

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nepali Student Leaders Participate in OU New Media Institute

Moore, OK – Six students from Nepal visited the University of Oklahoma as part of a U.S. State Department grant program with the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication May 19-June 21 2013.

These students include:

Mr. "Sapan" Hamal
Mr. Pratick Paudel
Ms. "Nikita" Tripathi
Ms. "Subina" Shrestha
Ms. Nisha Karki
Mr. Pradeep "Razdeep" Ghimire

This program also includes students from India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The five-week New Media Institute is designed to educate the students about new media practices and the role that new media can play for both journalists and citizens in an emerging democratic society. Not all of the students have studied journalism or mass communication at their home universities, but the program also teaches critical thinking skills that will benefit them as private citizens regardless of whether they pursue a career in journalism.

The workshop curriculum teaches the students the mechanics of newsgathering, reporting and producing multimedia presentations while incorporating social media skills such as setting up and administering a Facebook Page for the workshop, creating Twitter accounts and writing their own blogs.

"New Media and particularly social media has made our world more connected, more engaged and fostered international connection and collaboration." Said *John Hockett, Assistant Dean University of Oklahoma Gaylord College of Journalism & Mass Communications.*

All projects including shooting and editing video and still photography are completed using new iPad Mini tablets. The college developed special tripods for mounting the iPads for use as video cameras making them excellent tools for "backpack journalism" and creating web video.

"This amazing program allows are participants to learn that we have more in common than we have differences," said Hockett, " Our American and South Asian participants learn that they have the same universal life goals and aspirations."

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While in Norman the students toured several media outlets in Oklahoma City. The final two weeks of the program will be spent touring media outlets and visiting cultural sites in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. such as *Google*, *The U.S. Capitol* and *National Geographic Traveler Magazine*.

A secondary purpose of the program is to introduce the students to everyday life in the United States through various cultural experiences. During their visit, the students have spent a weekend with American families and have visited popular tourist venues like the Oklahoma National Memorial and Museum, the Chickasaw Cultural Center, Paseo Arts Festival. They will participate in several community service projects with Norman nonprofits like J.D. McCarty Center and Full Circle Adult Daycare as well as participate in activities like horseback riding at Lake Thunderbird and visit Six Flags Over Texas.

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