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NSU partners with CASC to offer Smart Choice degree programs

POTEAU – Students at Carl Albert State College now can seamlessly transition into several four-year degree programs at Northeastern State University.

Dr. Brandon Webb, CASC president, and Dr. Don Betz, NSU president, signed a partnership to establish a “Smart Choice” agreement between the two institutions. The signing ceremony was Nov. 29 in the second-floor ballroom of the Costner-Balentine Student Center on the Carl Albert campus.

The Smart Choice agreement allows CASC students to pursue several bachelor’s degrees at NSU – creating a seamless transition to four-year course work at NSU’s Tahlequah, Broken Arrow or Muskogee campuses.

“Two-year colleges are the gateway for millions of Americans to a better job and a better life,” said Webb. “They are also a bridge to that four-year college and obtaining that baccalaureate degree. This agreement builds on the relationship between Carl Albert State and Northeastern State to strengthen that bridge. As we become more technologically advanced in the classroom, we need to make sure we maintain that personalized interaction. It will help students persist in attaining their two-year degrees and take that next step toward pursuing their four-year degrees.”

Designed to create greater access to four-year degrees, the Smart Choice agreement will provide increased access to degree programs in the region and lead to an increased number of baccalaureate degree holders. This is a long-term objective of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education that can result in higher income for individuals and overall economic, social and cultural benefits for the state.

“This relationship we’re forging is to ensure that there is this pathway to opportunity and success,” Betz said. “It’s not just about one institution or the faculty of a particular college or department. It’s about what we do in concert that creates a new way of thinking about how we learn and providing that path of learning.”

The partnership plan provides course outlines for students majoring in the disciplines covered by the Smart Choice agreement. Class work will be provided through a traditional classroom setting and through distance learning.

Officials from the institutions hope to raise the number of degrees available locally. CASC and NSU recruiters and advisers will use the four-year plans to help students make long-term academic decisions. An NSU representative will travel to the CASC campuses to provide transcript evaluations and assist students with enrollment and advisement into programs covered by the Smart Choice agreement.

NSU also holds Smart Choice agreements with Tulsa Community College, Connors State College, Eastern Oklahoma State College and Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College. The partnerships provide transfer students opportunities to ease the transition to pursue a bachelor’s degree at NSU.

Visit the [Smart Choice website](#) for more information.

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