Intervention Training.
- Trained over 200 health care providers in alternative opioid pain management practices.

# OKLAHOMA OFFICE OF JUVENILE AFFAIRS

Executive Director: Rachel Canuso Holt | Secretary of Human Services: Justin Brown

## Hope-centered and trauma-informed care

- OJA launched an organizational trauma-informed care assessment to all its employees providing a baseline for strategic planning in the areas of trauma-informed care training, policies and practices. The assessment will assist in monitoring OJA's progress over the next two years to ensure and sustain OJA as a trauma-informed organization. In addition to this work, OJA is poised to be a hope-centered agency and has joined the science of hope initiative led by First Lady Sarah Stitt and Dr. Chan Hellman, a University of Oklahoma professor and director of the Hope Research Center.

## Continued construction of Next Generation Campus

- Construction continues on the Next Generation Campus at the Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center in Tecumseh. With modern residential units allowing each resident to have individual bedrooms, additional programming space and natural light to improve the environment for staff and residents, Oklahoma will lead the nation in secure care facilities. The project should be completed in 2022. Oklahoma will consolidate the two existing secure care facilities to the Next Generation Campus.

## Improved secure care programming leads to improved outcomes

- In preparation to lead the nation not only in modern secure care buildings, OJA's goal is for Oklahoma to lead the nation in secure care treatment programming. At the Next Generation Campus, a revised master schedule has been developed to increase treatment and positive organized activities while limiting idle time. Family visitation and counseling through virtual visits has led to an increase in family engagement. Group therapy has been focused on utilizing problem solving and enhancing social skills by introducing evidence-based and trauma-informed curriculums. A Direct Care Staff Leadership Academy was implemented that emphasizes the importance of role-modeling, rewards, relationship, and rapport building. Each of these initiatives have assisted secure care in reducing physical interventions by more than 50%, a 49.28% reduction in youth on staff assaults, as well as a 76% reduction in major rule violations. It also reduced workers' compensation recordable injuries by 52%.

## High school diplomas and GEDs through Oklahoma Youth Academy Charter School

- OJA's Oklahoma Youth Academy Charter School provides education for youth at OJA's two secure care treatment centers. Five students earned high school diplomas and 27 obtained their GEDs in 2021.

## Improved community-based rehabilitative programs and partnerships

- OJA increased youth well-being upon reentry to the community by agreements with the Department of Rehabilitation Services and Workforce Oklahoma for a paid work program that enhances job history for youth building their resume. Additional contracted services through the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, which has an agreement with the Federation of Families, to deliver mentoring, family connection and other supports to help youth successfully transition back to their communities.

## Compensation and workforce modernization

- OJA has streamlined its workforce and updated compensation across the agency. The salary adjustment plan was funded internally with no increase in appropriation required. OJA will continue to evaluate

compensation and career advancement opportunities. OJA has effectively transitioned many employees to full-time or hybrid telework positions leading to process efficiencies, improved time management, and a reduced real estate footprint. OJA has provided technology necessary to support teleworking employees, putting staff closer to the youth and families they are serving in their communities.

### **Invested in additional support resources for employees**

- OJA recognized the need to assist employees in managing life's daily challenges during the pandemic and with balancing work, family and personal hardships. In 2021, OJA contracted with the SupportLinc employee assistance program to provide instant access and referrals to professional counselors, legal consultation, financial consultation, identity-theft consultation, and dependent-care referrals, at no cost to OJA employees and their immediate family members.

### **Developing new Length of Stay (LOS) policies**

- OJA was selected to participate in the Length of Stay (LOS) Policy Academy. Individualizing length of stay creates a more efficient use of resources and better outcomes for safer communities. As a result of action plan implementation, OJA has been transforming the treatment landscape through investment in care, development of staff, reviewing step-down policies, and building state-of-the-art infrastructure to meet the unique needs of today's youth. OJA has implemented a process for all residential contract providers to submit a comprehensive monthly progress report on each youth that is disseminated to all parties involved in the case.

### **New Oklahoma law complies with federal laws on use of adult jails for children**

- House Bill 2311 brings Oklahoma into compliance with the reauthorization of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. HB 2311 makes juvenile detention centers the initial placement for all children arrested on detainable offenses. Prosecutors may file a motion requesting that children 15 to 17 years old charged with murder in the first degree be transferred to an adult jail as determined by the court based on several factors. Any adult jails used for such placements must be certified to hold juveniles by the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

### **Updated rates for designated youth service agencies**

- OJA's rates and standards committee and board continued work with designated youth service agency contractors to successfully convert service agreements from cost reimbursement to fee-for-service to emphasize payment for deliverables and control expense for administrative costs. As of June 30, 2021, 25 of 37 designated youth service agency contractors have been converted. The remainder should be converted by mid-2022. The agency's action follows through on a performance assessment of OJA completed in 2018 that recommended fee-for-service contracts for designated youth service agencies.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Executive Director: Joel Kintsel | Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Military: Ben T. Robinson

## Claims and Benefits

- Top ranking state in veterans benefits. Oklahoma took the lead and became first of the 50 states for highest per capita veterans in receipt of VA benefits through the collective efforts of ODVA and other veterans' service organizations' advocacy of OK veterans. The estimated collective value of veterans' benefits and services provided in Oklahoma is \$2.4 billion annually, with disability compensation received by Oklahoma's veterans providing Oklahoma veterans with \$693,440,241 in 2021.
- Veterans Service Representatives support veterans and families statewide. ODVA continued both in-person and virtual consultations with veterans in federal, state or partner office locations through Oklahoma. ODVA's Veterans Service representatives engaged with an estimated 148,000 contacts, consultations and direct correspondence with and on behalf of veterans during CY 21. ODVA obtained 5,350 new representative appointments by veterans and eligible family members for representation on claims before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Joint Service Officer Symposium Training hosted. ODVA hosted 116 participants live on-site at the annual professional education training event known as Joint Service Officer Training. ODVA welcomed government officials, accredited service officers and service officers in training from any veterans' service organization to participate in two full days of professional education offered by ODVA, USDVA and DOD subject matter experts.

