From:	MCGRADY, TRACY M.
To:	ProvostNotes
Subject:	Provost"s Notes: 4/21/2025
Date:	Monday, April 21, 2025 7:08:58 AM
Attachments:	IMG_9020.JPG IMG_8227 (1).jpg IMG_9026.JPG

Good morning!

As the semester winds down—only three more weeks of class!—we've got a lot to celebrate at Ozarks Tech right now. Here's a quick roundup of a few highlights:

HSE Graduation Ceremony
Commencement season kicks off this week with the **High School Equivalency** graduation ceremony on Tuesday, April 22 at 6 p.m. at the Gillioz Theatre in downtown Springfield. This will forever be one of my favorite ceremonies - come celebrate with us!

Chatbot for Faculty Communication
Philip Arnold, Director of Instructional Support, has developed a chatbot based on the Faculty Communication Template document I shared a few weeks ago. This tool enables faculty to input additional context and tailor messages to students accordingly. It's accessible to all users of the free version of ChatGPT, though usage limits apply within a given timeframe. The chatbot includes guidance on how to use each template, the policies that inform them, when to copy or blind copy others, and how to locate the names and email addresses of student navigators. As with our expectations for students to not rely on generative AI to do their thinking, this tool should serve as a starting point—messages should be personalized for each student. A big thank you to Philip and his team for yet one more instance of providing exceptional support for faculty and making our lives just a bit easier.

Oh That's Cool!
It's been on hiatus for a minute, but OTC's very own podcast, *Oh That's Cool!* is back – and this episode features Yours Truly. I had a fantastic time chatting with hosts Jared Durden and Andrew Crocker, reflecting on my life and career, all while going on a tangent or two. If you're so inclined, give it a listen.

Student Art in the Governor's Mansion
Ozarks Tech student **Jackson Byrd** recently had the honor of presenting his painting, "Wings of Conservation," to Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe. Jackson, who was named the Conservation Federation of Missouri's Youth Conservationist of 2024, is deeply involved in environmental efforts nationwide and will lead the OTC Green Council next

year. He is attending Ozarks Tech on an A+ scholarship and plans to pursue a major in Wildlife Biology and Fisheries with a minor in Art.

Jackson's creation, seen in the attached photos, is an oil pastel that now hangs in the Governor's Mansion. Jackson describes the piece as symbolic of "past successes and the future of conservation in Missouri," with the bald eagle representing one of America's greatest conservation success stories. The eagle's wings are representative of our state government, which is responsible for keeping conservation efforts alive in Missouri.

Congratulations to Jackson and his Drawing I instructor, Tina Hyde. Our students and faculty make us so proud!

Have a super week!

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D
Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E. Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802
417.447.8152