

**For immediate release**

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WOSC Agriculture Receives Research Grant

ALTUS, Okla. – Western Oklahoma State College is proud to partner with Oklahoma State University, Northern Oklahoma College, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Louisiana State University, receiving grant funding from the National Science Foundation to focus on the effects of climate change in rural communities throughout the United States due to their strong dependence on natural resources. This project will substantially advance rural climate resilience research and generate lasting improvements in rural STEM opportunities.

This NSF award is part of a \$56 million investment in 11 projects, spanning 21 institutions in 19 jurisdictions through NSF's Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). “This is an amazing opportunity for Western students to collaborate with other college and university students on research involving an issue that is vital to southwest Oklahoma. The National Science Foundation has a long history of innovative research and we are pleased to be a part of this consortium that will focus on natural resources,” said Western President, Dr. Chad Wiginton.

This initiative aims to involve rural communities in collaboratively developing frameworks that enhance their climate resilience. The project will involve assessing the effects of climate change and envisioning scenarios for community resilience. Additionally, it seeks to broaden opportunities in the fields of social, economic, and STEM workforce development, particularly for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds. This endeavor involves establishing partnerships spanning across Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Nebraska.

"The WOSC Ag Department is excited about the opportunity to work alongside faculty from OSU, NOC, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln, and LSU. Components of the project research will take place in six focus counties/parishes (in Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Louisiana) including rural Jackson County, OK, and provide hands-on research opportunities for WOSC Agriculture students as Rural Scholars. WOSC Agriculture students selected for the research project will be awarded tuition scholarships and summer research stipends," said Dr. Jennifer Hammack.

Western Oklahoma State College is the oldest original municipal two-year college still in existence in the State of Oklahoma. Its mission is to provide high quality education while ensuring equity, supporting student success, and empowering individuals to become productive members of diverse local, regional and global communities. Western offers high-quality associate degrees and certificates to students in its five-county service area and beyond. For more information, visit [wosc.edu](http://wosc.edu).

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