

In the late 1980s, Kayse Shrum was pitching for the Coweta Lady Tiger softball program and showing livestock with Coweta FFA. She was the epitome of a small town girl in rural Oklahoma, helping with the family farm and getting ready to go out into the world to make a difference. Little did she know then that one day she would be known and identified as a leader in the medical world. On Thursday, Oct. 10, Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences president Kayse Shrum, D.O., was named Woman of the Year by The Journal Record in Oklahoma City. Dr. Shrum was selected from a field of 50 outstanding finalists for the award. "We congratulate Dr. Shrum on this well-deserved honor," said OSU President Burns Hargis. "Through her unwavering commitment to medicine and the state of Oklahoma, she has quickly become a respected leader and advocate for rural and Native American health. She is guiding the OSU Center for Health Sciences through major initiatives that will improve the health of Oklahomans and the nation." Dr. Shrum said she is humbled and surprised to receive the recognition. "There were a lot of very worthy finalists there," she said on Friday. "This is very special and I am very honored. I just do what I love and what I'm called to do. Getting recognized for that is nice." Shrum admits while in high school and going into college, the thought of becoming a doctor never entered her mind. Her focus was on playing softball and taking science classes because she enjoyed them. When her physiology instructor told her she had the highest grade in his class that was filled with pre-med and medical students, he encouraged her to consider the possibilities and to meet with a local doctor. For her, it was Dr. Ronnie Carr in Coweta. Then she visited the Oklahoma State University campus in Stillwater where the vision for her future became clear. "I wanted a career where I could make a difference in people's lives, something challenging and exciting. Medicine was one of those things," Dr. Shrum said. "To be doing all of this is unbelievable, and I don't think I could

have planned the future. I would have never imagined Iâ€™d be the Secretary of Science and Innovation for the State of Oklahoma or the first female dean of a medical school in the state.â€• Dr. Shrum practiced in pediatrics from 2001 to 2011 when she took an administrative job. She had just come back to OSU and administrators were making a change with the department chair. She served as interim chair for a year and a half before she applied for the post. She started as the chair of pediatrics, then as vice president of academic affairs. â€œThe thing I love about OSU is the land grant mission, the connection to rural Oklahoma. I grew up in rural Oklahoma, and those doctors in Coweta, a lot of them graduated from OSU and were involved with my family. I understand the impact they had,â€• Dr. Shrum said. â€œThatâ€™s what really attracted me to moving out of my practice and going into administration as the dean. I could really have so much more of an impact.â€• The Journal Recordâ€™s Woman of the Year said itâ€™s â€œevery excitingâ€• to see medical students go out into those rural communities. â€œI think back to that discussion with my professor who encouraged me to do something I hadnâ€™t thought about,â€• she continued. â€œI have an opportunity to do that same thing across the state â€” encourage people to think outside of what others might consider.â€• Dr. Shrum said she is proud of the Blue Coats, White Coats partnership with FFA where they reach out to kids in rural Oklahoma who like agriculture and understand community service and are community minded and hard workers. â€œWe want to reach kids who are likely to go back to rural Oklahoma and think about medicine,â€• she noted. â€œItâ€™s a big outreach program that weâ€™ve been recognized at a national level through FFA and our medical organizations.â€• Dr. Shrum said it is hard to put into words what being named Woman of the Year means to her. However, she said everything she does feels like itâ€™s the right thing to do. â€œIt is nice to be recognized for doing something you love and to

be recognized for giving back. Thatâ€™s what makes it rewarding to me,â€• she said.

â€œThere are wonderful women out there making a difference, and it was really fun

for me to share this night with my family.â€• Under Dr. Shrumâ€™s leadership, the

Center for Health Sciences has evolved into an academic powerhouse and a leading care

provider. She was instrumental in establishing rural-based residency training programs, rural physician pipeline prog

that target 4-H and FFA students, and the nationâ€™s first tribally affiliated medical school

â€” the OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation. Dr. Shrum also

established the National Center for Wellness & Recovery at OSU Medicine to address Oklahomaâ€™s

opioid abuse health crisis. In addition to her leadership role at OSU Center for

Health Sciences, Shrum serves as Gov. Kevin Stittâ€™s secretary of science and innovation. Dr.

Shrum serves on the boards of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma, the

Childrenâ€™s Hospital Foundation at Saint Francis, the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence and the Oklahoma

Hall of Fame. She lives in Coweta with her husband, Darren. They have six

children, Colton, Kyndall, Joseph, Kilientn, Karsyn and Kason. Be the first to know Get

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