



**Creative Staff Innovation Awards**

**CSI 2019 Winner**

**Levi Wright**

**Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology**

**Levi Wright, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology**

**Student Success Facilitator**

[levi.wright@okstate.edu](mailto:levi.wright@okstate.edu)

**Rationale:**

Elimination of programs and teach-outs are difficult on both students and faculty. Soon-to-be displaced faculty sometimes leaves before the end of the term at their current positions to accept offers of employment elsewhere. This means students end up not having mentors to help them with capstone projects.

**Problem to be addressed:**

As part of the move toward achieving greater efficiencies and reducing expenses, OSUIT eliminated its bachelor of technology degree in civil engineering technologies- an ABET-accredited position. Some faculty were immediately offered positions elsewhere and left OSUIT. Students in the capstone class who were having difficulty with their final projects expressed concerns that they were not getting the support they needed to successfully complete the course and graduate.

**Descriptions of the Idea:**

Students needed feedback on their projects. They needed to know if their projects were feasible, realistic, and functional. Faculty generally served in this role. However, with so many vacancies, timely feedback and support was at a minimum.

OSUIT has over 700 industry partners. Why not use them? Our industry partners are always searching for technical talent and ways to get their brand in front of our students. This would be a way to partner students with industry representatives in the very fields our students were exploring, and for our industries to scout top talent serving as mentors.

Mentors met with students to review projects and provide feedback. As an example, the Ada City Manager who is a professional licensed engineer, had his student tour their wastewater treatment facilities, speak with their engineers, and guided the student through his project, encouraging modifications or changes in direction that were more depictive of rural facilities.

**As a result of this changed:**

- Students in the teach-out phase of their programs are graduating on time.
- Students in capstone classes had the added benefit of being mentored by real-world professionals.
- Industry partners have another tool for their talent acquisition toolbox to achieve hiring objectives.