



Join OC's 30 for 30 Fitness Challenge

You only have a few days left to register for Odessa College's 30 for 30 Fitness Challenge. We are challenging you to exercise 30 minutes each day for 30 days Sept. 1 through 30.

Participants will receive a one-month free membership to the OC Sports Center during the challenge. Plus, participants get a free T-shirt, lunch and learn sessions, weekly nutrition and exercise tips, and a chance to win one of three grand prizes.

OC's 30 for 30 Fitness Challenge is sponsored by Odessa Regional Medical Center, City of Odessa, 2010 West Texas Crossroads Marathon and Half Marathon, PhyTEX Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine Associates and OC Wrangler Club.

OC's 30 for 30 Fitness Challenge participants must register by Wednesday, Sept. 1 at the OC Sports Center or online at www.odessa.edu/30for30/.

For more information call the OC Sports Center at 335-6348. OC Delivers ... healthy minds, healthy bodies and healthy lives.

KOCV-FM adds new programs

Beginning Sept. 5, tune in to KOCV-FM at 8 p.m. on Sunday for three new local programs – "Moving On," "Rising Star" and "Community Connection."

- 8-8:20 p.m. – "Moving On" will spotlight break-through musical artists who have roots in the Permian Basin. Hosted by Permian Basin music aficionado Susan Hampton.
- 8:20-8:30 p.m. – "Rising Star," a 10-minute pre-recorded music competition featuring up-and-coming musical talents in the Permian Basin. Listeners will logon to the KOCV-FM Web site to vote. Hosted by Susan Hampton.
- 8:30-9 p.m. – "Community Connection" will discuss topics that touch and impact all people of the Permian Basin. Local guests and experts will join in the conversation each week with Corey Davis and Carl Evans.

Logon to the KOCV-FM Web site at www.odessa.edu/kocv or call 335-6340 to learn more.

Labor Day closings

In observance of Labor Day, the Odessa College campus will be closed Monday, Sept. 6. It will re-open Tuesday, Sept. 7. OC's regular business hours are 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday.

OC's Sports Center, Wrangler Express Center, Student Success Center and Learning Resource Center will be closed Sept. 4-Sept. 6 and will re-open Sept. 7.



Michael Babauta graduated in spring 2010 from the Odessa College occupational safety and health technology program with an associate degree in applied science. He was able to complete his degree in 18 months by taking his classes online. Three days after graduating he sent out three resumes and two companies responded with job offers.

OC grad encourages others to seek college education

Odessa College graduate Michael Babauta, a single parent, worked two jobs for more than 15 years to maintain an average standard of living. As an integrated pest manager coordinator for ECISD and the owner and operator of A-plus Pest Control, he had very little time available to seek a college degree in a traditional classroom setting.

"When I decided that I wanted to go to college to better my son's and my life, my first concern was that I would have to go to school part-time while working full-time," Babauta said. "After investigating possibly attending college at night, I found a limited number of night classes available and that I could never finish a degree without having to take daytime classes."

A friend suggested that Babauta speak with a counselor at OC about an online degree option. "I followed my friend's advice and met Rosie Aguilar, who is a wonderful counselor," he said. "She recommended the occupational safety and health technology degree because it is completely online and I was already working in a safety-related field."

Still a little apprehensive about going to college, Babauta met with OSHT chair Lynn Reese and instructors Marilyn Jones and Annie Littlefield. "All three assured me that I could get my degree with their help," he said.

It turned out that the online degree option was exactly what Babauta needed to accomplish his goals. "I'm a person that likes to ask questions. If I don't understand a topic, I love to take the time to research and investigate, and the nature of online course studies fit me like a pair of custom shoes," he said.

In May 2010, 18 months after taking a leap of faith and starting college for the first time, Babauta, who is in his 50s, graduated summa cum laude from Odessa

College with an associate degree in applied science in occupational safety and health technology.

"I've combined more than 18 years of experience in the pest control safety business with a college degree," Babauta said. "I now know a degree has value in the business world and to prove it to myself, I sent out three résumés. Three days after graduation, and to my surprise, two companies responded with job offers."

Babauta accepted a position with KBR, a leading global engineering, construction and services company supporting the energy, hydrocarbon, government services and civil infrastructure sectors. He now works in a position that serves military forces overseas in the Middle East making a six figure salary. "It's a chance of a lifetime. I am a part of a team that's serving the world," he said.

Babauta said it was hard telling his friends and family, especially his son and only child, Anthony Babauta, a 2010 Odessa High School graduate pursuing a degree in engineering, that he was changing jobs and leaving the country. "However, I think change is a key to life. A person can stay on the same track in life, but the train still is moving and if one doesn't move, he or she will be run over or left behind."

Babauta now considers himself an advocate for higher education. "I tell those in the workforce who are like me that education is the key to opening doors of opportunity for personal growth – spiritually, mentally and economically," he said. "If you want to grow and you're tired of being passed over for promotions or told 'no' because you don't have a degree, go back to school and finish that degree or start new like I did. Get some kind of degree. You can do it if you ask the right questions of the right people. Take the time to meet instructors, counselors and all the people at OC who are willing to help you make it happen."

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