



**OKLAHOMA**  
**Commission on the**  
**Status of Women**

# Annual Impact Report

FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)

Submitted on December 18, 2024, to:

Governor J. Kevin Stitt

Senate President Pro Tempore Lonnie Paxton

Speaker of the House Kyle Hilbert

# Contents

- 1 Executive Summary Letter
  - 2 Commission FY24 Impact Accomplishments
  - 3 Policy and Legislative Recommendations
  - 4 Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies (SIS) Summit, *Navigating the Oklahoma Childcare Crisis: A Barrier to Women’s Economic Opportunity*
  - 5 Commission FY24 Monthly Impact Report
  - 8 *Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking* Educational Initiative Final Report  
- Investment in Rural Newspapers and Samples of Media Coverage
  - 12 Commission Chronology of Impact Achievements Since 2004
- 

## Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission comprises of 30 Commissioners who are appointed by either the Governor, Senate President Pro Tempore or Speaker of the House. Each appointing authority has ten appointments, who serve five-year terms.

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**OKLAHOMA**  
Commission on the  
Status of Women

December 18, 2024  
Governor J. Kevin Stitt  
Senate President Pro Tempore Lonnie Paxton  
Speaker of the House Kyle Hilbert

Thank you for the opportunity to present findings by the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women on issues and challenges that impact women's quality of life and economic opportunities. This FY24 Annual Report is submitted to you under Section 665 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes. It is being submitted in December to reach all newly elected legislators for the 60th Legislature convening in January 2025.

The Commission experienced another impactful year and is providing policy and legislative recommendations to the executive and legislative branches from our efforts this year. These recommendations are based on the Commission hosting a Summit on access to affordable childcare, meeting with several state agencies and hosting Anti-Human Trafficking Community Conversations across the state.

In FY24, the Commission continued "The Journey" that began in FY23 when the Commission visited eight non-profit organizations and seven tribal nations to learn how domestic violence, substance abuse addiction, mental health and other issues are impacting women. We met with eight state agencies to collaborate on the Commission's findings and to learn more about how government programs are addressing these issues so that the Commission could make recommendations for improvement.

Through a \$150,000 appropriation by the Oklahoma Senate, the Commission wrapped up the state's first statewide effort to educate Oklahomans on recognizing the early signs of human trafficking. The Commission created *Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking* educational initiative and reached out to universities, colleges, career techs and high schools with a panel comprised of law enforcement, non-profit and tribal experts. The Commission provided the schools and communities with tools and resources to continue the educational process.

In FY25, the Commission will continue its "Journey" by collaborating with state agencies on a broad range of issues. We plan to take a holistic approach toward bridging the economic and quality of life issues, which are not mutually exclusive, by hosting a summit on the economic value of elevating women, from better access to affordable healthcare to financial independence. The Commission launched the first statewide survey to hear from Oklahomans on the top issues impacting women and plans to make this an annual survey to establish benchmarks and quantify current top-of-mind issues. Finally, discussions are underway to identify a location for a permanent Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame exhibit.

Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions about the Commission's Annual Report. Thank you for your continued support for the Commission and our work.

Sincerely,

Brenda Jones Barwick, APR  
State Chair (2022-2025)  
Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women  
Mobile: 405-831-5548



## FY24 Commission Impact Accomplishments:

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women serves as an advisory role to the executive and legislative branches on economic, education, healthcare, pay equity, workforce, and societal issues that impact women. In fulfilling this advisory role, the Commission accomplished the following events and activities from July 2023 to June 2024.

- Hosted a *Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies, (SIS) Summit* on *Navigating the Oklahoma Childcare Crisis as a Barrier to Women’s Economic Opportunities* with Paula Faris, author of “You Don’t Have To Carry It All”, Emmy-Award winning journalist, and encourager/advocate to moms. Presentations were also made by several state legislators, state agencies and non-profits. (A full report is on page 4.)
- Facilitated 16 Community Conversations statewide with state agencies, non-profits and colleges on education, workforce development, incarceration, diversionary programs, health, substance abuse, aging, and human trafficking.
- Conducted educational outreach to rural and urban communities: Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Ardmore, Chickasha, Claremore, Lawton, Miami, Wayne, Wilburton, and Enid.
- Provided briefing to the Women’s Legislative Caucus on progress of the human trafficking educational initiative.
- Collaborated with 7 non-profits statewide: Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administration, Oklahoma City Jr. League, Partnership for School Readiness, Girl Scouts, and Tulsa Kiwanis; and the Consul General of Ireland and Oklahoma Irish Heritage Society to celebrate Kate Barnard, Oklahoma’s first female statewide elected official.
- Collaborated with 8 state agencies: Department of Corrections, Department of Career and Technology Education, State Regents for Higher Education, Attorney General’s Office, Bureau of Narcotics, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and District Attorney Council.
- Provided grants to 6 non-profit organizations providing services and resources to human trafficking survivors for educating young women and girls about human trafficking and increasing public awareness. Each non-profit provided a report to the Commission on educational outreach accomplishments resulting from the grants.



*Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies Summit* held in October with Emmy-Award winning journalist and author Paula Faris.



Presentation to the Oklahoma Women’s Legislative Caucus on the human trafficking educational initiative.



## Policy and Legislative Recommendations

Based on the Commission’s conversations with dozens of Oklahoma women, the Commission brings forth these policy and legislative recommendations for consideration to increase the quality of life and economic opportunities for women.

1. Passage of HB 4147 authored by Rep. Suzanne Schreiber and presented in 2024 Regular Session. The bill offers a tax credit to employers that operate a childcare facility or willing to share costs with employees for childcare services. This would increase economic opportunities for women who desire to work and for promotions to advance careers and household incomes. This bill is eligible to be heard again in 2025.
2. Create policies aimed at expanding licensed childcare facilities in census tracts and extend full utilization of subsidized childcare benefits.
3. Offer the state cosmetology exam in Spanish and Mandarin to ensure women in these growing populations can practice legally and provide household financial stability.
4. Human Trafficking criminal charges should be a non-bailable offense.
5. Extend foster care to age 21, which provides a better path for the children to transition into a more stable adulthood. Oklahoma is one of the few states without extended foster care.

### **The Commission’s FY23 Annual Report included these policy and legislative recommendations:**

1. When released from prison for a felony and completing a re-entry program or certain number of years of no parole violations, women should no longer have to check the “F-Felon” box on apartments, jobs, and loan applications. This would give them equity when compared to other applicants for apartments, loans, and jobs. The women have children, and she is attempting to establish a stable home life for her family and stop the cycle of incarceration. She should not have to carry the Scarlett Letter F for the remainder of her entire life.
2. If she enters a post-incarceration work program, drop reinstatement fees for driver’s licenses and drug testing.
3. Allow mothers to enter a “how to be a good mother” program or class before taking her children away. The current approach is feeding a generational cycle of incarceration, and Oklahoma may never see a decrease in female incarceration without a new approach.
4. Develop a partnership with Career Techs, community colleges and universities that will assist domestic violence survivors who are exploited economically by helping her earn a degree or learn a trade to strive for economic independence. Studies show that a pilot project can result in a 60% success rate.
5. Accept accreditation by the National Association of Private Schools to help children put money into a College Savings 529 account and allow children with an incarcerated parent qualify for the Nicole Henry Scholarship.
6. Promote and give more funding to diversionary programs and transitional homes to give hope to young women, especially in rural areas that could help her get out of situations before escalating to prison. Many rural young women are not aware of diversionary programs and transitional homes due to lack of marketing and promoting of these programs in rural areas. A rural awareness initiative could be a “Get Out of Situation” card and save them from going to prison.
7. The state needs to re-evaluate how to provide a path to success for women between the ages of 18-25 who experienced foster care. Currently, there is a lack of resources and assistance for women who age out of foster care, which is pushing some women onto the incarceration path. Three pathway recommendations are:
  - Partner with career techs, community colleges and universities to learn a wage-paying trade, profession, or skill, combined with a scholarship program.
  - Partner with companies for jobs so she can earn a living wage salary with insurance and other benefits, not minimum wage jobs. This path could encourage her to become a productive citizen.
  - Partner with non-profits, hotels or apartment owners to provide a safe, secure housing until age 25.

## Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies (SIS) Summit: Navigating the Oklahoma Childcare Crisis: A Barrier to Women's Economic Opportunity

In partnership with Oklahoma City Community College, the Commission hosted the *Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies Summit, Navigating the Oklahoma Childcare Crisis: A Barrier to Women's Economic Opportunity*, on Thursday, October 24, 2023, with more than 150 in attendance and presentations by state agencies, legislators and non-profit leaders. The Summit was chaired by Commissioner Jana Gridley.

According to the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Center, currently 55% of our state's population lives in a childcare desert. A childcare desert is any census tract with more than 30 children under age 5 that contains either no childcare providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots (source: Center for American Progress).

Keynote speaker was Emmy-Award winning journalist Paula Faris who is an encourager/advocate to mothers through her book, "You Don't Have To Carry It All", and "The Paula Faris Show" podcast for mothers. The Summit featured several experts on childcare costs and access, workforce development and workplace issues. The speakers addressed current strategies and challenges.

Childcare continues to top the charts of common household expenses. Historically, statistics prove when families do not have access to affordable, high-quality childcare, children miss out on important child development opportunities. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as many as 100,000 Americans have been forced to stay home from work each month because of childcare problems.

The childcare shortage is not only causing parents to leave their jobs, but also preventing them from returning to work. The economic toll now amounts to \$122 billion each year in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue.

