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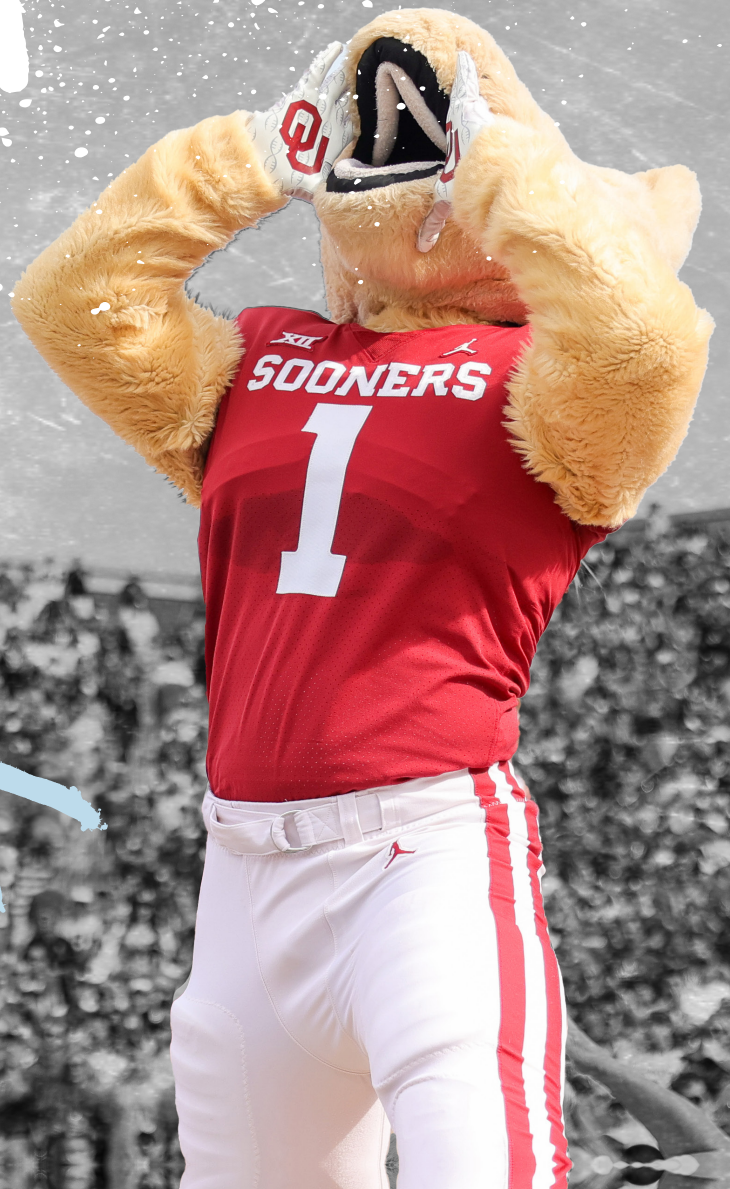


DAVID BOREN

Former Oklahoma governor, U.S. senator, OU president

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THE OKLAHOMA DAILY

Thursday, April 28, 1994

The University of Oklahoma — Norman, Okla. — Vol. 78, No. 161

"This is a great institution ... worthy of a lifetime of commitment."

David L. Boren

A new era begins



Jacobs Aguirre — The Oklahoma Daily

SOONER BOREN, SOONER BRED — President-designate David Boren, addressing an audience Wednesday at the Health Sciences Center, will be the first native Oklahoman to be OU's president.

Boren to take office in November

New president — David Boren pledges his time and energies to take OU to higher levels of excellence.

By Carlie Lawson
The Oklahoma Daily

It's official. U.S. Sen. David Boren will be OU's 13th president, and he's itching to get to work.

The senior senator from Seminole is already planning the changes and improvements he'll make in the university. But he's not doing it alone.

He and wife Molly will be partners in the university's affairs just as they have in life, he said.

The two held hands as Murray Gullatt, chairman of the OU Board of Regents, announced to a packed

"I didn't come here to become a part of the university administration but to become a part of the university family."

David Boren
OU president-designate

Holmberg Hall that Boren would soon leave the Senate to join OU.

No sooner was it announced that Boren was the president-designate than he began outlining his plan for the university. The crowd responded during the ceremony by erupting into four standing ovations.

The president-designate emphasized the importance of building a close community and began by leading a standing ovation for outgoing President Richard Van Horn.

Boren saluted Van Horn's efforts on the areas of OU's improved

national reputation in the area of research and the 40 percent increase in research grants in the last four years.

The couple's first order of business will be to create a close community on campus.

"We're going to want to be a part of your lives," he said. "And we're going to want you to be a part of our lives."

Boren seemed to appease concerns about the administration's perceived insulation from the rest of the university.

"I didn't come here to become a part of the university administration but to become a part of the university family," he said.

There's nothing more important than excellence in teaching, and that mission will become an immediate focus of his presidency, said the president-designate.

"The university is a place to teach, educate and nurture," Boren said.

He was adamant that the university is here "to create an environment where teachers can teach and students can learn."

"The important thing is teaching, teaching, teaching and teachers. That is priority number one through 10."

Boren quoted his late friend, Bart Giamatti, former president of Yale University, to sum up his feelings about education, saying, "Surely all

About our new president . . .

U.S. Sen. David L. Boren
Residence: Seminole, Okla.
Age: 53

Education: Bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1963; Rhodes Scholar with master's degree from Oxford in 1965; law degree from the OU in 1968

Political career: Democrat in the Oklahoma House of Representatives from 1967 to 1975; Governor of Oklahoma from 1975 to 1979; U.S. Senate from 1979 to 1994

Accomplishments: Helped lead Democratic efforts to enact campaign finance reform; longest serving chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; helped negotiate terms of the Intermediate Nuclear Force and Conventional Forces in Europe arms control treaties; member of the joint Senate-House Iran-Contra Committee; proposed new oversight of CIA; member of the Senate Finance Committee

Source: Associated Press

Please see **BOREN**, page 2



David Boren speaks at a campus protest.

FILE/OU DAILY

FROM BOREN TO HARROZ

Presidents tackle the ‘herculean task’ of transforming OU

BY KEVIN EAGLESON • KEVIN.J.EAGLESON-1@OU.EDU

With the sharp decline of confidence in higher education over the past decade coupled with political polarization surrounding education, university presidents’ obstacles are growing.

University presidents often enter their roles with lofty goals and visions of transformation. However, outside stakeholders routinely stifle these goals, hoping to drive change in directions they deem favorable.

“It started at the higher education level, now it’s gone to public education for God’s sake, and so basically all education is under attack right now on a partisan basis,” said former Oklahoma Gov. David Walters, who also served as an associate provost at OU Health Sciences Center. “That’s a very difficult element to add on top of the other challenges of managing a major university.”

In July 2024, a Gallup poll found 36% of Americans had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education, 32% had some confidence and 32% had little or no confidence.

Compared to the 2023 survey, the percentage of Americans with some confidence in higher education decreased by 8 percentage points while those with little or no confidence increased by 10 percentage points. Almost a

decade ago, 57% of Americans had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education and only 9% had little or no confidence.

A 2023 survey by the American Council on Education found, at the time of the study, college and university presidents had been in their position for an average of 5.9 years. Since 2007, the average length of service had dropped by 2.6 years.

According to the survey, the average length of tenure for a university president at a doctoral degree-granting university, such as OU, is 6.5 years.

The difficulty of the job has been publicly recognized by individuals who have no shortage of experience in difficult roles.

At his final board of regents meeting as chancellor of the University of Texas System in May 2018, retired U.S. Navy Adm. William McRaven said the toughest job in the nation is an academic or health institution president.

Day-to-day, university presidents face political scrutiny, donor pressure, criticism from their campus community and a public that increasingly lacks confidence in their institutions. The challenges that accompany such external pressure were not lost on McRaven.

“Every day, they must balance the needs, the opinions and the desires of countless

constituents all while trying to move their institution toward greater excellence,” McRaven said. “It is a herculean task, and they do it with remarkable skill.”

Before his stint as chancellor, McRaven spent 37 years in the Navy. During his service, he oversaw the operation to kill Osama bin Laden and spent three years leading the Special Operations Command under former President Barack Obama.

In late 2023 and early 2024 — as campus protests over the war in Gaza began and university presidents were put in the hot seat — the Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and the Chronicle of Higher Education published pieces highlighting the declining interest and difficult nature of the job.

