

FALL 2007

O·B·U

m a g a z i n e

A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark pinstripe suit, a white shirt, and a green patterned tie, is speaking at a podium. He is gesturing with his right hand. A microphone is positioned in front of him. The background is dark and out of focus.

Season
Change

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During my 38 years of employment at OBU, from 1964 to 2002, I worked for six presidents and four interim presidents. Therefore, interim administrations are not new to me. An interim is not a time for standing still or marking time; an interim should be a time of moving forward.

I believe the important work of the interim period has four key priorities: to maintain collegiality in the OBU community; to keep faculty and staff focused on the task at hand – providing a strong educational program and a nurturing, Christian environment; to assist our students in achieving their educational goals; and to lead staff and faculty to achieve the objectives established by each administrative and academic unit for this school year. Among these important objectives for the 2007-08 year are successfully preparing for and hosting the very important North Central Association accreditation visit next March, and working to strengthen our enrollment.

On October 12, the board of trustees elected a three-member nominating committee, following OBU's by-laws. This nominating committee submitted seven names for the presidential search committee at the trustees' meeting on November 30. Again, according to the by-laws, the seven selected by the trustees will be joined by up to five ex-officio committee members: the OBU Alumni Association president; the Faculty Council chair; the Student Government Association president; the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma executive director; and the board of trustees chairman.

After its formation, the search committee will begin meeting to determine the candidate profile and to work out the search process. The committee will gather resumes submitted by interested applicants and nominations provided by alumni and friends. The committee will sort through resumes and nominations, narrow the list, and begin making contacts. Then there will be interviews and visits. Ultimately, the committee will determine finalists, and at some point thereafter, the search committee will have a recommendation and will present its candidate at a meeting of the board of trustees. The search committee will work diligently and bring a carefully chosen nominee to the board.

I should add one additional word about presidential transitions. In 1965, the president who hired me, Dr. James Ralph Scales, resigned. I was stunned and greatly disappointed. I went to my friend Gene Lucas, OBU's chief financial officer, and shared with him my concern for the future. He responded by telling me not to worry. "OBU is a great institution, greater than any one man. The school has lived for many years and will live for many more."

Not to minimize the contributions of Dr. Mark Brister or any of OBU's presidents, but, through the years, I realized that presidents come and go. Some stay longer than others – but the faculty and staff endure. The faculty and staff who serve OBU for 20, 30, and even 40 years are the heart and soul of this institution. They are OBU!


John Parrish
OBU Interim President

On The Cover: Dr. Mark Brister, OBU's 14th president, addresses the audience at the dedication of the University's new Recreation and Wellness Center on November 9. Brister retired from the presidency at the conclusion of OBU's Homecoming celebration on November 10.



O·B·U

Fall 2007

m a g a z i n e

features

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When Mark Brister arrived on Bison Hill in 1998 it was a hot August day. More than nine years later, he departed the OBU presidency on a warm November weekend. The intervening years were marked by much more than the weather. The Brister Era includes an array of highlights for the University.

8 The Call From Home

John Parrish steps into the interim presidency with a fair amount of institutional history on his side. He worked as an administrator and faculty member at OBU for 38 years, and has continued to serve the University since his retirement. When he was asked to fill the chief executive's role this fall, it did not take long for him to decide.



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Season *of* Change

Reaching the
milestone of the
Recreation and
Wellness Center
dedication,
Dr. Mark Brister
saw the autumn of
2007 as a season
for change.

Mark Brister received a warm welcome on Bison Hill when he arrived in August of 1998. It was very warm, literally. The temperature was 102 degrees, as summer was in full blast.

For the next nine years, the lanky Texan would lead Oklahoma Baptist University through seasons of change and challenge. Weather, itself, would be one contributor to the changing times. Terrorist attacks, social agendas, and technological advances would also offer major calendar events.

On November 10, during one of OBU's warmest Homecoming celebrations in recent memory, Dr. Brister stepped away from the University's presidency and into a new season of life. It was time, he said, for a change.

Brister announced his intention to retire during a special called meeting of OBU's board of trustees on October 12. He had worked with the board's executive committee since late summer to prepare for a smooth transition of leadership. At the early fall meeting, the board gave the president a standing ovation, then approved a plan to shift leadership to John W. Parrish. The University's executive vice president emeritus became interim president on November 11, at the conclusion of Homecoming.

On the weekend when OBU dedicated a massive new recreation and wellness center, it also said "thanks" to Brister, who spearheaded the \$10 million capital project. Many saw it as a fitting setting for a president who valued fitness. It was one of the four elements of the Brister's mantra declaring OBU a "Luke 2:52 university." The passage, which encompasses 18 years of Christ's life, said Jesus grew in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

That focus on a four-fold developmental process contributed to OBU's mission statement, adopted in early 2005. Brister wanted well-rounded OBU graduates, he said. That process needed to include academic, spiritual, physical and social development.

During the nine years and two months Brister was at the helm of OBU, there were many external indicators of success in each area. Serving the third-longest term of any OBU president – only surpassed by John W. Raley's 27 years and Bob R. Agee's 16 years – Brister saw seasons of growth and accomplishment.

The milestone of the Recreation and Wellness Center dedication became a pivotal moment.