## Oklahoma Veterans Centers

- Veteran Centers score high on 2021 Resident & Family Satisfaction surveys. Statewide survey results for overall quality of care show an approval rating of 81.7% by Veterans Center residents and their families. Residents responded with approval ratings of 89.4% to provisions for safety and security within Oklahoma's Veterans Centers and 85.1% confidence rating on the genuine care and concern of staff providing daily care. Agency leaders met with each Center's Resident Council in person to deliver survey results and promote open communication.
- Federal Funds awarded to ODVA for Veterans Center HVAC upgrades and replacement statewide. ODVA was awarded full federal funding in the amount of \$19 million for upgrades or replacements of HVAC systems for the Oklahoma Veterans Centers in Claremore, Clinton, Lawton, Norman and Sulphur.
- Design for Ardmore Replacement Center begins. ODVA applied for federal funding to build a 242-bed replacement facility in Ardmore for the current aging structures there. Design for the new facility commenced in 2021.
- Construction continues on a new Veterans Center in Sallisaw. ODVA continues construction for the new Sallisaw Veterans Center with a target opening date of mid-2023. The new center will serve current and future generations of veterans and their families by providing long-term care for 175 veterans in Eastern Oklahoma. Additional federal funds were awarded in the amount of \$2.5 million for design and modification to build a state-of-the-art infection control wing within the new Veterans Center in Sallisaw.
- Planning begins for transformation of Veterans Center in Sulphur to Cognitive Care Mission. Agency leaders' meeting with the City Council in Sulphur, Oklahoma to discuss special mission opportunity showed strong support for the initiative. "Open Door" meetings with staff of the Veterans Center of Sulphur followed to provide ample opportunity for Q&A on future plans.
- Dynamic response to COVID-19 pandemic. High commitment by Oklahoma Veterans Center residents and staff across every division of ODVA have resulted in continuity of care, availability of services and availability of critical equipment throughout the pandemic.

- Strong relationships with state and federal partners. Strong interface, relationships and collaboration with leaders at the Governor’s Joint Task Force and with state and federal agencies including OSDH, ODMHSAS, DHS and USDVA continue to allow ODVA operations to benefit from shared knowledge and resources for the clear benefit of our Veterans Center residents and the agency throughout the pandemic.

## Veterans Services

- Construction continues on the Oklahoma Veterans Cemetery in Ardmore. Construction continued throughout 2021 on ODVA’s first Veterans Cemetery in Ardmore, Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Veterans Cemetery in Ardmore is under construction, utilizing \$7.355 million in federal funding for the full cost of construction. The cemetery will open in spring 2022 with initial capacity of 1,100 veterans and spouses, with significant future expansion capabilities.
  - > Progressive suicide prevention efforts continue.
  - > ODVA purchased and launched an online veteran service referral platform known as OKVALOR (Oklahoma Veterans Assistance Locator) to provide easy access to veteran-centric resources for service members, veterans and families as well as statewide service providers.
  - > ODVA partnered with Oklahoma State University’s Health Sciences Center to stand up the nation’s first Veteran Echo call line to educate medical and mental health practitioners on veteran-centric issues with the goal of increasing awareness and education opportunities in this realm.
- ODVA hosts on-site mental health conference. ODVA hosted an on-site conference welcoming a broad audience of veterans and service providers with a special focus on mental health programming.
- Statewide women veterans photography and history initiative. In 2021, ODVA’s Women Veterans Program created a feature photography and history initiative called “HerStory” to celebrate and recognize the military service of Oklahoma’s women veterans. One hundred women veterans were professionally photographed at six locations statewide, and stories were gathered regarding their military service experiences. ODVA was proud to provide a display of photos from the project for the Women’s Equality Day exhibit at the Oklahoma City VA Hospital.
- Launched new veteran-owned business development program. ODVA created a new veteran outreach program to encourage growth and development of business opportunities by Oklahoma’s veteran-owned businesses. ODVA is actively collaborating with businesses as well as state and federal government to increase registration of veteran-owned businesses and awareness of government contracting opportunities.
- Launched new agri-vets initiative. Joint efforts of ODVA with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture and Oklahoma Employment Security Commission have grown and resulted in the formation of a statewide chapter of the Farmer Veteran Coalition in 2021 to promote opportunities for veterans working in agriculture, food and forestry sectors. Oklahoma has the second largest membership in the nation across the 50 states.
- Increased educational opportunities for veterans. The State Approving Agency has facilitated continued growth in participation of public and private institutions of higher education, trade schools, on-the-job training programs, and apprenticeship sponsors in GI Bill® eligible programs. In addition, Oklahoma has led the way in digital transformation of application and review processes with an emphasis on reducing the labor burden for new and participating schools and with an ultimate purpose of increasing programs available to Oklahoma veterans.
- Strong support for justice-involved veteran initiatives. ODVA continued partnerships with two programs to provide information and expertise to increase opportunities for justice-involved veterans by working with public and private partners.