While OU’s president may not have been under the same campus protest-inspired pressure as the University of Pennsylvania’s or Columbia University’s presidents were, plenty of challenges remain from conforming to policy reshaping initiatives such as diversity, equity and inclusion to solving financial issues.

While the job is difficult, accomplishing something meaningful might be even more so. However, according to Walters, one recent OU president not only accomplished what he set out to do, he transformed the university.

"You could argue that he made a bigger contribution than Dr. (George Lynn) Cross, who is considered to be the touchstone in history for presidents," Walters said. "I don't know of anybody that transformed the campus at a level that David Boren did — and quite frankly, rapidly."

"He really took the university and stepped it up — not a notch, but maybe two notches — and put it on a different plane. That's a very difficult thing to do."

President David Boren

Before returning to the university, former OU President David Boren had a lengthy, storied and powerful political career.

The son of a U.S. representative, Boren was no stranger to politics. In 1966, at 25, Boren was elected to the Oklahoma House of Representatives where he served four terms.

Boren's time in the statehouse helped catapult him into the governor's office where he served one term as governor from 1975 to 1979. Boren chose not to run for reelection as governor, instead opting to take his political talents to Washington, D.C.

From 1979 to 1994, Boren represented Oklahoma in the Senate and was the state's senior senator from 1980 until his departure.

During his tenure, Boren became one of the Senate's most influential lawmakers. In 1994, *The Almanac of American Politics* listed him in the top five most influential senators, according to a spring 2018 issue of *Sooner Magazine*. He also served a historic six-years as chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence until 1993. He is tied with former Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) for the longest tenure as chair of the committee.

Despite the influence he had in Washington, Boren opted to cut his third term short and return to Oklahoma to lead his law school alma mater. However, Boren didn't leave politics behind, using his experience in Washington and the statehouse to shape and guide him.

"All of that built around him a cadre of loyal and smart people that could get things done and also a very large network of people that were very happy to help him," Walters said. "I think his creativity in that regard, in the U.S. Senate and his work there and the network that was built, carried with him to the University of Oklahoma."

Walters, whose term as governor was coming to an end when Boren took over at OU, said Boren's time as president was like an explosion of energy.

During his more than two-decade tenure as president of the university, Boren had various goals and plenty of accomplishments, but they all circled back to transformation, excellence and his fundraising skills.

"He just was enormously successful at raising huge amounts of funds," Walters said. "And

a lot of people get credit for that, but he raised a lot of money to make things happen."

Walters ultimately attributes Boren's fundraising ability to his political connections and prowess.

"He engaged this incredible network that he had to raise funds for the university at a level that had never been seen before," Walters said.

State Rep. Chris Kannady (R-Oklahoma City), who served as student body president during the 2000-01 school year, echoed Walters' amazement at Boren's fundraising ability but said Boren's ability to engage his network went beyond fundraising.

"I got to meet some really, really incredible people because he could pick up the phone and bring in people that, frankly, just weren't really traveling," Kannady said. "Archbishop Desmond Tutu, that guy was old and frail and wasn't the type of person that was on a speaking circuit."

Kannady said he was also able to meet and take a photo with former Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.). That photo now hangs in Kannady's legislative office.

Flying with OU's football team during their 2000 national championship run was another experience Boren made possible for students like Kannady.

"It was f***ing awesome," Kannady said. "I was in a position to do so, I realized that not every student can do that, but I had the opportunity."

While not every student had the same opportunity as Kannady, he said it spoke to Boren's efforts to keep students involved.

Fundraising initiatives and outcomes

In 1995, the "Reach for Excellence" campaign was officially launched at Boren's inaugural banquet at the Lloyd Noble Center. The five-year campaign sought to raise \$200 million. The plan showcased Boren's intent to launch OU to new heights.

"The \$200 million we seek would truly move us into the front ranks of American higher education," Boren said about the campaign in 1995. "I am convinced that within five years or less, when people say, 'Well, what is one of the greatest public universities in the country?' people are going to say, 'The University of Oklahoma.'"

The campaign sought to strengthen funding for professors through endowments, improve facilities, increase scholarship opportunities, extend OU's public service mission, assist the completion of new building projects and expand support for research.

By the end of the campaign in 2000, it had raised over \$500 million.

The success of the first fundraising campaign under Boren indicated what was to come.

In 2014, Boren unveiled the "Live On,

University" fundraising campaign. The campaign had a goal of \$500 million and sought to raise funds for projects such as scholarships, facility upgrades and a residential college system.

By September 2017, Boren had raised over \$3 billion from private donors, increased endowed faculty positions from 94 to over 550 and quadrupled private scholarships for students.

Under Boren, OU was the No.1 college for freshman National Merit Scholars in 2014, 2016 and 2017. Boren invested heavily in the recruitment of merit scholars, likely to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, according to a 2018 report by Oklahoma Watch.

Rep. Daniel Pae (R-Lawton), who served as the 2016 Student Government Association president, took issue with how the scholarship was based on standardized testing scores.

"I would rather an applicant be based on their overall background and not just one number," Pae said. "I think that there has been, in retrospect, that lesson learned. Let's try to get as many scholarships, many financial aid opportunities to high school students, especially those right here in Oklahoma."

Inspiration and a legacy undermined

Potential university presidents seek the position for a variety of reasons, from the pursuit of prestige to a longing for public service.

Walters, a fellow former governor, believes he knows why Boren took the position four years into his third term as the senior senator from Oklahoma.

"I think he knew that (OU) needed strong leadership and that it could do much, much more, but then I also think he had a sense of history," Walters said. "I think he saw Dr. Cross, for example, lead the university for so many years. And to be such a transformative, influential and, quite honestly, historic figure — he never verbalized that to me, but I can't help but think, knowing how many times he talked about Dr. Cross — he was inspired by (him)."

While a sense of duty may have played a part in his decision to return to Norman, a love for students did, too.

"There is no satisfaction like seeing a young person filled with talent. What a privilege to share in their lives," Boren said in a spring 2018 issue of *Sooner Magazine*.

Or a love of university may have drawn him away from Washington.

"I asked myself, 'What's going to be the main purpose of your life going forward? Where can I be of greatest service?' The University of Oklahoma is somewhere I could invest my life," Boren told *Sooner Magazine*.

Regardless of what brought him back to Norman, Boren was devoted. Due to his devotion, he found himself being compared to another OU president: his mentor Cross.



ANNIE DAVENPORT/OU DAILY

OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. speaks at a press conference for the University North Park entertainment district on Oct. 2, 2024.

In terms of time in office, Boren was closer than anyone to surpassing Cross. From Dec. 1, 1994, to June 30, 2018, Boren served as president of OU for 24 years, while Cross served 25 years from 1943 to 1968.

While his 24-year tenure is remembered as a transformative time for OU, Boren's memory has been tarnished by allegations that came to light after his presidency.

In December 2018, OU Daily reported that OU had misreported alumni's donorship data to U.S. News & World Report during Boren's tenure. In 2019, OU was stripped of its U.S. News & World Report ranking.

In the final 2018 report under Boren, OU was ranked 97. In 2025, OU ranked 132. From 2004 to 2018, OU's average rank was 107. From 2019 to 2025, OU's average rank is 128.

Along with investigating misreported alumni's donorship data in 2019, OU also investigated allegations of sexual harassment by Boren and then-OU Vice President of University Development Tripp Hall. Jess Eddy, an OU graduate and one of Boren's former teaching assistants, alleged that there were multiple instances of unwanted sexual contact by Boren and once by Hall. Another graduate, Levi Hilliard alleged that Hall had inappropriately touched him between 2017 and 2018. Hilliard later settled in court, and the file was sealed.

Both Boren and Hall denied the allegations, and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation did not file indictments against

either.

OU paid law firm Jones Day \$1.5 million to conduct an investigation into the allegations. The reports compiled by Jones Day, which have not been released to the public, have been the subject of a lawsuit pursuing their public release under the Open Records Act. On Jan. 4, a Cleveland County judge ruled against media outlet NonDoc, the party suing for the release of the reports. NonDoc editor-in-chief Tres Savage said he plans to appeal the case to a higher court.

President Joseph Harroz Jr.

During the 2018 presidential search, Joseph Harroz Jr. was one of three finalists. He was ultimately passed over for James Gallogly. After Gallogly's short stint as president ended in May 2019, Harroz was tapped as the interim president and was later named OU's 15th president in May 2020.

