



## Oklahoma State University Unveils Five-Year Campaign to Raise \$1 Billion to Fund Scholarships, Faculty Positions, Research, Programs and Facilities

*Oklahoma State Alumnus, Energy Entrepreneur and Philanthropist T. Boone Pickens Announces \$100 Million Challenge Gift to Fund Student Scholarships*

*Oklahoma State President V. Burns Hargis Announces \$537 Million Raised in 26 Months for "Branding Success: The Campaign for Oklahoma State University"*

STILLWATER, OK – February 26, 2010 – Before an orange-clad crowd in the packed atrium of the Student Union on the campus of Oklahoma State University (OSU), the president of OSU, V. Burns Hargis, announced a \$1 billion campaign to raise private funds to strengthen student scholarships and aid, endowments for faculty support, as well as fund advanced research and academic initiatives, and upgrade teaching and research facilities, including renovations to the Student Union and the construction of additional essential facilities, such as the Spears School of Business and a new Performing Arts Center.

"This campaign marks the most ambitious fundraising initiative in the history of Oklahoma State University," noted Hargis, who is also an OSU alumnus. "The incredible generosity of graduates and friends around the world who believe in our land-grant mission and embrace our vision to make OSU a leader in education, public service, and research has inspired and encouraged us to move forward with this historic campaign at this time."

Hargis continued, "The need has never been greater at Oklahoma State, and now is the time for us to seek significant private funds so we can serve our students, support our faculty and fund vital research at a much higher level than ever before. This campaign will secure OSU's place as one of America's premier public universities and a leader among land-grant universities."

The \$ 1 billion campaign, called 'Branding Success: The Campaign for Oklahoma State University,' is chaired by OSU graduates Ross and Billie McKnight of Throckmorton, Texas. The McKnights, who founded and now operate several successful business enterprises in banking, energy and ranching, met at OSU in 1969. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Billie and me to give back in a big way to the university that means so much to both of us. We are honored to lead this campaign," Ross McKnight said. "We credit a lot of our success to the education and experiences we gained as students at OSU, and we know the lasting benefits of this campaign on OSU are incalculable."

Though the campaign is being publicly launched today, the “quiet phase” of the campaign has been underway since President Hargis’ appointment in Dec. 2007. More than \$437 million has been committed in conjunction with this campaign, President Hargis reported.

### ***Pickens Announces Surprise \$100 Million Challenge Gift – Pushes Total Raised to \$537 Million***

As President Hargis unveiled the \$437 million amount, OSU alumnus, entrepreneur and philanthropist T. Boone Pickens joined him at the podium for a surprise announcement. The curious crowd watched as Pickens announced a \$100 million testamentary challenge gift to fund a major endowment for scholarships to not only attract more students to OSU, but also provide financial assistance to students who are eager to attend a major research university but are unable to do so because of personal financial limitations.

“You know me - I want us to be the best in everything we do at Oklahoma State. We are not going to be second to anyone, either academically or athletically. I know the leadership now in place at OSU with Ann and Burns has been a game-changer. We are on the move in ways I could have never imagined a few years ago. These are exciting times at OSU, and the possibilities are limitless. I was amazed at the sheer number of people who stepped up to support the stadium project and the \$100 million match to endowed chairs and professorships. There is no doubt in my mind we will succeed again,” Pickens said.

“We are extraordinarily grateful to Boone for his continued generosity to Oklahoma State. Boone’s astounding gift, combined with the many other advance gifts we have already received, puts us in a strong position to meet and even exceed our billion dollar goal before Dec. 31, 2014--the target date for the completion of the campaign,” Hargis said.

In his remarks, President Hargis outlined how the one billion dollars would be used to address pressing, immediate needs as well as emerging opportunities. He said \$500 million will be used to endow scholarships and fellowships for students; \$200 million will be used to attract and retain top-flight professors and researchers; \$200 million to construct and upgrade educational and research facilities; and \$100 million to create and sustain programs and provide services that will benefit the citizens, communities and economic well-being of Oklahoma.

“We have a responsibility to build on the momentum we have established today,” Hargis said. “This campaign is indeed audacious and historic in its scope and magnitude. The money we will raise through ‘*Branding Success: The Campaign for Oklahoma State University*’ will have a tremendous impact on OSU, our faculty, and students as well as our state and beyond, benefitting generations to come. This is our time to redefine the future of OSU, raise expectations, seize opportunities and do something truly purposeful and exceptional.”

To learn more about ‘*Branding Success: The Campaign for Oklahoma State University*,’ visit [www.OSUgiving.com](http://www.OSUgiving.com).

*The OSU Foundation serves as the private fundraising organization for OSU, as designated by the OSU Regents. Its mission is to unite donor and university passions and priorities to achieve excellence.*

*Oklahoma State University is a five-campus, public land-grant educational system that improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality teaching, research and outreach. More than 32,000 students attend OSU with nearly 21,000 on the main campus in Stillwater. Students are from all 50 states and around 110 nations. Established in 1890, OSU has graduated more than 200,000 students. Today, OSU graduates are making a lasting difference in Oklahoma, the nation and the world.*

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