"The time has come for me and Rhonda to move to the next phase of our careers and lives," he told OBU students, faculty and staff on the afternoon of October 12. "The last nine years have been among the most satisfying and enjoyable, and so it is with mixed feelings that we make this announcement."

"I'm enormously proud of the quality of education that OBU provides its students," said Brister. "There is growing recognition nationally and internationally for the value of the liberal arts education found at Christian colleges. Our consistently strong showing in national rankings has bolstered OBU's reputation as a leader in providing that kind of educational experience. That reputation is due to the efforts of so many dedicated, committed people on our campus."

The Brister Era included development of a new center for global outreach; renovations of several major campus facilities; growth of several academic programs, notably in telecommunication, art, and nursing; and expansion of athletic programs.

"We will miss the energy and excitement of campus life," said the man who once – at the request of a faculty member – appeared as Elvis to sing "Blue Christmas" at a campus-wide gathering.

"Dr. Brister's unbridled enthusiasm for education and for this university made him a wonderful ambassador for OBU," said Jim Howell, a Midwest City attorney who chaired OBU's board of trustees for the 2006-07 term. "He has led OBU in significant endowment, land, and building project growth. We are grateful for his vision and leadership."



**"Dr. Brister's
unbridled enthusiasm
for education and
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ambassador for OBU."**



“We came to OBU to give our lives to Christian higher education,” said Brister. “We see this as a ministry to future generations.”

Brister and his wife, Rhonda, will relocate to the Dallas-Fort Worth area in early 2008. A pastor for 26 years before becoming OBU’s 14th president, Brister said he plans to return to his “first passion for writing, preaching, teaching and public speaking.”

Howell said the University is poised for continued success thanks to groundwork laid by Brister.

“OBU is enjoying great days, and even brighter days are ahead. Thanks to prudent fiscal management, Dr. Brister is retiring from this post with our institution’s long-term debt at a low level. We are moving into a new wellness facility, we have a growing graduate program, and we have undertaken significant new initiatives in student recruitment that have already resulted in extremely positive steps for the institution,” said the 1956 OBU graduate.

“I see these as signs of effective leadership and we are thankful to Dr. Brister for investing more than nine years as our

president,” said Howell. That appreciation was echoed by varied OBU constituents in October and November.

The University’s Faculty Council presented Brister a certificate at his final meeting with the faculty November 2, noting his work to increase OBU’s endowment and expand opportunities for student aid, as well as representing the institution’s Christian liberal arts mission. On November 13, during its annual meeting, the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma passed a resolution commending Brister’s leadership of OBU.

As other words of appreciation came in to the president’s office, Brister said he was grateful for the support and affirmation. For him, it also was an affirmation that the time was right for a change. He had presided over many seasons in the life of OBU, seeing the University weather an array of challenges and continue on its course. He had personally congratulated 3,021 OBU graduates since the autumn of 1998.

In a state known for significant seasonal markers, Mark Brister’s season as president concluded on a warm November weekend, with the sun shining brightly on Bison Hill. ♦



THE BRISTER ERA 1998-2007

*Some notable highlights of
Dr. Mark A. Brister's tenure as
Oklahoma Baptist University's 14th president*

OBU's new Recreation and Wellness Center opened in late November 2007. The \$10 million capital project is the largest in OBU's history.

The University is completing projects in the \$4.78 million Winning Spirit Campaign, including additions and renovations to OBU's Noble Complex for Athletics, and construction of new intramural fields, a track complex and a baseball/softball complex.

In early 2007, OBU launched an MBA degree program based in Oklahoma City. The graduate program is the first to be implemented in OBU's International Graduate School.

The University received a record \$7.15 million in gifts during the 2003-04 fiscal year. A total of \$6.74 million was received in the 2006-07 year, making it the second-highest total in OBU's history. The annual totals do not include around \$2.8 million the University receives through the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma's Cooperative Program support.

The University's endowment, which was approximately \$60 million in the summer of 1998, is more than 50 percent larger today, standing at \$93.7 million.

OBU acquired 64 acres on the north side of the campus in the spring of 1999, expanding the campus to 189 acres.



The University has operated with a balanced budget throughout Brister's tenure. The 2007-08 fiscal year budget is \$35.4 million, up from \$26 million in the 1998-99 year.

OBU established the Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach in the spring of 2005, to coordinate and expand missions education and international projects.

In September 2006, OBU adopted the "Kai" people group as part of the Finishing The Task global evangelism effort.

OBU's School of Nursing has achieved a record enrollment in the past three years.

OBU has maintained a strong pre-medicine program, with an acceptance rate to medical school in excess of 90 percent per year.

Capital improvements since 1998 include significant renovation of the Art Building in 2000, Craig-Dorland Theatre in 2002, and a multi-year renovation of John Wesley Raley Chapel, completed in 2001.

OBU has one of the top four-year graduation rates in the state of Oklahoma according to recent statewide reports.

Athletically, OBU has finished in the top five in the NAIA annual Directors' Cup ranking of overall athletic programs for the past two years.

OBU won the 2005 and 2007 NAIA Women's Indoor Track and Field National Championship and the 2007 NAIA Men's Outdoor Track and Field National Championship. These are three of the five NAIA national championships in OBU's 97-year history.