"He was part of the group that president Boren brought in to run the university," Kannady said. "I would argue that Joe Harroz would not be where Joe Harroz is without (Boren)."

Harroz had been in Boren's orbit since 1992 when he joined then-Sen. Boren's office as legislative director and legal counsel in Washington. In 1994, when Boren returned to OU, Harroz followed. Harroz served as vice president of executive affairs and then general counsel under Boren until 2008. Harroz then

joined the private sector until he returned to OU in 2010 as dean of the OU College of Law.

Though Harroz's appointment and Boren's tenure were divided by Gallogly, some still see Harroz as Boren's natural successor.

Pae said he felt Harroz was the person to continue Boren's mission.

"He did an excellent job at OU law school when he was over there," Pae said. "And so I appreciate his emphasis on building relationships with the Legislature and trying to communicate the importance of investing in higher ed."

Walters also believes Harroz is up to the task of elevating OU.

"Joe's certainly got the capacity to do that and is a smart and affable guy, and I think (he) has been very successful, as well," Walters said. "He's got a few years to go to meet the tenure of Boren and what he accomplished, so hopefully Joe can use that as a touchstone of how high one person's leadership can raise the university."

So far, Harroz is moving forward with his plans to transform the university through the "Lead On" fundraising campaign. The campaign was officially announced in 2022 and sets out to raise \$2 billion by June 2027.

In 2024, OU joined the Southeastern Conference, fulfilling one key aspect of Harroz's envisioned transformation.

However, the SEC is not the only organization Harroz is vying to join.

"Our strategic plan includes our ambition to join the Association of American Universities — a prestigious coalition of tier one research universities — and moving into a conference with more AAU institutions offers an opportunity to align OU to our aspirational peers," Harroz wrote in a 2023 press release.

The Association of American Universities is a nonprofit organization comprised of leading public and private research universities.

"AAU's membership is limited to institutions at the forefront of scientific inquiry and educational excellence," said Mary Sue Coleman, former Association of American Universities president, in a 2019 press release.

Membership to the association is invitation only and, according to the release, is "based on an extensive set of quantitative indicators and qualitative judgments that assess the breadth and quality of a university's research, graduate, and undergraduate education programs."

In 2023, six universities joined the association: Arizona State University; George Washington University; the University of California, Riverside; the University of Miami; the University of Notre Dame; and the University of South Florida.

"We're going to provide accessible, affordable excellence," Harroz said during his 2022 State of the University address.

Former Oklahoma governor, U.S. senator, OU president

BOREN

**A sweeping,
complex legacy**

BY PEGGY DODD • PDODD@OU.EDU



FILE/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren announces his retirement during a press conference on Sept. 20, 2017.

Former U.S. Senator, Oklahoma Governor and OU President David Boren died on Feb. 20 at 83.

His lifetime in public service and 24 years as the university's president made him one of the most consequential leaders in Oklahoma history. In retirement, his legacy was tarnished by allegations of misconduct that he denied, was never indicted for and that the university he transformed continues to fight from becoming public in a protracted legal battle.

The son of a U.S. representative, Boren was born in Washington, D.C., on April 21, 1941. Growing up, Boren attended public school in Bethesda, Maryland, and his hometown of Seminole. He graduated from Yale University in 1963 and from the University of Oxford with a master's degree as a Rhodes scholar in 1965. He earned a law degree from the OU College of Law in 1968.

After 28 years as a politician, rising from state representative to governor to U.S. senator, Boren spent another two-plus decades at OU as president before retiring from public service in 2018.

His efforts to enact open meeting laws for public bodies, advocate for increased governmental transparency and elevate educational initiatives defined his time in state office. As a U.S. senator, Boren was remembered as a bipartisan lawmaker who was one of the longest serving chairs of the Senate intelligence committee, championed human rights and helped secure the release of Nelson Mandela.

At OU, where he became the university's president at a time some thought he might vie to become the nation's, the old-school Southern Democrat oversaw a vast and lasting transformation of a leading-edge Republican state's flagship university and its reputation, from the physical appearance of campus to athletics and the student experience.

"No Oklahoman had more influence in the state's first century than David Boren," wrote Bob Burke, Boren's longtime friend and manager of his 1978 Senate campaign. "His career in public service spanned more than a half century. No one has served in so many ways. ... He truly believed that the education of our citizens was paramount to creating a better place to live and work."

A year into his retirement, however, two OU graduates' accusations of sexual misconduct against Boren and a longtime university associate led to the launch of an investigation. OU would also investigate and later acknowledge misreporting of alums' donor data to U.S. News & World Report during Boren's tenure dating back to 1999. The investigations and a later lawsuit ensured the accusations — which Boren steadfastly denied — would shadow his legacy through his final years, which he largely spent at his ranch near Newcastle as his health declined.

OU hired law firm Jones Day to investigate the claims, which referred its findings to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. The bureau did not charge Boren with any crime, and no indictment was ever filed. All related files were labeled as personnel records and have not been made public. A lawsuit that argues the Jones Day reports should be released to the public under Oklahoma's Open Records Act is currently on appeal.

In April 2023, those close to Boren organized a gathering at Norman's Embassy Suites to celebrate his birthday. Some of the state's most powerful and politically connected people were among the attendees, including billionaire oilman Harold Hamm, Tulsa philanthropist George Kaiser and former Gov. David Walters, according to the Tulsa World.

Today, Boren's impact can still be felt across campus from his statue overlooking the North Oval to one of his proteges, Joseph Harroz Jr., serving in Evans Hall. Before becoming OU's 15th president, Harroz was Boren's legislative director and legal counsel in the U.S. Senate. Under Boren at OU, Harroz served as OU's general counsel from 1996 to 2008, before becoming dean of the College of Law in 2010.

Political career 1966-1994: Oklahoma House, U.S. Senate

In 1966, Boren entered politics and won a seat in the Oklahoma House of Representatives, representing Seminole County. He served four terms in the state Legislature, from 1967 to 1975. While in the Legislature, Boren practiced law in Seminole and chaired the social sciences department at Oklahoma Baptist University in nearby Shawnee.

In 1974, Boren ran for governor with the promise to reform the state government. He won and served a single term, becoming the youngest governor in the nation at 33, before launching a campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1978.

In 1968, Boren married his first wife, Janna Lou Little. They had two children, Dan — who served as a U.S. congressman from 2005 to 2012 — and Carrie, before divorcing in 1975. In 1977, Boren married then-Pontotoc County Special District Judge Molly Shi in the governor's mansion.

In a statement provided to OU Daily by Burke, Dan Boren wrote that his father dedicated his life to public service and saw it as his calling.

"He was driven by a deep desire to improve the lives of others and build a better future for our state, nation and university. The countless heartwarming stories I hear almost daily from people across this state who he helped are reminders of his remarkable life," Dan Boren wrote.

Though he won his campaign for Senate,

Boren faced several accusations from his opponents, including that he was a Republican and that he was gay. After Boren won, he swore on a family Bible during a 1978 press conference that he was not.

"I further swear that I have never engaged in any homosexual or bisexual activities, nor do I approve of or condone them," Boren said at the press conference, according to The Associated Press.

Boren served in the Senate through 1994, when he resigned to accept the position of president of OU. Boren was the last Democrat to serve as senator for Oklahoma.

His time in Washington was hallmarked by a chair position on the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, a vote against the Gulf War, regret over his vote to confirm Supreme Court Associate Justice Clarence Thomas in 1991 and a consideration for the role of defense secretary by former President Bill Clinton.

Boren's Washington legacy left some colleagues like former Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) saying Boren should run for president of the United States. In 1996, Reform Party presidential candidate Ross Perot unsuccessfully sought Boren to be his running mate.

OU presidency 1994-2018: Campuswide improvements

OU under the Boren administration went through transformations physically, academically and athletically. Boren's tenure followed the five-year stint of President Richard Van Horn, who resigned after several financial audits and investigations in 1993.

Boren raised over \$2 billion from private donors and was dedicated to building study abroad programs and increasing the number of National Merit Scholars. Boren sought to increase the number of students studying abroad by 50% and provide new scholarships for those students.

Boren founded both the Honors College and the College of International Studies, the latter of which still bears his name. He oversaw the creation of over 30 new programs and OU Cousins, the establishment of flat-rate tuition and massive transformations to campus, including upgrades to or construction of Oklahoma Memorial Union, Holmberg Hall, the Michael F. Price College of Business, the Stephenson Research and Technology Center, Gaylord Hall and Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium.