## Central Office and Agencywide Accomplishments

- Leadership training instituted. ODVA instituted the agency's first leadership and communication training at various levels and divisions of the agency, with the intent to take the training to all levels in the future.
- Labor resource management. ODVA responsibly managed limited fiscal resources, as shown by actively managing overtime to a very low level at 1.3% of employee labor costs.
- Planning for OK Specific Transition Education Program. Planning and development commenced in 2021 for an Oklahoma Specific Transition Education Program to be launched in 2022 to attract and retain veterans to the state by educating them on all our great state has to offer. The veteran hired as the program manager for this effort has begun by leveraging experience in job matching and networking in support of the upcoming program.
- Marketing effort undertaken. Active marketing efforts specific to various agency programs, with special emphasis on the Veterans Centers, was begun in 2021 and will continue to grow and extend reach in 2022 to ensure that Oklahoma veterans and their families are aware of the services offered by and through the State of Oklahoma's Department of Veterans Affairs.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Commissioner of Public Safety: Tim Tipton | Secretary of Public Safety: Tricia Everest

## **Opened two megacenters to alleviate the backlog of Oklahomans needing driver licenses and IDs.**

- DPS, in conjunction with the governor's office and the Legislature, opened two megacenters as an additional option for Oklahomans seeking driver licenses and IDs. The megacenters were located in Oklahoma City and Tulsa and provided the following services: original issuance and renewal for REAL IDs, renewals and replacements of Class D and commercial driver licenses and identification cards, out-of-state transfers, original ID issuance and learner permits. The megacenters operated on a walk-in basis only and were able to serve close to 100,000 Oklahomans in the five months that the two centers were open. After they were closed, DPS added an additional 10 employees at the I-240 Oklahoma City location and an additional five employees at the Tulsa Eastgate location.

## **OHP Communications Centers become secondary PSAPs**

- The Oklahoma Highway Patrol Communications Centers across the state officially became secondary PSAPs (public safety answering points). The decades old \*55 number for roadside assistance was retired and now all highway emergencies are dealt with through 911. The updated technology means OHP can now receive transferred 911 calls with all the caller's information, including contact number and location. The upgrade is resulting in enhanced service and quicker response times for motorist assistance or crashes on state highways.

## **Mobile ID App upgraded to allow pre-enrollment for REAL ID**

- The Mobile ID app was upgraded to allow Oklahomans to pre-enroll for the federally mandated REAL ID. Residents can now start the REAL ID process from the comfort of home. Mobile ID users can use the app's checklist to confirm they have the correct documents, then upload them using their smartphone camera, and finally, answer a brief questionnaire. By completing these steps in advance, applicants can experience up to a 40% decrease in their transaction time during their in-person visit to both DPS and tag agent locations.

## **DPS expands services and DL area at the main headquarters on Martin Luther King Avenue in Oklahoma City**

- DPS conducted a complete remodel of the public driver license area at the headquarters location on Martin Luther King Avenue in Oklahoma City. The capacity went from four to six workstations to serve the public. And the agency also added the ability and areas to conduct all written exams which were not previously offered at this location.

## **DPS eliminated backlog for online renewals and replacements of DLs and IDs**

- After offering online enrollment during the pandemic in 2020, DPS experienced a backlog with thousands of Oklahomans taking advantage of the service. Through an expanded workforce, the agency was able to eliminate a backlog that at one point in time reached 26,000. The process is now close to being fully automated. This means instead of 18 employees working on online renewals, there are now only four with the assistance of robotic process automation, making the process quicker and more efficient and saving \$820,000 a year in staff costs.

**DPS supported the Sarah Stitt Act by enabling driver license services in prisons to serve the incarcerated population.**

**OHP troopers worked thousands of collisions and other specialty services and agency assists.**

- OHP Emergency Services Unit responded to 48 activations including high risk search/arrest warrants and protests.
- OHP troopers worked 30,000 collisions.
- OHP dive team worked 37 activations, including nine drowning/victim searches with six victims recovered, eight evidence searches and 13 vehicle recoveries.
- OHP bomb squad worked a total of 361 calls including none improvised explosive devices, 21 suspicious packages, 14 bomb threats, 27 explosive recoveries, 155 Capitol sweeps and 88 outside agency requested event security sweeps.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY

Executive Director: Mark Gower | Secretary of Public Safety: Tricia Everest

## Agency structure and staffing

- In 2021, ODEMHS continued work to further consolidate processes and procedures with the Office of Homeland Security, in response to the Governor's Executive Order 2020-25.
- ODEMHS also continued the process of transitioning long-time temporary employees to FTEs, which helped lower turnover to 17% and save more than \$70,000 annually.
- Additionally, ODEMHS moved HR shared services in house, saving \$1,050 per month; created a more efficient and streamlined process; and reduced payroll errors.
- Developed and implemented a new customer service program to improve response and resolution times for issues and inquiries.

## Grants and finance

- Expedited payments of \$1.8 million in federal Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) dollars to 84 city, county and tribal emergency management programs.
- Successfully applied for and received more than \$7.5 million in new non-disaster grant funding, including the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program and supplemental EMPG funding.
- Kicked off a new grant program for local jurisdictions using \$925,000 in EMPG funding for generators, water buffaloes, pallets of bottled water, emergency operations center upgrades and training to increase emergency response capacity at the local level.
- Completed payments totaling \$916,870 for legacy disaster support for other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.
- Closed 23 findings from the State Auditor and FEMA from previous years.
- Awarded the City of Durant \$1.6 million in state appropriated funding for the Durant Weather Radar Project.

## Recovery and mitigation

- Secured one FEMA Major Disaster Declaration and two U.S. Small Business Administration declarations, which have brought more than \$1.7 million in public assistance to local jurisdictions and other public sector entities, \$3.3 million in FEMA aid to homeowners and renters, and \$2.3 million in disaster loans to businesses and homeowners.
- Partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to develop a nearly \$4 million home rehabilitation project for residents impacted by the 2019 floods. The program uses Community Development Block Grant Disaster funding.
- The disaster case management program closed 265 cases representing \$1 million in services, support and other fulfilled needs for disaster survivors. These cases utilized 19,217 volunteer hours valued at \$440,956.
- More than \$119 billion in FEMA Public Assistance projects has been obligated in 2021 across all open disaster declarations, including COVID-19. Of that total, 449 projects have been paid, representing a federal share of \$83 billion. This federal funding is for local jurisdictions, state agencies, tribes and some private non-profits.

