

SPRING 2008

# O·B·U

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# Next?

“Why should I choose OBU over other schools?” This is a frequently asked question by prospective students. Some of the features I mention are:

- OBU has offered a distinctive, nurturing Christian environment for students for almost 100 years.
- Outstanding teachers in small classes allow for and promote the exchange of knowledge and ideas. An OBU student is not lost in classes of 100, 200, or more. The average student-teacher ratio is less than 15-to-1. In the classroom, the student will be known by the teacher, and the student will find that the teacher is accessible outside the classroom. Some 70 percent of OBU’s faculty have doctorates, and OBU rarely uses graduate students in the classroom. OBU’s primary emphasis is classroom teaching, not research; although, many of our faculty conduct research to remain current in their specialties.
- OBU’s academic program is strong and equips graduates for a variety of careers, graduate study, or advanced professional training. OBU’s national rankings in U.S. News and World Report’s “America’s Best Colleges” attest to our academic quality.
- From the classroom to the chapel to discipleship training to missions opportunities, OBU students are challenged to grow spiritually and to “live worthy of the high calling of God in Christ,” as proclaimed in OBU’s mission statement.
- OBU has one of the highest four-year graduation rates in the region, and OBU was tied for the best four-year graduation rate in Oklahoma in the latest statewide report. This is a very important statistic because graduating in four years instead of five or six means important savings in time and financial resources.

Faculty and staff are working very hard to recruit and retain students. We believe that the 2008 freshman class will show a significant increase over 2007 and that overall enrollment will grow. Please join us in this effort. Encourage students you know to consider OBU. They can check us out and get the information they need to start the exploration process at [www.okbu.edu](http://www.okbu.edu).

OBU can grow in enrollment again!

  
John Parrish  
OBU Interim President



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Spring 2008 | Vol. 4 • No. 3

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OBU Magazine is published quarterly by the Public Relations Office, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma. It is mailed to nearly 40,000 alumni, parents and friends of OBU throughout the country and world. To change your mailing address send an email to [update@okbu.edu](mailto:update@okbu.edu); write OBU Magazine, OBU Box 61275, 500 West University, Shawnee, Oklahoma 74804; or call 405.878.2706.

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**On The Cover:** J.M. Carroll, 1910-12; Frank M. Masters, 1915-19; Judson A. Tolman, 1919-21; John B. Lawrence, 1922-26; Warren W. Phelan, 1926-30; William Cooke Boone, 1930-32; Hale Virginius Davis, 1932-34; John Wesley Raley, 1934-61; James Ralph Scales, 1961-65; Grady C. Cothen, 1966-70; William G. Tanner, 1972-76; E. Eugene Hall, 1977-82; Bob R. Agee, 1982-98; Mark A. Brister, 1998-2007.



# O·B·U

Spring 2008

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"We are going to pick a leader  
who has a vision ...

# Q&A

with  
Stephen Allen

ONEOK Attorney, OBU Graduate, OBU Trustee,  
Presidential Search Committee Chairman

*There are several reasons why being president of Oklahoma Baptist University is not a position entered into lightly. For one, it can be a lengthy time commitment. OBU had seven presidents in its first 24 years of existence. It has had only seven presidents in the 74 years since. That is an average tenure of 10.4 years. The expectations are high. The University's second president, Frank M. Masters, called the faculty together in 1915 and said, "Gentlemen, we are about to make Baptist history. You are assembled by the will and wish of the Baptists of Oklahoma and I am persuaded by the grace and purpose of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father. We are charged with the challenging task of building a university on the ash heap of dead schools. We cannot afford to make a mistake. I suggest that we go down upon our knees and ask Almighty God to give guidance and wisdom without which we cannot perfect the organization of this institution properly." They did make history, and today, as OBU nears its second century, the expectations are as high as ever. An 11-member presidential search committee has been given the task of identifying the top candidate for the presidency. Stephen Allen, '95, chairs the committee. He visited with OBU Magazine this spring to give us a glimpse of the search process. His words are somewhat reminiscent of G. Lee Phelps' prayer on Bison Hill 98 years ago when he asked God to "bid us hope great things."*

a vision that is going to take OBU to the next level ...

also understanding that God's plans for OBU are probably greater than any of us could imagine."

**Q: Your name is going to be tied, whether you like it or not, to the next president of OBU. What were your thoughts, both when asked to serve on the search committee, and when elected chair of the committee?**

It is a daunting task. I am very busy in my career and I have a seven month old son, and my wife, who I want to spend time with. The idea of serving on the search committee, and the time commitment it would involve, took a lot of consideration. On the flip side, OBU impacted my life so profoundly and this was an opportunity to give back. The University also plays such a critical role, not only in the lives of the students, but in Oklahoma Baptist life and beyond. It was so important that I felt I could not *not* accept the nomination. Not because I felt I had anything special I could add to the process, other than a willingness to serve, but that God had given me that opportunity to use my talents and I wasn't going to turn that down.

Everything that I have is a gift from God. He's given us all talents and we can choose to bury them, or we can choose to use them and try to grow His kingdom. It is just good stewardship to use those gifts, especially for something as important as OBU and the impact that OBU can have.

**Q: What was the process of determining the skill set and qualifications you are seeking for the university's president?**

I think the first thing we had to do was really turn our focus inward and look at OBU. When you are choosing a future leader of an institution that has been around as long as OBU has, you have to understand the institution. So we did that. We looked at OBU's history and heritage and its mission. We looked at OBU's strengths and its weaknesses. That process of really getting to understand the university, where it was and where it is going, helps a tremendous amount in deciding who the next leader of the university should be. We also read the David Dockery book, *Renewing Minds*. That helped us understand the importance of Christian higher education in a secular world. Like OBU has done in the past, and will continue to do, we must equip students, not only to be excellent in their fields of training, but also to be change agents. They should be salt and light, reaching those around them for Christ no matter where they are serving, wherever God has placed them.

By understanding OBU's mission, OBU's heritage, and then understanding how important it is to have Christian higher education in a secular world, then there is a natural segue into saying, OK, who is the person that God is going to have to be the next leader of OBU.

**Q: So, as you gained an understanding of OBU's mission, its heritage, and the role of Christian higher education – did that help you develop a prioritized list of criteria for the next president?**

Yes. I think the most important element is that the person is a passionate follower of Christ, both in witness and in their own personal walk. That is the most central element. I think the word "hot-hearted" was used on several occasions. Someone said we need a "hot-hearted, sold-out disciple of Christ." If you get that, you have accomplished a lot toward choosing the next leader of OBU.

Now, clearly, we also need someone who has a commitment and a vision for Christian higher education, and who is experienced both in ministry and in higher education. Because of the relationship between OBU, the BGCO and the Baptist churches here in Oklahoma, it is important that the president be someone who can go into the churches and encourage the membership of the churches about the mission of OBU, and at the same time be able to have a vision to expand and grow OBU as a Christian liberal arts university.

Another important criterion is a commitment to grow the university. A commitment to grow it spiritually, a commitment to grow the academic programs it offers, and to grow it numerically. As the university grows spiritually, academically, and numerically, the impact that OBU will have on the world will also grow.