Sean Burrage, chancellor of Oklahoma higher education and former OU vice president for executive affairs and chief of staff under Harroz, wrote in a statement provided by Burke that Boren's achievements in higher education are renowned.

"David Boren's contributions to Oklahoma higher education, our state, and our nation are



immeasurable,” Burrage wrote. “As a statesman, lifelong public servant, and president of the University of Oklahoma for more than 20 years, his leadership, vision, and deep understanding of the value of education for every Oklahoman are widely recognized.”

Boren also expanded and improved on-campus housing options, including building Headington Hall, the residential colleges and Cross Village. Cross Village began as a financial burden for OU but has since become a staple for OU’s housing program.

Boren’s campus beautification efforts — often led by Molly Shi Boren — included the creation of 10 new gardens across the Norman and Health Sciences Center campuses funded by over \$2 million in endowments. Other endowments focused on lighting buildings at night, including Evans Hall, Oklahoma Memorial Union and Bizzell Memorial Library. On the Norman campus, 20 new fountains and sculptures were installed during Boren’s tenure.

In an example that showcases the politically powerful connections he leveraged, Boren brought to campus to deliver speeches former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1999, former Secretary of State Colin Powell in 2000, South African Archbishop Desmond

Tutu in 2000, former Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev in 2001 and former Sen. John McCain in 2001.

Boren was a major player in the success and improvements of OU’s athletic department. In 1995, he hired Patty Gasso as softball head coach, and in 1998 he hired Joe Castiglione as athletic director and Bob Stoops as football head coach. Under Boren, OU made multiple appearances in the College Football Playoffs, made Final Four appearances in women’s and men’s basketball and won national titles in football, softball, men’s golf and women’s and men’s gymnastics.

Over the years, Boren was generally considered a proponent of student causes and activism. In 2015, he recognized OU’s first Indigenous Peoples Day.

In one of the most challenging moments in recent OU history, Boren took quick action against OU’s Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity chapter after a video that made national news was posted online showing members reciting a racist chant. Speaking the next day, before he closed the house, he said, “Real Sooners are not bigots. Real Sooners are not racists.” He also publicly denounced racist demonstrators on the South Oval in 2016.

In a statement provided by Burke, George

Henderson, OU professor emeritus and civil rights activist, wrote Boren had been his friend since Henderson arrived on campus in 1967.

“I am saddened by the news,” Henderson wrote. “He has been a caring and supportive friend to me and countless others. His love for the University of Oklahoma has been unmatched. His death will leave a hole in my heart — forever.”

Boren was also the subject of protests during his tenure, such as when students flooded Evans Hall after he commented on research about sexual assault on campus to OU Daily in 2016.

“We try to really train students about (sexual violence), and you try to also say, ‘Don’t get yourself in a situation where you’re incapable of saying no,’” Boren said.

In 2016, a Boren-backed penny sales tax supporting public education was shot down by Oklahoma voters. The tax revenue would have been distributed across K-12 schools, career and technical programs and higher education options.

It was the only political defeat of his career, and perhaps hastened the end of it as Oklahoma’s political climate continued to change.

Ken Levit — a member of the Oklahoma



Members of the OU community fill Holmberg Hall as OU President David Boren announces his retirement on Sept. 20, 2017. MEGAN ROSS/OU DAILY

Regents for Higher Education, executive director of the George Kaiser Family Foundation and former OU-Tulsa president who worked on Boren's Senate staff in Washington — wrote in a statement provided by Burke that Boren was a mentor and teacher to countless Oklahomans who have followed his footsteps into public service and higher education careers.

"David Boren forged a path of exemplary public service and dedication to the state of Oklahoma and his country," Levit wrote. "From his time as governor where he led a modernization of state government and made historic investments in education to his leadership in the U.S. Senate where he was a great reformer, bridge builder and a guiding hand for the country's intelligence community, he led with wisdom, boundless energy and deep compassion. We were fortunate to claim him as an Oklahoman and his mark will endure for many generations to come."

On Sept. 20, 2017, Boren announced his retirement, effective June 2018. He ultimately departed as the second-longest serving OU president following George Lynn Cross.

"The calendar finally caught up with me — that's the biggest thing," Boren said during his retirement speech in 2017. "I didn't want to be

president unless I could give every ounce of my energy to the job. ... Time takes a toll on that, so I knew it was inevitable, and I had to face it."

As Boren departed from Evans Hall, his successor, James Gallogly, was publicly critical of OU's financial status, leading Boren to push back against the criticism in a 2018 editorial in *The Norman Transcript*, beginning a notable public feud between the two.

Nearly a year after Boren's retirement, two OU graduates came forward and alleged sexual misconduct against Boren and one of his colleagues, former OU Vice President of University Development Tripp Hall, staining Boren's presidential and political legacy.

Alums' donation misreporting, sexual misconduct investigation, NonDoc lawsuit

OU Daily first reported in December 2018 that OU hired law firm Jones Day to investigate potential misreporting of alums' donations to U.S. News & World Report over multiple years during Boren's tenure.

In March 2019, *The Oklahoman* first reported that Jones Day had requested to interview Boren after OU received allegations of serious misconduct that it was legally obligated to investigate.

Media outlet NonDoc published an article

later that March detailing sexual misconduct allegations against Boren by OU alum Jess Eddy. Eddy described incidents of unwanted sexual touching by Boren between late 2010 to 2012 and once by Hall. A former OU employee, Levi Hilliard, made an additional accusation and filed a lawsuit against Hall. Hilliard accepted a financial settlement, and the lawsuit was later dismissed.

Boren, then 77, denied all accusations.

In June 2019, Boren submitted a two-page letter to OU making a highly unusual move of cutting all remaining ties with the university. He surrendered his president emeritus status, ceased any teaching duties, cleared his campus office and gave up his free tickets to OU sporting events.

After Eddy's allegations were made public, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation began looking into the claims. OU turned over the Jones Day report to the bureau. Screenshots from the report found Eddy's account to be "generally credible," and OU later confirmed to Eddy that he had been subjected to a "hostile" working environment during OU's Title IX investigation.

Following the completion of the state's investigation, neither Boren nor Hall faced indictments.

"I have made the decision, after considering all relevant facts and circumstances, to not seek a grand jury criminal indictment relative to Boren's and Hall's alleged wrongful conduct while they were employed by the University of Oklahoma," the special counsel, Patrick Ryan, told *The Oklahoman* in 2020 of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation's inquiry.

The Jones Day reports, which OU paid \$1.5 million to have produced, have never been released to the public. NonDoc editor-in-chief Tres Savage sued the OU Board of Regents in 2021 after OU denied his Open Records Request for a copy of the reports. Savage is an OU alum who served as OU Daily's editor-in-chief in 2007-08.

Savage told media outside of the courtroom after a November hearing the public has an interest in knowing that the university is engaging in proper and ethical financing practices, adding he finds it concerning OU would "cover up" investigated behavior.

"It is a story where a powerful individual who had leverage and sway and used that in undue manner in arguably a violation of university code, arguably in violation of the law, to gain sexual gratification from employees, from students, and in many cases, that behavior was known and was not addressed by the university for an extended period of time," Savage said.

In January, a Cleveland County judge ruled the records were exempt under the Open Records Act's personnel records exemption. Savage said he plans to appeal.

The legacy of Boren: Reconciling leader, man

In 1995, Boren outlined a 15-point plan for improving OU that he delivered to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Among his goals:

- Better tout OU's existing strengths.
- Invest more current resources to the university's educational mission.
- Reward great teaching and mentoring.
- Modernize learning tools.
- Prepare students for interfacing with the world at large.
- Inspire in students a commitment to public service.
- Make the university more user friendly.
- Transform the stature of the College of Law.
- Reinvigorate fundraising.
- Found an elite Honors College.
- Remain an athletic power while better merging student athletes into campus life.
- Foster more interdisciplinary learning.
- Beautify campus while preserving its history for the enrichment of all.

An ambitious list for its time, it was largely completed upon his retirement and became a foundational framework for the university



MEGAN ROSS/OU DAILY

Reporters surround David Boren following the conclusion of the press conference announcing his intent to retire as OU's 13th president on Sept. 20, 2017.

today, both in regard to its many strengths as well as its persistent weaknesses. One of the primary critiques in Boren's later years being the consolidation of power in the hands of a president who reigned from Boyd House and Evans Hall, almost as if they were a mini White House and Oval Office.

