



### **Oklahoma Pro Chapter Sponsors Three Local College Students**

**OKLAHOMA CITY** – Three collegiate journalists will attend a national journalism convention thanks to sponsorships from the Oklahoma Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Amanda Alfanos, a mass communications senior from Oklahoma City University; Gabe Lenners, a broadcast journalism senior from the University of Oklahoma, and Mark Smith, a journalism student at Oklahoma City Community College, received the sponsorships.

The recipients will attend the Society of Professional Journalists 2010 national journalism convention. The convention is Oct. 3-5 at the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.

“National convention is an amazing opportunity for these talented students to network with professionals working in the media industry and learn more about our profession,” said Kenna Griffin, vice president of education outreach for the Oklahoma professional chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

“The board chose these three students out of a pool of talented collegiate journalists. It is an honor for them to have been chosen, and it’s a real privilege for our state media to have such gifted, intelligent students representing us nationally.”

Alfanos is editor-in-chief of Oklahoma City University’s Student Publications staff. She spent the summer completing an internship at the *Shawnee News-Star* as part of the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation’s annual internship program.

Lenners is host of the InFocus movie review show and on-camera weather anchor of OU Nightly, both at the University of Oklahoma. He spent the summer reporting for KHAS-TV in Hastings, Neb. He also has reported for Oklavisision.tv and Oklatravelnet.com, and interned with ABC Network News in Los Angeles and KOCO News 5 in Oklahoma City.

Smith is a freelance writer for the United Press International university program and a contributing writer for the *Pioneer* student newspaper at Oklahoma City Community College.

Smith will receive the Mark of Excellence Award for his online news writing while at the national convention. He also will intern for the Society of Professional Journalists' conference newsletter, *The Working Press*.

"We are especially thrilled to assist Mark Smith in attending national convention, where he will honor Oklahoma student journalists by receiving the highest award given by the society," Griffin said.

For more information about the sponsorships, call Kenna Griffin at (405) 208-5043.

For more information about the Oklahoma Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, visit [www.okspj.com](http://www.okspj.com) or follow the organization on Facebook or Twitter @spjok.

Founded in 1909 as Sigma Delta Chi, SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry; works to inspire and educate the next generation of journalists; and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press. For more information about SPJ, please visit [www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org).

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