OBU has been listed in the regional "top-10" in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of "America's Best Colleges" for 16 straight years, climbing as high as #2 in the region. OBU is ranked third among baccalaureate colleges in the West in the 2008 rankings.

OBU currently is the highest ranked private baccalaureate college in the western region in the 2008 *U.S. News & World Report* listing of "Great Schools. Great Prices."

OBU was named one of "America's Best Value Colleges" in both the 2007 and 2008 annual rankings by The Princeton Review.

OBU has been named a "Best in the West" institution by The Princeton Review in the 2007 and 2008 listings. ♦

The Brister Era, in pictures, clockwise from top left, Dr. Brister speaks during Founders' Day; Brister and Rev. Rusty Foreman, '45, place a wreath in Gold Star Park during Homecoming 2005; Brister as a small-town deputy, cites Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma President Robert Kellogg in a foundation video; Brister serves as a photographer outside Raley Chapel following an OBU Commencement; renovated Craig-Dorland Theatre opens in 2002; students participate in global missions through the Avery T. Willis Global Outreach Center, which opened in the spring of 2005; new soccer, baseball and softball facilities are constructed on part of the 64 acres OBU acquired in April 1999; OBU's International Graduate School, based in Oklahoma City, opens in January 2007.



THE *Call from Home*

“Retirement” is a very subjective word.

“Home” is a little more objective.

For John Parrish, retirement has been a fairly active time, but one where he could choose his favorite attire, drive that pick-up he often contemplated owning, and try to work in as much fishing as he could.

When he got a call from home, however, the retirement schedule was shelved and the suits and ties were moved back to the front of his closet.

For John Warren Parrish, 68, “home” is a synonym for Oklahoma Baptist University. Parrish joined the OBU faculty and administrative staff in 1964. Already an experienced journalist and military veteran, the Drumright native saw his hiring by OBU President James Ralph Scales as a calling to invest his life in the lives of others.

For the next 38 years, he served in a variety of leadership roles. His early years on Bison Hill included work as OBU’s journalism professor and advisor to *The OBU Bison*, while also serving as the University’s public relations director. He became director of alumni and annual giving in 1979, and was promoted to vice president for institutional advancement in 1986. OBU President Bob Agee named Parrish senior vice president for business and external affairs in 1991. Four years later, he became executive vice president and chief financial officer. He filled that role until he retired at the end of November 2002.

Faced with the retirement of OBU President Mark Brister in October, the University’s board of trustees needed to identify someone to fill the interim presidency. If the trustees were seeking someone who possessed a strong sense of institutional history – and the respect of his former colleagues – they did not have to look very far. They did not have to do a lot of persuading, either.

“I have had little desire to return to a regular work schedule,” Parrish told the board on October 12. “However, when OBU calls, I must listen because I believe that this is an institution which was inspired by God – and I also believe God called me to serve here 43 years ago.”

The board elected Parrish to assume the role of OBU’s interim president beginning on November 11. Two days later, he presented the OBU report at the annual Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma meeting. It was an opportunity for him to verbalize his personal conviction about the University’s relationship with Oklahoma Baptists.

“OBU’s history is inextricably intertwined with the Baptist people of Oklahoma,” he explained. “OBU was born during challenging days shortly after statehood as a vision of pioneer Oklahoma Baptists. With the help of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Baptist churches, the state WMU, and a faculty that sacrificed a great deal, OBU survived the desperate days of the Great Depression. Because of this first quarter of a century of vision and sacrifice, OBU became a significant presence in Oklahoma higher education and a very important contributor to Baptist and Kingdom work.

“I believe OBU’s future is inextricably intertwined with the future of Oklahoma Baptists,” he asserted. “We must have the strong support of our churches through the Cooperative Program. Our life blood has been and needs to continue to be the students who come from Baptist churches across this state. We welcome students from anywhere, but we especially want Oklahoma Baptist students at OBU.”

Parrish knows Oklahoma well. He has crisscrossed the state many times on behalf of OBU, meeting people from small communities and urban centers. He possesses a photographic



“When OBU calls, I must listen because I believe that this is an institution which was inspired by God – and I also believe God called me to serve here 43 years ago.”

