

First team on and off the court

**By Ron Wilson,
Huck Boyd Institute**

First Team All-Big 12. Achieving such an honor is a tremendous accomplishment for any athlete. Today we'll meet a Big 12 athlete who made the First Team with his achievements in the classroom, while contributing on the basketball court and the campus. His leadership extends all the way from rural Kansas to the Big 12 Conference.

Victor Ojeleye is a senior on the K-State basketball team. As his last name suggests, he has international roots. Victor was born in Nigeria where his family originates. When he was two years old, he moved to Kansas where his father was studying medicine.

The family eventually moved to Ottawa, where his father, Dr. Ernest Ojeleye, became a family physician. Victor's mother, Joy, is trained as a nurse and is active in community projects. Victor went through Ottawa schools. The Ojeleyes also bought land on the south side of Ottawa, in the direction of the rural community of Princeton, population 315 people. Now, that's rural.

This small-town Kansas upbringing would have an influence on Victor. "It taught me values," Victor said. "We've learned to value the things we've been given."

"I learned to work hard. My parents taught me that work ethic," he said. "We have a lot of hard-working people in Kansas."

It also taught Victor to have high aspirations. "All our elementary schools in Ottawa had

names of presidents, like Eisenhower and Lincoln," he said. He learned the importance of study, faith, and community service. And of course, he loved basketball.

Victor was a four-year letterman at Ottawa High School, setting new school scoring and rebounding records while becoming valedictorian of his senior class. After a year at the Patterson School in North Carolina, he enrolled at Kansas State and joined the basketball team where he has been a key reserve player ever since.

Victor is one of only two seniors on the roster. He has already completed his required credits and will go through graduation in spring 2012.

On the basketball court, Victor has seen action in almost every game this season. He scored a season-high eight points against Texas Tech and grabbed 10 rebounds against Iowa State. But when the coaches talk about Victor, they talk about the intrinsic values of discipline, toughness, energy, and unselfishness. He lives the team concept.

One assistant coach commented that Victor might have been MVP of the team a year ago, in the sense of providing leadership when the team faced adversity.

Victor also gives leadership in other ways. He leads a Bible study for players on the team and is active in student-athlete organizations.

"I got involved in the student-athlete advisory committee at K-State," Victor said. "Two to three representatives from each school were sent to a Big 12

leadership conference."

Ultimately, Victor was elected by his peers to serve as vice-chair of the Big 12 Student-Athlete Advisory Council during the 2011-12 athletic season. "This council is intended to speak up for the welfare of student-athletes," Victor said. "We serve to bridge the gap between administration and the athletes."

The term "student-athlete" really applies in Victor's case. In addition to his contributions on the basketball court, his accomplishments in the classroom are remarkable. While maintaining the hectic schedule of a Big 12 athlete, he earned the conference's inaugural Dr. Gerald Lage Award, which is the Big 12's highest academic honor. Victor has consistently been on the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll.

In fact, Victor made the Big 12 Conference Academic All-Big 12 Men's Basketball First Team - not once, not twice, but three years in a row. He is only the seventh player in school history to be a three-time recipient, and the first since the year 2000. He has done so while earning a double major in accounting and finance.

First Team All-Big 12. That's a remarkable achievement. Victor Ojeleye has earned these accolades in the classroom. We commend Victor for making a difference by earning those grades and encouraging his teammates, while serving in a supportive leadership role for athletes in all sports across the conference. He has become First Team with an attitude of putting the "team first."

The family tree



Two different sets of five generations of the Gordon Ingram family gathered in Almena on Feb. 18 for a birthday celebration. Pictured (back, left to right) are Crystal Laurin, Addison Laurin, Mason Laurin, Craig Ingram, Teri Linain, Dee Isabell, (front, left to right), Gordon Ingram, Levina Ingram, Wilma Nash, Shelby Lingain and Twila Ingram.

-Photo contributed

Talking book hero recognized for enthusiasm

Tom Votapka of Jennings has been named a "Talking Book Hero" by the State Library of Kansas. Votapka, representing Northwest Kansas Library System in Norton, was one of nine librarians recognized.

When it comes to books, generally there's a hero and heroine, a bad guy, and a host of other characters that the reader either loves or hates. But when it comes to Talking Books, the heroes are the real flesh and blood kind that everyone cheers for when they stand up and promote an essential service to nearly 6,000 Kansans.

Talking Books is a division of the State Library of Kansas, serving nearly 6,000 blind and physically disabled patrons through an office located at Emporia State University and a series of outreach centers located in Dodge City, Great Bend, Iola, Johnson County, Manhattan, Norton, Topeka, and Wichita.