- Implemented a virtual damage assessment process and online tool which helped support during a major disaster for Oklahoma and is now used as an industry standard.
- Awarded grants for 21 local hazard mitigation projects totaling \$9,698,656 in FEMA disaster funds and \$1,526,000 in FEMA non-disaster grants.
- Provided \$1,618,909 in safe room rebate grants to 921 homeowners.

## **Homeland Security**

- In 2021, OKOHS managed approximately \$16.9 million in federal Homeland Security Grant Program funds awarded to 66 separate sub-recipients.
- OKOHS also managed \$2.6 million in grants through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program awarded to 28 separate sub-recipients.
- Continued to provide an annual \$200,000 hazardous material sustainment maintenance agreement to 30 Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosive (CBRNE) Regional Response System (RRS) entities.
- Awarded over \$570,000 in support of CBRNE and technical rescue RRS entities, which included: an explosive detection K-9, 37 photoionization detectors, nine upgraded rope rescue kits, and 12 flight harnesses for Oklahoma Task Force 1.
- Funded 181 HAZMAT and technical rescue training courses with 2,953 responders trained.
- Funded 26 in-person and virtual NIMS Classes with 412 students trained.
- Taught three statewide communications courses with 63 students trained.
- Taught 96 classes focused on terrorism and active threat response.
- OKOHS, Oklahoma Task Force 1, Oklahoma State University Fire Service Training, Tulsa Fire Department, and other state partners hosted the biennial Operational Readiness Exercise, a full-scale exercise that tests the technical abilities of first responders. During the three-day exercise, 470 technical rescue first responders participated in multiple locations, coordinated with the assistance of the OKOHS Statewide Interoperability coordinator, technical communications assets, and 60 communications leaders and technicians.
- Completed the annual Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Review for FEMA.
- The Oklahoma School Security Institute completed 90 Risk and Vulnerability Site Assessments and eight presentations focused on Behavioral Threat Assessment Management, School Response to an Armed Assailant, and Bus Security.
- OSSI received a total of 61 School Security Tips through the Oklahoma Information Fusion Center and its School Tip-line programs. The program serves approximately 698,000 students in over 1800 school site locations statewide.

## **911**

- The Oklahoma 911 Management Authority (OK911MA) received a federal grant that assisted in execution development of a statewide GIS dataset that meets national standards for the delivery of 911 calls in a NexGen911 system. This funding helped accomplish two priorities: three training classes in partnership with the Oklahoma Office of Geospatial Information (OGI) and development of a toolkit that allows 911 authorities to test local data to ensure it meets the state's NexGen911 standards. The toolkit, developed in partnership with OGI and ODOT, will be fully implemented in 2022.
- OK911MA kicked off another round of grants for 2021 including the following: three counties received grants for 911 consolidation studies, two counties received grants for implementing new mapping technology and 13 counties received grants to help them meet the state's minimum funding threshold for 911 programs.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Partnered with the Department of Public Safety on implementation of public alerts. Since that time, ODEMHS has issued three AMBER alerts with successful recovery, three missing children alerts, and two Blue alerts due to dangerous suspects.
- Continued to provide cybersecurity training, outreach and technical assistance for local jurisdictions through two cybersecurity training courses, presentations for partner organizations, and planning and/or participation in three cybersecurity exercises.

# OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES

Executive Director: Steven Harpe | Secretary of Digital Transformation and Administration: Steven Harpe

OMES thrived in 2021 in our service-to-partner agencies, executive leaders and the Legislature.

## Implemented vital technology and business process optimization for state agencies and employees

- The BrightPath project is the implementation of [Workday](#), the state's new standardized HR platform. This project began in fall 2020 and is scheduled to complete in spring 2022. Transitioning to this new platform will be a major modernization for the State of Oklahoma and our employees, who will be able to access all their HR, learning, time-tracking, benefit and retirement information in one place. OMES is leading the way and collaborating with agency partners to launch this platform spring 2022.
- The Disaster Recovery project was the nationally recognized implementation of a redundant data center for the State of Oklahoma. This initiative was crucial to ensuring state services will always be available for our citizens, even if the primary data center experiences disruptions.
- OMES Human Capital Management and Employees Group Insurance Division hosted the first-ever virtual Option Period. Because thousands of employees are now utilizing a telework model across the state, OMES recognized it must adapt to meet the needs of those we serve.
- The Capitol Restoration Project is nearing the end after nearly seven years. OMES and our partners achieved major milestones over the past year, including the completion of the Capitol roof, installation of new external lighting and implementation of the state seal on the new ground floor of the Capitol. Work on the legislative chambers is wrapping up, and the entire project will reach completion in spring of 2022.



## **Recognized for outstanding performance and customer service**

- OMES won the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada presented the award to the State of Oklahoma for its annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2020. The certificate of achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by government and its management.
- OMES received the 2021 Sunshine Award from Freedom of Information Oklahoma for our work in eliminating a backlog of open records requests. Our teams tackled hundreds of requests, dating back several years, to deliver on a promise of transparency to Oklahomans.
- OMES was rated highest among large Oklahoma state agencies in the Oklahoma State Employee Engagement Survey categories of Employee Engagement and Satisfaction.
- OMES Executive Director Steven Harpe was named Oklahoma's chief operating officer. In the position, Harpe oversees executive cabinet secretaries and state agencies, while retaining his role as executive director of OMES. He will also continue to serve on the governor's cabinet as deputy secretary of Digital Transformation and Administration.