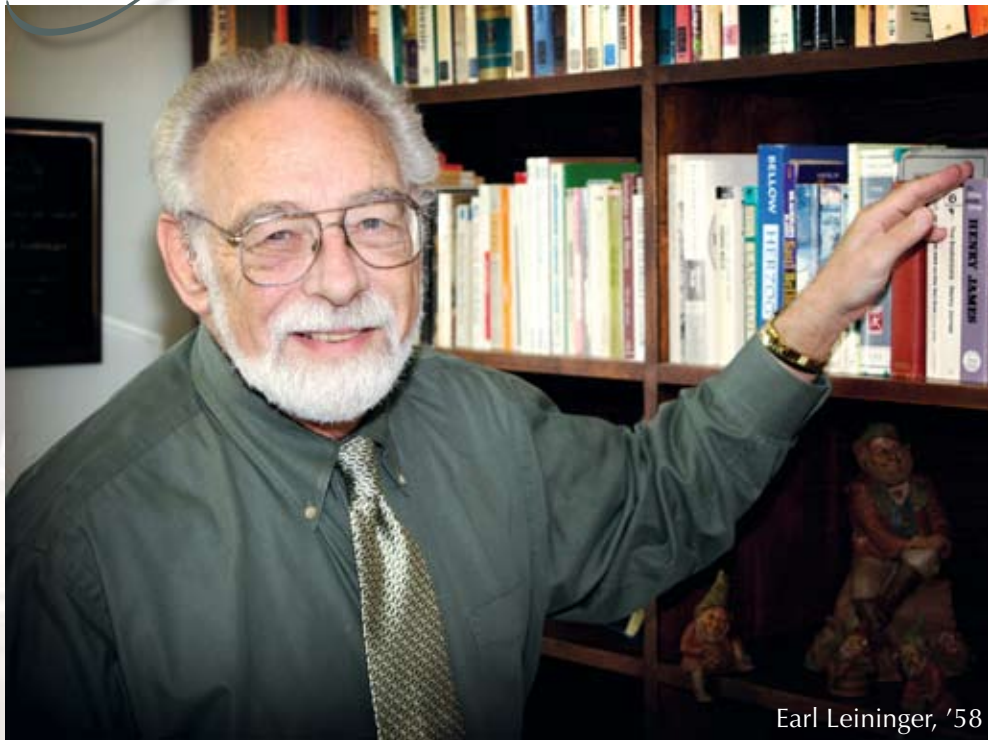
memory, and augments that with an attention to detail that includes significant notes. While some may share stories of his managerial style or his ability to recall minute details, there are no stories about how others out-worked Parrish or were better-prepared for a task.

After graduating from high school in Eureka, Kansas, Parrish immediately headed south to complete bachelor's and master's degrees from Oklahoma State University. He enjoys following his alma mater's sports teams, but he is passionate about OBU. That passion was nurtured in his early years on the campus. Among his many roles, he was the University's sports information director when the Bison appeared in three consecutive NAIA men's basketball championship games. Coach Bob Bass and the team led by future NBA player Al Tucker brought home the national title in 1966. He likes to remind current OBU coach Doug Tolin that he has not seen the feat repeated. If it happens in the near future, he plans to see it in person, and help others experience the moment. One of the roles he retained after retirement was serving as the radio play-by-play voice of OBU men's basketball. Unlike the interim presidency, it is not a temporary job.

Parrish's sense of responsibility, coupled with his love for OBU, has kept him busy in retirement. He chairs OBU's Centennial Committee, and has written two books about OBU basketball since the fall of 2002. He and his wife, the former Mary Kay Higginbotham, a 1962 OBU graduate and long-time music faculty member, have found time to travel in recent years. Visiting family requires a good deal of travel in itself. Their son, Dr. John Michael Parrish, is assistant professor of political science at Loyola-Marymount University in Los Angeles. Their daughter, Robin Parrish McAlister, '99, a summa cum laude graduate of OBU, is a graduate student in public policy at Duke University in Durham, N.C.

Serving as interim president means Parrish will be dressing more formally, and working in OBU's executive offices instead of in his makeshift office/storage room in the basement of Jent Alumni Center. But it does not mean he will have to muster energy to step out of retirement and into the working world. In many respects, he has not slowed down since he arrived on the campus 43 years ago. OBU is home for John Parrish. It has been for a very long time. ♦

Performance DRIVEN



Earl Leininger, '58

Lifelong educator Earl Leininger enrolled at OBU, like many young men, with the expectation to someday be pastor of a church. His sophomore year, however, he began to suspect his gifts might lay in teaching. And yet his major of speech and theatre pulled from his love for dramatic performance.

He was right on all counts.



**“Good theatre productions, like all the arts, are ‘texts’ for learning,
for exploring the human condition and simply for providing great entertainment.”**

His career began in a pastorate in Louisville, Ky., and concluded with his role of provost and senior vice president of Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, N.C. In between lay an impressive resume of work – in which Leininger both taught and learned. His career included 34 years at Mars Hill College in Mars Hill, N.C., where Leininger’s wife, Cathy, is assistant professor of music, and where he served in several roles including vice president for academic affairs.

And since his retirement – “for the third and final time,” he emphasized – he has continued his interest in theatre, currently acting the role of Niels Bohr in the play *Copenhagen*.

“OBU was, as I believe higher education should always be, about the opening of my mind,” Leininger said. “I arrived pretty much assuming I had all the right answers, but the truth is that I hadn’t really learned to ask all the right questions.”

He recalls a number of professors who influenced his intellectual journey: Rowena Strickland, James Timberlake, Corbett Rushing, Katherine Rader and others. However, speech professor Opal Frazier Cole Craig, and philosophy professor Gregory Pritchard stand out.

“Professor Craig took it as her calling in life to see to it that the ‘preacher boys’ in her care were not allowed to carry into the pulpit a ‘preacher’s tone,’” he said. “I learned from her the fundamentals of public speaking and how to be conversational from the pulpit or podium, both of which have served me well.”

Pritchard taught a philosophy class Leininger calls the “most important single course” he took at OBU.

“What I remember is that he forced me, for the first time in my life, to think for myself,” Leininger said. “It was a life-changing experience and an example that permanently influences my own approach to teaching.”

