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News Release

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Eastern Oklahoma State College Receives Grant for Environmental Cleanup

A special ceremony was held January 27, 2012, to award Eastern Oklahoma State College a Brownfields cleanup grant from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Eastern Oklahoma State College will use the grant for asbestos abatement of the former E.T. Dunlap student union building. Once abatement is complete, the building will be demolished. A veterans memorial and nature park will be built in its place.

“This project has been ongoing for a couple of years and we’re glad the DEQ is now involved. This grant funding will be beneficial to southeast Oklahoma. I’ll be glad to tell my colleagues in the senate that this is money well spent,” said state Sen. Richard Lerblance.

“We’re very excited to be the only higher education institution in Oklahoma ever to be chosen for a Brownfields cleanup grant and we are grateful to the DEQ for helping make this veterans memorial and nature park a reality. We don’t have a veterans memorial on this campus and it’s a shame. Our young students need to understand the impact veterans have on our nation,” said Eastern President Dr. Steve Smith.

“DEQ is pleased that this grant affords Eastern Oklahoma State College the opportunity to turn an abandoned building into a meaningful memorial in honor of our veterans,” said DEQ Deputy Executive Director Jimmy Givens.

Funding for these grants is from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). DEQ’s Brownfields Program received approximately \$1.9 million to issue grants and loans through its Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. The ARRA Brownfield cleanup grants are meant to finance eligible shovel-ready Brownfield cleanup projects, encourage redevelopment and create and/or preserve local jobs in communities across the state. The funds may be used toward the cleanup of properties contaminated by hazardous chemicals, petroleum or petroleum products, mine-scarred lands, and buildings containing asbestos and lead paint. Local governments and non-profit organizations are eligible for grants and loans; “for-profit” companies are eligible for low-interest loans.

For more information on DEQ’s Brownfields Program, visit <http://www.deq.state.ok.us/lpdnew/brownfindex.html>.

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