Tackling the childcare crisis in Oklahoma will require a comprehensive strategy in public investment. On May 2, 2023, House Bill 2452 was signed by Governor Kevin Stitt, and became law on Nov. 1, 2023. The bill principally authored by Rep. Suzanne Schreiber (Dist. 70) and Sen. Jessica Garvin (Dist. 43) prohibit municipal governments from enacting additional regulations on family childcare homes that have already undergone the rigorous licensing process prescribed by the Department of Human Services to operate a childcare business in Oklahoma. Through the passage of HB 2452, Oklahoma has shown a commitment to increasing access to quality and affordable childcare for Oklahoma families, while working to stabilize the struggling childcare industry across the state.

### Policy and Legislation Recommendation to Improve the Childcare Crisis:

- Create policies aimed at expanding licensed childcare facilities in census tracts
- Extend full utilization of subsidized childcare benefits
- Where applicable, increase access to paid family leave
- Offer flexible working hours or on-site childcare
- Provide more Nontraditional Hours (NTH) childcare facilities

SIS is a collaborative statewide initiative of action strategies recommended by the Commission to improve the quality of life for women in Oklahoma. Links to the Summit video presentations are at [www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/summits](http://www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/summits).



Representative Suzanne Schreiber speaking at the Commission's SIS Summit on the economic cost of lack of access to affordable childcare.



Summit Chair and Commissioner Jana Gridley with keynote speaker Paula Faris.

# Commission FY24 Monthly Impact Report

## August 2023

Presentation by Secretary of Public Safety Tricia Everest on elevating the quality of life and mental health for incarcerated women and developing educational and job training preparation for their post-incarceration.

Presentation by Dr. Laura Ahlstrom, Professor at OSU Spears School of Business and Lead Author of "Summary Report of Women," on data related to childcare access and affordability, women's labor force participation, earnings, and business ownership. Full report is available at [www.oklahoma.gov/OCSW](http://www.oklahoma.gov/OCSW) under Initiatives tab.

Supported Governor Kevin Stitt's Executive Order for Women's Bill of Rights. He was the first governor in the nation to issue an executive order protecting women in sports, school restrooms, locker rooms, and correctional facilities, and supporting the human right for access to safe spaces for women.



## September 2023

Met with Mabel Bassett Correctional Facility's Warden and nine women who are serving their sentences at the facility to learn from their life experiences on how policies or legislation could help other women before situations escalate to imprisonment.



## October 2023

Hosted a Summit on *Navigating the Oklahoma Childcare Crisis as a Barrier to Women's Economic Opportunities* with legislators, several nonprofit groups and state agencies. Private funds were raised to welcome Paula Faris as the keynote speaker. Videos of six presenters at the Summit are available at [www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/summits](http://www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/summits).

Senator Darrell Weaver held an Interim Study to evaluate how to best educate students on human trafficking and prevent them from becoming a victim. Commission State Chair was one of the presenters to the Senate Education Committee meeting.



**Interim Study Participants from left:** The Demand Project Executive Assistant Sarah Rivera, Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women Executive Director Kitti Asberry, The Dragonfly Home Outreach Coordinator Halle Carr, The Dragonfly Home Co-Founder and Development Director Melissa Eick, Senator Darrell Weaver, Commission Chair Brenda Barwick, Dragonfly Home Co-Founder and Executive Director Whitney Anderson, Institute for Child Advocacy CEO Joe Dorman, TDP Co-Founder and CEO Kristin Weiss, TDP Legal Director Shar Agosto, and TDP Program Director Holly Frankfurt

**November 2023**

Partnered with First Lady Sarah Stitt to host a Community Conversation at the Governor’s Mansion on the stop human trafficking educational initiative. The panels included the Attorney General, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics, and The Dragonfly Home. A second panel included college and high school students who attended *Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking* events and provided an update on how they have reached out further within their communities. One student who attended the Durant event led an effort to educate school bus drivers on how to recognize the early signs of human trafficking.

Senator Micheal Bergstrom speaks at the *Not Me Not My Community* educational event at Rogers State University in Claremore.



Attorney General Gentner Drummond and First Lady Sarah Stitt speak at the Community Conversation hosted at the Governor’s Mansion.

**January 2024**

Senator and Commissioner Brenda Stanley provided a presentation on legislation that had been introduced related to women and families.

Presented the *Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking* educational initiative to the Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration’s annual conference. Afterwards, several administrators asked for presentations to their teachers.



Senator and Commissioner Brenda Stanley provides legislative update on bills impacting women.

**February 2024**

Met with Oklahoma Department of Health Chief of Staff Jackie Shawnee on services to 68 county health departments statewide and learned Oklahoma ranks 5th in nation for STDs and STIs. Testing and education about these diseases are encouraged, however there is a need for funding to hire contract workers to meet the needs of the communities and school districts need to provide access.

