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By: Julie Whiteman

Northwestern campus goes tobacco free

Folks on the Northwestern Oklahoma State University campus will be breathing easier after July 1 thanks to a proclamation signed by President Janet Cunningham this week declaring the campus tobacco free.

Northwestern's transition to becoming tobacco free is assisted by the Woods County Coalition through the donation of signs and the promotion of resources to help users kick the habit.

The leading cause of death in Oklahoma is tobacco use. This allows us to take a step in making this a healthier community as well as a healthier state, said Yolanda Creswell with the Woods County Coalition.

Healthcare is such an important topic right now. It is only a matter of time before tobacco causes its user health problems. This is a step in the right direction in making change for this community, said Alva Mayor Arden Chaffee.

Cunningham said the administration at Northwestern had been discussing the move to becoming tobacco free for quite some time. The conversations became moot in February however, when Governor Mary Fallin signed an executive order prohibiting tobacco use on state-owned properties.

Beginning July 1, 2012 all Northwestern Oklahoma State University campuses, including all property owned and leased by the university will be tobacco free, including athletic properties, declared Cunningham. We will be asking the assistance of our visitors and supporters at all events on campus.

Helping eliminate tobacco use altogether is the greater goal as suggested by Cunningham.

The role of the County Coalition is to provide cessation resources to help tobacco users kick the habit, because really that is the goal, Cunningham said.

We understand the complexities of this issue, but ask for the cooperation of our staff, employees, students and visitors in making this a tobacco free campus.