



**SCOTT MEACHAM
OKLAHOMA STATE TREASURER**

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**Thin Mints® Announced as Oklahoma's Favorite Girl Scout Cookie
*College Savings Account Awarded To Top Selling Girl Scout***

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK --- The votes have been tallied and Oklahomans have chosen. State Treasurer Scott Meacham, at a news conference at the State Capitol today, announced that Thin Mints® finished first in the winner-take-all competition with 24% percent of the vote. The Samoa was a close second with 23% percent. There will be no run-off election. Treasurer Meacham also awarded 7 year-old Khierra Beal from Foss a \$1,529 Oklahoma College Savings Plan (OCSP) account. Khierra demonstrated excellent sales skills in selling 4,512 boxes of Girl Scout Cookies to family and friends.

The OCSP partnered with the Girl Scouts- Western Oklahoma and Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma Councils on the "Vote for Oklahoma's Favorite Girl Scout Cookie" contest which conducted an online vote at the OCSP website www.ok4saving.org during the annual Girl Scout Cookie sales. As part of the promotion, the Girl Scout in the state who sold the most Girl Scout Cookies was awarded a \$1,529 OCSP account.

"I really worked hard for this and I'm so excited," said Khierra. "I'm only seven, so \$1,529 will mean a lot when it gets time for me to go to college."

Treasurer Meacham also awarded \$529 to Troop #42 from south Oklahoma City for garnering the most cookie votes during the contest. As Oklahoma Girl Scouts sold cookies across the state, they also asked cookie buyers to vote online for their favorite Girl Scout Cookie and also enter in a troop number when they voted. They also created and posted a video on YouTube that encouraged people to vote. The troop that garnered the most votes won the \$529.

"\$529 is a lot of money to a Girl Scout Troop," said Michelle Boykin, Troop #42 leader. "This money from the Oklahoma College Savings Plan will basically pay for a kayak trip for our troop – the girls are proud of their accomplishment."

Treasurer Meacham said the statewide online contest, which ended March 31, was designed to promote the Girls Scout organization and encourage parents to learn more about saving for their child's college education when they go online to vote for their favorite cookie.

(more)

“Our partnership with the Girl Scouts during their annual cookie sales drive was the perfect opportunity to build awareness about the importance of saving for college,” said Meacham, Chairman of the Oklahoma College Savings Plan. “And today, a week before the April 15 tax deadline, is the perfect opportunity to remind parents to open or contribute to their Oklahoma College Savings Plan.”

“We really appreciate the Oklahoma College Savings Plan offering the \$1,529 OCSP account to the top cookie salesperson, and the \$529 award to the top troop will make a big difference for a lot of girls,” said Cathy Stackpole, CEO for Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma. “This was such a teachable experience for the girls and a terrific way to remind them of a very important goal – planning for college.”

“Everyone has their favorite Girl Scout Cookie, but in the end it was our local Girl Scout Troops and Oklahoma’s parents and grandparents who win as we build awareness about both of these great programs,” said Meacham.

Meacham says one of the easiest and most efficient ways to help save for the future costs of college tuition, including room and board, books and fees, is through the Oklahoma College Savings Plan. Individual Oklahoma taxpayers who open an account or contribute to their existing account may deduct from their Oklahoma adjusted gross income up to \$10,000 in contributions to the Oklahoma College Savings Plan and up to \$20,000 for taxpayers filing a joint return. Amounts deducted may later be subject to recapture if a non-qualified withdrawal or rollover is taken (depending on the timing of such transactions), which could result in adverse Oklahoma income tax consequences.

Contributions made by April 15 by Oklahoma taxpayers to their OCSP Account are eligible for a 2009 Oklahoma income tax deduction. All contributions and any earnings to an OCSP account are federal and Oklahoma income tax-deferred, and distributions are also federal and Oklahoma income tax-free when qualified withdrawals are made to fund an array of student expenses at most institutions of higher learning (see Disclosure Book for details). Funds may be used at virtually any private or public college nationwide, and the savings can be applied to tuition as well as other qualified expenses including fees, books, supplies and certain room and board costs.

For more information about the Oklahoma College Savings Plan or to open an account, visit the website at www.ok4saving.org or call 1-877-654-7284.

The Oklahoma College Savings Plan is a state-sponsored, tax-advantaged 529 college savings plan managed by TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing Inc. Introduced in April 2000, the Oklahoma College Savings Plan currently has more than \$354 million in total assets and more than 42,000 accounts, as of April 1, 2010.

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