



Contact: Mandy Gross | FAPC Communications | 405-744-0442 | [mandy.gross@okstate.edu](mailto:mandy.gross@okstate.edu)

## ***FAPC Industry Advisory Committee member wins distinction award***

**(April 16, 2009 Stillwater, Okla.)** An Industry Advisory Committee member of the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, located on the Oklahoma State University campus, was one of the recipients of the Advanced Degree Graduate of Distinction award through OSU's department of animal science.

Tommy Kramer, executive director of the Office of Economic Development for the Durant Industrial Authority, accepted the award during the animal science departmental banquet on April 4.

"This is one of the highest honors that has ever been bestowed upon me," Kramer said. "I give all credit and thanks to Oklahoma State in not only being nominated and accepting this award, but also because of all the research, teaching and knowledge that I gained during my graduate studies, which prepared me to go out into the business world. I am so deeply honored; it is such a prestigious award."

Stanley Gilliland, FAPC food microbiologist, Regents Professor and Sitlington Endowed Chair in Food Microbiology nominated Kramer for the award.

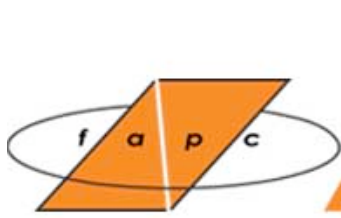
"Tommy is one of the most deserving candidates who has ever received this award because of the success of the economic development work he has completed in the Durant area," Gilliland said.

The Graduate of Distinction award has been presented since the 1984 OSU animal science banquet. It recognizes those recipients of Master of Science and doctoral degrees in the department of animal science who have attained singular professional excellence in the field of animal agriculture. Other 2009 recipients included Dwain Johnson, Master of Science degree in 1979, and Ernie Minton, Master of Science degree in 1980 and doctoral degree in 1984.

Greg Massey, OSU/A&M Board of Regents member and chief executive officer and president of First United Bank and Trust of Durant, attended the animal science departmental banquet with Kramer.

"Mr. Kramer is well deserving of this honor," Massey said. "He has been instrumental in Durant being recognized as the fastest growing city in Oklahoma in 2008. He has a vision for Durant's future and the determination to make it happen."

Kramer received his OSU master's degree in food science in 1976. Following graduation, he was department head and taught at Eastern Oklahoma State College, then went on to work for Owens Country Sausage as the production manager and vice president of operations for J.C. Potter Sausage Co. in Durant.



Since working for the Durant Industrial Authority, Kramer has been instrumental in the creation of TEAM DURANT, which is a pro-business economic development group. TEAM DURANT is responsible for the recruitment and development of more than \$500 million of business investments for the city, which has resulted in the creation of more than 5,000 new jobs.

Because of Kramer's efforts, Durant has been identified as the fastest growing rural city in Oklahoma.

Roy Escoubas, FAPC director, said Kramer should be proud of his accomplishments and of being acknowledged as a graduate of distinction.

"Tommy is a leader and asset to Oklahoma in economic development," Escoubas said. "We benefit from having him on our advisory committee because of his experience and leadership. He has definitely earned this graduate of distinction award."

As one of the activities related to the animal science weekend, Kramer was asked to present a seminar to a group of students, faculty and professional staff in the department of animal science.

"I believe in education," Kramer said. "I had a strong foundation in 4-H. That's where my agricultural education started."

Kramer's mother and father raised him and his three siblings, twin brothers and a sister, with what he said was a unique philosophy.

Kramer said his father told him and his siblings that they were going to get an education, no questions asked. He also said each one of his family members were thankful for agriculture and the food they ate.

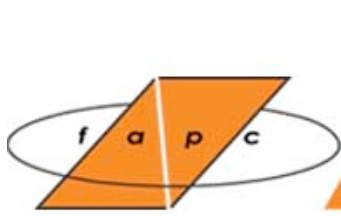
"We did all our family talking around the dinner table while eating," Kramer said. "That's where we conducted all our business and made all our plans."

During his presentation, Kramer talked about some of the lessons his mother and father instilled in him during his childhood.

"My father taught us if you are going to do something, literally do it right," Kramer said. "He taught us kids to not borrow money unless it's an emergency."

Kramer said he remembers when he was getting ready to go on a 4-H trip and his mother telling him he needed to pack his own suitcase and carry it. Other times, his mother told him if he were going to ride a horse, he would need to hold the reins.

"I live by these two philosophies," Kramer said. "If I'm going to ride a horse, I'm going to hold the reins, and I'm going to pack my own suitcase and carry it."



Kramer said his graduate work at OSU changed his life and was an unbelievable turning point. He said he is thankful for the animal science research and faculty at OSU, and he gained a tremendous amount of knowledge while attending OSU.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Kramer gave the audience some comments to ponder.

“What on earth am I doing here? You better ask yourself that everyday,” Kramer said. “I know who I am, I know who I am following, and I know where I’m going.”

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