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Ag Award presented to gala committee

The annual Agriculture Award was presented to the Otero Junior College Foundation and Ag Gala Committee Monday night for their continued efforts in promoting and enhancing the agricultural way of life.



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Photo by Bette McFarren

Ag Gala Committee accepts Ag Award from Candi Hill, publisher of Ag Journal. Left to right: Brooke Matthew, Emma Lock, Candi Hill.

The annual Agriculture Award was presented to the Otero Junior College Foundation and Ag Gala Committee Monday night for their continued efforts in promoting and enhancing the agricultural way of life. Accepting the award were gala committee members and agricultural science instructors Brooke Matthew and Emma Locke.

Presenter Candi Hill, publisher of the Ag Journal and La Junta Tribune-Democrat, said in her presentation:

"Education is defined as the process of acquiring general knowledge of a subject. All of us in this room understand the importance of education and the impact it has on our economy.

"But one group has gone above and beyond — specifically related to agriculture.

"In 2012, the OJC Foundation board approved overseeing a fundraiser for scholarships related to Otero Junior College's ag science program. The ag science program isn't just a draw for local kids raised in the ag world of Southeastern Colorado. At OJC, it's an international draw with kids from all over the world taking classes.

"The fundraiser would eventually be called the Ag Gaia. Offering an opportunity to shake a tail feather on New Year's Eve, the Ag Gala committee put their heads together to offer other fundraisers during the celebration. Most committees, especially a new committee, dream big but understand it might take a few years before things really get going. Most committees, that is. But not the Ag Gala committee. They had big dreams and the results were even bigger. In the first year, the group brought in \$10,000 and funded four scholarships. The next year, they brought in over \$18,000 and funded six scholarships. The most recent event raised more than \$20,000.

"That's almost \$50,000 in three years. Imagine the mark Otero Junior College is making on the ag industry around the world. Imagine the future possibilities this committee will make happen with a little elbow grease, determined minds and a true love of Southeastern Colorado's backbone - agriculture," Hill concluded.

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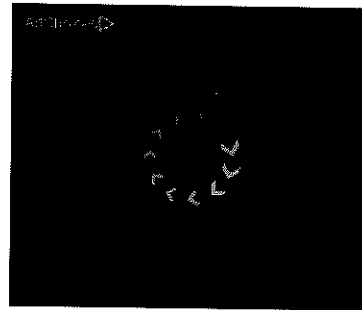
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