**Q: Has the committee discussed the "vision" element for the next president to the point that it is something where you are looking for the president to articulate a vision, or embrace a community vision and get in front of that? What are you expecting as far as the vision from the next leader?**

It is a hard question, and I'll try to answer it the best I can. I don't think the committee has picked a vision that we are



expecting a leader to come in and agree with. We are going to pick a leader who has a vision that not only furthers the mission and the purpose of OBU as a Christian liberal arts university, but also a vision that is going to take OBU to the next level, maybe beyond what any of us have been able to imagine or articulate. We also understand that God's plans for OBU are probably greater than any of us could envision. So, when bringing in a leader who has a vision, ultimately their vision must be subjugated to what God's will is for the university. By focusing our efforts on identifying God's will, then we can accomplish more than we can in our own human strength.

**Q:** So how are you going to assess a leader's vision potential?

It's one of those intangible qualities that, to be perfectly frank, is very hard to ascertain in an interview. In order to gain an understanding of the type of leader someone is going to be, and what type of vision they have, we are going to have to understand what they've accomplished. Are they a team builder? What have those whom they've brought in around them gone out and accomplished after having spent time with the individual?

It is intangible, but you see it in people who are passionate, relational, and inspire enthusiasm. I think a person with vision is going to inspire people around them.

**Q:** We are unique in our relationship with our state convention. We were founded by the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. We are part of the family. So the president of this institution, maybe more than all the other Baptist-affiliated colleges in the country, has a role within the state convention that is uncommon. How does that reality affect your thoughts that you've got to have somebody who is going to be able relate to the state convention while still having the strong higher education leadership skills?

First, I view the relationship between the BGCO and OBU as a critical partnership. The BGCO supports OBU not only financially, but in other ways, through the leadership that it provides in assisting the university. In turn, OBU is turning out future ministers, missionaries, pastors who are going to be filling the pulpits here in Oklahoma and elsewhere. The next president of OBU is going to need to be able to go into a church anywhere in the state and deliver the message of OBU's mission and the impact OBU is making. This message should motivate the adult membership of the churches, but also excite young students who are deciding where they are going to spend their college years.

**Q:** Are there other characteristics or qualities you see as essential?

The president of OBU has so many different constituencies – whether it's the student body, the faculty, the board of trustees, the officers of the BGCO, the members of the churches, the pastors of the churches, or the accreditation personnel. There are so many different constituencies that they will need to effectively interact with, that the person is going to have to be a skilled communicator and very relational and approachable. These skills are essential across the board, from student recruitment to fund raising.

**Q:** While we have unique relationships within the state of Oklahoma, the reality is that we have a presence around the world. With alumni in every state and scores of countries, and with students coming from across the nation and around the world, it seems the president would have to be able to connect with individuals on a global scale.

This is absolutely correct. Coming to OBU from Massachusetts, I am a prime example of how OBU can reach out beyond the borders of Oklahoma. With the cost of higher education being a primary concern for students and parents alike, we sometimes forget what a bargain OBU is compared to many of the Christian schools on the east and west coasts. With the exceptional education OBU offers, our next president has a great opportunity to tell the OBU story around the country and to the world. In addition, since OBU turns out more Baptist missionaries than any other school in the country, OBU's international impact is tremendous. I think many of the international students that come to OBU, come because an OBU alumnus is in their country sharing the Gospel. Our next president not only needs to be able to connect on a global level, but understand what a tremendous opportunity exists for OBU students to be world-changers.

**Q:** What is the committee hoping to identify for the next president in the way that person works with the faculty?

There is a lot of discussion about that. Dr. Bob Agee, OBU's president emeritus, made the comment to us – and I've said it several times – that “being the president of OBU is not an entry level position.” It would benefit the candidate to be experienced in their understanding of how an academic institution works. They should understand how to develop and support academic programs, relate to and lead the faculty, as well as understand the business aspects of a university. The university has to grow financially and through student

recruitment. There are a lot of dynamics to leading a university, and they are going to have to come in and hit the ground running. The ideal candidate is going to have the skill sets and experiences that have prepared them to assume that position without a huge learning curve.

However, if someone is a tremendous leader in ministry but has little experience in Christian higher education experience, that fact will not necessarily exclude them from consideration. Vice versa, if someone has incredible experience in Christian higher education, but not a whole lot of experience in ministry, we're not going to exclude them. We are evaluating the candidates on their merits, but we feel that because of the nature of OBU and its relationship with the state and the churches that they are going to need to be experienced, or quickly gain experience, in both.

**Q: Having formed criteria of things that need to be addressed for the next leader, and making sure you have cast a broad net in letting people know a search is under way, what is the process that you are following related to a timeline?**

One of the greatest luxuries we have is the fact that John Parrish is providing incredible interim leadership. We understand that the new president who comes in won't have to reorganize a leaderless ship, but they are going to have to catch up because OBU is continuing on and moving forward. That is a luxury we have, but one we are not going to abuse. We are working diligently to select the next president as quickly as possible, while making sure we are doing as thorough a job as possible. You know, there is a tension in that. Although we have internally discussed timelines, we also recognize God's timing is different from ours. We definitely want God's person for the job, so we're going to take the time and invest the time to make sure that the selection is right.

**Q: What is the nature of the committee meetings? Is there a basic tenor of the meetings?**

Clearly, prayer is a critical part of the meetings. We constantly pray for guidance and for wisdom beyond our own abilities. There is a lot of deliberation and discussion. I think it is important that we don't have a committee of "yes men." We have a committee of very knowledgeable, experienced people from diverse backgrounds that all bring a degree of expertise and skill to the process. It is iron sharpening iron in a lot of ways. Although the process at times is lengthy and our meetings are long, the results are going to be better because of the rigor that went into the decision-making process.

**Q: Has the committee decided on an interview process?**

The process we envision would include having the final candidates come on campus. They will have an opportunity to meet with the Faculty Council, to meet with the administrative leadership, and to meet with leadership of the student body, all before the trustees would ultimately vote and elect the next president. When I talked about being relational, it is so important that we build consensus because of the long-term impact that the president of OBU will have. If you look back, OBU's presidents have served for 10, 20 years. It is not a revolving door, so we want to make sure the process is thorough and that, once the selection is done, the president is going to come in and have the support of the institution and everyone around. ♦

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*When Stephen Allen talks about the importance of praying for guidance in the search process, he speaks with a high degree of personal understanding. Bison Hill wasn't exactly top-of-mind when he was growing up in suburban Boston, Mass.*

*The son of Southern Baptist church planters graduated from OBU in 1995 with a degree in political science. He completed a juris doctorate from Vanderbilt University School of Law in 1998, then returned to Oklahoma, working with a law firm in Tulsa for eight years before joining ONEOK Inc. in 2006. He is vice president and associate general counsel with the firm.*

*Stephen and his wife, Rachel, are members of Calvary Baptist Church in Broken Arrow. Read more about Stephen's path to OBU online at [www.okbu.edu/magazine](http://www.okbu.edu/magazine).*

## The Presidential Search Committee

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Stephen Allen, attorney, Tulsa (Chairman)  
Dr. Alton Fannin, pastor, First Baptist Church, Ardmore  
Lisa Fillmore, pharmacist, Ada  
Rev. Nick Garland, pastor, First Baptist Church, Broken Arrow  
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Bruce Sanders, pastor, North Fork Baptist Church, Eufaula  
Richard Streeter, financial planner, Claremore

### Ex-Officio Members

Ray Griffin, 2007 president, OBU Alumni Association  
Dr. Bill Hagen, 2007-08 OBU Faculty Council chairman  
Abigail Jeffers, 2007-08 SGA president  
Dr. Anthony Jordan, executive director, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma



# Rhetta

"The journey has been incredible for me.  
From A to Z, I've loved it."