Hosted *Not Me Not My Community* Community Conversations at the University of Science and Arts in Oklahoma in Chickasha and in partnership with the Dr. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Center for Social Justice and Racial Healing; and at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in Miami.

Panel experts Rochelle Redbone Arebalo of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and former Deputy District Attorney Leslie Stewart address students at University of Science and Arts in Chickasha on early detection of human trafficking.



Commissioner Jill Shero facilitates Community Conversation with panel expert Mike Hoskins at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in Miami.





**March 2024**

Met with the Oklahoma Attorney General’s office for an update on its Human Trafficking Task Force led by Deputy Attorney General Dana Towery. Information was provided about their efforts related to labor trafficking, lack of interpreters in multiple languages, especially Asian, and “Sugar Daddy” websites to pay for college or get a vehicle masked as “financial freedom.” There is a need to change the narrative “just a runaway” because a number of minors are entrapped in human trafficking. It is imperative to get information into 6th and 7th grades at schools.

*Not Me Not My Community* Community Conversations held at Southern Tech in Ardmore and at Mid-America Technology Center in Wayne with Rep. Cynthia Roe.



Stop Human Trafficking Community Conversation at Southern Tech in Ardmore with Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics Agent-in-Charge Matt Varney, Dragonfly Home co-founder Melissa Eick, and facilitated by Commissioner Dr. Nyla Khan.

Deputy Attorney General Dane Towery updated the Commission on its Human Trafficking Task Force.



**April 2024**

Met with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services who presented information about five programs:

- WorkReadyOK that offers remote work environment for those who need to work from home
- Wheels Mobile Bus taking all DHS services to reach people wherever
- Foster Care services after aging out at 18, such as community partners like PIVOT building tiny homes that open in May 2024, establishing a helpline; and helping connect with biological parents
- Beaneighbor.com to help people connect with fellow Oklahomans and create a stronger community
- Multi-sector Plan on Aging that recognizes there will be more older Oklahomans than children within 15 years.

The Jr. League of Oklahoma City invited the Commission for a brief presentation about its work and previewed the commission’s video on human trafficking in Oklahoma, produced by Prairie Surf Studio.

*Not Me Not My Community* Conversation held at Eastern Oklahoma State College in Wilburton.



Rep. Cynthia Roe welcomes students attending the Stop Human Trafficking Community Conversation at Mid-America Technology Center in Wayne.



Oklahoma Department of Human Services Marcida Dubose, Jami Majors, and Jennifer Boyer made presentations on 5 programs from foster care to aging.

**May 2024**

The District Attorneys Council Executive Coordinator Kathryn Brewer, Director of Grants Robert Herman and Administrator Annie Daniel presented information on federal grants that go to 125 agencies statewide. Top priorities are related to domestic violence and sexual assault for underserved victims. Rep. Sherrie Conley provided a briefing on HB3958 to stop crimes against children that went into effect July 1, 2024.

**June 2024**

Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics Agent-in-Charge Matt Varney presented a new initiative that takes the *Not Me Not My Community* educational initiative to the next level. OBN launched “You Are Not Alone” to reach women who are currently being trafficked but unaware that human trafficking defines their current situation.



## Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking Educational Initiative – Final Report

The Oklahoma Senate appropriated \$150,000 funds for a two-year initiative to reach students between the ages of 13-25 living in rural areas to increase their knowledge and awareness about human trafficking.

In January 2023, the Commission launched Oklahoma’s first-ever educational initiative, *Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking* educational initiative that focuses on recognizing the early signs of human trafficking with Community Conversations of expert panelists.

### Highlights of the educational initiative are:

- ✓ 13 Community Conversations at universities, colleges, and career technology centers
- ✓ 6 educational grants to non-profit groups providing resources to human trafficking survivors for educational programs: Dragonfly Home, DVIS, The Spring, Red Cord, Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, The Demand Project
- ✓ 6 non-profit and trade association presentations: Jr. League, Girl Scouts, Kiwanis, Cybersecurity Association, Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administration, Partnership for School Readiness.
- ✓ 3 First Lady Sarah Stitt hosted panel discussions at the Governor’s Phillips Pavilion
- ✓ 1 briefing with Women’s Legislative Caucus
- ✓ 1 video to illustrate the typical human trafficking scenario in Oklahoma produced by Prairie Surf Studio. The video is available to any organization at [www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/human-trafficking](http://www.oklahoma.gov/ocsw/human-trafficking).



Senators Roger Thompson and Darrell Weaver recognized for their support to stop human trafficking with Commission’s subcommittee members: Executive Director Kitti Asberry, Commissioner Briana Ramos, Vice Chair Carol Hefner, Chair Brenda Barwick, Advisory Council members Mike Hoskins and Debbie Hogue Downing.

The educational initiative reached more than 20,000 Oklahomans through Community Conversations at colleges and career techs, presentations to non-profit groups and trade associations, graduate presentations and programs at high schools, middle schools and camps, plus earned media, newspaper, and digital media placements. The funds expired September 30, 2024.

