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OBU

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OKLAHOMA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

JOHN WESLEY RALEY CHAPEL

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We are about to celebrate 100 years of transforming the lives of students and preparing them to serve all over the world. Our upcoming Centennial Celebration is shaping up to be a year to remember. The OBU legacy reaches back to 1906, when Baptists joined together in Shawnee to form the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. One of its first tasks was to appoint a planning commission to establish a Baptist university for the new state of Oklahoma on schedule for statehood in 1907. Their foresight and actions led to OBU's founding on February 10, 1910. As we celebrate 100 years in 2009 and 2010, we will have many opportunities to reflect on the vision and the sacrifice of those God used to make Oklahoma Baptist University a reality.



Our University thrives today because we have a storied history of investment – of energy, resources, and time – in this enterprise of distinctively Christian higher education. The efforts over the decades have been richly blessed. God allowed OBU to move through growing pains of those earliest years by blessing the sacrifice of our administrators and faculty members. OBU survived the Great Depression as God sustained faculty members who took their “paychecks” in the form of food and livestock. We were sustained – and even bolstered – during World War II when our campus community contributed to the nation’s work as Army Air Corps soldiers trained on Bison Hill. There are so many stories to be told, and we will explore them in the coming months.

Through all of the years, there has been a constant which sometimes is overlooked in conversations about individual commitment; that constant is the decision of Oklahoma Baptist families to send their children to study on Bison Hill. Our enterprise would have failed in its infancy had we not been in a shared mission with Oklahoma Baptist families. The results of our shared mission and work are immeasurable. We note with gratitude the number of doctors, teachers, broadcasters, musicians, pastors, scientists, and missionaries who have graced our halls and then served with distinction. But only in glory will we be able to measure the far-reaching influence they have had on the lives of others. Our task is one in which the final results cannot be completely tallied in earthly numbers.

Today, our shared mission continues. We see clear evidence of the academic achievement of our students. We see clear evidence of the spiritual growth and active service of our students. We see a bright, expanding future for OBU. Now is the time – perhaps more than ever – that we should be in a shared ministry with Oklahoma Baptist families and churches as we equip godly leaders to make a difference in our rapidly changing world. We have reason to celebrate!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. Whitlock". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'D' and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David W. Whitlock
OBU President

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OBU MAGAZINE STAFF

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Editor

Marty O'Gwynn

Writers

Misty Hamilton, Julie McGowan,
Marty O'Gwynn,
Kristi Zevenbergen

Creative Services

Chele Marker

Photographers

William Pope, Jason Jones (cover)

View OBU Magazine Online

www.okbu.edu/obumagazine

Contact OBU Magazine

obumagazine@okbu.edu
405.878.2111

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

President

Dr. David W. Whitlock

Provost and Executive Vice President for Campus Life

Dr. R. Stanton Norman

Executive Vice President for Business and Administrative Services

Randy L. Smith

Interim Vice President for Development

Bill Holley

CONTACT INFORMATION

(area code 405)

Academic Center	878.2023
Admissions	878.2033
Alumni	878.2706
Business Office	878.2020
Campus Ministry	878.2377
Career Services	878.2416
Development	878.2703
Mabee Learning Center	878.2251
President's Office	878.2002
Public Relations	878.2111
Residential Life	878.2404
Student Development	878.2406
Student Financial Services	878.2016
Switchboard	275.2850

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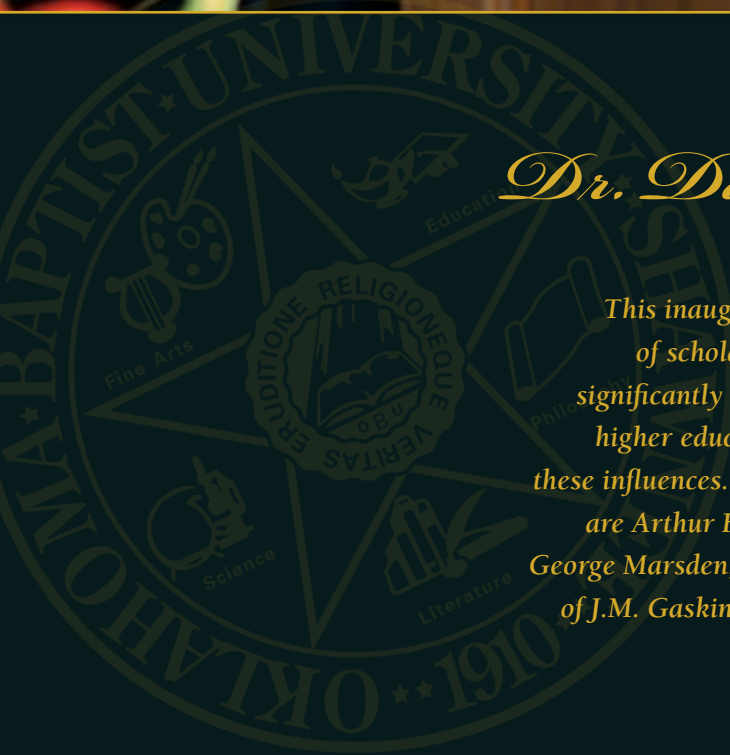


Stepping Into the OBU Story

INAUGURAL ADDRESS – MAY 1, 2009

Dr. David Wesley Whitlock

This inaugural address is a conflation of influences from a variety of scholars and authors whose writings and conversations have significantly influenced my philosophy and perspectives of Christian higher education. The language used in this address is reflective of these influences. Among the influences that are apparent in this address are Arthur Holmes, David Dockery, Bob R. Agee, James Burtchaell, George Marsden, and Michael Beatty. I am also indebted to the writings of J.M. Gaskin relative to the history of OBU and Oklahoma Baptists.