In an interview with OU Daily, Henderson remembered how the Borens took OU's campus from "mediocre to excellent," a feat Henderson said couldn't be overstated.

"We live up to our song — 'beautiful by day and night,'" Henderson said of the transformation Boren led, quoting the lyrics to the OU Chant. "He was committed to the equity of all people."

Before Boren's arrival, Henderson said, it was clear OU was "striving to be average." Upon landing in Norman, Henderson said Boren immediately decided OU would become an outstanding university.

"I haven't seen or worked for any other individual administrators who was a total administrator in terms of caring, not just for the buildings and the grounds, but for the people and for the visitors," Henderson said. "I remember watching the making of David Boren into not only a very, very good legislator but also someone who really had no experience in being a university administrator. I saw the growth, and I saw the changes, and we changed with him."

Henderson, who first became friends with Boren when the young lawmaker taught at Oklahoma Baptist University in the late 1960s, later became one of the faculty members who

asked Boren to leave the Senate and return to Norman.

"I didn't come to the university for money. David didn't come to the university for money," Henderson said. "I came for the students. He came for us."

Henderson recalled a walk they took together shortly after Boren took the job in which the new president told Henderson he expected his friend would hear the rumors and shared the whispers that followed Boren throughout his life.

"I said, 'David, I don't care about those things. I care about you and how you treat me and the other people that I know,'" Henderson said. "I'm reminded of the song: 'I'm a man and man ain't no saint.' None of us are."

"What mattered to me was what he was doing in the arenas and the situations where we were together and other people, where he was considerate of others. From my perspective, I'm aware of the other side, but darn it, all of us have a dark side, but I think the light side is, for me, what shines brighter in terms of David."

"The house of Boren, or the house of the university," Henderson said, "was recreated from the equivalent of the (Great Depression) to where we are now."

Boren is survived by his wife, Molly Shi; daughter Carrie and her husband Greg Headington; son Dan and his wife Andrea (Heupel) Boren; and grandchildren, Janna Lou and Hunter Daniel.



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PAXSON HAWS/OU DAILY

David Boren sits next to his wife, Molly Shi Boren, on Sept. 20, 2017, at Holmberg Hall during events timed with the announcement of his retirement as OU's 13th president. From left, behind him in the first row is BancFirst founder Gene Rainbolt, former U.S. Circuit Court Judge Robert Henry, current OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. and then-OU general counsel Anil Gollahalli. Standing, behind in the second row is James Gallogly, who served for 10 months as OU's 14th president.

THE BOREN YEARS

16 significant moments on OU's campus

BY PEGGY DODD AND ANUSHA FATHEPURE • PDODD@OU.EDU AND ANUSHA.FATHEPURE@OU.EDU

Looking across former OU President David Boren's 24-year stint in Evans Hall, here are key moments throughout the Boren years:

EARLY DAYS OF OU PRESIDENCY, GOALS

Boren was officially named OU's 13th president on April 28, 1994. In preparation for Boren's tenure, the OU Board of Regents approved an exception to its affirmative action hiring policy, allowing Boren to bring key staffers from Washington, D.C., with him to Norman. One of those staffers included OU's current president, Joseph Harroz Jr., who served as vice president for executive affairs under Boren from 1994-1996 and later as OU general counsel.

In 1995, Boren announced the "Reach for Excellence" initiative, a goal for the university

to raise \$200 million by 2000. That money would be used to raise faculty salaries, renovate the Oklahoma Memorial Union, increase funds for Bizzell Memorial Library and fund the relocation of the OU College of Law to the North Oval.

The renovation of the Union was a top priority during Boren's first years and a driving force of Boren's goal to increase private donations.

Boren officially took the oath of office in September 1995. As rain fell on the over 4,000 people at his inaugural address, Boren laid out his goals and passion for the university.

"No institution is more important to our future," Boren said during his address. "The university is the linchpin of our society because it is the point of contact between generations. ... It is our turn to love it, nurture it, preserve it, revitalize it and prepare it to serve the next generation even better than it has served us."

FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Boren's early successes with fundraising continued through his tenure. By his inauguration, \$41.2 million had already been raised as part of the Reach for Excellence campaign.

At the January 1996 OU Board of Regents meeting, Boren announced his campaign had raised \$55 million in 13 months, breaking every university fundraising record at the time. Alums' donations went from 44 major gifts totaling \$4.4 million in 1994 to 185 gifts totaling \$54.4 million in 1995. Nearly 20,000 alums donated to OU in Boren's first 13 months as president.

The following year saw additional records set in fundraising efforts, with OU's endowment reaching higher than ever before. Over \$30 million helped fund OU's libraries, several academic programs, Health Sciences Center,

international study programs and the Honors College. Over \$13 million went to endowed scholarships, and \$44 million went to new endowed faculty chairs and professorships.

Fundraising efforts expanded to athletics when Boren unveiled a \$50 million campaign for renovations to the then-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium. The campaign saw a \$12 million gift from Edward L. Gaylord in 2002, leading to the stadium's current name in honor of the Gaylord family.

ExxonMobil gave \$5 million in 2005 for the construction of an engineering practice facility. By 2006, endowments reached \$428 million, with 403 endowed chairs and professorships across campus.

THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

A few months into Boren's presidency, on April 19, 1995, a bomb went off in downtown Oklahoma City, destroying the Alfred Murrah Federal Building. One OU student, Trudy Rigney, died in the blast, along with several OU alums.

As the bomb went off, the OU Board of Regents were meeting to discuss university business. After Boren announced the act of terror midway through the meeting, the regents took a break to place phone calls and tune into newscasts covering the bombing. The regents continued to work following the break.

On April 21, 1995, Boren instated a campuswide moment of silence at 10 a.m. to honor the bombing's victims and lowered all campus flags to half mast.

"I hope that the university family will use this time of mourning to reflect upon the ways in which each one of us can help to advance human understanding and remove the causes of hatred which leads to this kind of senseless act," Boren said.

On April 26, 1995, Boren, then-Norman Mayor Bill Nations and several student leaders led the "Picking Up the Pieces" memorial service. The ceremony included a tree-planting, a multi-faith prayer service and a memorial for Rigney.

ANITA HILL RESIGNATION

While he was a U.S. senator, Boren and then-OU law professor Anita Hill would cross paths in Washington during the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas in 1991. Hill had come forward with allegations of sexual harassment against Thomas during the confirmation process. Thomas denied all allegations.

The judiciary committee forwarded

Thomas' nomination to the Senate, which confirmed Thomas in a 52-48 vote. Boren was one of 11 Democrats who voted to confirm Thomas. Before the vote, Boren told media outlets he didn't think Hill was lying about her allegations but did give Thomas the benefit of the doubt following his denial.

A year after the confirmation, Boren said he regretted his vote in support of Thomas but not because of Hill's allegations. Boren disagreed with Thomas' stances on the Voting Rights Act, the rights of prisoners and abortion, according to reporting from *The Oklahoman* in 1992.

In 1996, less than two years into Boren's presidency, Hill resigned her tenured professorship, saying she was pursuing other opportunities. Hill did not specify why she resigned, and the OU Board of Regents approved her resignation unanimously upon her request.

However, Hill later wrote in her book, "Speaking Truth to Power," Boren had refused to meet with her when she returned to OU from a leave of absence in 1995 and said she felt that leadership saw her as an "embarrassment." Boren denied all of Hill's claims to *The Oklahoman*.

CONTINUED POLITICAL INFLUENCE

Though Boren left Washington to return to Norman, he continued to carry political influence during his presidency. Twenty months in, Boren revealed that then-Reform Party presidential candidate Ross Perot had asked him to consider a campaign for the White House. Boren turned down the offer to remain at OU and reaffirmed his commitment to his post in a statement and in personal conversations with several 1996 presidential campaigns.

"I expressed to all of them that my responsibility at the university makes it inappropriate for me to be involved in partisan political campaigns," Boren said in 1996. "I also explained to them that I have a long-term commitment to my responsibilities at the university and have absolutely no plans to leave and reenter politics."

Boren stuck by his statement, spending the rest of his life in public service in Evans Hall. Boren would make visits to Washington over his 24 years at OU, including speaking on the White House lawn in 1997. Boren joined former President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Vice President Al Gore and retired Gen. Colin Powell to advocate for a global ban on chemical weapons.

In 2009, former President Barack Obama appointed Boren to serve as co-chair of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board, a part-time and uncompensated role.