### Budget:

Educational grants to 6 nonprofit groups, Girl Scouts and a state college	\$70,000
Materials: Rack cards, stickers, key chains	\$4,559
Video on Oklahoma human trafficking	\$24,820
Photography and Videography at all events	\$28,082
Printing for signage and materials at events	\$1,775
Venue rentals and event costs	\$12,101
Digital and newspaper marketing to promote attendance at events	\$8,662
**Branding, creative design, social media posts and media relations services were donated at no cost to the state by Jones PR	**\$0
TOTAL	\$149,999

## Investment in Rural Newspapers



Chickasha Express Star

This collage includes several elements:
 

- Top left: A newspaper clipping with the headline "For Your Personal Business" and sub-headline "A local business is getting ready to open its doors on Monday, Feb. 12, 2024. The business is located in Chickasha, Oklahoma, and is a family-owned and operated business. The business is a service business and is located in the heart of the city. The business is a service business and is located in the heart of the city. The business is a service business and is located in the heart of the city."
- Top right: A newspaper clipping with the headline "OMRF:" and sub-headline "The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the study of cancer. The foundation is located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and is a leading research institution in the world. The foundation is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to the study of cancer. The foundation is located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and is a leading research institution in the world."
- Center: A large "NOT ME NOT MY COMMUNITY" poster with a graphic of hands in various colors.
- Bottom left: An advertisement for Hale's Overhead Doors, featuring the text "HALE'S OVERHEAD DOORS", "527-3232", "Your Local TRUSTED Garage Door Company for over 40 Years", and "SERVING THE OKLAHOMA AREA SINCE 1984".
- Bottom right: A "NOT ME NOT MY COMMUNITY" poster with the text "AS A PART OF THE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION TO STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING", "FRIDAY, MARCH 29", "Tree Seedlings - 10:00am and 1:00pm", and "FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC".

Purcell Register

This collage includes several elements:
 

- Top left: A newspaper clipping with the headline "Age-appropriate tasks for kids when caring for pets" and sub-headline "Parents encourage the strong bond children form with their pets. The two could foster love, compassion, and self-respect. Age-appropriate tasks for kids when caring for pets. Parents encourage the strong bond children form with their pets. The two could foster love, compassion, and self-respect. Age-appropriate tasks for kids when caring for pets. Parents encourage the strong bond children form with their pets. The two could foster love, compassion, and self-respect."
- Center: A large "NOT ME NOT MY COMMUNITY" poster with a graphic of hands in various colors.
- Bottom left: A newspaper clipping with the headline "NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING" and sub-headline "The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) is holding a public hearing on the proposed Oklahoma Turnpike Authority (OTA) Act. The hearing is scheduled for Friday, March 29, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the Oklahoma State Capitol Building, Room 1000. The hearing is open to the public and will be held in both English and Spanish. The hearing is scheduled for Friday, March 29, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the Oklahoma State Capitol Building, Room 1000. The hearing is open to the public and will be held in both English and Spanish."
- Bottom right: An advertisement for CherryRoad, featuring the text "Building Community Engagement Through the Power of Local News", "We believe the newspaper is an essential resource for developing strong communities.", and "CherryRoad".

The Daily Ardmore

# Media Coverage Samples

## Stopping Human Trafficking topic

Two forums Friday at Mid-America Technology Center

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCOW) will host two forums Friday at the Mid-America Technology Center in Tulsa. The forums will focus on human trafficking and the role of technology in combating it. The first forum, titled "Human Trafficking: A National Conversation," will feature speakers from various organizations, including the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. State Department, and the U.S. Attorney General. The second forum, titled "Technology and Human Trafficking," will focus on the use of technology to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking. Both forums are free and open to the public. Registration is required for both forums. For more information, visit [www.ok.gov/ocow](http://www.ok.gov/ocow).



**#1 HAMBURGER**

[www.purcellregister.com](http://www.purcellregister.com)

Purcell Register

## OKlahoma Commission on Status of Women to honor Sec. Everest, Sen. Stanley and Rep. West at Women's Hall of Fame

Page 6A • Wednesday, September 11, 2024 Local News CentralOklahoma.com

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCOW) will honor three women in its 2024 Women's Hall of Fame ceremony. The honorees are Secretary of State Kay Ivey, Senator Shelley Stanley, and Representative Brenda Stanley. The ceremony will be held at the Oklahoma State Capitol in Oklahoma City on Friday, September 13, 2024. The OCOW was founded in 1975 to promote the rights and interests of women in Oklahoma. The commission has a long history of advocating for women's equality and has been instrumental in passing several landmark laws, including the Oklahoma Equal Rights Amendment and the Oklahoma Pay Equity Act. The Women's Hall of Fame ceremony is an annual event that recognizes women who have made significant contributions to their communities and the state of Oklahoma. The honorees are selected by a panel of judges and are inducted into the Hall of Fame. The ceremony is a celebration of women's achievements and a source of inspiration for women everywhere.



