Cameron University is proud to be a partner with Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma, a community coalition aimed at creating a healthier community for our children. In fact, Cameron has pledged to make a Healthier CU in Century II as we begin our second century of changing lives through education.

In the fall of 2005 at a guest lecture hosted by Cameron University, Kenneth Cooper, M.D., an internationally recognized expert in physical fitness evaluation, made a statement that has had a profound impact on our community. Dr. Cooper reported that a recent article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* showed that this would be the first generation of children in the history of our country whose life expectancy would not be that of their parents due to obesity and inactivity. The thought is staggering, really, but that’s where the conversation in our community started.

We know that health has an important impact on education. Researchers have studied the relationship between health and learning, and it is proven that there is a mind and body connection. Good health has a positive impact on education, and children who are healthy will be better students, they will learn more, and they will be more successful in the classroom. We are a champion for education, and to impact education in our community, it is also important that we attempt to impact health in our community. This is why Cameron University is proud to be involved with such an important cause.

To support the wellness of our campus, Cameron University has launched a number of health-conscious initiatives, to help students and the community live healthier. Cameron University opened a community garden with plots available to members of the CU community. The university provides maintenance and water, and the project has more than doubled in the past three growing seasons. Additionally, to promote healthy eating, the cafeteria promotes a healthy, well balanced eating station every day. The healthier menu ensures that all students, faculty, staff and visitors to the campus have the option of eating healthier.

One of the most exciting transformations in Cameron University's recent history is the one mile route that has been clearly marked and designated as the Aggie Mile. The Aggie Mile is a beautiful tree lined path and provides an excellent tour of Cameron's campus. The route is safe and well lit and provides a great place for the CU family and community to get in shape.

Because we are committed to improving the health of our campus, Cameron University will be Tobacco-Free beginning August 1, 2011. The university has offered a number of cessation resources and will continue to offer Freedom from Smoking, a community-based smoking cessation program that provides a supportive environment in which individuals can quit smoking. This nationally successful program includes counseling on diet, exercise, stress management and relaxation techniques.

Cameron University will continue to confront our community’s health issues in a positive manner while meeting the health needs of our students, faculty and staff. We look forward to the role Cameron can play in helping Fit Kids of Southwest Oklahoma grow to become an even stronger force for the benefit of Southwest Oklahoma and those that depend on us most, our children.

Cindy Ross
President