

[County receives \\$75,000 as part of tobacco settlement](#)

DEBI DESILVER TERRY [The Express-Star](#)

CHICKASHA — Interagency and Community Coalition for Grady County has received \$75,000.00 as a part of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust's Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control program. Interagency works with Norman Regional Health System to assist tobacco prevention efforts in Grady County.

"Tobacco is harmful and destructive to our families, co-workers and children. Interagency coalition members are excited to build upon the in-roads made in tobacco prevention in Grady County," said Barbara Higgins, Coalition chair. "We are looking forward to making our schools, towns and neighborhoods safer, cleaner, tobacco free environments for our children and families."

At its September meeting, the TSET Board of Directors renewed more than \$4.8 million in Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control program grants to 24 coalitions serving 38 counties and one tribal nation.

In addition, the TSET Board approved new grants to ten community coalitions serving 13 counties, totaling more than \$745,000 in the next grant year. With the combined grants, Community of Excellence grantees will serve approximately 85 percent of the state's population.

"The local community efforts across Oklahoma are beginning to have a profound impact on the devastating effects of commercial tobacco use," said Tracey Strader, executive director of TSET.

"The legacy of tobacco will not be defined by its huge economic toll on our state, but rather by the work being done by concerned individuals and coalitions that realize the importance of healthy lives and healthy environments in which we all work and play."

Interagency and Community Coalition for Grady County is a Communities of Excellence in Tobacco Control grantee of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust serving Grady County and promoting smokefree environments, tobacco cessation and tobacco prevention. For more information about the coalition contact Alyson Kopycinski at 405-625-1713.

TSET, a constitutional endowment trust committed to improving the health of the Oklahomans, was created by an overwhelming majority vote of the people in 2000.

The foresight of Oklahoma voters is beginning to make a substantial impact through community grants, in combination with the other research and programs funded by TSET, including the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (1-800-QUIT-NOW).

Funding from TSET will be available to create better lives through better health for generations to come.