## **Innovated to grow public-private partnerships and provide services in new ways**

- OMES initiated and collaborated with all state agencies to host the inaugural State Suppliers Expo. This first-of-its-kind event was designed to bridge communication gaps between the public and private sectors and streamline the way companies do business with the state. Over 220 organizations attended the event, which resulted in 62 new state suppliers and countless relationships developed between agencies and service providers.
- OMES held the first OK-ISAC Symposium as part of the region's largest business, IT and cybersecurity conference. With cyberattacks posing new and heightened threats around the globe, OMES hosted an event at the Oklahoma City Convention Center to create a network of trust with regional companies and cybersecurity professionals. This will help protect K-12 schools, businesses and even local and state governments.

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND RECREATION

Executive Director: Jerry Winchester | Secretary of Tourism and Branding: Matt Pinnell

## Travel Promotion

The Travel Promotion Division launched the new bi-weekly series, The Weekender, which was created to increase lodging bookings by providing easy weekend getaways featuring places to eat, stay and play. Since its debut in August 2021, the series has received nearly a million views, captured 949 new subscribers for TravelOK's YouTube channel, and generated over \$400,000 in lodging revenue.

The division also continued its OKHereWeGo pandemic campaign, focusing on overnight stays and encouraging visitors to support local businesses. In FY 21, the campaign drove 235,000+ users to TravelOK.com, garnered over \$50 million in lodging revenue, and inspired over 29,000 park visits. The campaign also generated 90,000+ orders of sticker packs and niche activity decals.

Additionally, Travel Promotion marketing initiatives led to 85,715 bookings for Oklahoma State Parks, generating over \$8 million in park lodging revenue.

TravelOK.com had over 6.5 million visitors in 2021, an increase of 16.4% YOY. Additionally, the site saw a 43.3% increase in page views, up over 37.7 million for the year. New features added to the site included a redesign of the Trip Planner App, 200+ ShopTravelOK.com products, and the addition of the new, bi-weekly series, The Weekender.

The TravelOK Trip Planner App added 72,279 new users in 2021, bringing the total users up to 378,582. The app also received a redesign, adding Places to Stay and Places to Eat to the main menu. The State Parks App, developed in-house by the TravelOK team, added 52,153 new users in 2021, bringing the total users up to 61,091. The app had over 218,000 sessions with an average engagement time of over seven minutes.

In June 2021, Travel Promotion launched its first Oklahoma Fishing Trail Guide. The 48-page print publication highlights 60 fishing lakes and rivers across Oklahoma and generated \$44,700 in advertising revenue for the department. The cover features Oklahoma fishing legends Jimmy Houston and Edwin Evers. The Oklahoma Fishing Trail had 35 Grand Slam submissions in 2021 – 34 Oklahomans and one Texan. In June 2021, Travel Promotion launched a fully revamped Oklahoma Fall Foliage Guide. The 32-page publication highlights 14 fall foliage routes around the state along with 17 urban foliage viewing locations, nine fall festivals and 21 fall farm destinations. The guide's cover features the legendary Talimena National Scenic Byway. The guide generated \$18,825 in advertising revenue.

The marketing sales department sold a total of \$725,821 in Travel Promotion products in 2021.

The department saw more than 60 travelers complete its Route 66 Passport, which features 66 Route 66 attractions where visitors can get passport stamps. Travelers from 14 states completed passports in 2021, including visitors from as far as Ketchikan, Alaska; Sacramento, California; and Deadwood, South Dakota. More than 75 visitors from 15 different states, including 40-plus Oklahomans, have now completed the passport since it launched in 2020.

Oklahoma Today won the International Regional Magazine Association's Magazine of the Year 2021 for the third time in four years and the second year in a row. The magazine was also awarded the Tulsa Press Club/ Great Plains Journalism Association Magazine of the Year 2021 (eight states represented) for the second year in a row. In 2021, Oklahoma Today launched season three of its podcast and developed regularly scheduled newsletters for Food, Travel, and History & Culture for its audience.

## State parks

- Utilized revenue from the Parking Pass Program to construct state park improvements, including:
  - > A boardwalk at the swim beach, 10 new restrooms and campground improvements at Beavers Bend State Park.
  - > New siding for the historic dining hall at Boiling Springs State Park.
  - > A new picnic pavilion at Lake Murray State Park.
  - > A new restroom and laundry facility at Natural Falls State Park.
  - > Boat ramp improvements at Lake Thunderbird State Park.
  - > Picnic area improvements at Foss State Park.
- Continued implementation of a \$48.6 million bond issue for capital projects, including:
  - > Installation of 61 new restroom facilities at 12 state parks, with 55 more installations scheduled for 2022.
  - > Installation of eight new tiny cabins at Lake Murray State Park, with 27 additional cabins scheduled for installation at Beavers Bend and Robbers Cave State Parks in 2022.
  - > Repair and safety improvements to 37 sewer lagoons at seven state parks.
  - > Completion of a \$10.4 million renovation of Quartz Mountain Lodge.
  - > Renovation and expansion of office, construction of new campground, road repaving, installation of wristband kiosks, new entry gates and a restroom renovation at Little Sahara State Park.
  - > Installation of entrance signage across the park system.
  - > Began renovation of the Beavers Bend and Robbers Cave lodges, to be completed in 2022.
  - > Began construction of new RV campground at Beavers Bend State Park.
  - > Installation of generators, shade structures and restrooms at Black Mesa State Park.
  - > Improvements to roads, boat ramps and tent campgrounds at Keystone State Park.
  - > Renovated and installed restrooms at the pool at Roman Nose State Park.
  - > More to come in 2022...
- Entered into partnerships with Oklahoma businesses to create state park-themed apparel, candles and other items, which are sold to retailers across the state with 10% of sale proceeds going to support Oklahoma State Parks.
- Renovated the historic CCC group camp at Lake Murray State Park.
- Opened a new Foggy Bottom Kitchen restaurant at Quartz Mountain State Park and began construction of a new restaurant at Robbers Cave State Park.
- Opened Murray Harbor Marina, a partnership with a concessionaire to serve the east side of Lake Murray State Park.

