

The Pinnacle

Destination Known

BREAKTHROUGH

BY: EBONY WILLIAMS

Dear Students,

We have passed the one year mark of the COVID-19 Pandemic and its lockdowns and mandates. We have made it through and are still fighting! Cases are decreasing and we, like the nature that we are, have adjusted in ways that we did not see we would a year ago. I hope you all are in a more optimistic light than from the previous mark of the last Pinnacle that came out. In do-so, this Pinnacle for the most part is COVID-free, and full of things that will be beneficial to you all. Once again, I enjoyed working on the Pinnacle and hope you all enjoy it with me!

P.S. We are still in a pandemic so everything helps— continue to wash your hands, social distant to your best ability, avoid all germy activity (such as messing with your face, etc.), wear your mask when mandated (even when it's not— we are protecting another, including yourself), and other CDC/OTC recommendations to prevent the spread of the virus, at all cost. Thank you!

The OTC Honors Program provides academically motivated, high achieving students, who conduct themselves in a responsible manner. They're given the opportunity to develop their potential through collaboration with a designated community of scholars, enhanced learning environments, and opportunities.



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CONTACT US

If you are interested in applying to the Honors Program or have already been accepted and wish to have your work published in the newsletter, you may email honors@otc.edu for more information or search 'honors program' on the OTC website.

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HONORS ORIENTATION

BY: CHEYANNE GRIFFIN

The OTC Honors Program prides itself on a fun and informative orientation each semester. This spring was no different. This event is typically held on campus on the second Saturday after the semester starts. We use it as a way for us to communicate information for the semester, introduce our office personnel and Honors council officers, then we do a fun team-building exercise. This semester we changed things up. Instead of listening to us talk, we asked our students to do the talking.

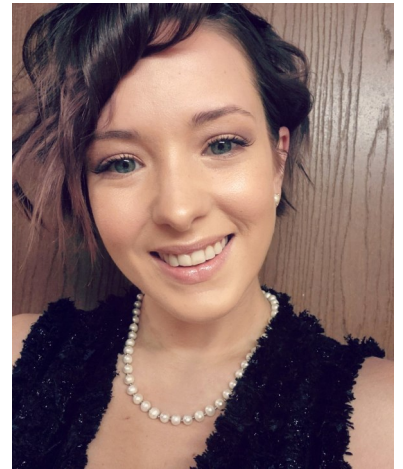
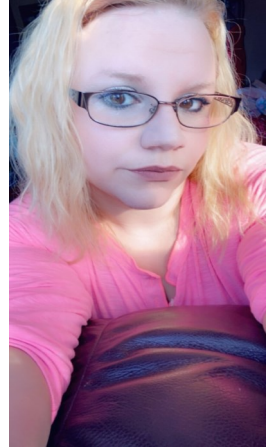
For the Spring 2021 Honors Orientation, we had required all students to post a short video of themselves on a discussion board with the following requirements: name, where you are from, family, pets, course of study while at OTC, where you plan on continuing your education, and at least one fun fact about yourself. After their initial videos, they were asked to respond to two fellow Honors students' posts.

This was a great way for our students to get to know some of their fellow Honors Program students. As a student in the program myself as well as the Office Manager, I participated as well. My favorite part was learning about everyone's pets. Some of this semester's students have birds, cats, dogs, and even chickens. I have two cats myself and I loved the replies I received about them, so I will include some pictures of them below.



MEET THE OFFICERS

Spring 2021



President– Kallie Tuter

VP of Fundraising– Jennifer Fortner

VP of Community Service– Annice Cotter

VP of Publicity– Cheyanne Griffin

Treasurer– Anna Creson

VP of the Pinnacle– Ebony Williams

Secretary– Matthew Gordon

VP of Social and Educational Activities– John Cottle

VP of Campus Service– Izzy Franckewitz

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST

BY: JENNIFER FORTNER

Hello everyone,

My name is Jennifer Fortner and I have volunteered at Ozark Food Harvest since joining the honors program in the Fall of 2020. Covid of course has changed a lot of the Honors Program, but students have always been encouraged to continue to volunteer and give back to the community. I am happy to tell you about Ozark Food Harvest (OFH) because it's an organization that truly helps our community.

The OFH is one of many non-profit organizations that heavily rely on volunteers to keep their organizations running. The OFH proudly distributes large quantities of food to many families in need throughout Springfield. You may have heard of them on the radio near Thanksgiving as that is one of OFH's busiest times of the year. When you arrive at OFH, you are immediately greeted with a friendly face and are led into a very large warehouse. You are put to work on a large conveyer belt machine, where you will put one item in a box, such as a can of green beans or a milk jar, as it is passed down person to person. This is such a fun atmosphere and they always have the best 60's to 80's music blasting. Not to mention, the people that work there genuinely try to get to know you.

