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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OETA and OAB Scholarship Selection Committee Announce  
2024 Scholarship Recipients**

**Oklahoma City, OK** – The Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (OETA) and Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters (OAB) Scholarship Selection Committee are proud to announce the recipients of the prestigious \$1,500 William “Bill” Thrash & Gene Dillehay Scholarships for 2024.

These outstanding students have demonstrated exceptional academic achievements and a commitment to their communities. The scholarships honor the legacies of William “Bill” Thrash and Gene Dillehay, who made significant contributions to OETA and the Oklahoma broadcasting industry.

Bill Thrash served as OETA’s longtime station manager and was a programming visionary, while Gene Dillehay was the beloved "voice" of OETA, known for his work as a voiceover announcer and music editor. This scholarship fund is a tribute to their remarkable careers and dedication to fostering talent in media and education.

This year’s scholarship winners are:

- **Shanice Hopkins – University of Central Oklahoma**

Shanice is actively involved in her university’s student newscast, where she showcases her skills and passion for media. As the President of the Association of Black Journalists, she advocates for diversity and representation in the field. Additionally, she is a former Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame scholar, underscoring her commitment to excellence in journalism.

Beyond her academic pursuits, Shanice serves as the chapter president for Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc., demonstrating her leadership and community engagement. Her achievements exemplify her commitment to making a positive impact in journalism and her community.

- **Jonathan Menie – Oklahoma City University**

Jonathan has made significant strides in the gaming industry, recently earning Epic Games Partner Status. With over four years of experience as an Affiliate with Twitch, Jonathan is well-respected in the esports community.

He has also made the President's Honor Roll throughout his time at OCU and received certification from the National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS), further solidifying his commitment to excellence.

In addition to his accolades, Jonathan has been selected for the prestigious role of Director of Content and Production within the OCU Esports Student Leadership team, where he will continue to shape the future of esports at the university.

- **Tara Owen – Northwestern Oklahoma State University**

Tara Owen is a recipient of the Allison Zimmerman Memorial Scholarship and the Toff Dayton Memorial Mass Communication Scholarship, which recognize her dedication and potential in broadcasting.

Additionally, Tara has showcased her skills as the anchor for NWTN7, where she demonstrated leadership and professionalism, and she previously held the position of editor for Northwestern News, contributing significantly to the campus media landscape.

- **Whitney Smith – University of Oklahoma**

Whitney, a distinguished student at the University of Oklahoma, has received several prestigious accolades, including the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) Crown Award and the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) Pacemaker Award. These honors highlight her exceptional contributions to student media.

In addition to her media achievements, Whitney is a proud member of the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, which recognizes her academic excellence. She has also been selected for the Gaylord Dean's Leadership Class, where she continues to develop her leadership skills.

“We are thrilled to honor these remarkable students and their dedication to their fields,” said Polly Anderson, Executive Director of OETA. “Their passion for media and education is inspiring, and we look forward to seeing the impact they will make in the future.”

The recipients will be formally recognized at the annual OETA/OBEA (Oklahoma Broadcast Education Association) Student Day event on **October 9, 2024**. This event celebrates student achievements and provides networking opportunities among future media professionals.

For media inquiries or further information, please contact Jennifer Mullins, VP of Marketing and Communications, at [jmullins@oeta.tv](mailto:jmullins@oeta.tv).

Follow OETA on social media for updates and highlights from the event:

- Facebook: [facebook.com/OETAOK](https://facebook.com/OETAOK)
- Instagram: [instagram.com/OETAOK](https://instagram.com/OETAOK)

### **About OETA**

OETA provides essential educational content and services that inform, inspire and connect Oklahomans to ideas and information that enrich our quality of life. We do this by consistently engaging Oklahomans with educational and public television programming, providing educational training and curriculum, outreach initiatives and online features that collectively encourage lifelong learning. For more information about education curriculum and programs, local productions, digital television, community resources and show schedules explore [OETA.tv](https://OETA.tv).

### **About OAB**

The Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters (OAB) is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the public interest while promoting the cooperation and prosperity of commercial radio and television stations across Oklahoma. Governed by a 12-member Board of Directors, OAB acts as a vital resource for its members, providing crucial information on regulations, advertising, employee recruitment, education, and the various challenges facing the evolving broadcast industry. Established in 1948 by a small group of radio broadcasters, OAB has grown to represent 152 radio stations, 29 television stations, 20 non-commercial/educational stations, and 28 associate members. Through its initiatives, OAB continues to advocate for its members and ensure the continued success of broadcasting in Oklahoma. For more information, visit [OABOK.org](https://OABOK.org).

### **About OBEA**

The Oklahoma Broadcast Education Association (OBEA) is a collaborative organization dedicated to advancing broadcast education and supporting the development of media and communication students in Oklahoma. Comprising the state's leading broadcast educators and electronic media professionals, OBEA focuses on strengthening educational programs, fostering partnerships with industry professionals, and promoting the exchange of ideas among institutions. OBEA aims to cultivate a new generation of innovative and skilled media professionals through its initiatives, ensuring a legacy of excellence in the broadcast industry. For more information, visit [OBEA.org](https://OBEA.org).