In turn, Leininger found the highlight of his career also based in positively influencing students.

“Without question ... the single most important thing in my professional life was the hoped-for and occasionally confirmed impact on the lives of students,” he said. “The core of the academy is teaching and learning – my biorhythms have always been those of a teacher, and the only true task of an administrator is to be an enabler of those persons directly engaged with students.”

Leininger’s full career includes both unusual and wonderful events. Before he began his full-time teaching role at Mars Hill, he was asked to teach a course in Reformation Theology at a Roman Catholic institution in Louisville. The large class was composed of nuns and priests – teachers in Catholic schools who were seeking master’s degrees.

“It was a terrific experience,” he said. “I found them to be eager learners and warm and affirming persons who taught me a great deal.”

His unexpected three-and-a-half-year second career at Gardner-Webb University also was a highlight, especially since the faculty voted to confer an honorary doctor of humanities degree on him at his last Commencement.

Through Leininger’s life work, he has filled many university roles; written numerous papers, presentations and publications; served as various chairs and coordinators; and traveled to several countries, including Austria, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Mexico, Morocco, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia and the United Kingdom. It’s a life work founded on education in a Christian context – the value of studying on Bison Hill.

“Unlike secular institutions, a university like OBU is permitted to bring a ‘vertical’ dimension to education, to ask how the Christian ‘story’ is related to subject matter, to activities, to conversations, to values,” Leininger said. “It can remind students that education demands not only strenuous minds, but also richness of mind.”

In his current stage of life, Leininger is finding his classroom for influencing students to be the theatre. In addition to many “plum” roles through the years at the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre, he has landed professional voice work through commercial radio and TV in local, regional and national venues.

“Good theatre productions, like all the arts, are ‘texts’ for learning, for exploring the human condition and simply for providing great entertainment,” he said. “For me, as an actor, it has been an enriching creative outlet and a chance to relate to students and fellow actors in a very different setting than the classroom.”

Looking back, it’s only natural that this lifelong educator, with that OBU degree in speech and theatre, continues in his proven role today. ♦

Touch a Life,

Touche une Vie, Transformée le Monde
Tocar un Vida, Cambiar el Mundo

Lela Hastey Losq's favorite memories of OBU revolve around people. These memories from decades past reflect on her personal interest in and care for people. They also offer a glimpse at the growth of her desire to positively affect the world.

Sitting on lawn chairs in front of OBU's library, Lela engaged in long sociological, philosophical and political conversations with her friend Al Bridgman. Through her student years, such conversations opened Lela's eyes to the civil rights movement.

"I guess that is, in fact, one of the things I remember about my campus experience in the late '60s," says the Profile in Excellence recipient, who graduated from OBU in 1970. "My friends and I thought we would be able to contribute to a more just society. I hope we have."

Lela's childhood included a worldview unlike most. She was raised in Central America and Mexico by missionary parents who worked through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board). Her early education took place in bilingual schools in Mexico.

Three of Lela's five brothers – as well as her parents – also attended OBU. Lela credits her roommate, Carole Hitchins, with making her feel welcome on Bison Hill.

"(She) not only understood but, most importantly, accepted my cultural differences of having grown up as an MK in Mexico," Lela said. "She helped me understand many American cultural 'quirks' and accepted me as I was. I count her as one of my long-time friends."

Lela earned a bachelor of arts degree with majors in French and Spanish and a minor in secondary education. She worked as Patricia Pernaleté's student assistant in the Spanish department. The longtime OBU educator was her mentor and one of the people who had the most influence on Lela's career choice as a teacher of foreign languages. During two summers, Lela worked directly with Pernaleté in the Upward Bound program on campus.

"These summer experiences tutoring and teaching under Mrs. Pernaleté's supervision impacted my vision of the American society which was, at that time, in turmoil and transition," Lela recalled. "Some of the African American students ... weren't willing to wait for the civil rights movement to work. This was quite eye-opening for me. Although I wasn't an active participant of the civil rights movement, it affected my perspective on many things."

Even today, Lela noted, there still is room for society to improve in such issues.

"I hope we can look back on our personal lives and be glad about how we have taught our children," she said.

Lela's career took her to Pennsylvania, where she taught at a bilingual elementary school in the Philadelphia Public School system. At the school, situated in a largely African American and Puerto Rican community, the Spanish-speaking students learned subjects in Spanish, with English taught as a second language. English-speaking students learned subjects in English, with Spanish taught as a second language.

Change the World

“Learn at least one foreign language, visit a foreign country, and be open to learning more about the way people think through a different global vision and diverse cultures.”



Lela Losq, '70

“We worked with the parents to help their children learn literacy at a very young age,” Lela explained. “This is where I was most aware of how I could touch people’s lives through teaching.”

While in Philadelphia, Lela met her future husband, Etienne Losq, who she describes as “a sensitive, reflective and intelligent man.” He was a French student studying for his Ph.D. degree in finance. They married and, after living a few years in Montreal, Canada, moved to France. Etienne was a professor of finance and Lela taught English. Etienne passed away several years ago, a victim of cancer.