Early in March, I went to volunteer and for the first time I was able to learn a different job: sorting fruit and vegetables. They have a very neat system. Grocery stores donate to them and volunteers sort out the fresh fruits that go to families. Any kind of fruit that is deemed past fresh is donated to local pig farmers, which truly shows they care about many avenues of our community.

If you would consider volunteering, you will not be disappointed, and it gives you the most wonderful feeling of giving back! To volunteer: simply fill out a form located on the Ozark Food Harvest Website, under the volunteer tab. You will get an email confirmation then simply pick your days! Don't forget your mask and closed-toe shoes, and you are good to go!

If you want to be one of the volunteers to help give hope to the hungry, if you want to say, "because of me, someone eats today", contact Jo Thompson at 417-865-3411, ext. 114 or go to the OFH webpage, www.ozarksfoodharvest.org

Activities

By: Ebony Williams



If you love the outdoors and would love to learn about the crawly, aesthetic creatures of nature, then this event might be the one for you. Organizer Friends of the Garden is hosting an event at the Springfield- Greene Country Botanical Center called the Butterfly House Docent Training. Here, you get to learn about the lovely native butterflies, their cycles, and their habitats. And most importantly, you get trained on how to become a docent- someone who will become a guide and teach about the ways of the lepidoptera.



This is a great educational program and volunteering opportunity. These trainings are reoccurring and free! The next times for this event are April 14th 5:30pm-7:30pm and April 17th 10:30am-11:30am again @the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center. You will only need to go to one of these. And to remind you- these sessions are free!

For more information: Call 417-874-2952 or email info@friendsofthegarden.org, or go to their website: <https://friendsofthegarden.org/>

What is a better way to celebrate the spring than having a Kites and Pinata Festival? Correct, there is none. Springfield Sister Cities Association is bringing in the spring with Japanese and Mexican fun. On April 10th, they will be hosting a Kites and Pinata Festival from 11 am to 4 pm at the Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center. This event is FREE to all, so bring your kites and enjoy! And if you don't have one, that's okay; you can build kites and mini pinatas there for \$5. You can also enjoy the Mizumoto Japanese Garden at no cost!

For more information: Call 417-864-1191 or go to the website: <http://peacethroughpeople.org/>



GETTING INVOLVED

BY: IZZY FRANCKEWITZ

Listed below, I have highlighted only a few of the many student organizations available. While many have had to pause in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, they will be looking to restart and grow anew as OTC once again begins to open fully. When this time comes, they will be seeking students with a passion for leadership, giving back, and community to bring these incredible clubs back to life. A complete club listing can be found at students.otc.edu/studentlife/, and I encourage you to explore and discover a possible new facet of your college experience.

Politically Active is a nonpartisan, student-run organization dedicated to improving the political literacy of OTC students. Young adults consistently rank the worst in political awareness and political participation. We volunteer the least and we donate the least. This generation is less likely to know what terms like “pro-life” and “pro-choice” means, how the legislative process works, or even what it takes to vote. We have two meetings a semester where we discuss and debate the issues. We require club members to participate in one activity of their choice.

Be a part of our movement. Email the sponsors Cara Griffin (griffinc@otc.edu) or Andrew Crocker (crockera@otc.edu) for more information, or show up to any of our meetings!

CPU Club: The purpose of the Computer Programmers and Users Society is to provide students with a means for networking with those already working or preparing to work, in their chosen field. This can be anyone who plans on becoming IT professionals, support staff, programmers, web developers, or technicians. The goals of this organization are to bring together these people for the sharing of information, workshops, seminars, and the building of relationships before they begin their career. We also welcome those that would like to learn from us! We work to be educators of technology so that all can benefit from computers.

Interested students should join our discord to get information on meetings (usually the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm) but sometimes we have other activities as well. <http://discord.otccompsci.com/>

Green Council: Do you enjoy the outdoors? Are you interested in conservation and sustainability? Are you simply looking for a way to get involved and invest in the community? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then join the Green Council! We are a group of students who are passionate about the environment and all that it has to offer. We do community service projects throughout the year with local environmental organizations such as the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks and Missouri Stream Team. Each semester we take group tours of Wonders of Wildlife, the Underground Jordan Creek, and more! Sign up today by emailing greencouncil@otc.edu and check us out on Facebook, under OTC Green Council.

Books, Coffee and Identi-tea is a book club dedicated to exploring LGBTQ+ fiction. We meet once a month to discuss the chosen reading, hang out, and vote on the next book. Our ultimate goal is to provide a comfortable place for LGBTQ+ and allies to discuss issues surrounding the community and raise awareness for at-risk queer youth.

Meetings are held once a month and rotate between the Richwood Valley campus library and the Springfield campus Hamra library. Contact Nikohl at nw0909706@otc.edu for meeting dates/times or for more information.