CARLY ROBINSON/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren responds to reporters' questions regarding the failure of State Question 779, a penny sales tax that would have supported funding for Oklahoma education, on Nov. 8, 2016.

RENOWNED GUEST SPEAKERS

Throughout Boren's tenure, several major political figures and international dignitaries would visit Norman on various occasions. The first came in 1997 when former President George H.W. Bush delivered the commencement address to that year's graduating class.

Next came former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1999, who spoke in the Union's ballroom after receiving an honorary degree from OU. About two months later, former presidential candidate and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole came to campus as part of the OU Speakers' Bureau, which asked Boren to contact Dole.

In 2000, retired Gen. Colin Powell addressed OU's The Big Event rally as part of a large volunteer project with nearly 2,000 participating students. The next year, Powell would be appointed U.S. secretary of state. South African Archbishop and human rights activist Desmond Tutu spoke at the Lloyd Noble Center a month later, drawing students from across the state to the event.

OU hosted The Future of American Politics series in 2001, drawing Sens. John McCain and Russ Feingold to campus as their McCain-Feingold bill — legislation that reformed the way political campaigns collect unregulated money — was making its way through Congress amid national debate. The event also featured Pulitzer Prize winner and presidential historian and biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin.

That same year, Mikhail Gorbachev, the last president of the Soviet Union, addressed about 7,000 people in the Lloyd Noble Center, urging for cooperation between the U.S. and Russia.



PAXSON HAWS/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren gives a speech after the unveiling of his statue on April 21, 2018.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM MILESTONES

Beyond the fundraising efforts that resulted in the renovation of the Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium, Boren saw multiple national championship appearances in several sports and the hiring of four vital figures in OU athletics: softball head coach Patty Gasso, athletic director Joe Castiglione, football head coach Bob Stoops and women's gymnastics head coach K.J. Kindler.

Gasso came on as head softball coach in 1995 during Boren's first year as OU president. In her nearly 30 years at OU, Gasso has eight national championships under her belt, four of which occurred during Boren's tenure.

"President Boren hired me 24 years ago and it's amazing to witness what he has done for the University throughout the years," Gasso wrote on Twitter, now the social platform X, upon Boren's retirement. "THERE'S ONLY ONE OKLAHOMA' ... and his name is David Boren."

In 1998, Castiglione started at OU, replacing Heisman winner and former OU running back Steven Owens. Castiglione has been at OU for over 25 years, overseeing more than 20 national championships and over 100 conference titles in his time as athletic director.

One of Boren and Castiglione's biggest moves came later in 1998 when then-University of Florida defensive coordinator Stoops was named head football coach. OU won the national championship in 2001 in a 13-2 victory over Florida State. By the time Stoops left OU in 2017, he had led the Sooners to 10 Big 12 championships.

Boren also hired women's gymnastics head coach K.J. Kindler in 2006. Kindler has six national championships, three of which happened during Boren's tenure.



CAITLYN EPES/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren and his wife, Molly Shi Boren, after the Sooners won the Big 12 Championship game on Dec. 2, 2017.

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, TRAVEL

Boren was dedicated to expanding international studies and study abroad opportunities at the university. Boren, who studied abroad at Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar, announced his goal to increase students studying abroad by 50% in 2009.

Under Boren's leadership, the university saw growth not only in the number of students participating but also in the variety of programs offered, including an increase of faculty-led study abroad trips and partnerships with universities in different countries. In 2011, OU spent \$16.5 million to establish an OU campus in Arezzo, Italy.

Presently, the Arezzo student center hosts a number of short-term, summer and semester-long programs.

To further promote international studies, Boren helped establish the College of International Studies in 2011 with a \$14 million campaign. Boren's advocacy for the internationalization of the college experience was not just limited to OU. Established in his name, the Boren Awards are an initiative of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office that funds U.S. students to learn languages and study abroad in regions considered critical to U.S. interests.

CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION

When Boren became OU president in 1994, one of his major goals was campus beautification. He envisioned a campus where the environment itself would be a source of pride, fostering an inspiring atmosphere for students, faculty and visitors. Boren said in a 1998 Oklahoman article the idea was to "utilize the artistic talent of students and staff to add to the beauty of the environment."

Boren, alongside his wife, Molly Shi Boren, spearheaded a series of initiatives that transformed the campus. They led the addition and renovation of more than 80 buildings. The Borens also initiated the reforestation and bench program. The reforestation program added over 20,000 trees to the university's three campuses. The bench program gives people the opportunity to pay for a bench and have it dedicated to someone. More than 350 benches and approximately 20 fountains and sculptures have been added to campus. Under Boren, the campus was recognized among the 25 most beautiful campuses nationwide.

Boren also led efforts on the Union restoration project. Beginning in 1996, the project aimed to restore the Union to its former gothic design. The renovations included restoring 1920s oak beams and light fixtures. A ground-floor food court expansion and \$1.5 million asbestos removal was also undertaken.



CHANDLER KIDD/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren tells students to "turn their backs" from an anti-Black Lives Matter protester on campus Nov. 16, 2016.

OU UNHEARD, SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON

Boren's leadership was tested on a national stage when a video of members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity reciting a racist chant made national news in March 2015.

Following the video, OU Unheard, an alliance of Black students who advocate for the rights of minority groups on campus, gathered on the university's North Oval to protest. The group demanded accountability and action from university administration and greek life leadership regarding the racist behavior displayed by the fraternity members. Boren met demonstrators outside his Evans Hall office, using a megaphone borrowed from a protester to address the crowd.

"In my mind, you shouldn't have the privilege of calling yourself Sooners," Boren said to the students in the video. "Real Sooners are not bigots. Real Sooners are not racists."

Boren took swift action and shut down the fraternity's chapter at OU.

"I have emphasized that there is zero tolerance for this kind of threatening racist behavior at the University of Oklahoma," Boren said in a press release. "I hope that the entire nation will join us in having zero tolerance of such racism when it raises its ugly head in other situations across our country."

COMMENTS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT

Boren faced protests following comments he made regarding a sexual assault study that was seen by some as victim-blaming. In April 2016, a report detailing research on sexual misconduct on the Norman campus was delivered to Boren's office, Title IX and other administrative offices. The report found that 19% of the 823 OU students anonymously surveyed said they had experienced sexual assault.

In response to the study, Boren acknowledged the importance of decreasing gender-based violence but also placed responsibility on students' shoulders to avoid dangerous situations.

"We try to really train students about (sexual violence), and you try to also say, 'Don't get yourself in a situation where you're incapable of saying no,'" Boren said to OU Daily in 2016. "Can we eradicate the problem? Not any more than we can eradicate human nature."

Following the comment, students organized a protest calling attention to the issue of victim-blaming. The protesters called for the university to show a commitment to ending campus sexual assault.

Former OU press secretary Corbin Wallace told OU Daily that Boren would be out of town on the day of the protest for meetings in Oklahoma City and Clinton.



NOOR EEMAAN/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren officially recognized Indigenous Peoples Day as a campus holiday on Oct. 12, 2015.

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT ACTIVISM

In the early years of Boren's tenure, several incidents of racism toward Native American students placed a spotlight on the relationship between the community and Boren. In 1996, during OU's American Indian Heritage Celebration, one of five tipis near the Bizzell Memorial Library was stolen and later found near the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority house. Boren told OU Daily in 1996 that kind of behavior would not be tolerated on campus and ordered a thorough investigation into the incident. In 1994, prior to Boren's arrival, six members of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity knocked over a tipi.

In 1997, a tipi near Gould Hall was vandalized during American Indian Awareness and Celebration week, the third incident in a four-year span. Students called on Boren to take immediate action, and he arranged a meeting with 11 Native American student groups, promising the people responsible would be dealt with swiftly.

In 2015, after the Sigma Alpha Epsilon racism incident, a debate led by Indigenize OU to remove the word "Sooner" from OU's identity began. Boren responded to the organization by arguing the word had taken on a meaning of its own, removed from its historical meaning, which refers to a person who settled on land in Oklahoma in the late 1800s before it legally opened to settlers in order to get first choice of property.

Following a meeting with Native American student leaders, Boren expressed his support for the recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day on campus, the expansion of the Native American studies program and resources for Native American students and plans to create Native Nations Center.