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Rhetta Hudson enjoys wearing hats. In her 37 years of serving in OBU's music education department, she has worn enough to start her own fashion line.

There is the teaching hat, which coordinates nicely with an administrative hat. Rhetta has taught voice and related courses, has served as coordinator of the voice department for a decade, and served as head of the music education department for 15 years. She also has served as assistant dean of the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts.

Then there are the hats she wears while performing. She has filled leading roles in many musicals, including *Hello Dolly*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Sound of Music*, *Gypsy*, *South Pacific* and *Oklahoma*.

Rhetta also has served on an array of OBU committees and is an active volunteer in the Shawnee community, sharing her talents and expertise.

At the end of the spring semester, she boxed up one of her hats as she retired from her post as associate professor of music.

Rhetta moved to Shawnee in 1966, after teaching at Oklahoma City's John Marshall High School. A teaching friend mentioned her name to Dean Angell, who called her for an interview.

"The interview was so totally different than how we hire today," she said. "He had me sing a song, which he accompanied. He had me play a piece of music on the piano, and he had me sight-read a hymn. Then he said, 'you're hired.'"

"Dean Angell had an uncanny knack for hiring folks," she said. "He hired wonderful faculty members. He was a wonderful man to work under, and with pride I can say that I was his last person to hire."

When Jim Woodward came on board as dean, he named Hudson assistant dean and chairperson of the voice department.

"Dean Woodward was the best conductor I have ever been under," she said. "He was an impeccable rehearsal technician, and he could draw the music out of the performance. It was something to behold."

"Being his assistant dean, I really took care of the nitty gritty because he did not like to do the detail work," she said. "And this was before computers. Everything was done by hand; no email. You knocked on doors."

Splitting teaching between music education and voice, Rhetta influenced many students who have built successful music careers.



"I've had students go on to fine programs and music conservatories," she said. "I had students who graduated from the New York Academy of Arts. More and more of them are performing now than in my early years. Many are teaching in colleges and universities.

"One of my students, Lloyd Holt, has just finished being in the show *The Promise* in Branson," she said. "Keri Burman is in New York. An agent is asking her to audition which is a very positive step for her. Aubrey Billingsley Chapin, who is working on her doctorate, is teaching adjunct for us this year, and then I have another one who is graduating from the Oberlin Conservatory. Those particular students always excelled at OBU in voice, and I was really blessed to have them."

Rhetta's personal work with theatre has been a blessing for others. Along with stage performance, she has worked as costume designer and music director for many productions.

While she is a regular participant with Shawnee Little Theatre productions, her performance roles have entertained audiences beyond the local community. She has served as music director and played Aunt Eller in *Oklahoma* at Discoveryland near Tulsa.

"I love performing musicals," she said. "I feel like that's my strongest talent. However, I have perhaps done my best work in some oratorical things."

Through her work with Siné Nominé, Shawnee's choral society, she performed a duet with Dr. Paul Hammond, current dean of OBU's College of Fine Arts.

"I enjoyed performing with him," she said. "He is the kindest of men, and I admire him very much. He has brought us into the computer age. Really, it's a different time to teach now than it was then."

Growing up in Norman, Hudson received both her bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Oklahoma. Her training with one of her college educators, though, began much earlier.

"Her name was Dolly Ward, and that's just exactly what she was. She fit 'Dolly,'" said Rhetta. "She was the music education chair at OU, and I had her in first grade all the way through college because she worked with the student teachers at the lab school.

"She invested in me. I look at that and think 'Wow. She really did that for me.' I hope I've done that for some of my kids. Some of them verbalize that, and it always makes you feel good," she said.

Rhetta's influence doesn't stop with her students. She has served on numerous OBU search committees, including searches for three academic vice presidents, and searches for men's and women's basketball coaches. She also chaired the athletic council for OBU's in-depth study on adding a varsity football program.

"That was a greatly discussed issue on campus, and Rhetta's respect among her colleagues aided the overall process," said Dr. Debbie Blue, OBU senior vice president for academic affairs.

OBU has been a part of Rhetta's entire life. Both of her parents attended OBU, and their diplomas, from 1928 and 1930, hang on her office wall. One is made of sheepskin, and the other is on parchment.

Her children also attended OBU and she said they feel blessed by their college experience. "I dragged them to every recital and every program. They thought that was a way of life," she said. "They were very active in lots of different things. It's fun for me now to watch my grandchildren be active in doing the same kind of musical experiences that my children did."

**H**udson has a list of things she wants to do after she retires. Though she doesn't plan to have a private studio, she will continue to be involved in music and theatre, as well as trying other projects.

"The first thing I'm going to do is be a master gardener," she said. "I want to continue volunteering at Shawnee Little Theatre. I'm thinking about doing some child advocacy."

She and her husband, Phil, will continue to faithfully support the OBU basketball teams. They are long-time season ticket holders, and Rhetta often can be heard performing the Star Spangled Banner at home games.

She will try to choose her new hats wisely. "I don't want to get into doing too many things in volunteering that I don't have time for me personally," she said. "I am going to try very hard to say 'no' because Phil and I want to do some traveling. I really am looking forward to doing the grandparenting role more extensively than what I do already."

There is a role she also is carrying forward with OBU. She is leading the University's centennial cookbook committee. As she said, with pun intended, this committee is the "icing on the cake of being here."

"The journey has been incredible for me," she said. "From A to Z, I've loved it." ♦

#### FROM THE TOP:

##### **Little Mary Sunshine**

Rhetta, as Madame Ernestine, with Dr. Jim Farthing, professor emeritus of history.

##### **Jerry's Girls**

Rhetta, with longtime faculty colleague Norma Partridge, left, and local educator Marcia Scott.

##### **Oklahoma**

Rhetta, as Aunt Eller, with her husband, Phil.

##### **Fiddler on the Roof**

Rhetta, as Golda.



# LIBERATOR'S HEART



IF YOU CONNECT WITH PEOPLE AT THE HEART LEVEL,  
GREAT THINGS CAN HAPPEN FOR EVERYONE.

**I**t is a tried-and-true formula in many notable romantic movies. Highly successful businessmen often are portrayed as conquerors who finally bow to the power of love, usually within a two-hour timeframe. Whether portrayed by Humphrey Bogart, Harrison Ford or Richard Gere, the character amasses wealth only to find there is greater value found in relationships of the heart.

Jeremie Kubicek did not have to travel the power path to learn the value of the heart.

As president and chief executive officer of Giant Impact, Jeremie Kubicek, a 1993 OBU graduate, wants to diminish the “conquerors overpower” perspective and emphasize the importance of business relationships with a “liberators empower” philosophy.

“I have always believed that the most important role of a leader in business is to liberate their employees and those they reach to become the best they can be,” he said. “This normally happens at the heart, not just the mind. If you connect with people at the heart level, great things can happen for everyone.”

Growing up in Shawnee, Kubicek took Bible courses at OBU while he was still in high school. He struggled between pursuing a degree in business or one in ministry. He also considered attending Oklahoma State. “Everyone told me I’d be a good minister,” he said.