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Small & Large Animals • Cold Laser Therapy

Digital Radiography Dentistry

Farm Calls Available

**UCO invites high school students to Oklahoma County College Fair, Sept. 19**

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) is inviting high school students to attend the Oklahoma County College Fair on September 19, 2024. The fair will be held at the UCO campus in Edmond, Oklahoma. The fair is a free event that provides high school students with an opportunity to explore college options and meet with college representatives. The fair will feature information booths for various colleges and universities, including UCO, Oklahoma State University, and the University of Oklahoma. College representatives will be available to answer questions about admissions, financial aid, and campus life. The fair is a great way for high school students to learn more about college and to make informed decisions about their future. Registration is required for the fair. For more information, visit [www.uco.edu](http://www.uco.edu).

Midwest City Beacon

## OK women's panel gathering insights to remove barriers

March is Women's History Month, a time to honor the remarkable achievements of women who have shaped our nation's history. As a result of the work of a network of advocates, more than 4,000 women are being honored annually. Although approximately 75% of women are employed by someone other than their own business, as a nation we must also address the systemic barriers that impede women's economic mobility. The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCOW) is gathering insights from a panel of experts to identify and remove these barriers. The panel will include representatives from various organizations, including the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. State Department, and the U.S. Attorney General. The panel will focus on the use of technology to identify and rescue victims of human trafficking. Both forums are free and open to the public. Registration is required for both forums. For more information, visit [www.ok.gov/ocow](http://www.ok.gov/ocow).

**OKLAHOMA CLASSIFIED AD NETWORK**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE COMMISSION AT 405-521-2872

**WANT TO BUY?**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE COMMISSION AT 405-521-2872

**FACTORS FOR 2024**

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The Oklahoman

## Ponca City Now

Living news & events from Ponca City, Oklahoma

Home News Jobs Announcements Real Estate Weather Sports Community

### State Commission, NOC End Sponsoring Human Trafficking Conversation

The Commission on the Status of Women (OCOW) and the Northern Oklahoma College (NOC) have announced that they will no longer sponsor the Human Trafficking Conversation. The conversation is a free event that provides high school students with an opportunity to explore college options and meet with college representatives. The conversation is held at the NOC campus in Ponca City, Oklahoma. The OCOW and NOC have been sponsoring the conversation since 2015. The decision to end the sponsorship was made by the OCOW and NOC. The OCOW is a state agency that promotes the rights and interests of women in Oklahoma. The NOC is a community college that provides education and training for students in Ponca City, Oklahoma. The conversation is a great way for high school students to learn more about college and to make informed decisions about their future. The OCOW and NOC are committed to providing high-quality education and training for students in Ponca City, Oklahoma. The decision to end the sponsorship is a result of budget cuts and a change in priorities. The OCOW and NOC will continue to provide other programs and services to students in Ponca City, Oklahoma. For more information, visit [www.poncacitynow.com](http://www.poncacitynow.com).



Ponca City Now

## End Buzz

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**NOC NORTHERN Oklahoma College**

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

End Buzz

## CITY NEWS OKC

OKlahoma Senator Weaver guides Interim Study on Trafficking, working with Women's Commission, advocates

**CITY NEWS OKC**

City Sentinel

## USAO, OCOW partner to host "Stop Human Trafficking" community conversation

Chickasha Express Star - 02/08/2024 Page: A04

The United States Attorney (USAO) and the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (OCOW) are partnering to host a community conversation on human trafficking. The conversation will be held at the Chickasha Express Star on February 8, 2024. The conversation is a free event that provides high school students with an opportunity to explore college options and meet with college representatives. The conversation is held at the Chickasha Express Star in Chickasha, Oklahoma. The USAO and OCOW are committed to providing high-quality education and training for students in Chickasha, Oklahoma. The conversation is a great way for high school students to learn more about college and to make informed decisions about their future. The USAO and OCOW will continue to provide other programs and services to students in Chickasha, Oklahoma. For more information, visit [www.usao.gov](http://www.usao.gov).