# OKLAHOMA PARDON AND PAROLE BOARD

Executive Director: Tom Bates | Secretary of Public Safety: Tricia Everest

The Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board faced some unique challenges and external pressures during 2021. Despite these challenges, the agency was incredibly productive in terms of work product while asserting its independence and constitutional role. The board docketed and considered 7108 cases in 2021 from the following categories:

Stage I Commutations: 2251

Stage II Commutations: 257

SIR: 915<sup>1</sup>

Paroles: 2,387

<sup>1</sup> The Serious Incident Review (SIR) Docket is an expedited parole docket for offenders that have either one Class X misconduct within six months of their parole docket or any combination of three Class X and/or Class A misconducts within one year of their parole docket. The docket is summarily denied parole after board members remove offenders whom the board deem deserving of further investigation into the circumstances surrounding their misconducts.

Administrative Paroles: 873

Medical Paroles: Six

Pardons: 226

Additional work completed by agency staff during 2021 included:

- 2843 reports prepared by investigators.
- 5,234 new DOC arrivals docketed for parole eligibility.
- 143 revocations, 44 hearings (through November).
- Certificates prepared: 860 board paroles; 76 paroles; 245 commutations; 177 pardons.
- Approximately 35,000 additional emails and 7,800 voicemails received September-November.
- Created new process utilizing SharePoint for future commutation applications.
- Updated administrative rules.
- Relocated administrative offices.
- Implemented new technology to handle increased call volume.
- Resumed clemency hearings.

This work was accomplished while the agency continued to be short staffed by three FTE for most of 2021 and with no budget increase.

# OKLAHOMA TAX COMMISSION

Executive Director: Doug Linehan

## **Opened centralized customer service center**

- Months of research and design by the Oklahoma Tax Commission culminated in the actualization of its new forward-facing Taxpayer Resource Center (TRC) providing both in-person and remote taxpayer services from one centralized location.
- Welcoming an average of 200 on-site guests daily, the new TRC leads with a concierge approach to serving its taxpayers. Online scheduling provides guests with an appointment plan to ensure effective resolution, and efficient streamlined service fulfillment begins with a customer service expert managing guest check-in. The TRC offers the services of multiple state agencies in one convenient location with comfortable, spacious seating and device charging capabilities.

## **Launched intuitive website to streamline access to resources**

- The launch of the new website showcased revamped OTC communications and advanced the taxpayer reach. With more than 257,000 visitors and 800,000 page views, it is evident that taxpayers heavily utilize the site to independently locate information and access resources. More than 374,000 searches have produced results within the site and more than 30,000 publications and forms have been downloaded.
- The newly restructured site adapts to any device and features a simplified navigation system making it possible for taxpayers to find the information they need within a couple clicks. Newly developed search features quickly identify information, forms or resources the taxpayers may seek.
- Thanks to advanced analytic capabilities, real-time data capture drives website updates and improvement modifications. By studying which resources are most frequently downloaded, which pages see the most traffic and the search terms most commonly used to find and explore within the website, OTC frequently and accurately improves search engine optimization and site content.

## **Amplified accessibility through broadened social media reach**

- Humanizing OTC through a refined communications and social media strategy fostered an approachable relationship with taxpayers, inviting them to ask questions or send concerns directly. The social media team assists and answers taxpayer inquiries daily via live online conversations. As a result, direct messaging increased 87%, broadening the reach across digital platforms.
- The aggressive approach to educating and assisting Oklahoma taxpayers through social media produced a 703% increase in posts across all platforms, resulting in a 51% increase in followers and a 364% increase in taxpayer engagement.

## **Increased efficiencies to better serve Oklahomans**

- Proactively applied last-minute federal tax mandates on behalf of taxpayers
- When the federally enacted American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was passed in the middle of tax season, OTC worked swiftly to provide proactive customer service that would release the burden from taxpayers and simultaneously address the newly enacted benefit.
- With a data sharing agreement already in place, OTC coordinated with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission to acquire 1099 data submitted to the IRS.
- OTC used this data to establish a process for returns filed prior to March 15 that automatically applied adjustments to taxpayer accounts to exclude non-taxable unemployment compensation and issue

resulting refunds in a seamless transition. This innovative approach resulted in OTC adjusting 93,154 returns and refunding \$21,575,244 to 78,050 taxpayers, relieving them of necessary manual intervention.

**Expanded easy online account access to include new tax types**

- With the launch of the current upgrade of the OTC OneLink system, new and existing groups of taxpayers now have online access through OkTAP to new management and reporting tools as well as improved processes and workflows. The expansion introduced new tax type accounts available including individual income, franchise and corporate accounts, maximizing the reach and volume of the system’s taxpayer experience potential.

**Modernized fraud protection measures to protect taxpayers and taxpayer dollars**

The safe and efficient processing of returns and refunds remains a primary focus for OTC. OTC continues its efforts to strengthen fraud prevention measures that protect taxpayer information and ensure tax refund dollars are going to the correct taxpayers.

