

Okla-*home*-a:

Their home away from home



Oklahoma State University is home to many students who are proud to wear the OSU brand. For some of them, moving to Stillwater meant moving to a new state and being hours away from family, friends and the security of home.

Martin Sanders, an agricultural economics senior, chose OSU not only for the prestige of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources but also for a place to explore new options and new freedoms.

Sanders and his fraternal twin, Phillip, both decided they wanted the chance to go to new places and meet new people before returning to Spearman, Texas, to run the family ranch. Phillip Sanders chose Texas A&M to pursue a degree in agricultural business, and Martin Sanders chose to wear the orange and black of the Cowboys.

"I had narrowed my choices down to three colleges, OSU being one of the three," Martin Sanders said. "College reputation, out-of-state waivers and personal influences all had a part in helping finalize my decision."

Sanders said it was the reputation of CASNR and the atmosphere around the college that made him decide to make Stillwater his home.

"CASNR has a family feeling about it. The professors care about their students," he said. "Not only do they care about the success students have in the classroom, they also care about personal issues students are going through."

In the fall of 2000, OSU enrolled approximately 1,800 out-of-state undergraduates. Of those 1,800, about 320 were freshman.

The bordering states, Arkansas, Texas and Kansas account for nearly half the nonresident undergraduate enrollment.

Melissa Majors, agricultural communications/animal science double major, decided she wanted to go to OSU the minute she walked on campus.

"I just knew it was where I wanted to go," she said. "Although I had already decided I would go to the place that offered the best scholarships, OSU was where I wanted to be."

Majors, a junior, said she is paying for college herself, and financial assistance is important to her.

After looking into other colleges and applying for all the scholarships OSU offered, she was excited when it was OSU who offered the most financial help.

"My parents and I love OSU, but my dad always teases me about being 300 miles too far away from home," she said.

"I'm from Sutton, Neb., which is actually close to 350 miles from Stillwater, but the University of Nebraska is about 50 miles from home," Majors said. "One day when my dad was teasing me, I told him I was actually 350 miles away. He responded with, 'I can handle 50 miles, but 300 is too far.'"

Majors said the personal attention she receives in CASNR has made her love it even more.

"Everyone is so nice, and the faculty and staff really care about their students," she said.

"The students are also caring, everyone gets along and it is easy to make new friends, which is very helpful when you are as far away from home as I am."

Sophomore Matt Vicinus from Chicago chose OSU and CASNR for the reputation of the college and the degrees it offered.

"I want to do something with environmental sciences," Vicinus said.

"I'm still not quite sure what route I'll take, but with all the career

development activities CASNR offers, I'm sure I'll be able to find the direction I'm most interested in."

Vicinus said he learned about OSU from a high school teacher, who later played a great part in influencing Vicinus' decision to attend OSU and major in environmental science.

CASNR director of student services Louann Waldner said the college makes a point to recruit out-of-state freshmen and transfer students.

"We keep a database of students who have contacted us," Waldner said. "From that database we try to keep in contact with the prospective student through mailings."

Another helpful out-of-state recruiting tool for CASNR is the National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky., she said.

"Out-of-state students are particularly impressed with OSU's out-of-state tuition policy," Waldner said.

In addition to CASNR, the university's high school and college relations office also plays a large role in the recruitment of many students from all over the nation. They have three out-of-state recruiters who work recruiting specifically in Oklahoma's bordering states.

"I know the recruiter from Texas does a great deal of recruiting in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area," Waldner said.

Don Pitchford of the high school and college relations office said proximity to home and scholarships offered to out-of-state students play the biggest roles in recruiting.

"We always go to the major cities in bordering states such as Denver, Kansas City and Amarillo," Pitchford said.

This extra effort by OSU always proves beneficial for CASNR, said CASNR Associate Dean Ed Miller.

"Having a rich complement of out-of-state students adds greatly to the diversity of

the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources," said Miller.

With extended travel time and long road trips, OSU recruiters work to reach the nation's best agricultural students.

OSU truly does reach farther than Stillwater, thanks to CASNR. The pride of being a Cowboy and the prestige CASNR carries hold strong for

recruiting students from across the nation. The proof is in the number of out-of-state students enrolled at OSU. *ej*

By Jacquelynn Boyd
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Melissa Majors, Matt Vicinus and Martin Sanders came to OSU to major in agriculture.

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