

2017 COMMUNITY APPRECIATION AWARD—BILL BLANKENSHIP
Presented by Steve Mowery

At this time, it is my pleasure to present the 2017 Community Appreciation Award.

Last year, during the chamber's annual luncheon, I had the honor of introducing Bill Blankenship as Owasso's new Head Football Coach. We congratulated our athletic director, Zach Duffield, and our school board for making such a significant hire.

Today, I have the privilege of introducing Bill Blankenship as the Head Coach of the 2017 State 6A-1 Football Champions, the Owasso Rams. While everyone was aware of coach's credentials, I don't think many believed a state championship would occur in his first year—and yet it did. The first state championship in 43 years, and the first outright championship in our school's history. Great community pride arose for our team's positive attitude and for their dedication to hard work. We respected the inspirational leadership provided by our coaches, and shared our community's mounting excitement with each passing week of the season. Then, on a beautiful Saturday night on December 2nd, 2017, our Owasso Rams won the state title.

Good story, yes. End of story, no. You see, the value we gained in hiring Coach Blankenship was much greater than the teaching of XX's and OO's and the execution of plays, our school board hired a man with great Character. What the players are learning from this coach are character traits they will use throughout their lifetime. Traits such as respect, positive thinking, hard work, diligence, discipline and determination, all combined to achieve a desired result, **SUCCESS.**

I'll venture to say that years from now, when the members of this team recall this season, they will be very proud of a football championship, but, what they will cherish is the life-long lessons they learned from Coach Blankenship.

It is for helping our teenage boys develop positive character traits, that will benefit them throughout their lifetime. It is a privilege to present the Chamber's 2017 Community Appreciation Award to Owasso High School Head Football Coach, Bill Blankenship.