**OKLAHOMA CLASSIFIED AD NETWORK**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE COMMISSION AT 405-521-2872

**WANT TO BUY?**

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Chickasha Express Star

## The Duncan Banner

OCOW: Senators examine human trafficking at State Capitol study

**THE DUNCAN BANNER**

The Duncan Banner

## Collateral

Info card:



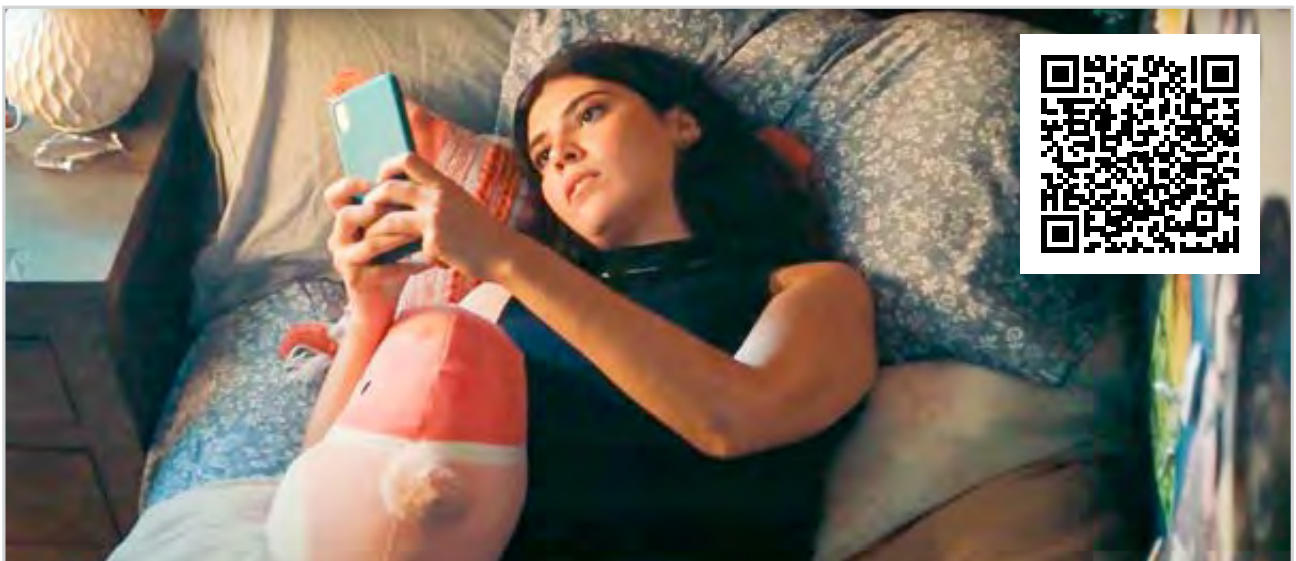
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Digital and Social Media Posts



Video produced by Prairie Surf Studio depicting a typical scenario in Oklahoma involving human trafficking.

## CHRONOLOGY OF IMPACT ACHIEVEMENTS ON ISSUES (FY04 – FY24)

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women advises the Governor and legislature on findings from research, focus groups, summits and community conversations conducted by the Commission. These findings are provided in an Annual Report as recommendations for legislation and policy to improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for women in Oklahoma. Below is a chronology of the research, summits and community conversations conducted by the Commission from FY04 to FY24.

### 2024 – Focus on Childcare and Human Trafficking

- Hosted *Solutions, Initiatives, Strategies Summit on Navigating Childcare Crisis as a Barrier to Women’s Economic Opportunities* with Emmy-Award winning journalist, Encourager/Advocate to Moms, and Author Paula Faris of “You Don’t Have To Carry It All” book.
- Facilitated 16 Community Conversations statewide on workforce development, incarceration, health, substance abuse, aging, and human trafficking
- Collaborated with 8 state agencies: Corrections, Career/Technology, Higher Education State Regents, Attorney General, Bureau of Narcotics, Health, Human Services and District Attorney Council.
- Wrapped up Not Me Not My Community Stop Human Trafficking educational initiative reaching more than 20,000 Oklahomans and provided 6 grants to non-profit organizations to continue education in schools and camps on how to detect early signs of human trafficking.

### 2023 – Focus on Collaboration with State Agencies

- Collaborated with 7 state agencies: Corrections, Career & Technology Education, Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Attorney General, Bureau of Narcotics, Seminole State College, OKC Community College
- Conducted 15 Community Conversations on incarceration, diversionary programs, domestic violence, education, substance abuse, trauma and human trafficking, reaching urban and rural: OKC, Tulsa, Seminole, Okemah, Durant, Weatherford and Lawton
- Collaborated with 9 non-profits statewide and heard from 10 survivors of different situations
- Collaborated with 6 nations: Apache, Choctaw, Cheyenne-Arapaho, Chickasaw, Cherokee and Comanche
- Launched the state’s first-ever educational effort, Not Me, to focus on early signs of human trafficking

## CHRONOLOGY OF IMPACT ACHIEVEMENTS ON ISSUES (FY04 – FY24)

### 2022-2021 – Focus on Human Trafficking

- Conducted focus group research on human trafficking in Weatherford at Southwestern Oklahoma State University
- Held a Stop Human Trafficking Summit with First Lady Sarah Stitt and brought in the world’s foremost expert researcher on human trafficking from London – at no cost to the state
- Partnered with 3 non-profits statewide and an internationally acclaimed Subject Matter Expert throughout 2019-2020; published The White Paper, Growing Epidemic of Human Trafficking in Oklahoma in 2021 that is memorialized in the Oklahoma Department of Human Services publication, “A Snapshot Report on Efforts to Fight Human Trafficking in Oklahoma” and detailed in HB 4210 that established the Human Trafficking Response Unit in the Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office, which was provided funding in 2023.
- Held statewide Facebook Live Community Conversations on the growing epidemic of human trafficking

