

Vince Gill Highlights Oklahoma Hispanic Hall of Fame Ceremony at OCCC

Vince Gill Highlights Oklahoma Hispanic Hall of Fame Ceremony at OCCC Chairman David Echols and President Dr. Mautra Staley Jones Among Honorees

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, UNITED STATES, April 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A moving tribute from Vince Gill and dual honors for campus leadership highlighted the [2026 Oklahoma Hispanic Hall of Fame](#) ceremony, hosted at [Oklahoma City Community College \(OCCC\)](#).

Dr. Mautra Staley Jones, [OCCC president](#), was named to the 2026 Hall of Fame's class of inductees, while Regent David Echols, chairman of the OCCC Board of Regents, received the Águila Eagle Award. The event was hosted by the Oklahoma Hispanic Institute, led by Chairman and Founder Fred Mendoza.

Gill delivered one of the ceremony's most memorable moments, presenting a Hall of Fame award posthumously to Benny Garcia, a respected guitar technician and his childhood friend. Garcia worked with Gill and leading artists including Trisha Yearwood and The Dixie Chicks. Benny's wife Brenda accepted the award for the Garcia family.

"This recognition reflects the strength, resilience, and rich cultural contributions of Hispanic communities across our state. It also honors leaders who are advancing that mission every day," said Fred Mendoza.

The Oklahoma Hispanic Institute established the Hall of Fame at Oklahoma City Community College in 2025 to recognize Hispanic Oklahomans whose accomplishments, leadership,



(L to R) Norma Condreay, Edgar Cruz, Major Ed Pulido, Fred Mendoza, Marcelino Garcia, Katheleen Guzman, Dr. Mautra Staley Jones, Brenda Garcia, and Vince Gill.

professionalism, and cultural contributions have significantly shaped the state's history and future.

Additional Hall of Fame inductees included Major Ed Pulido, Kathleen Guzman, Manuel Cruz II, Marcelino "Chelino" Garcia, Norma Condreay and Christian Kanady, reflecting a broad range of impact across military service, music, and community leadership.

The Aguila Eagle Award was also presented to Chickasaw Nation Lieutenant Governor Chris Anoatubby, Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt, Oklahoma County District Judge Heather Mendoza Coyle, Marilyn Hildreth Luper and Deanna Cardenas.

About Oklahoma City Community College

Since its inception in 1972, Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC) has been the heartbeat of the Metro, dedicated to empowering learners and strengthening communities. Serving more than 18,000 students in credit-seeking courses and more than 5,000 students in non-credit-seeking programs, we are committed to producing leaders. "Student Success, Community Enrichment" is our mission, and we offer 87 degree and certificate programs plus more than 50 micro-credentials that provide a foundation for further education or immediate career readiness. We remain dedicated to providing accessible, affordable, high-quality education that equips students to achieve personal and professional goals. OCCC is more than an institution; we are a community catalyst, fostering growth and success in our city, our workforce, and the lives of our students. Discover your potential at OCCC, where your future is our purpose. Visit us at occc.edu.

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(L to R) Dr. Mautra Staley Jones, Hall of Fame Inductee; Vince Gill, Águila Eagle Award Honoree. □



(L to R) OCCC Board Chair David Echols, Aguila Eagle Award Honoree and Oklahoma Hispanic Institute Chairman Fred Mendoza



(L to R) Oklahoma Hispanic Institute Chairman Fred Mendoza, OCCC President Dr. Mautra Staley Jones, OCCC Foundation Trustee Joyce Mauldin, OCCC Board Chair David Echols, and The Honorable Jon Echols



(L to R) Brenda Garcia (seated) and Vince Gill

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