The couple had two daughters, Stephanie and Anne, both born in France and who are Franco-American. Stephanie has completed pre-med studies and has applied to medical schools

in the United States. Anne is pursuing theatre studies in a master’s-level program at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Today, Lela works as an English teacher and co-coordinator of the English section of the language and cultures department of Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Telecommunications, one of the schools in the French higher education system. She lives and works in her adopted city, Paris, where she enjoys the cultural aspects the city offers – art, theatre, films and architecture – as well as the “neighborhood” atmosphere.

“My challenge to students at the university level today is to learn at least one foreign language, visit a foreign country and be open to learning more about the way people think through a different global vision and diverse cultures,” Lela said. “This would certainly contribute to a more peaceful world.” ♦

Lorraine Dageforde, '59



A Life of Positive Influence

*A*s a new student on Bison Hill, transplanted to Oklahoma from sunny California, Lorraine Dageforde, '59, felt excitement – and fear. Growing up in a relatively sheltered church-based environment, attending college was her first real venture into the great unknown.

"I had just turned 17, and my life experience had been centered at school and church up to that time," Lorraine recalled.

While she often felt afraid, she knew she wasn't alone. Several other students from her church were already attending OBU. Equally important, she said, were three professors who not

only provided her a strong academic foundation, but also led her to be a positive influence on others throughout her life.

OBU professors Opal Craig, Rowena Strickland and Gregory Pritchard influenced her life then in ways that still affect her now.

"Dr. Craig was the greatest influence in polishing my presentation skills," said Lorraine, who has used those skills throughout her lifetime as a teacher, consultant, trainer and facilitator in education-related venues.

"When I was fearful, she encouraged me to take the next step, and did so with loving support," she recalled.

The revered speech professor served as Lorraine's personal advisor, as well as her academic advisor and primary professor. While completing a degree in secondary education with a major in speech, she worked as a student secretary for Dr. Pritchard and Dr. Strickland.

"Dr. Strickland provided deep spiritual inspiration. She demanded excellence, and at the same time, she had a heart of gold," she said. "Dr. Pritchard was the first professor to open my mind so that I started thinking for myself."

Following graduation, Lorraine returned to her home state and earned lifetime credentials in elementary and secondary education. After teaching for 15 years, she returned to school again and earned a credential to be a high school counselor. She filled that role for a few years before assuming directorship of the American Diabetes Association in Orange County.

In the new position, Lorraine worked with hospitals to prepare and provide educational seminars on diabetes. She learned how to interact with the greater community in public relations roles; and she learned how to interact with a board of directors.

"Then I realized there was no place for me to advance in my career there, and I definitely was still an educator at heart," she said.

With her new set of career skills, coupled with her education experience, Lorraine began a life-changing journey, facilitating business-education partnerships between students and the business community, first for the Irvine School District, then for 28 districts through the Orange County Department of Education.

"That opportunity turned out to be the epitome of my career," she said.

Through the partnerships, businesses provided speakers for classes, positions for interns, and people to serve on school advisory boards. They frequently created advisory boards of their own. Through one business partnership, an old drafting room in a school was revamped and developed into an academy for future builders. More than \$250,000 was donated for that project.

"Many students who were in danger of dropping out of school stayed and graduated. Very often they would have a job waiting when they graduated," Lorraine explained. "Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined having the opportunity to influence literally thousands of students and also to educate business people on the needs of education."

Her work has been recognized by educators and business groups. She received the Ruby Slipper Award from the Building Industry Association, along with supporting resolutions from California's State Assembly and Senate. She also was honored by the American Electronics Association for contributions to science education in California.

"Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined having the opportunity to influence literally thousands of students and also to educate business people on the needs of education."

She was a co-founder of the California Educational Partnership Consortium, and served as the group's executive director for two years. She also was the Golden State's representative to the advisory board of National Partners in Education.

Today, Lorraine is retired from her work as a presenter and program director. For two years, she has been battling incurable cancer. But rather than viewing her illness as a discouragement, she sees it as a unique opportunity to act as a positive influence to others each day.

"I have discovered my life doesn't stop because I have an illness," she said. "It provides me with many new opportunities to encourage others. I have a deep faith in God and I am certain He has a purpose for me even during this period of my life."

Lorraine always remembers the positive influences that started at OBU. The University community knew she had the potential to be a difference-maker. She received OBU's Life Beautiful Award in 1959.

She feels honored to be named a Profile in Excellence recipient. A photo of the Bison on the Oval hangs on her bedroom wall. Since her illness, she stays in touch with other alumni. Every day, she seeks opportunities to help others face challenges.

"Memories of my years at OBU have always remained alive," she said.

Her influence will live on in the lives of students she has helped for many years to come. ♦

OBU Rolls Out New Financial Aid Structure

In late October, OBU introduced a new financial aid structure for students entering in the 2008-09 academic year.

Scholarships will be awarded based on high school GPA and ACT or SAT scores. Students may enter their information online at www.okbu.edu/scholarships to calculate the level of scholarship aid they will receive.

"We are delighted to be adopting this new structure," said Jonna Raney, OBU director of student financial services. "This model will help students and their families get a better idea of what to expect in terms of OBU academic scholarships."

"We are committed to helping students achieve an OBU education," said Trent Argo, OBU dean of enrollment management. "This new structure is designed to help more students in a substantial way."

