



Will Rogers, July 4th, and Family Legacy
DUSTY SCHULER (great nephew of Will Rogers)
WILL ROGERS (actor)

Cee Cee Donovan:

Will Rogers was celebrated for his wit, wisdom, and deep connection to both the Cherokee Nation and Oklahoma—becoming “Oklahoma’s Favorite Son” and a national symbol of common sense and patriotism. What does being the great nephew of Will Rogers mean to you, especially as we celebrate the 4th of July and American independence?

Dusty Schuler:



Being the great nephew of Will Rogers is a real honor, especially around the 4th of July. Will's legacy is a reminder of the best parts of Oklahoma and America—humor, honesty, and a deep sense of community. He showed us how to be proud of our roots while always looking out for others, and that's something I try to live up to every day.

Cee Cee Donovan:

How do you keep Will Rogers' legacy of humor, honesty, and public service alive in your own life?

Dusty Schuler:

I try to approach life and public service with a sense of humor and humility. Will never let fame get to his head, and he always told the truth, even when it wasn't easy. I try to keep those values in mind—whether I'm helping out in the community or just talking with neighbors.

Cee Cee Donavan:

What tribes are you part of, and how has your tribal heritage shaped your identity?

Dusty Schuler:

I'm proud to be part of the Cherokee Nation as well as a citizen of Muscogee Nation. My tribal heritage has shaped my sense of identity by teaching me the importance of community, tradition, and looking out for one another. It's a big part of who I am and how I see the world.

Cee Cee Donavan:

How have you seen the McGirt decision impact life on tribal lands—such as policing, taxation, and relationships with the state?

Dusty Schuler:

The McGirt decision has really changed things. It's reaffirmed tribal sovereignty, which has had a big impact on law enforcement, taxation, and how tribes and the state work together. There's more collaboration now, but also new challenges as we figure out the best way forward.

Cee Cee Donavan:

How does your tribal background influence your approach to public service and your vision for Oklahoma's future?

Dusty Schuler:

My tribal background reminds me that public service is about community and working together. I want Oklahoma to be a place where everyone has a voice and a fair shot at success. That means honoring our history, building bridges, and finding common ground.

Cee Cee Donavan:

Are there other members of your family who have served in Oklahoma government? If so, how has that influenced your perspective on public service?

Dusty Schuler:

Yes, I come from a family with a strong tradition of public service. Seeing family members dedicate themselves to improving our state has taught me that leadership is about listening, learning, and putting others first. It's inspired me to get involved and do my part.

Cee Cee Donavan:

How do you see the state's relationship with tribes evolving after McGirt, especially in terms of law enforcement and tax policy?

Dusty Schuler:

After McGirt, I believe we're at a turning point. There's a real opportunity for the state and tribes to work together in new ways, especially around law enforcement and tax policy. If we approach these challenges with respect and open minds, we can find solutions that benefit everyone.

Cee Cee Donavan:

Do you have aspirations to run for the Oklahoma Senate? What issues or values would you prioritize if you did?

Dusty Schuler:

I'm always open to serving where I can make the biggest difference. If I were to run for the Oklahoma Senate, I'd focus on education, healthcare, and strengthening our communities. I'd also prioritize building strong partnerships between the state and tribal nations, because I believe that's key to our future.

Cee Cee Donavan:

How do you hope to inspire others through your work, your family's story, and the changing relationship between tribes and the state?

Dusty Schuler:

I hope to inspire others by showing that we can honor our past while building a brighter future. My family's story is about coming together as a community, and as the relationship between tribes and the state evolves, I want to help build a legacy of cooperation, respect, and shared success. If my work can encourage others to get involved and work together, I'll consider it a job well done.

Cee Cee Donovan:

As an architectural consultant and business development manager at Burgess Company, you help clients bring their visions to life and support growth in the industry. Can you describe a project or initiative you're particularly proud of, and how your work at the intersection of design, finance, and business development has made a difference for your clients or the broader Oklahoma community?

Dusty Schuler:

Thank you, Cee Cee. On the business development side, my focus is really on networking and public relations—building relationships with clients, partners, and community leaders to help Burgess Company grow and support the needs of our region. I enjoy connecting people and organizations, and I'm always looking for ways to bring new opportunities to the table. When it comes to my work as an architectural consultant, I work closely with the actual architects to make sure our designs are not only creative and functional, but also fully compliant with fire codes and safety regulations. Whether it's a project like Bixby High School or the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, I review plans, coordinate with engineers and inspectors, and ensure that every detail meets the highest standards for safety and accessibility. Projects like these make a real difference for our clients and the broader community. By combining strong relationships and a commitment to safety, I help create spaces that are not just beautiful, but also secure and welcoming for everyone. It's rewarding to see how our work supports local businesses, schools, and cultural institutions—and ultimately, strengthens the fabric of Oklahoma.

For more information: <https://www.burgess-co.com/about>