As a part of the 2012 celebration of Talking Books Week, March 3-10, each outreach center

selected a Talking Books Hero to honor. These heroes are the individuals who tell others about the service, help others learn to download digital books, donate funds to purchase books or digital cartridges, and advocate tirelessly for other patrons. More than 40,000 Kansans are eligible for this service and more than 100,000 titles are available for reading.

Talking Books week celebrates the Federal Pratt-Smoot Act, enacted on March 3, 1931, and the beginning of distribution of free library materials for blind adults, administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the Library of Congress. The Kansas network serving the print-impaired was

established in 1971. Today this program is a division of the State Library of Kansas, serving nearly 6,000 patrons through an office located at Emporia State University and a series of outreach centers located in Dodge City, Great Bend, Iola, Johnson County, Manhattan, Norton, Topeka, and Wichita.

Tom was one of the first Talking Book patrons in Norton and has been one of its biggest champions, telling others with physical disabilities about the program and always trying to assist in any way that he can. He donates funds throughout the year to help buy digital cartridges because he feels it is such a new and vital part of the service. He's a dedicated supporter of Talking Books.

COLLEGE NEWS

Local students are among the 443 Fort Hays State University students who completed requirements for associate and bachelor's degrees in the fall 2011 semester.

Jennings-Seth Ritter, a B.B.A. in marketing.

Norton-Traci Kyser, a Bachelor of General Studies.

Phillipsburg-David Hadley, a B.S. in agriculture (agronomy).

Phillipsburg-Amber Hockman, a B.B.A. in business communication.

Phillipsburg-Patrick Patterson, a B.B.A. in finance (banking).

Phillipsburg-Melinda Schremmer, a B.S. in elementary education.

Prairie View-Emily Lowry, a B.S. mathematics (teaching) and a B.S. in secondary education.

Deena Wallingford, Norton, has graduated from Fort Hays State University with a Master of Science in Education (reading specialist).

Wallingford is one of 150 master's and education specialist graduates who were announced for the fall 2011 semester by Dr. Tim Crowley, dean of the Graduate School.

Rachel Shepard of Lenora was honored during the First-Year Scholars Reception on Feb. 28 at Emporia State University. The inaugural event honored more than 140 first-year students at the university who earned a 3.5 or higher grade point average in their first semester.

Demetria Fanchon Stephens of Jennings has been named to

the Dean's List for the fall 2011 semester at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Stephens is a senior majoring in journalism.

Tyler Montgomery, a senior at Northern Valley High School, was awarded Kansas State University's Leadership Scholarship during ceremonies Feb. 15 at the university. Pat Bosco, vice president for student life and dean of students, presented the award.

Tyler is the son of Monte and Staci Montgomery of Almena.

Allan Szabo of Norton has earned his Dietary Manager certificate from Barton Community College. Szabo earned his certificate at the end of the fall 2011 semester.

FYI



Storekeeper Specialist Jerry Tolle has been selected as the outstanding non-uniformed employee for Norton Correctional Facility. Jerry demonstrates a lot of integrity and respect for his duties, co-workers and to all other departments. Staff comments about enjoying his smile and positive attitude. He is always on time to work and starts working the minute he steps in the door. Jerry has the major task of working every canteen day and evening and also orders and distribution to inmates. His good attitude and suggestions to improve daily duties and security are important and appreciated.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

NCHS	EES
Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16	Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16
No School: Spring Break	No School: Spring Break
Friday, March 16-Saturday, March 17	<u>Northern Valley</u>
FFA Leader Lab at Junction City	Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16
	No School: Spring Break
<u>NIHS</u>	Monday, March 12
Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16	School Board Meeting in the conference room at Almena, 7:30 p.m.
No School: Spring Break	

SCHOOL MENU

Norton Jr.-Sr. High Schools Menu	March 16
Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16	No School: Spring Break
No School: Spring Break	<u>Northern Valley Menu</u>
<u>EES Menu</u>	Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16
Monday, March 12-Friday, March 16	No School: Spring Break

FHSU Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC) in partnership with Norton City/County Economic Development is offering the following FREE classes:

- Business Plan Essentials**
Thursday, March 15, 4:00-5:00 p.m.
- Profit Visioning and Goal Setting**
Thursday, March 15, 5:15-6:15 p.m.
- Succession Planning**
Friday, March 16, 4:00-5:00 p.m.
- Financial Basics Workshop**
Friday, March 16, 5:15-6:15 p.m.

All classes will be held in the Norton Public Library Community Room. **Space is limited, advanced registration is required.** Register online at <http://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/>. **Registration deadline is March 14.** Questions may be directed to Megan Horinek, email mlhorinek@fhsu.edu or (785) 734-2592.

Computers are not required but feel free to bring your laptop.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLASSES IS AVAILABLE ON THE discovernorton.com WEBSITE

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