The new financial aid information, including an easy-to-use scholarship calculator, is available online at www.okbu.edu/scholarships.

OBU IGS Honored By Business Ethics Consortium

In its first year of existence, OBU's International Graduate School is gaining attention from the state's leaders in business and education.

In November, OBU IGS was recognized as a "Leading Member" of the Oklahoma Business Ethics Consortium.

"OK Ethics does a great deal to inspire business leaders to be ethical and educate their employees in principles of integrity," said Marian Combs, dean of the graduate school. "It is an

honor that we were recognized. It is an indication that IGS is 'on the radar' in Oklahoma."

According to the organization's mission statement, "Oklahoma Business Ethics Consortium strives to establish Oklahoma as a state known for high personal and corporate ethical standards. The Consortium provides a forum of support to the Oklahoma business community so that ethical standards and integrity in the workplace can be discussed, defined and reinforced."

Organizations affiliated with OBEC include Chesapeake Energy, Devon Energy, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, Express Personnel Services, and Principal Technologies.

Combs has worked with the OBEC

since joining OBU's administrative team. She said the affiliation is a natural extension of OBU's mission in Christian higher education. The relationship also has given OBU the opportunity to participate in OBEC events. Earlier this year, Dr. Rich Rudebock, dean of OBU's Paul Dickinson School of Business, was a panelist for a forum offered by the consortium.

OBEC meets monthly at the Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City. For more information, contact Shannon Warren at 405.858.2233.

OBU IGS offers an 18-month master of business administration degree program through its classrooms in the Momentum Building at 111 N. Harrison in downtown Oklahoma City.



A Contemporary Setting For A Gospel Story

OBU Theatre brought the 1972 musical *Godspell* back to the campus in early November. The cast and band presented six shows, including packed-out Homecoming performances in Craig-Dorland Theatre. Written by John-Michael Tebelak, with music by Stephen Schwartz, *Godspell* is based on the book of Matthew. "It is the story of Jesus and his unconventional disciples in a spirited and colorful musical," said Dr. Joyce Aldridge, OBU associate professor of theatre, who directed the production.

McElroy Receives State Association's Honor Award

Dr. Linda McElroy, OBU professor of kinesiology and leisure studies, is a 2007 recipient of the Oklahoma Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Honor Award. It is the highest recognition offered by the organization.



McELROY

The OAHPERD limits the award to members who have served a minimum of 10 years in Oklahoma; who hold national membership in their special field of interest; who have demonstrated ethical professional practices; and have shown excellence in teaching, administrative achievement, contribution to research and professional publications; leadership in state, district and national professional associations or meritorious service within the profession.

"I am very happy for Linda," said Dr. Norris Russell, chair of OBU's kinesiology and leisure studies division. "This award highlights a couple of her strengths: being a true professional and service to the organization. She is most deserving of this honor."

McElroy, who joined the faculty in 1990, also is OBU's cheerleading coach. In addition, she serves as the University's faculty marshal, and is a past chair of OBU's faculty council.

She earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana State University and a master's degree from Purdue University. She completed a doctor of education degree from the University of Utah.

Sports Year Moves Into High Gear

As fall sports completed their seasons, OBU's basketball teams were starting their 2007-08 campaigns. OBU is seeking a third consecutive top-five finish in the NAIAs annual Director's Cup standings for overall athletic programs.

Five OBU **soccer** players were named to the Daktronics NAIA All-America Scholar Athlete Soccer Teams this fall. Andi Little, Brittany Cook, John Cook, Joel Dixon and Ryan Weaver received the honor, which requires junior or senior hours and a cumulative grade point average of no less than 3.50.

OBU's **cross country** teams both finished in the top 25 at the national

championships in Kenosha, Wisc., in November. The 10th-ranked men finished 13th, while the unranked Lady Bison were 25th. OBU's Michael Elizondo, who had his best race of the season in winning the regional title, led Sooner Athletic Conference and Region VI champion OBU in 35th place overall in 25:36. Becca Murdock was the leader for the Lady Bison, finishing 102nd overall at 19:12.

The men's **basketball** team moved out to a 6-0 start heading into conference action. The Bison were tested against No. 20 Union and came through with an overtime win, 88-82, during Homecoming.

The Lady Bison were 7-0 heading into conference play. Among their victims are No. 17 Loyola (La.), No. 21 Columbia College and NCAA Division I newcomer Houston Baptist.

OBU fans can keep up with the teams in several ways, including the e-Herd Newsletter, the OBU website and the athletic hotline. You can register for the weekly e-newsletter on OBU's home page. Through the athletic web pages, fans can follow each basketball game on audio or through real-time stats. The hotline, 405.878.2110, includes scores from around the Sooner Athletic Conference.

Senior guard Evan Grace tied a school record with nine 3-pointers in a game Nov. 16 against Central Baptist College.





Homecoming 2007 gave alumni from across the years the chance to reconnect on the campus.

ABOVE, Clark Jolley, '92, and his wife, Verlyne, visit with Christina Kuiken Brewster, '92, at the registration desk.

LEFT, students enjoyed roasting marshmallows (from a distance) at a late-night bonfire Friday on the lawn between Sarkeys and Jent.