Engaging Men is a student organization dedicated to promoting preventative measures to end gender-based violence and providing support for male victims of sexual and interpersonal violence. Students involved with Engaging Men will be better able to educate other students about the growing concern of gender-based violence, assist in preventing gender-based violence on and off campus, and effect societal change on the local, state, and national level. For more information contact Thomas Bartolotta: Bartolot@otc.edu.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: THE VICTIM CENTER

BY: MATTHEW GORDON

Domestic violence/assault is never to discuss but, nonetheless, a critical issue to address for those invested in the health of their community. The impact of domestic violence is widespread, often having effects that extend well beyond individual victims to include their families, friends, co-workers and beyond. Domestic violence can take a physical, emotional and/or mental toll on victims – who are better known as *survivors* for their courage to report violence and seek support.

While Springfield's number of domestic violence reports has remained somewhat level in recent years, it's still elevated compared to where it was a decade ago. The most recent Springfield Police Department annual report available noted 2,880 domestic violence reports in 2019; compare that to 2009 when the SPD noted 2,161 reports. The difference is that a decade later, an average of eight domestic violence reports are filed daily, rather than the previous average of six. However, an increase in reports isn't necessarily a bad thing – it could mean that previously unreported assaults are now being reported – possibly due to increased access to reporting, or less stigma about acknowledging domestic violence and reporting it.

One of the local organizations working to offer services to victims of abuse is named The Victim Center (TVC) – a non-profit organization which offers support to survivors of domestic violence (including sexual assaults) through resources like individual or group counseling, a 24-hour crisis hotline and individual advocacy that considers each person. They offer these services to survivors of violent or sexual crimes at no cost to survivors. TVC also works to prevent domestic violence and improve a survivor's chance of reporting it. They accomplish this by hosting educational events for thousands of students of many ages every year – events where they share the warning signs of domestic violence and ways students should get help.

The Victim Center relies largely upon individual contributions to help fund their efforts; the demand for their resources is high, so any help they receive makes a big difference! TVC will wisely use any funds they receive to directly support their mission. You can donate at their website, listed at the end of this article. A great way to learn more about TVC is through their yearly Breakfast of Hope – an event which will be held this year on Thursday, April 29th – virtually, in light of the pandemic. There are even opportunities to volunteer for services such as the crisis hotline.

If you or someone you know would benefit from The Victim Center, call 417-863-7273. For more information on services, donation or volunteering please visit <https://www.thevictimcenter.org>

IN HONOR OF BETTY THOMPSON

BY: EBONY WILLIAMS

Throughout my school career, I have always had love and passion for English. In high school, I loved all my English teachers which pushed my determination to follow through one day with an English degree. I did not know then, that I would have the opportunity to meet a wonderful inspiration of mine.

Senior year, I received the Betty Thompson Scholarship Award in honor of her excellence as an English teacher. I neither knew nor met her in person then. I was at a low point in my life and was just about to give up on English until I received that award. When I found out Betty Thompson was a teacher at OTC, I knew I had to take her class.

At first, it was intimidating to meet someone you represent an award from. I finally met her in person and did not know whether I was worthy of her award or not. Eventually, I built up the courage to express to her that I had, in fact, received her award in high school and how I was pursuing English. And it was the best decision I ever made.

Ever since, Thompson and I were friends. After class, we would joke, laugh, discuss class and our personal lives. She helped me believe in myself and always supported my path and future, and spoke proudly of me to her family and friends. She was actually the one who recommended me to the Honors Program and would always tell me that I would do great things in life, that she wanted to keep in touch when it happened. Little did she know, she was part of my great things.

After that semester, she had retired and we stayed in touch via email. Our friendship was truly unbreakable.

Betty Thompson was a light in many peoples' lives and truly made students believe in their success. She was a passionate, strong, fierce, and deliberant woman who believed in what she did and what she served. Thompson passed away on Valentine's Day of this year. She fought and fought hard, and I have no doubt her legacy will be praised not only in high but here with us.

You will be missed, my inspirator, my mentor, my supporter...my friend. Betty Thompson. Rest in everlasting peace.



Picture taken Fall 2018

Arts by Honors



Like the sun, I rise and
fall
I come and go
I shine and hide
I give light, I give the
deep
I enlighten and I expose
I am needed either way



Pictures By: Jennifer Fortner

Poem By: Ebony Williams

Mental Break



How to Join the Honors Program

Do you have a 3.5 GPA or higher? Are you looking for more challenges in the classroom? Would you like to graduate in the top 1%? The OTC Honors Program is here to promote academic excellence in OTC students. Are you interested yet? We're interested in having you! Here are the steps to apply for the Honors Program:

Fill out an application

Go to otc.edu and type in "honors program." On the right there should be a column with a tab, "apply to join." Fill out the application accurately and thoroughly.

Disperse three reference sheets to professors/mentors/co workers (no parents)

Write a 500 to 1,000-word essay describing why you want to join the honors program and what makes you a good candidate then send it to honors@otc.edu

Wait for the email!