Instead of heading to Stillwater, Jeremie opted to stay in his hometown and study business. By the end of his first week of college, he had already made lasting friendships.

“I met my wife my first day of school,” he said. “We were friends for a long time and started dating later on. What I value the most about my OBU experience is the friendships I made.”

Jeremie was involved in many activities on campus. He takes pride in the fact his intramural football team, the Toxic Dolphins, had a long run as league champions.

What may have influenced Kubicek the most in his business career was the instruction he received from former OBU business professor John Cragin.

“Dr. Cragin is an amazing teacher. I consider him my college mentor. He challenged me to see how I can use business to influence people,” he said. “He got me to think globally. I am an internationally minded guy because of Dr. Cragin.”

Through Cragin’s influence, Kubicek became a founding member of OBU’s Global Options team in Moscow, Russia. A two-year experience in the former communist country was the start of Jeremie’s professional career. He formed a consulting group that specializing in accounting, training and marketing for American and international firms already in operation.

His team’s work in Russia also led to the development of Moscow Economic School, the first private school in Russia. MES is currently the largest private educational institution in the former Soviet Union. Kubicek’s company worked with Fortune 500 firms and other international businesses during Russia’s formidable transition years to a new economy.

In 1995, Jeremie and his wife, the former Kelly Gobin, a 1991 OBU graduate, moved back to Oklahoma City. They were compelled to return after Kelly’s father, a survivor of the Murrah Building bombing, lost his business because of the tragedy.

Kubicek began working for prominent businessman Kent Humphreys as a regional sales manager for Humphrey’s merchandising and distribution company. In 1998, Jeremie was promoted to vice president of marketing.

"Kent was my next mentor," he said. "I learned a lot from him about the value of people over tactics and the value of integrity. He taught me that relationships were the most important element of business."

In 2002, Jeremie, along with his business partner Matthew Myers, started Giant Partners. The consulting firm helps clients improve their businesses by using biblical examples and principles.

"I had an epiphany," he said. "In my years of management, I'd seen bad leadership, and I wanted good leadership. I wanted others to understand what the qualities of good leadership are."

"In the Bible, we know about David having to fight Goliath," he said. "The true giant in the story was not the loud, proud and boastful Goliath; rather it was David, who was humble and served one greater than himself. In the end, the real Giant won."

Kubicek and Giant Partners were featured in a Christianity Today article last year. His business was described as "using a model Jesus lays out in Matthew 9 and 10 – whether the [client] company is Christian-led or not. Giant enters a village (business) and tries to heal the sick (fix problems), cast out demons (alleviate anxiety), and preach the Good News (encourage executives to live righteously)."

The year he started Giant Partners was also nearly the conclusion of Jeremie's life. He was critically injured in a car wreck in Cancun, Mexico, when a taxi he and Kelly were in was broadsided. While recovering from the accident, he came to another conclusion.

"This is not about me," he said. "I know I could have died in that car wreck, but God let me live. My passion for people has grown because of this. I want to make an impact on millions of people, bringing them one step closer to God."

In February 2007, Giant Partners helped form Giant Impact after acquiring John Maxwell's Maximum Impact and INJOY companies in Atlanta, Ga. Giant Impact has organized conferences in cities across the country and around the world.



Jeremie Kubicek, '93

Jeremie remains involved with his alma mater and has spoken at engagements affiliated with OBU's Paul Dickinson School of Business. He recently served as vice president of the OBU Alumni Association and helped launch OBU's new master's degree program in business administration.

Jeremie and Kelly have three children, Addison, Will and Kate. They now live in the Atlanta area and are active in missional community in their church.

Everywhere Jeremie goes, whether professionally or in his spare time, he encourages people to become liberators by first being liberated. ♦



# DEFINING DECISIONS

What saved Apollo 13 was  
“the problem-solving ability of  
thousands of nerds.”

Don Cooper has made a lot of important decisions. Some seemed insignificant at the time. Some helped shape historic events.

As a physicist for the National Aeronautical and Space Administration, Don solved problems involving the flight of space crafts. One of his most significant achievements was making crash calculations for the legendary Apollo 13 mission. The path to that achievement began on a short road trip in the 1950s.

While a high school student in Oklahoma City, Don traveled to Shawnee with a friend to play basketball one Saturday. That decision to play hoops turned into an offer to attend OBU.

“My friend told me he had to take a test at OBU first,” Don said. “I decided to take the test also. Later, someone at OBU called and offered me a scholarship.”

Don accepted the offer and began studying physics on Bison Hill. Dr. Beryl Clotfelter and Dr. Eugene Lucas were some of his influential teachers. Longtime OBU physics professor C.J. Halley also contributed to Cooper’s education.

Don recalled what happened in Halley’s physics class in early October 1957, the day after the Soviets’ Sputnik orbited the earth.

“Dr. Halley took our class out to an open area by the science building and demonstrated a water-powered rocket,” he said. “I was not impressed. In fact, I remember being concerned that Dr. Halley would chase it into the street, be hit by a car, and I would miss lunch. Never did I dream that, five years later, I would create the equations to get us from earth orbit to the moon.”

As a senior, Don applied to serve in the U.S. Air Force and spent three days at Tinker Air Force Base taking officer candidate tests. About a month before graduation, he received a message to call someone long distance.

“I was 22 and had never made a long distance phone call,” he said. “I knew it must cost a lot of money, and since I had no money, I did not return the call.”

One night, Don was summoned to a pay phone at his dorm. He said a person with a loud German accent was on the line.

“Why haven’t you called me back?” the caller asked. “I told him that I didn’t have the money for a long distance call,” Don said. “He asked how much money I had. When I said, ‘a quarter,’ he belted out the longest laugh I had ever heard, followed by, ‘from now on call me collect!’”

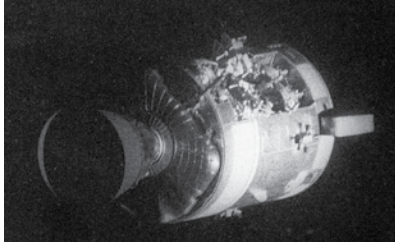
The call was from Al Bromlick, a German mathematician who worked for the U.S. Army. He offered Don the chance to work for the Army Ballistic Missile Agency, and Cooper decided to pursue the opportunity.

Two days after graduation, in June 1960, Don drove to his new job inside Redstone Arsenal near Huntsville, Ala. His first assignment was helping design short-range missiles that could reach 200 miles.

Don was engaged to his soon-to-be wife, Linda Lou Lee, whom he met at OBU when she was a freshman, working in the library. They were married in October 1960.



Don Cooper, '60



#### ◀ Apollo 13

A potential disaster turned into NASA's "successful failure" in April of 1970, when the crew of Apollo 13 used the Lunar Module as a lifeboat to return to Earth. An explosion in the craft's oxygen tanks had crippled the Command Module, preventing a landing on the Moon. COURTESY NASA.GOV

Don took graduate courses at the University of Alabama in Huntsville and in 1961 went to work for NASA. One of his assignments was development of targeting guidance equations to get Apollo 11 from Earth's orbit to the lunar coast trajectory.

His decision to join the nation's race to the moon was relatively easy.

"The technical work for the Army was interesting, but I was beginning to realize that my life's work could not be determining how best to kill people," Don said. "Helping us get to the moon sounded much better."

