

Eastern Oklahoma State College
Hank Mooney, Office of Public Information
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Alumnus selected as commencement speaker

(Press Release 04-23-10)



An Eastern graduate and Alumni Hall of Fame member is slated to address the 101st Eastern Oklahoma State College spring commencement exercises 7 p.m. Friday (May 7) in the C.C. Dunlap Field House on the Wilburton campus.

Attorney James F. Howell from Midwest City will address more than 2,500 guests and graduates expected to attend the graduation exercises.

Howell is a 1954 graduate of what was then called Eastern Oklahoma A&M Junior College and a 1952 graduate of Wewoka High School. He earned his B.S. Degree in 1956 from Oklahoma Baptist University and his Juris Doctorate in 1963 from University of Oklahoma School of Law. He is the senior partner in the law firm of James F. Howell, Inc. and Associates in Midwest City.

Howell began his career as a teacher and football/basketball coach at Wetumka in 1956 and moved to Monroney Junior High School in Midwest City in 1957.

He was admitted to practice law in Oklahoma in 1963 and since that time has been admitted to practice in the United State District Court of Oklahoma for the Western District; the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma; the United States Court of Appeals, Tenth circuit and the Supreme Court of the United States of America.

He served as the Municipal Judge of Midwest City from 1963 until 1970 when he was elected to the State Senate for District 42 where he served until 1986.

Howell was selected as one of the “Top Ten Senators” during his freshman year in the Senate and served as the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee for 12 years earning the title of “Mr. Education.”

As a senator he authored the initial legislation providing for “Gifted and Talented Students,” authored the present “Rainy Day Fund” Oklahoma Constitutional Amendment and authored legislation changing Rose State College from a community college to a state college with full funding. He now serves as a regent at the college and served as their board Chairman 2007-2008.

He has been active in civic affairs with the Midwest City Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, Midwest City hospital board, Baptist Hospital Director and Trustee for Oklahoma Baptist University and many others.

According to Eastern Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Karen Harrison, the majority of students earning associate degrees from Eastern will be in the fields of general studies, agriculture and nursing.

Eastern graduates will represent 32 of Oklahoma's 77 counties, 7 different states and one foreign country.

Eighty-two Eastern students will receive Associate in Arts with 74 earning the Associate in Science. Seventy-three graduates will receive the Associate in Applied Science with three students earning One Year Certificates in Child Development.