LOWER LEFT, retired U.S. Congressman Joel Hefley, '57, talks about some of his adventures in the nation's capital while accepting the Alumni Achievement Award at the Harvest Dinner.

BELOW, alumni and current members of the Bison Glee Club and the Angell Era Bisonettes pose for a group photo after their "Grand Gathering of Glorious Song," which included an array of musical presentations from various groups affiliated with the two choral clubs founded by the late Dr. Warren Angell. Alumni celebrated Dean Angell's 100th birthday and the 70th anniversary of the Bison Glee Club during the weekend.





LEFT, alumni recognized at the Harvest Dinner were, front row, Brandy Bratton Lusk, '02, Athletic Hall of Fame inductee; Carrie Phillips Underwood, '01, GOLD Alum of the Year; John Parrish, representing Alumni Achievement Award recipient Lawrence Harris, '41; and, back row, Joel Hefley, '57, Alumni Achievement Award; and Jerry Lester, '59, Athletic Hall of Fame inductee.

ABOVE, Patsy Freeman Bush, '57, visits at a reception Friday morning.

BELOW, Jerry O. Jones, '61, left, performs with fellow Embellishments member Don Blackley, '63, during the Saturday evening concert in Raley Chapel.





ABOVE, Odus Compton, '87, delivers the Homecoming Chapel message.



RIGHT, Brandy Bratton Lusk, '02, an OBU Athletic Hall of Fame inductee, is introduced to the crowd during halftime of the men's basketball game.

Proudly Standing On Bison Hill

The Bison Spirit, a sculpture of the OBU namesake, was unveiled on Friday afternoon, Nov. 9, in the atrium of the University's new Recreation and Wellness Center. ▶

Noted Oklahoma artist and sculptor Harold T. Holden, from Kremlin, was commissioned to sculpt the American Bison artwork. Underwritten by NBC Bank, the piece is an Official Oklahoma Centennial Project.

Limited edition maquettes of *The Bison Spirit*, 16-inch replicas of the life-size sculpture, are available for purchase for \$2,000 each through OBU's Office of Development. (Of the total, \$1,000 is a tax deductible gift to OBU.)

Limited signed and numbered prints of *The Bison Spirit* by Holden are available for \$50. ▶

Information on purchasing a numbered maquette or signed print is available by calling 405.878.2703.



Extraordinary Experience

Christi Mitchell likes the unique aspects of OBU's communication arts division. It helped her gain a unique distinction this fall, when she won the Overall Broadcast category in the Baptist Press Excellence in Journalism Award Competition.

A telecommunication and cross-cultural ministry major, Mitchell said her professors' varied areas of expertise in telecommunication prepares students for a variety of disciplines.

"They are all specialized in a different area within our field, whether it is sports production, writing, visual media or comedy," said the junior from the southwestern Oklahoma town of Blair.

The telecommunication faculty seeks to create a learning environment in which the students receive proper training through practical experience, according to Dr. Roger Hadley, chair of the communication arts division and professor of telecommunication. Students become familiar with different aspects of the profession, such as news, production or even music videos.

"The professors are there to guide us, but everything is student-produced and a hands-on learning experience. We get to develop our technical skills and combine them with creativity which we use for our assignments," Mitchell said.

Skills learned in the classroom setting directly link to skills the students will use in their future work environments. Assignments completed inside and outside of the classroom are designed to aid in refining the students' skills.

"What we do in class are things we can actually apply to News30 or our live televised basketball games," Mitchell said.



Mitchell said a variety of hands-on experiences has enriched her education in telecommunication.

Her award-winning entry in the Baptist Press competition was a news report she had previously completed for News30, a weekly live broadcast.

News30, produced by 15 to 20 student volunteers, provides an atmosphere where the students can learn about the value of professional preparation and the abilities needed to carry out a live production. The volunteers work in a rotation, which gives each student the chance to practice several roles in a live broadcast.

"I've been able to be in front of the camera and behind the camera. It's nice to do both," Mitchell said.

With News30, Mitchell previously was an anchor and currently is director. Through the telecommunication program, she has received

opportunities to expand her learning experiences beyond OBU.

"I've been able to do different sorts of internships – one with a news station, one with live televised sports in Oklahoma City and I also had a job in radio over the summer," she said.

"We get to do some pretty extraordinary things. Our major is time-consuming but at the same time I am really able to see what it will be like in the real world," Mitchell said.

Mitchell's world has included OBU for as long as she can remember. She is the daughter of Rev. Randy Mitchell, '79, and his wife, Sheryl Means Mitchell, '72. Randy is pastor of Blair's First Baptist Church, and Sheryl teaches school in Blair. Christi's sister, Randa, is a 2000 OBU graduate, and her brother, Michael, graduated from OBU in 2007.



Agee Residence Center, named for former OBU president Bob Agee and his wife, Nelle, was opened in 1947 as Brotherhood Dormitory. In 1958, the Baxter and Storer wings were added to the structure that can accommodate 365 men. Baxter wing contained a large dining hall where male students dined until the University Center (now Geiger Center) opened in 1970. The former dining hall space now houses the University's public relations office suite, named in honor of Interim President John Parrish when he retired as executive vice president in 2002.



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