In 1965, Don and his family moved from Huntsville to Houston, and he went to work for TRW Systems Group, which was the technical contractor for Johnson Space Center. As a member of the Apollo 11 Mission Team, Don was a part of history when man landed on the moon on July 20, 1969.

"I stayed at home to watch the launch with my family," Don said. "It was thrilling to see the beginning of what we all hoped would be a successful mission. The work was an application of what I had learned in school at OBU. It was fun to use your knowledge, but when I saw Apollo 11 lift off, there was a realization that this was serious and our work had better be correct."

Less than a year later, his phone rang about midnight with a request to help Apollo 13 return safely to Earth. Within 15 minutes, Don was at Houston Mission Control with other experts to determine the abort options. He knew there was no room for error.

"We provided the abort options and ran several more cases for different spacecraft positions," he said. "It was about 9 a.m., and we had done all we could."

Don said he went straight to his office, avoiding the media frenzy in the parking lot. Tired and sad, Don sat at his desk and prayed.

The Apollo 13 crew made it back to Earth unharmed. Don surmised what saved Apollo 13 was "the problem-solving ability of thousands of nerds."

After working with NASA and TRW, Don owned a business selling order entry systems and then was chief information officer for a pharmaceutical company. He retired in 2002.

Linda died in 1993 after a battle with breast cancer. At the time, Don wrote a lengthy letter to his grandchildren who

were too young to really know their grandmother. He told them about her and gave advice that she would want them to have. The letter, bound in book form, is included in the OBU Historical Collection in the Mabee Learning Center.

Don has since married Mary Lou Click and enjoys spending time with their children and grandchildren. He also is an active tennis player, winning several Senior Olympics tennis gold medals.

No matter how simple or grave the results have been from the many decisions Don has made, his philosophy remained the same.

"It has been my experience that God will intervene at critical decisions in your life if you seek his guidance," he said. "The result will be a better life than you would have chosen on your own." ♦



To win a bet that he could do it, Cooper crafted a pin-hole camera in 1959 while an OBU student. He recalls the process, which included two friends: "The original was from a 35 mm piece of film I stuck on cardboard with Scotch tape in a room with no light in the basement of Thurmond Hall. Constructed the cardboard box in the light and then turned off the light to "load the film." I had used a pin to make a small hole. Covering the hole with my finger, I carried it outside, found a rock to hold it down in the wind, lined up Ralph and Don, took my finger off and ran to my spot (center). The exposure was about five seconds as I remember. Ran back, covered the hole and went back to the basement to develop the film. I was a physics lab assistant to Dr. Clotfelter and had access to the closet we called the dark room. This was a shot in the dark, so to speak." All three of the pictured Bison went on to complete doctorates. Dr. Ralph Faudree, '61, left, is provost for the University of Memphis. Dr. Don Kouri, '60, right, has retired from a chemistry, mathematics and physics faculty position with the University of Houston.

Marvin Hall is an influencer.

He's been one all of his life. As a farmer, grocer, pastor, business manager and Christian financial counselor, he has influenced the lives of others. At the age of 89, he's still at it.

# INFLUENCING GROWTH



Dr. Marvin Hall

**A** product of the Great Depression, Marvin taught Sunday School as a teenager in his western Oklahoma hometown of Sayre. At 21, he married Lois Moore. It was the start of a partnership which has spanned nearly seven decades.

"When we got married, we barely could make a living at farming," he said. "For nine months, I worked in a country store, and that's how I learned the grocery business. From 1946-49, I had a grocery store in Dill City. In my third year of the grocery business, I knew God called me to preach. I started preaching 60 years ago."

The career change did not come as a surprise to his wife. "I knew he was going to surrender to preach, and he had never said a word to me," said Lois, recalling the Sunday morning

Marvin made his calling public. "He wanted to sell the store, and he found somebody in a couple of weeks to buy it."

Marvin started supply preaching in Lone Oak after he received a call from the associational missionary. In less than a month, the church called him as pastor. He was later called as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Norman. That was the first step in a gradual move east.

By the mid-1950s, Marvin was taking classes at OBU. The Hall family had expanded to five. Marvin and Lois and their young children, Marvin Jr., Sandy and Vivian, made the move to Shawnee.

Several of his young professors would become Bison Hill legends. He studied religion under Dr. Rowena Strickland and



“We had a lot of young people from our churches attend OBU, and I know they are now impacting lives.”

Dr. James Timberlake. He also enjoyed biology courses taught by Dr. Sheridan Lee and English and history classes taught by Dr. James Ralph Scales.

“Sheridan Lee always started the class with prayer,” said Marvin. “And then he would say, ‘Today, we’re going to find out how God made it.’ That’s how he taught science.”

Marvin was pastor of Shawnee’s Trinity Baptist Church while he was in college. The Halls’ fourth child, Randy, was born just months before Marvin went in view of a call to a church in northeast Oklahoma. He would serve at Bartlesville’s Trinity Baptist Church for six years.

While leading churches to expand their facilities, Marvin developed a strong relationship with the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma. As a pastor in Norman, he led his church to build a new education building with assistance from the BFO.

“We were the fourth church to borrow from the Foundation, and I got acquainted with them through their support,” he said. “Then when I was in Bartlesville we built an education building, but the committee said ‘you can’t borrow from the Baptist Foundation.’ The next week, I showed them the paperwork for \$8,000 from the Baptist Foundation. They were shocked that I could get it.”

In 1965, a BFO representative came to Bartlesville to make an offer to Marvin – not for a loan, but for a position with the foundation staff.

“I was sitting in my office, and someone called me and asked if he could visit with me,” he said, recalling the scheduled appointment. “By the end of the conversation, I had accepted the job.”

It was an opportunity for Marvin to have a positive influence on other Oklahoma Baptists. He could help them make the most of their financial resources to expand Baptist work in the state.

For 20 years, Marvin worked as an executive for the BFO. He helped numerous churches and ministries through financial management.

“The Baptist Foundation had \$6 million when I came on board,” he said. “Now they have \$250 million, so it’s really grown.”

The partnership he and Lois formed 68 years ago served him extremely well as he traversed Oklahoma for the foundation.

“Mom stayed at home while he traveled all over Oklahoma,” recalls Vivian. “When my brothers and I were out of the home, she traveled with him. She was an ideal pastor’s wife and confidant.”

Along with supporting churches, the Halls also are passionate about helping students receive a Christian education. Their desire grew from the influence of a man who helped Sandy and Vivian attend Marvin’s alma mater. Sandy graduated in 1969 and Vivian graduated in 1971.

“A farmer from Beaver gave us money for our kids’ education,” he said. “We were so thankful that we had the help to send our kids to school that we wanted to set up a scholarship for other kids to go that couldn’t make it otherwise.”

Marvin and Lois made it possible for many students to attend OBU through a scholarship fund they established in honor of Lois’ parents. The fund is now endowed with more than \$100,000 and continues to grow.

“I love OBU because I love the professors and how they open the classes with prayer,” he said. “We had a lot of young people from our churches attend OBU, and I know they are now impacting lives.”

Just as Marvin influenced many people, he also encouraged them to do the same.

