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Education

UCO announces scholarship to honor Mustang graduate

By Traci Chapman
 Staff Writer

Mustang's Marissa Murrow continues to change lives a year after her death.

University of Central Oklahoma Monday announced it has established the "Legacy with Heart" scholarship, designed to benefit members of the school's Sigma Kappa sorority.

Murrow was a member of that sorority

while attending UCO as a special education major. The 19-year-old died Oct. 3, 2020, after her car was hit head-on by a driver allegedly under the influence who was traveling the wrong way on the Kilpatrick Turnpike, according to documents filed in the criminal felony case filed against him in Canadian County District Court.

A 2019 graduate of Mustang High

School, Murrow was a valedictorian and cheerleader, singer and wrestling team manager, as well as Chisholm Heights Baptist Church youth group and praise band member.

In addition to the new scholarship, Murrow was an organ donor, reportedly helping at least seven individuals through transplants made possible by her choice, as well as countless others who



UCO has established the "Legacy with Heart" scholarship designed to help honor Mustang's Marissa Murrow who died in a head-on car wreck on Oct. 3, 2020. PHOTO PROVIDED

benefitted from her donation, officials said.

"Live with Heart" is Sigma Kappa's motto, with the sorority's values described as personal growth, service, loyalty and friendship. Sigma Kappa has more than 120 collegiate chapters in 36 states, with more than 177,000 members listed worldwide.

"Marissa loved her Sigma Kappa sisters and fully embraced the 'Live with Heart' values of the

sorority," her mother, Kristy Murrow, said in the release announcing the scholarship. "We hope this scholarship will allow future Sigma Kappa women to fully live out these qualities and make a difference in her honor."

Anyone interested in donating to the Murrow "Live with Heart" scholarship may do so online at <https://centralconnection.org/heart>.

"Marissa loved her Sigma Kappa sisters and fully embraced the 'Live with Heart' values of the

Education

Mustang library receives health literacy grant

By Traci Chapman
 Staff Writer

A Health Literacy Grant will combine outdoor activities with a new chance to encourage a love of reading at Mustang Public Library next summer.

The library recently was awarded \$9,000 by Oklahoma Department of Libraries, money that will fund a story walk and fairy walk, Director Julie Slupe said. Both programs are anticipated for an early summer 2022 unveiling, she said.

"We are so excited to offer outdoor activities to encourage kids of all ages to get out into nature to

get some exercise and to have some fun," Slupe said. "We are in the process of overseeing fairies moving into many of the trees in Wildhorse Park; we are also ordering supplies for a book walk."

The book walk will be comprised of glass enclosures that display story pages, read as participants move from one enclosure to the next.

"Approximately 1,000 steps will be taken during the process of reading the book," Slupe said.

Mustang is one of 36 libraries across the state to be awarded grant funds totaling more than \$220,000. The Oklahoma Health Literacy Grants

program, in its 10th year, is made possible by Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Today's projects funded by program grant money are a far cry from those seen

at its inception in 2012, ODL literacy coordinator Leslie Gelders said.

"It didn't take long for the project to grow," she said. "Within a couple of years, local libraries

and we fully supported their efforts because our state ranks so low in health outcomes."

Mustang's choice of a story walk is something that's become popular in recent years, Slupe said. With the novel coronavirus pandemic posing concerns for some about gathering indoors, story walks provide an outdoor activity that still promotes a love of reading and a chance to improve literacy, she said.

This year's number of 36 grant awardees is an ODL record, Gelders said — in the last decade, 66 library and literacy programs have benefitted from more than 200 grants.



Mustang Public Library next summer will begin offering story and fairy walks, made possible by a health and literacy grant through Oklahoma Department of Libraries. Also on tap is current construction of a wall providing a special space for teens at the library, expected to be completed "in the near future," officials say. PHOTO PROVIDED



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