FILE/OU DAILY

OU President David Boren and his wife, Molly Shi Boren, during the 20th anniversary celebration of his presidency on Nov. 14, 2014.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS, HONORS

During his tenure, Boren heavily invested in enrolling more National Merit Scholars than any other college to enhance the university's reputation and attract top-tier students. He offered National Merit students tuition waivers and stipends for technology, housing and study abroad. In 2017, OU ranked No. 1 among both public and private universities for the number of National Merit Scholars, with more than 900 enrolled. OU was the first public university in U.S. history to rank first among both public and private universities in the number of freshman National Merit Scholars.

Boren's leadership also had a transformative impact on OU's honors program, which saw significant growth and development during his time as president. The Honors College was established in 1997 as a separate academic unit. Boren worked to raise the college's profile, expanding its size and opportunities for students. To better support student research, Boren expanded the college's research resources and helped launch programs such as the Honors at Oxford summer program. He also established a writing center dedicated to Honors students and began hiring distinguished faculty members, including the first endowed chairs. The Honors College is currently housed in David L. Boren Hall.

NAZI ART IN FRED JONES JR. MUSEUM

In 2015, Boren and the university faced criticism for the possession of Camille Pissaro's "La Bergère Rentrant des Moutons," a painting stolen by Nazis hanging in the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art.

Nazi forces stole the painting in 1941 from the family of Léone Meyer, who sued the university in 2013 to re-obtain ownership. After a period where the painting exchanged hands multiple times, Clara and Aaron Weitzenhoffer, the parents of former OU regent Max Weitzenhoffer, purchased it from an art gallery in New York in 1956. Clara Weitzenhoffer's estate then bequeathed the painting to OU's art museum in 2000.

Boren defended the Weitzenhoffer family's purchase of the painting, writing in a statement that the full history of the painting was unknown.

Former state Reps. Paul Wesselhöft and Mike Reynolds and then-OU student Eric Sundby, president of the Holocaust Remembrance and Restitution Society at OU, held a press conference to discuss the settlement. Reynolds said OU's fight to keep the painting was Boren's fault and called for an investigation into the artwork and how much Boren knew about the situation at the conference.

The press conference followed the

announcement that OU would fully return the rights of "La Bergère Rentrant des Moutons" to the family of Léone Meyer. There was no money exchanged in the settlement.

In 2016, attorneys for the university and Meyer confirmed the painting would be displayed for three-year intervals at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art in Norman and a museum in France with a label describing what is known of the painting's history.

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING

Oklahoma faced a severe budget crisis in the years leading up to 2016, with consistent state underfunding for higher education. This financial strain placed a considerable burden on the state's educational institutions, forcing many to reduce services, raise tuition or cut programs. In an attempt to address these challenges, Boren led the campaign for State Question 779, a measure aimed at providing much-needed financial relief for the state's education system. Boren's initiative, backed by his organization "Oklahoma's Children, Our Future," proposed a statewide sales tax increase of one cent, often referred to as a penny tax.

The revenue generated from this tax hike was intended to be directed entirely toward education, with \$125 million earmarked for

higher education to support public colleges and universities across Oklahoma with crucial funding to improve facilities, resources and student support services. About 70% of the total revenue was intended for public schools to support raising K-12 teacher salaries and address the state's ongoing struggles with teacher retention and recruitment due to low pay.

Despite the strong push and recognition of educational needs across Oklahoma, State Question 779 was defeated in the November 2016 election.



CAITLYN EPES/OU DAILY

David Boren retired from the position of OU's president on June 30, 2018, after nearly 24 years.

BOREN'S RETIREMENT

In 2017, Boren announced his retirement from the position of OU president after nearly 24 years. Under Boren's leadership, the university expanded its academic programs, increased enrollment and enhanced research opportunities. Boren's tenure also witnessed substantial investment in campus infrastructure, including the construction of new academic buildings, residence halls and athletic facilities. Boren's presidency was marked by his ability to raise large amounts of funding and secure grants that ensured OU's continued development.

In light of his retirement announcement, Boren said he was excited to be able to freely express political opinions and stances he was previously unable to vocalize as president of a public institution.

"Sometimes when you're president of the university, there are moments when you say — because you must be nonpolitical — 'I'd like to just tell them what I really think about that,'" Boren said.

Following Boren's retirement, James Gallogly served as OU's 14th president for less than a year. In 2020, current OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. was named the university's 15th president after serving in an interim position for nearly a year.

LEGAL TIMELINE

2018: OU hired Jones Day, an international law firm, to conduct two investigations: one on falsified alumni donorship data sent to the U.S. News & World Report and the other on accusations of sexual misconduct against former OU President David Boren and former Vice President of University Development Jim "Tripp" Hall.

2019: OU Daily obtained a Title IX summary that included details of the relationship between Boren and Jess Eddy, an OU alum and Boren's former teaching assistant. Bob Burke, attorney and spokesperson for Boren, denied all accusations on behalf of the former university president.

The Oklahoman reported in March that Jones Day requested to interview Boren as part of the investigation. Both Boren and Hall denied all accusations. The university paid Jones Day \$1.5 million over two years to conduct both investigations.

The accusations of sexual misconduct against Boren and Hall were allegedly made by male students and former teaching assistants.

In an article released by media outlet NonDoc, Eddy gave a detailed account of sexual misconduct by Boren, which he said spanned nearly two years from late 2010 through 2012. Eddy also described an incident of unwanted sexual touching by Hall.

A former OU employee and alum, Levi Hilliard, made an additional accusation and filed a lawsuit against Hall. Hilliard settled out of court, and the filings were sealed.

After Eddy's accusations were made public, OU turned over the Jones Day reports to the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, which then began to look into Eddy's claims. Jones Day found Eddy's account to be "generally credible," during its investigation.

In June, Boren officially cut all ties he had with OU, including his position as a political science instructor and benefits that included free tickets to sporting events, an on-campus office and an assigned parking space.

2020: Head of the investigation and special counsel Patrick Ryan announced in a news release that he reached the decision to not indict Boren or Hall.

"I have made the decision, after considering all relevant facts and circumstances, to not seek a grand jury criminal indictment relative to Boren's and Hall's alleged wrongful conduct while they were employed by the University of Oklahoma," Ryan said.

2021: Tres Savage, editor-in-chief of NonDoc, filed an open records request for the reports, which was ultimately denied. Savage filed a lawsuit against the OU Board of Regents, claiming OU had violated the state's Open Records Act when his request was denied, which led to a multi-year legal battle between Savage and the university.

2022: The OU Board of Regents filed a protective order against both Savage and NonDoc Media for attempting to make the university release the Jones Day reports.

The regents cited the risk of NonDoc and Savage publishing records found in discovery and the filing of the documents in the public record. The regents said the order would "protect the University from the annoyance, harassment, embarrassment, oppression of having confidential materials published."

2023: NonDoc responded to OU's request for a summary judgment by filing a motion for a camera review, in which Cleveland County Judge Michael Tupper would privately review the content of the Jones Day report.

2024: In November, Savage told media outside of the courtroom after a hearing that the public has an interest in knowing that the university is engaging in proper and ethical financing practices, adding he finds it concerning OU would "cover up" investigated behavior.

"It is a story where a powerful individual who had leverage and sway and used that in undue manner in arguably a violation of university code, arguably in violation of the law, to gain sexual gratification from employees, from students, and in many cases, that behavior was known and was not addressed by the university for an extended period of time," Savage said.

According to university lawyers, OU wished to keep the Jones Day reports from being made public to protect the identities and details made by the 62 people who were interviewed during the investigation.

In December, Judge Michael Tupper ruled that the records were exempt under the Open Records Act's personnel records exemption.

2025: In January, Savage said he plans to appeal the case to a higher court.

President lists goals in speech

By Annette Barry
The Oklahoman Daily

Clad in a red and black ceremonial robe, OU President David Boren officially took office Friday before a crowd of more than 4,000, at struggling to keep dry. Witnesses hidden by colorful umbrellas dotted the North Oval as rain fluctuated between degrees of drizzle and downpour.

Members of Crimson Club and President's Leadership Club handed guests programs and paper towels, while others made continuous rounds drying guests throughout the ceremony, which began shortly after 10:30 a.m.

People clustered in two, building heads together to share umbrellas.

On the platform, former governor Henry Bellmon offered half of his umbrella to a soaked Kim Hefley, president of the OU Student Association.

After student, faculty and staff leaders presented Boren with the symbolic mace and collar, Boren spoke for about 20 minutes on his goals for the university and the importance of the presidency.

"No institution is more important to our future," he said.