Marvin and Lois continue to live in Oklahoma City, and it appears his life has come full circle. He is teaching every Sunday morning, just like he did as a teenager in Sayre. ♦



**At 21, Marvin married Lois Moore. It was the start of a partnership which has spanned nearly seven decades. The Halls shared a vision for supporting Oklahoma Baptist ministry. Today, they continue that legacy through an OBU scholarship.**

## WMU Dorm Closes For Major Renovation

Although it means a group of freshman women will not be part of an 80-year tradition, OBU is taking significant steps in improvement of on-campus housing this year.

In their spring meeting, OBU trustees approved a campus housing plan which includes closing of OBU's historic WMU Memorial Dormitory for the 2008-09 academic year. The University's oldest continuing

dormitory, WMU Dormitory opened in 1928. While the University has completed annual maintenance work at the facility, it has not been significantly renovated since 1980. The 202-bed dormitory has traditionally housed freshman women.

To accommodate the major capital project, OBU is transitioning MacArthur East Apartments from male to female housing for the 2008-09 year. Opened in 1989, MacArthur East Apartments accommodates 32 students, and has been a men's

residence facility throughout its 18-year history.

Male students displaced by the apartment transition were offered housing in OBU-owned houses on the southern edge of the campus.

In addition to changing the residential structure for MacArthur Apartments, OBU plans to fully utilize Kerr Memorial Dormitory. The three-story facility on University Street has not been fully occupied by female students in recent years.

The WMU renovation includes new painting, furniture, carpeting, and other enhancements for residence rooms. In addition, the building's fire alarm system will be enhanced.

OBU will invest \$1.1 million in the renovation effort, including nearly \$800,000 for the WMU Dormitory project, and additional funds for improvements to MacArthur Apartments and Kerr Dormitory.

## Nursing Students Surpass National Exam Average

Adding their names to the program's strong tradition of success, OBU nursing students had a 90.91 percent pass rate on the 2007 National Council Licensing Exam, according to a recent report from the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

The OBU students surpassed the national average of 85.47 percent and the Oklahoma average of 82.07 percent. The exam is required for a student to be licensed as a registered nurse.

"We have worked very hard on our pass rate on NCLEX," said Dr. Lana Bolhouse, dean of OBU's School of Nursing.

Multiple steps must be completed before a nurse can safely enter the profession. The steps include graduating from a recognized nursing program, meeting specific requirements of the state board of nursing and passing the NCLEX examination

"We have historically had high pass rates," said Bolhouse. "This year's pass rate is in the range which we expect from our graduates."

A total of 44 OBU nursing students took the exam in 2007.



## Compton Fills New Church Relations Post

A face familiar to many OBU alumni is becoming a more visible representative of the University. Odus Compton has rejoined the OBU staff, filling the new post of director of church relations.

Compton, who was OBU's director of religious activities from 1992 to 2002, will be part of the campus ministry staff, working with churches, associations and denominational staff in Oklahoma. He joined the staff on June 1, 2008.

In the newly created role, Compton will work with Oklahoma Baptists in coordinating special events and programs, including OBU Day observances, Falls Creek, and church partnership scholarships.

"As director of church relations, Odus will offer expertise as a preacher, organizer, and team builder," said Dale Griffin, OBU campus minister.

A native of Ardmore, Compton graduated from OBU in 1987 with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology. He became OBU's assistant campus minister in 1989. He was Baptist Student Union director at Maui Community College in Maui, Hawaii, for the 1987-88 academic year.

Compton resigned from the OBU staff in 2002 to become co-founder of Heritage Property Holdings Inc. in Norman. He has served as president of the company for the past six years.

Griffin said Compton's experience with collegiate ministry provides a strong base for his new role.

"Odus offered leadership through 13 years of collegiate ministry at OBU and the product is a large number of former students serving as pastors, missionaries and ministry volunteers in Oklahoma and around the world," said Griffin.

Compton's wife, the former Paula Kaye Paschall, is a 1989 OBU graduate. The Comptons are members of Emmaus Baptist Church in Moore. They have eight children, Blake, 17; Caleb, 13; Lindsey, 10, Rachel, 8, Micah, 7; Nate, 5; Noelle, 3; and Charity, 20 months.

## Board Approves Budget, Faculty Promotions

OBU trustees approved a \$38.6 million operating budget for the 2008-09 academic year during their spring meeting on the campus. The budget includes a 4.74 percent increase in cost of attendance for the upcoming year. The \$996 overall increase in the cost of tuition, fees and room and board is less than half of last year's \$1,998 increase in cost.

## Teacher Ed Program Nationally Recognized



OBU's teacher education program recently gained national recognition from the Association for Childhood Education International.

To be listed as "nationally recognized," the program met the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education's standards of accreditation without conditions. The program was reviewed by ACEI representatives.

"This recognition means that our candidates, programs and faculty are having a positive impact on preschool through senior high student learning in our schools," said Dr. John Farris, chair of OBU's division of teacher education.

Farris said national recognition from ACEI reflects the "standard of excellence in the elementary teacher education at OBU." ACEI representatives gave a "rigorous external and impartial review by education professionals, and determined that OBU's elementary education program meets the national standards of ACEI," he said.

"Research has shown that teacher candidates who graduate from national recognized and accredited institutions are better prepared for initial licensing and advanced board certification," Farris said.

Randy L. Smith, OBU senior vice president for business affairs, presented the board an overview of the University's proposed plan for revenue and expenses before board members voted to approve the budget.

The University's tuition for a full-time student during the 2008-09 year will be \$15,468. The total cost for tuition, fees, room and board will be \$21,990. That is compared to a total of \$20,994 this year.

Smith said OBU's total cost for the current academic year is at 67 percent of the national average for four-year private universities, and 81 percent of the average for the southwest region of private universities.

In his state-of-the-University report to the board, OBU Interim President John W. Parrish said the University has met or exceeded many of its goals for student recruitment for the upcoming year. OBU officials anticipate more than 415 new freshmen will enroll



for the 2008-09 academic year. The university had a total of 315 new freshmen for the 2007-08 year.

In other business, the board approved promotions for six OBU faculty members. Dr. Brian Camp, who joined the OBU faculty in 2004, was promoted from associate professor to professor of family science. Dr. John Powell, who joined the faculty in 2004, was promoted from associate professor to professor of history. Dr. Karen Longest was promoted from the rank of assistant professor to associate professor of psychology. Three faculty were promoted from the rank of instructor to assistant professor. Those are Beth Green-Nagle, assistant professor of Spanish; Conchita Hansford, assistant professor of music; and Dr. Keith Whitmore, assistant professor of music.

## BJO Takes On International Gigs

For eight days in May, a select group of OBU students got a taste of the life of an international musician.

The Bison Jazz Orchestra left Shawnee May 18 for a concert tour in Brazil. It was a milestone event for the group, and offered an array of opportunities for the 19 OBU students.

"It gave them a good idea of what it is like to be a gigging musician," said Dr. Kevin Pruiett, BJO director. "We traveled a lot and played in front of some large crowds."

Pruett said the idea for the tour surfaced more than two years ago. Trent Argo, OBU's dean of enrollment management, has coordinated OBU recruitment efforts in Brazil for several years. He thought the jazz band could offer the Brazilians a first-hand encounter with OBU students, along with musical entertainment.

"It's the biggest thing this group has ever done," said Pruiett. "To do a major tour on our own allowed us to develop a better identity of who we are."