- An average document processing time of three days includes one day to perform fraud detection measures.
- For tax year 2019, fraud prevention measures stopped more than 66,000 suspected or fraudulent returns, equating to more than \$25 million in potentially fraudulent refunds.
- The agency effectively averted fraudulent refunds preventing the loss of \$15 million as of December 2021 for tax year 2020. Of the fraudulent refunds prevented, approximately \$5.8 million were from new fraud detection measures implemented in 2020. OTC also expects an additional \$3 million in potential fraudulent refund savings for tax year 2020.
- OTC is spearheading the implementation of an electronic fraud platform, FAST Identity Verification System (FIVS), for individual income taxes. This process reduces the redundant and unnecessary backlog of identity verification letters sent to taxpayers and streamlines fraud services for the agency as a whole.

**Made strides in audit and revenue recovery programs**

- OTC has made large scale changes to better identify taxes owed and the means for collecting them by revising audit methodologies and targeting new areas with automated discovery audit programs to increase revenue recovery.
- The streamlined discovery programs require less time and manual intervention, improve collections and increase program automation. In 2021, 63% of all tax audits were performed by automation.
- The total number of tax audits was reduced by 52% (16,928 fewer assessments).
- The total dollars collected increased by 24%, equating to \$8,804,343 in additional revenue.

BREAKDOWN OF AGENCY STATISTICS	
Total dollars apportioned	\$15,795,909,275
Payments scheduled through OkTAP	1,550,461
Returns processed on OkTAP	1,479,575
Payments processed through mail	659,606
Deposits received by mail	\$1,366,949,161
Incoming returns received by mail	481,743
Total permits issued/renewed	45,652
Total motor vehicle registration dollars	\$267,778,748
Motor vehicle registrations	4,532,342
Motor vehicle registrations on OkCARS	459,280

# OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Executive Director: Scott Crow | Secretary of Public Safety: Tricia Everest

## **Modernized agency functions to increase overall efficiencies**

- Launched the agency landscape-altering Inmate & Community Offender Network (ICON) management program, now being used by all probation and parole officers and staff, which streamlines fingerprint/ photograph data gathering for easy transmittal to FBI, OSBI and other agencies. Cell phone compatible, ICON increases officer safety through mapping and data availability and makes offender identification faster, easier and more accurate.
- Implemented a program which provides smart tablets to more than 15,000 inmates in agency custody. The tablet program, realized without the need for agency-sourced start-up capital, makes it easier for inmates to stay connected with the outside world while providing quick, easy access to things such as health care requests as well as educational, religious and personal-improvement opportunities in an easy, effective and easily monitored fashion.
- Conducted 312 virtual hearings for offenders, resulting in a net savings of 2,879 man-hours and \$108,741.35 in operating costs while providing an incalculable overall benefit to public safety in the state.

## **Sought new ways to evaluate and reduce the agency's overall footprint and operating costs**

- Closed the 1,089-bed William S. Key Correctional Center, relocating inmates and educational programs to other facilities. The decommissioning of this facility will save the state \$15 million annually in overall operating costs. The property is now being evaluated for liquidation or converted use by OMES REALS.
- Installed Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVLs) on all ODOC-operated vehicles, which monitors speed and safety as well as location, increasing both overall safety records and ongoing maintenance and operation costs.
- Ordered 96 new vehicles to replace 96 high-mileage/aging vehicles to further reduce maintenance costs and minimize off-the-road time for fleet units.

## **Provided coordinated responses to protect inmates in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic**

- Vaccinated 14,997 inmates (70% of the population) since March 2021 and administered booster shots to 4,414 inmates in the last three months of the year.
- Hosted mass-vaccination clinics for inmates at multiple facilities with more slated for CY 2022 and sourced rapid antigen tests to be distributed to all facilities statewide to allow for faster testing of symptomatic inmates and reduce overall COVID-19 cases, which affects both inmates and staff.
- Continued to promote adherence to current CDC guidelines for mask usage, which the agency provides to inmates on a weekly basis, as well as limit the size of gatherings and carefully screen visitors.

## **Developed systems and programs to ease the transition for inmates back into society and help reduce recidivism**

- Embedded five identification workstations within select facilities across the state to produce 118 Oklahoma Real ID non-compliant identification cards for discharging inmates with room to grow the output numbers.
- Created a centralized process for obtaining birth certificates for inmates nearing their release dates, which produced 682 orders and 650 fulfillments. These records, in conjunction with the IDs, makes it easier to secure housing and employment—both key factors in reducing recidivism—upon reentry into society.

- Increased the agency's career training programs by adding a commercial driver's license program for eligible female incarcerates, providing them a clear career path in an industry that pays a livable wage.
- Brought Oklahoma Baptist University's Prison Divinity Program into Lexington Correctional Center, a program which prioritizes inmates serving long sentences who can earn a four-year Bachelor of Arts degree in Christian Studies that equips them as field ministers.
- Hosted seven re-entry resource fairs at facilities attended by more than 1,200 inmates within one year of their discharge dates. The program currently has 68 different community and state agency partners who assist with information on housing, employment, transportation and other services essential for the successful reentry into society after incarceration

# SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary of State: Brian Bingman

## **Increased efficiencies and modernization**

- Increased web-submitted documents, including business filings, notary filings, trademark filings and orders for business documents to 65%, up from 64% in 2020, reducing the number of documents received or processed via mail.
- Successfully maintained the ability to shift a large number of staff to teleworking due to the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining core office functions and customer service requirements.
- Promulgated emergency rules to successfully implement SB 913 (2021), creating new rulemaking filings published in Oklahoma Register during expedited revocation process.
- Developed step-by-step instructions for online notary filings, reducing client calls for filing assistance while using the Secretary of State website.
- Updated and published rulemaking checklists and document examples, enhancing state agencies' ability to efficiently promulgate rules under the Administrative Procedures Act.
- Streamlined accounts payable to all paperless processing, thus eliminating the need to process original invoices to scanned invoices.
- Decreased processing times for business filings. Currently 2-3 business days from receipt of documents by mail or hand delivery, down from 3-5 business days.