### 2020 – Focus on Census (In-person events limited due to pandemic)

- Held Community Conversation on Facebook Live “Stand Up and Be Counted: Shape Your Future, 2020 Census”
- Held Proclamation presentation event at the State Capitol celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment
- Women’s Right to Vote

### 2019-2017 – Focus on Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- Held first statewide Facebook Live Webinar with Subject Matter Experts on underlying mental health and substance abuse issues leading to the high incarceration of women; the National Commission on the Status of Women shared the webinar nationwide and to state and local commissions
- Held several Regional Community Conversations on Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Ada, Oklahoma City, Woodward and with Hispanic community partners, while conducting survey research
- Formed partnership with Girls Scouts of Western Oklahoma to provide role models in many professions for young girls, and participated in Girls Day of Discovery event

### 2016-2015 – Focus on Domestic Violence

- Held Regional Community Conversations on Domestic Violence in Tulsa, Weatherford and Stillwater; conducted survey research at each event
- Held a statewide Summit on Domestic Violence; partnered with YWCA and other non-profits
- Developed and distributed fact sheets to the legislature on the Status of Women in the U.S. and Oklahoma with focus on underlying causes of incarceration: Domestic Violence of Women, Behavioral Health and Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and Women’s Health
- Held Community Conversations on women’s health, reducing incarceration, improving educational and economic status in Ardmore and Tulsa, partnering with the Oklahoma Women’s Coalition
- OU’s Carl Albert Research Center transferred The Appointment Project (get more women appointed to boards and commissions) and LINKS (registry of state organizations focused on advancement of women) to Commission for implementation

### **2014 – Focus on Human Trafficking**

- Held a statewide Summit on Human Trafficking and partnered with Survivors for Solutions, plus many women’s groups
- Collaborated with the Justice System partners in Norman on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking that led to the Commission’s focus on human trafficking.

### **2013 -2011: Focus on Health**

- Held statewide Summit on Wise Choices: Solutions to Obesity and Diabetes in Women and partnered with Harold Hamm Diabetes Center. Summit was funded by U.S. Public Health Service grant and partners.
- Co-hosted a legislative interim study on the growing human trafficking issue and partnered with Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and several law enforcement entities.
- Statewide collaboration on Gestational Diabetes for women and their children to prevent obesity. Partners included Harold Hamm Diabetes Center, OUHSC Gestational Diabetes Clinic, OSU Diabetes Clinic, Choctaw Nation Gestational Diabetes Clinic of Excellence, Chickasaw Nation Gestational Diabetes Clinic of Excellence, and Oklahoma Department of Health County network of maternity clinics.

### **2010-2009 – Focus on Incarceration**

- Published Oklahoma Women’s Baseline Statistical Report and distributed statewide. Partnered with Oklahoma State University’s Women Archives.
- Held Blue Ribbon Panel to address reducing the incarceration rate of women; partnered with the George Kaiser Foundation and Oklahoma Department of Corrections
- Held statewide Summit to develop the Public Agenda Action Plan by 2020 to reduce the rate of incarceration of women with increased community services in prevention, intervention and diversion, recidivism, and reentry, which stimulated policy and community service changes
- Established the Guardian Award as an annual recognition to elected officials contributing to guarding, protecting and preserving the rights of women, after presenting the first Guardian Award to Rep. Ron Peters for legislation passed supporting women.

### **2008-2007 – Focus on Health**

- Statewide Summit featuring U.S. Assistant Secretary of Health Wanda Jones to discuss health, also incarceration of women.
- Regional Summits on Osteoporosis and Heart Health held in Stillwater, Muskogee, Seminole and Woodward.



### **2006-2004 – Focus on Health, Incarceration**

- Published Oklahoma Women’s Almanac; partnered with OSU Women’s Archives
- Statewide Summit on drugs and mental health courts as an approach to reduce women incarceration
- Implemented 2004 Task Force recommendations to reduce women incarceration
- Commissioner legislators introduced bill to develop Oklahoma’s Breast and Cervical Cancer Program.
- Published Special Task Force Report on Incarcerated Women

### **Prior to 2004:**

From the inception of the Oklahoma Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women (1960s) to the legislated Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women (1994), the Commission selects one to three topical focus areas and spends two to four years researching the topic, conducting community conversations to gain local input, and finally, convening a Summit for the purpose of making recommendations to the legislature and the Governor.



**OKLAHOMA**  
Commission on the  
Status of Women

## Annual Impact Report FY24

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