Pruett used the tour as a chance to challenge the 20-member group. As they started the 2007-08 year, group members committed themselves to making the most of the opportunity.

"The level of dedication and the level of expertise we've developed has been strong," said Pruiett. "The quality of music we are playing now is very high."

Like other OBU musical groups, the BJO is not reserved for music majors.

"About 45 percent of the students are non-majors," said Pruiett, who noted that several never performed in a jazz group before attending OBU. "In some cases it is never too late to start," he said.

## Blitz Week Addresses African Water Woes

In 325 African communities, 325 wells have been built, providing each community clean water. This spring, OBU's Blitz Week committee led the charge to build four more.

Through a week of events and competitions, Blitz Week supported Blood:Water Mission, an organization working to provide clean water and clean blood in African communities.

"We saw an opportunity to make a difference in a community other than Shawnee," said Kristi Zevenbergen, a senior from Arvada, Colo., who co-chaired the event. "Blitz Week has always focused on the local needs, but we felt drawn to address a global need this year."

The week included an array of activities, from a faculty/student

basketball game to a concert by a Christian rap artist.

Blood:Water Mission was founded by Christian musical group Jars of Clay. Through Blood:Water Mission, groups and organizations help provide medication to fight HIV/AIDS, education about unclean blood, and new wells in communities with dirty or limited water.

## McWilliams Fills Dean's Post Again

Two members of OBU's School of Christian Service faculty returned to familiar settings in early 2008.

Dr. Mike McGough, who had served as dean of OBU's Joe L. Ingram School of Christian Service since January 2007, resigned to accept a pastorate in his hometown of Niceville, Florida.

With McGough's departure, Dr. Warren McWilliams, OBU's Auguie Henry professor of Bible, moved to the post of interim dean of the School of Christian Service. It is the longtime professor's third stint as interim dean of the school.

McGough moved to OBU in early 2007 after 19 years on the faculty of the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary.

McWilliams, a 1968 OBU graduate,



**McWILLIAMS**

joined the faculty in 1976. He completed a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and earned both

the master of arts and Ph.D. degrees from Vanderbilt University.

# New Harris Academic Chairs Filled By Farris, Robinson

Two OBU faculty members were installed to newly created academic chairs in education and nursing during the University's annual awards chapel in early May.

Funded by OBU alumnus Lawrence C. Harris, and named to honor Harris and his late wife, Marion V. Harris, the new chairs provide salary assistance for the chairs' holders.

Dr. John Farris is the inaugural holder of the Lawrence C. Harris and Marion V. Harris Chair of Education. Wanda Robinson is the inaugural holder of the Lawrence C. Harris and Marion V.

Harris Chair of Nursing. The endowed nursing post is the first in OBU's history.

The two academic chairs were created in July 2007 by Harris, a 1941 OBU graduate.

Harris was born in Pleasant Valley. The central Oklahoma community, which was north of Coyle on the Cimarron River, no longer exists. He attended public schools in Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas. He resided in Guthrie when he entered OBU in 1937, majoring in economics. Mrs. Harris was born in Roswell, N.M.,

and attended public schools there. She graduated from Indiana University with a degree in speech and English in 1940. She died in 2004, at the age of 86.

At OBU, Harris was a quarterback on the Bison football team. During his senior season, OBU won the Oklahoma Collegiate Conference championship with an 8-2-1 record.

He was in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, serving in the Pacific Theater. The Harris were married in 1942. Following the war, they lived in Roswell. He worked in

*Continued on next page*

## OBU ATHLETICS UPDATE

### Monsen To Lead Volleyball Program

Anna Monsen has taken on a significant task. Her resume indicates she may be up to the challenge.



MONSEN

Monsen, who was named OBU's head volleyball coach at the start of the

spring semester, is a former Big XII co-Libero of the Year. She will be in charge of restarting a Lady Bison program which has been dormant for 21 years.

Monsen, who attended high school in Wisconsin, played four seasons at the University of Oklahoma. She

was Academic All-Big XII from 2004-06 and Co-Libero of the Year in 2006. She was OU's Most Improved Player in 2004. Monsen also ran track for the Sooners for one season, earning All-Conference honors in the heptathlon.

She is tasked with rebuilding volleyball on Bison Hill. OBU started volleyball in 1975, but the program was discontinued after the 1987 season.

Monsen is working on her master's degree at OU. She served as head coach at Carl Albert High School last season, leading the team to its first state tournament appearance.

"We're excited to have her here at OBU and look forward to her resurrecting the volleyball program," said Dr. Norris Russell, OBU director of athletics.

Volleyball is a rising sport in the Sooner Athletic Conference with John Brown, Lubbock Christian, Oklahoma City, St. Gregory's, Southern Nazarene

and Wayland Baptist currently participating, along with new member Mid-America Christian coming on board last fall.

### Bison Just Miss NAIA Title

OBU's Bison came within half a second of winning the 2008 NAIA Indoor Track and Field Championship this spring.

Azusa Pacific University entered the final event with a 63.75 to 58 lead and finished sixth to pick up a point in the 4x400 relay. OBU needed a second- or first-place finish, but came in third at 3:13.51. Doane was second at 3:13.05. The final team score put APU ahead 64.75 to 64.

The Lady Bison finished fourth in the NAIA, as Wayland Baptist edged Azusa Pacific 71-70 to win the women's team title.

For more about OBU Athletics, visit [www.okbu.edu/athletics](http://www.okbu.edu/athletics).

the abstract and title business for six years before entering the oil and gas industry as an independent land man. Fifty-five years later, he is still in the energy business on a limited basis.

Mrs. Harris devoted her time to raising their three children: Judy, Scott, and Abby. She also was very involved in church activities and supported education as a member of a PEO Chapter and a local Shakespeare Club.

Mr. Harris served for 10 years as a member of the Roswell Board of Education. He served on the board of directors of the National School Boards Association for five years; and served the group's executive committee, representing 11 western states.

"Endowed chairs and professorships are the most distinguished teaching posts at OBU and are awarded only to professors who are outstanding teachers and who have demonstrated exceptional ability in their academic disciplines," said John W. Parrish, OBU interim president, during the installations in Raley Chapel.

"The gift, which provides an endowed academic position, is invested in the University's permanent endowment fund, and the annual earnings are used to assist with salary compensation," said Parrish.

Farris is associate professor of education and chair of the teacher education division. He was a school administrator and teacher for 26 years, and also worked as a college professor and administrator before joining the OBU faculty as an assistant professor of education in 1999. After two years as chair of the education department at Cumberland College, he returned to OBU as an associate professor in 2004. He became director

of the teacher education division in 2006.

He earned a doctor of education degree in educational administration from the University of the Pacific in 1983.

Robinson joined the OBU faculty full-time in 1999 as assistant professor of nursing. She previously taught at OBU from 1991-99 as an adjunct clinical nursing instructor. She was a partner and founder of Advanced Mental Health Care from 1994-2002.

Robinson received her bachelor's degree from OBU in 1986. She earned a master's degree in psychiatric mental-health nursing from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in 1994. She has completed study toward a doctorate in nursing at Texas Woman's University and Indiana University-Purdue University.

OBU has 14 endowed academic chairs and 11 endowed academic professorships.