## **Implemented digital transformation of services**

- Launched the new rules.ok.gov website for public use and continue to develop agency filing framework that maximizes transparency, accessibility, accountability and efficiency in the rulemaking process.
- Successfully converted all Office of Administrative Rules filings to electronic submission, eliminating the requirement for agencies to file rules in-person or via paper.
- Executed and fulfilled the requirements of HB 1799 (2020) which directs the Official Oklahoma Statutes, Official Oklahoma Session Laws and Constitution, to be codified, annotated and published in electronic format only, accessible to the public free of charge, 24/7.
- Successfully implemented an electronic process for counting and verification of signatures for initiative and referendum petitions in accordance with HB 3826.
- Implemented new filing types to accommodate the formation of Public Benefit LLCs and amend current LLCs to become Public Benefit LLCs in accordance with SB 228 (2021).

## **Delivered financial efficiencies**

- The agency operated at 80% of the total budget for fiscal year 2021.
- 2021 also saw a decrease in the percentage of fees handled by in-house staff from 23%, down to 18%, and an increase in online receipts from 65% to 72%.
- Ability to utilize unclassified positions as for fiscal year 2021 allowed the agency to quickly adjust and perform additional duties assigned by the secretary.

# OKLAHOMA EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION

Executive Director: Shelley Zumwalt

## **Prioritized the state's workforce and economic recovery while reaching record-low unemployment rates**

- Oklahoma's economy is recovering faster than almost any other state in the nation.
- In October and November, Oklahoma's unemployment was ranked as the third lowest in the country.
- Oklahoma reached an unemployment rate of 2.7% in November, which is the lowest unemployment rate the state has recorded since 1976.
- Oklahoma's continued claims' four-week moving average declined for 19 consecutive weeks in 2021, further solidifying the strides made by the state's administration.
- Oklahoma has more individuals participating in the workforce than ever before. In the month of November, 1,813,979 people were recorded in the workforce.

## **Continued to serve Oklahomans in need throughout the pandemic, providing benefits for more than 350,000 people**

- In 2021, OESC paid out more than \$1.6 billion in claims to claimants who sought benefits.
- Since March 2020, OESC has paid out \$5.2 billion dollars in claims and helped about a million claimants.
- This payout includes federal programs like Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.

## **Made significant changes to improve claimants' experience by utilizing and introducing new technology**

- In 2021, OESC's First Call Resolution hit above 90% consistently, week over week.
- The agency is hyper-focused on its digital transformation, named BT40.
- In November, OESC successfully launched a new self-scheduling tool for its Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program.
- Through this program, claimants are given one-on-one access to job assessments, training resources and new career opportunities.
- The new technology allows claimants the ability to self-schedule and tailor services to their calendar.
- OESC is in final stages to roll out more innovative, new technology to vastly improve the experience of claimants, employers and agency employees.

## **Continued to decrease fraud, protecting Oklahoma's citizens and employers**

- Introduced new fraud-risk scoring tool to analyze all unemployment claims.
- OESC spearheaded a task force that includes both state and federal law enforcement entities.
- Now using more than a dozen data sets to cross check unemployment claims and stop fraudulent claims from being paid out.

## **Maximized the use of all funds available by applying for and receiving multiple federal grants**

- In September, OESC was awarded a multi-million dollar fraud grant to combat fraud in Oklahoma. Since

the award date, funds have already been put to good use by enhancing internal capabilities to identify and minimize fraud.

- This includes creating multiple mechanisms for identifying Indicators of fraud early in the unemployment application process.
- The ongoing efforts to obtain data that can help prevent fraud have proven invaluable in the battle against fraudsters.
- In October, OESC was invited to join the National Governors Association's Workforce Innovation Network and was awarded \$100,000 to identify and find solutions for the state's gaps in digital literacy.
- Through the NGA partnership, OESC plans to collaborate with stakeholders and other state agencies to find lasting, innovative ways to continue to grow and support our state's workforce.
- In October, OESC applied for a \$4.5 million dollar grant from the federal government to promote equity within our workforce system. Once awarded, OESC plans to apply this funding to our digital transformation.

### **Effectively managed the funds in the UI Trust Fund, making Oklahoma one of the only states in the nation to remain solvent**

- Since joining OESC, Executive Director Shelley Zumwalt has placed a priority on being fiscally responsible with Oklahoma's taxpayer dollars.
- Through her leadership, OESC's UI Trust Fund remained solvent through the worst of the pandemic and through 2021.
- As of December 2021, OESC's UI Trust Fund balance sits at \$227,845,802, which is higher than almost any other state. While other states had to borrow funds, OESC's balance remained steady.
- In 2022, most employers will not experience a change in their contribution rates.

### **In 2021, Director Zumwalt made robust plans to invest in OESC's employees to attract and retain the best talent in the state**

In December, Director Zumwalt presented the agency's plan to the Board of Commissioners. The extensive plan includes, but is not limited to:

- > Refining the agency's mission, vision and values.
- > Increasing internal communications across the agency.
- > Pay-for-performance pilot program based on measurable performance metrics, with plans to extend to all eligible employees.
- > Making equal investments in people and technology.
- > ARPA request for customer-facing staff to undergo best-in-class customer service training, creating a quality, consistent experience for all claimants across all local offices.

### **OESC continues to prioritize transparency and communication with the public to ensure all Oklahomans are well-informed**

- Under the leadership of Director Zumwalt, OESC put out more than 60 news releases.
- Posted to social media 224 times, with crucial agency updates and career opportunities.
- Provided regular legislator updates to ensure elected officials have up-to-date information to respond to constituent questions.