The university is the linchpin of our society because it is the point of contact between generations.

Boren said OU will have a greater impact on policy-making because of the decentralization of government.

He said officials will rely more on local institutions like OU.

He further described universities in general as "the greatest cre-



Students: rain didn't spoil Friday ceremony

Precipitation —
Students and speakers joke about wet conditions at Boren's inauguration.

By Annette Barry
The Oklahoman Daily

Students who attended OU President David Boren's inauguration Friday said they were surprised by the elaborate ceremony and the decision to hold it outside.

Rain didn't spoil the spirits of the crowd as more than 4,000 people attended.

The crowd answered with a warm laugh every time speakers alluded to the weather and even joked with each other.

"I bet this is one of the few times it rains on Boren's parade," said Michael Mudd, education graduate student, who attended the ceremony.

Joye Sala, meteorology junior, said she went to the inauguration because his class had been canceled.

"I didn't have anything else to do anyway," Sala said. "I don't think this kind of rain is any big deal. So you get a little bit wet. Who cares?"

A 30-minute procession began the ceremony.

It featured international and American-Indian students marching in costume.

The international students carried the flags of their home coun-



OU President David Boren sits in between then U.S. President Barack Obama and then Vice President Joe Biden in the White House in 2009.

Department has seen growth, wins in president's time

KELLI STACY
AStacy@kelli

On June 7, Oklahoma was rocked with the news of coach Bob Stoops' retirement. Just 106 days later, the state faced yet another shock when OU President David Boren stood before a packed crowd in Holmberg Hall inside the Donald W. Reynolds Performing Arts Center and announced his retirement.

As president, Boren moved the athletic department forward in monumental ways. He was part of a triumvirate of himself, Stoops and Athletics Director Joe Castiglione that was arguably the most successful and long-fool standing president, head football coach and athletic director trio in the NCAA.

Boren and Castiglione

University staff co

OU leaders reacted with gratitude and pride towards the announcement of the resignation of David Boren. Here's what faculty across OU had to say about his tenure.

"It's his overwhelming because of the impact he's had on the university and the respect he's had on countless thousands of faculty members and students and staff members. I think that we won't know the enormity of his impact even for some time, but it's certainly lasting, beyond any of our lifetime currently, and we just know that the most immense debt of gratitude for his energy and vision and for his creativity."

DAVID HENNINGSEN/STAFF PHOTO BY KELLI STACY

THE OKLAHOMA DAILY

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT VOICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Boren turns down offer for presidential bid

doJob — OU President David Boren says his 20 months at OU have been among the most rewarding of his life.

OU President David Boren recently mentioned to a few Crimson Club members that Boren said he would not run for the U.S. presidency.

"I said to the six students shared a picnic table with Boren at his home last June week."

Jay Corwin, public relations director, said he would not comment on Boren's decision.

"If you ever see me act as administrator in the wrong sense, I want you to call me to task for it."

David L. Boren

Boren proposes dry campus

President Boren presented a 15-point plan Wednesday to help combat alcohol abuse at OU.

- NEWS IN BRIEF**
- U.S. Military numbers increase in Iraq**
WASHINGTON — The United States is reporting in Iraq that it has 12,000 troops, the highest level since the start of the war in 2003. The increase is in response to a report that the Iraqi government is planning to withdraw its forces from the country.
 - Source of undercover video comes forward**
PROVIDENCE, R.I. — A defense lawyer came forward and admitted he is the person who leaked the video to the media. The video showed a police officer using force on a person who was not armed.
 - New York City firefighter killed in Iraq**
NEW YORK — A New York City firefighter was killed in Iraq. He was part of a team that was sent to help with the reconstruction of the country.
 - Iran's president supports nuclear development**
TEHRAN — Iran's president said that his country supports nuclear development. He said that nuclear energy is a clean and safe source of power.

MAN CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

Former politician transformed OU with his advocacy

EMILY MCPHERSON
@emilymcpherson

Boren dedicates life to education

Sheehan said he remains grateful to Boren for his leadership. Boren's dedication to education is a testament to his character and his vision for the future of the university.

Succession plan for President Boren begins

Boren encourages activism

OU president helps lead campus in diversity, inclusion

NICK HAZELRIG
@nickhazlerig

When two anti-Black Lives Matter demonstrators clashed with counter protesters on the South Oval in November 2016, then 75-year-old OU President David Boren stepped onto a bench and grabbed a megaphone.

Standing among students, Boren condemned the actions of the demonstrators.

"As a part of the OU family, because we're all brothers and sisters here together in one OU family, I condemn absolutely what he's been saying to you," Boren said. "I condemn the hatred he's been spreading."

Student activists have expressed appreciation for Boren's willingness to hear their concerns, emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion on campus.

Succession plan for President Boren begins

student activist Chelsea D. Boren, who co-founded the black student activist group OU Unheard, said Boren was always receptive to the needs of minority students.

A LIFETIME OF ACHIEVEMENT:
A look at OU President David Boren's life from Yale

ANNA BAUMAN • @ANNABAUMAN

Boren stood before a crowd at the 113th anniversary of the founding of OU — an honors ceremony for international community, a diva of leaders.

A FOND FAREWELL

In the same building where he was inaugurated over two decades ago, OU President David Boren announced his retirement to raucous applause from a room full of admiring students and employees.

DANA BRANHAM • @DANABRANHAM

When more than 4,000 people gathered for the ceremony, Boren was the center of attention. He spoke of his love for the university and his commitment to the future of the state.

He said that he was proud to have been part of the university's history and that he would miss the daily challenges and triumphs of the job.

He thanked the faculty, staff, and students for their support and dedication to the university.

He said that he would continue to be involved in the university's affairs and that he would be a lifelong member of the OU family.

He ended his speech with a heartfelt thank you to everyone who had been part of his journey at OU.

OUDAILY

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ENDING an ERA

celebrate Boren

...toward OU President David Boren at the Sept. 20
his upcoming retirement.
to say about Boren's 23 years as president:

"There should be celebrations and honor
given to David Boren because through
his leadership, he has changed many
people's lives that have been able to
come to the university, get a degree.
We're more diverse than we've ever been,
people have had more opportunities
to come — he's always supported need-
based financial aid, which is a big thing
to me... So I've just seen him as a man of
integrity really supporting students and
being personal about it."



VESTIGATING BOREN FOR AL HARASSMENT CLAIMS

ident's attorney says Boren denies wrongdoing



BÖREN'S LEGACY LIVES ON

KYLA GILLETTE/THE DAI

dent leaves university stronger after 3 years of dedicated service

NABAUMAN2 | KAYLA BRANCH • @KAYLA_BRANCH | EMMA KEITH • @SHAKEITHA_97

a crowd in Holmberg
with great aspirations
college, a thriving
a diverse institution of

undergone a physical transformation that landed
it recognition among the 25 most beautiful cam-
puses nationwide.
Boren's time at OU was defined by innovation,
growth and success, but also shadowed by chal-

has a special feeling for OU, maybe someone who
spent part of their own college career at OU —
to bring someone like that here, because they al-
ready have the love of the university, they realize
what a special place that it is."

WELL



LEGACY

What Boren will
leave behind at
the university

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REACTION

How students and
state leaders reacted
to Boren's retirement

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TIMELINE

Looking back on
Boren's accolades
through the years

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offcampushousing.ou.edu



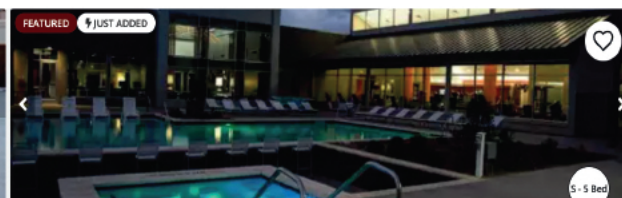
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(405) 281-4855

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\$Ask
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Shuttle to Campus



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\$565 - \$719
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Shuttle to Campus



Millennium
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Per Person Only
Available: Now

Email

(405) 870-2337

Walk Time To Campus: 23 mins



Campus Station
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Walk Time To Campus: 30+ mins



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a TurboTax expert —→



LISTEN, I HATE ME IF I STOP GOING TO THEM? THEY'RE ALWAYS SO NICE TO ME...

NEED, A COMB? MAYBE AN EXTRA MIRROR TO SEE THE BACK OF MY HEAD,

OR I COULD JUST GO BY FEEL. WILL MY HAIRSTYLE