## Momaday Shares Insights On Campus

Dr. N. Scott Momaday, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and Oklahoma's Centennial Poet Laureate, spoke at OBU this spring. The noted author discussed the "origins, realizations and possibilities of language" during a Native American Heritage chapel service. He also visited with OBU students while on the campus. The appearance was hosted by OBU's Distinguished Speakers Committee. A Lawton native, Momaday was the first Native American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize, receiving the honor in 1969 for his first novel, "House Made of Dawn." The poet, artist, playwright and scholar received the National Medal of Arts in 2007. Founded in 2003, the Distinguished Speakers Committee's is comprised of eight OBU students. The DSC sponsors an annual academic lecture intended to "broaden the learning experience, expand critical thinking, challenge traditional thought, and encourage conversation among various disciplines of study."



## Mullins To Head New Success Center

While OBU enjoys one of the best four-year graduation rates in the state, the University has created a new post to help enhance student success.

During the spring semester, Monica Mullins, longtime student development administrator, was named assistant dean of enrollment management and director of student success.

Mullins will officially move to the position on August 1, 2008, directing the University's Student Success Center.

"OBU has been blessed with significant student success throughout our history. We don't take that for granted," said Dr. Debbie Blue, OBU senior vice president for academic affairs. "Today, with new tools available to enhance the learning process, we are pleased to create a focused student success program which can build on a strong tradition."

The Student Success Center will offer tutoring in most of the core subjects as well as mathematics, chemistry, physics, accounting and economics. Students also will find help in writing research papers and in general study strategies.

A 1988 OBU graduate, Mullins joined the University staff as an admissions counselor in 1990. She became director of residential life and student activities in 1993. She was promoted to assistant dean of students in 1998. In addition, she has served as an instructor of language and literature at OBU since 2003.

Mullins completed a master's degree in college student affairs from Azusa Pacific University, and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

## Graduate School Expands With Master's Degree In Nursing

*New Program Bolstered By \$2.5 Million Grant*

Addressing a national nursing shortage, OBU's International Graduate School has launched a new master of science in nursing degree program.

The new program has been bolstered by a \$2.5 million grant from an anonymous donor.

Based in the IGS facility at 111 North Harrison in downtown Oklahoma City, the MSN degree program will start its first cohort in August 2008. The 18-month program's inaugural graduating class will complete study in February 2010.

OBU's MSN degree focuses on nursing education. The University received approval for the graduate program earlier this spring from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

According to the program's mission statement, the mission of the nursing graduate program is "to prepare nurses for advanced nursing roles through the delivery of health care with diverse populations and through leadership roles in rapidly changing health care systems. This is accomplished through the integration of advanced professional knowledge and Judeo-Christian beliefs."

The OBU program will accept 15 students per cohort.

The major program grant from an anonymous donor will provide full-tuition scholarships to 12 students per cohort. In addition, two students in each cohort will receive graduate teaching assistantships in addition to the tuition waivers.

The grant, which is facilitated through the Communities Foundation of Oklahoma, is designed to "help combat the shortage of nursing instructors at Oklahoma's colleges and universities," according to a foundation news release.

OBU and Southern Nazarene University each received a \$2.5 million grant. The funds are awarded in \$500,000 annual amounts, based on each institution's successful completion of annual program goals.

The grants also provide funds for faculty support and development, instructional technology and supplies, and marketing costs.

OBU's undergraduate nursing program currently benefits from a \$1.4 million grant provided by the anonymous donor.

For more information on the IGS program, visit [igs.okbu.edu](http://igs.okbu.edu) or call 405.319.8470.



Looking to the future while celebrating the past, OBU will commemorate its Centennial Year during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years. The University unveiled its centennial logo this spring, built on the theme, "Proudly Stand On Bison Hill: The First 100 Years."

"This graphic image connects several elements of the University into one logo," OBU Interim President John W. Parrish, who also chairs the centennial committee.

The stately columns and main gable of historic Shawnee Hall frame the University's current "OBU" logo lettering, which sits above the centennial theme. Built by the city of Shawnee, Shawnee Hall opened in 1914 and is the University's oldest structure.

"We believe this clean, attractive logo will serve us well in our multi-year celebration of OBU's centennial," said Parrish. "We have planned a variety of centennial events which will incorporate this logo. The visual element will continually remind us that we have much for which to be thankful in this time of celebration."

The centennial committee has structured a celebration which will officially kick off at the start of the 2009 fall semester. Special Homecoming celebrations are planned for November 13-14, 2009, and November 12-13, 2010. The centerpiece event of the commemoration will be Founders' Day, February 10, 2010. In addition, students who graduate in May 2010 and December 2010 will be recognized as members of the University's Centennial Class.

Among the Centennial projects are completion of a 100-year pictorial history book, creation of an OBU centennial cookbook, special dramatic and musical performances, and an array of academic presentations. To stay up-to-date on Centennial events and activities, visit [www.okbu.edu/100](http://www.okbu.edu/100).



## Centennial Celebration Highlights

September 2, 2009	First Centennial Convocation
November 13-14, 2009	Homecoming Centennial Celebration Kick-off
December 5, 2009	First Centennial Hanging of the Green
February 10, 2010	Centennial Founders' Day Chapel and Evening Worship Celebration
March 4-5, 2010	OBU Board of Trustees Spring Meeting/ Centennial Celebration
April 17, 2010	Centennial President's Council Dinner
May 2010	Shawnee Community Centennial Celebration
May 22, 2010	Centennial Spring Commencement
August 19-24, 2010	Centennial Back-to-School Celebration
September 1, 2010	Second Centennial Convocation
November 12-13, 2010	Centennial Homecoming Celebration
November 15-17, 2010	Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma hosted by OBU
December 4, 2010	Second Centennial Hanging of the Green
December 17, 2010	Centennial Winter Commencement

Throughout the celebration, OBU will host Centennial concerts, dramatic presentations, lectures and guest speakers on the campus, and Centennial alumni events around the country.

Visit [www.okbu.edu/100](http://www.okbu.edu/100) to keep up with the Centennial activities.



## Telling The Story

Transforming lives is a fairly robust process. This spring, a team of OBU students, faculty and staff sought to describe that process for a group of visiting educators. They developed a Showcase Room for members of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools site visit team. Through the Showcase Room in the upper level of the Geiger Center, the team got a visual depiction of how OBU lives out its mission. Large photographs – with related quotes from students and alumni – were on display, supported by vignettes from current students. Throughout the Alumni Notes section, select images and accompanying quotes give a glimpse of the Showcase display. You can find the collection of images online at [www.okbu.edu](http://www.okbu.edu).

Worship at OBU has allowed me to better integrate the different aspects of my life. The people I study with, hang out with, and live with are also the people I worship with.

– Veronica Pistone

*Biblical Languages – Blue Springs, Missouri*



# *A Living Symbol of OBU*



When Dr. John W. Raley became president of OBU in 1934 he began working on ways to improve the appearance of the campus. In his 1940 report to the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma he presented



a list of improvements to OBU grounds and buildings which included the rock wall around the campus (a memorial of the Class of 1935); the illuminated fountain, (a memorial of the Class of 1938); and the large “OBU” hedge on the northeast corner of the campus. This design was installed under the supervision of T.L. Archer, who served as OBU superintendent of buildings and grounds. This photograph at the top, taken in November 1938, shows the design in its early life. Today, the hedge quickly identifies the campus to those traveling along Kickapoo and MacArthur streets.



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