



Contacts: Don Stotts | Agricultural Communications Services | 405-744-4079 | donald.stotts@okstate.edu
Mandy Gross | FAPC Communications | 405-744-0442 | mandy.gross@okstate.edu

Temple Grandin speaks during highly anticipated OSU seminar

(STILLWATER, Okla. – Sept. 15, 2010) Animal scientist and autistic expert Temple Grandin, whose life story put to film recently won five Emmy awards, spoke Sept. 15 in Oklahoma State University's historic Gallagher-Iba Arena.

"We are honored to bring such a well-recognized individual in both the animal science and autism arenas to campus for such a highly anticipated event," said Robert E. Whitson, vice president, dean and director of OSU's Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Grandin, a professor of animal science at Colorado State University and a designer of livestock handling facilities, discussed animal welfare, animal auditing, animal measurement, animal behavior, cattle handling and how autism helps with animal behavior.

"I really like talking to people, especially students, to get them turned on to animal behavior and animal handling," Grandin said.

The division's department of animal science sponsored the event.

Steve Damron, OSU professor of animal production, is pleased the seminar brought one of the most celebrated and influential scientists of this time to campus.

"Students, faculty, staff and ranchers had the opportunity to interact with the person who initiated major paradigm shifts in both animal handling and the world's view of autism and autistics," he said. "What a priceless experience."

In addition, Ron Kensinger, head of the department of animal science, discussed a new endowed professorship to be housed in animal science named in honor of Grandin. The seminar kicked off the campaign to raise money for the Temple Grandin Endowed Professorship in Animal Behavior and Well-Being.

Widely recognized as the most accomplished and well-known adult with autism in the world, Grandin was diagnosed with autism in 1950. Because of her family's timely interaction of working with Grandin's special needs, she credits this early intervention to her professional success later in life.

Grandin received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Franklin Pierce College, her Master of Science degree in animal science at Arizona State University and her doctorate degree in animal science from the University of Illinois.

She began her career working for Corral Industries in Phoenix designing equipment for its plants and then went on to start her own company, Grandin Livestock Handling Systems in 1975.



During the next two decades, she became an expert in animal handling in slaughterhouses and one of the most respected names in her field. She also has developed an objective scoring system for assessing handling of cattle and pigs at meat plants.

Grandin has appeared on television shows such as “20/20,” “48 Hours,” “CNN Larry King Live,” “PrimeTime Live,” “Today” and many more. She has been featured in People magazine, the New York Times, Forbes, U.S. News and World Report, Time magazine, the New York Times book review and Discover magazine.

This year, Time magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people, and in July, Grandin received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

Her life story also has been made into an HBO movie titled “Temple Grandin, starring Claire Danes,” which shows her life as a teenager and how she started her career. The movie was nominated for 15 Emmy Awards in August.

“The opportunity to bring Dr. Grandin to campus and share her work with the Oklahoma State University community was wonderful,” Kensinger said. “Grandin-designed animal handling facilities are known to reduce stress on animals, and are the benchmark for the livestock industries. She taught us important lessons in how we should interact with animals today.”

- ### -

Oklahoma State University is a modern land-grant system that cuts across disciplines to better prepare students for success. Oklahoma’s only university with a statewide presence, OSU improves the lives of people in Oklahoma, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality teaching, research and outreach. OSU has more than 35,000 students across its five-campus system and more than 23,000 on its Stillwater campus, with students from all 50 states and 118 nations. Established in 1890, OSU has graduated more than 200,000 students who have made a lasting impact on Oklahoma and the world.