THE OBU STORY

Thank you Oklahoma Baptist University for welcoming me into the OBU Family. Aside from Jesus redeeming me, and from the love of my wife and sons and family, serving at OBU is one of the greatest honors I have been given, and one for which I will always be grateful and humbled.

To my family, and especially Dana, OBU's Campus Mom, thank you for your support. When Dana married me, she certainly never expected to serve as a university First Lady, but she has risen to the occasion. And her mother is a prime example of the old adage that behind every successful man is a surprised mother-in-law.

You have heard me say several times since my arrival that I knew after visiting the campus for the first time 15 years ago that I wanted to serve at OBU. Although I assumed I would serve here in a capacity different than my current role, I knew then that I wanted to be a part of the OBU Story. And what a story it is.

In 1906, Baptists from two conventions, Oklahoma Territory Baptist Convention, and the Baptist General Convention of Indian Territory met in Shawnee at First Baptist Church to become one convention – the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. At the very first meeting of this new Convention, those Baptist pioneers, anticipating statehood for Oklahoma in 1907, appointed an educational commission to establish a Baptist university in the new state. They had a vision for a university that would inspire and equip generations of leaders to serve the state, the nation, and the world.

Those Baptist pioneers saw beyond the need for training only pastors and missionaries, thus they did not establish a seminary or Bible school, as noble an enterprise as that may have been. Instead they envisioned a co-educational university that would be grounded in the liberal arts, which would prepare students to integrate their Christian faith and disciplines as educators, doctors, lawyers, artists, musicians, missionaries, pastors, entrepreneurs, writers, poets, actors, and economists. Their lofty vision was realized as Oklahoma Baptist University was founded in 1910 on Bison Hill.

The OBU Story is the story of men like W.P. Blake and G. Lee Phelps who knelt in prayer on the very wind-swept hill on which we stand today. Those men, like countless other men and women, bathed and birthed this university with prayer.

The OBU Story is the story of administrators like our first president, James Milton Carroll, who had accumulated a large natural history collection, primarily of bird specimens. That collection is part of the University of Oklahoma's natural history holdings. President Carroll sold his prized collection, the last worldly assets he owned, to OU in order to pay off the debts of OBU.

The OBU Story is the story of faculty like Rhett May Dorland, elected chairman of the department of public speaking and dramatic arts in the College of Fine Arts in 1919. Dorland built the communication and drama department at OBU and used her talents to benefit the church. She once made national news in the New York City Sun, which reported that Mrs. Dorland required student preachers to record their sermons so they "could catch the faults in their style." For 37 years, this remarkable woman invested her life in the students of OBU.

The OBU Story is the story of Berta Spooner, executive secretary of the Oklahoma Woman's Missionary Union. Spooner encouraged WMU members to join together to build a beautiful home for OBU female students. In 1928, after the Baptist women sold countless eggs in fundraisers across the state, WMU Dormitory was dedicated.

The OBU Story is the story of Dr. John Wesley Raley, who tirelessly served OBU, transforming the campus and leading with vision, clarity, and dignity. OBU bears the handprints of this remarkable man who served as president for 28 years.

The OBU Story is the story of a young African boy who watched his two brothers die of sickle cell anemia in Nigeria, and vowed to find a treatment for the deadly disease. Enrolling in 1961, Sunday O. Fadulu graduated from OBU in 1964. He finished his doctorate at OU, and is now a noted microbiologist and medical researcher. Dr. Fadulu also holds a patent for the treatment of sickle cell anemia.

The OBU Story is the story of Dr. Mike Hunkapiller, a 1970 OBU graduate whose company developed the gene mapping equipment that has enabled completion of the revolutionary Human Genome Project.

The OBU Story is the story of a young boy who enrolled here at the age of 14 and finished his B.S. degree after being mentored by OBU's Dr. Albert Chen. Dr. Branson Stephens completed his Ph.D. degree a few years later and now works at Princeton in the lab once occupied by Einstein.

The OBU Story is the story of hundreds of missionaries serving all over the world. The world's largest mission sending agency is the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, and the IMB reports that OBU is the number one sending institution in the world for missionaries.

The OBU Story is a story of each student, employee, and faculty member who has selflessly sacrificed to see the vision of those early Oklahoma pioneers realized – the story of Dr. Bob Agee, Dr. Rowena Strickland, and Uncle Jimmy Owens, among so many others.

The OBU Story is a story that attests to the truth that a love of God and a love of learning are complimentary, that all truth is



God's truth, and that a biblical worldview provides the unifying factor in a distinctively Christian university.

MISSION AND COMMITMENTS

As we reflect upon our shared mission and the stories of OBU, it is with a profound appreciation of our history that I accept these symbols of leadership.

I am deeply humbled by the privilege to serve here with dedicated employees, a world-class faculty, and on a campus that rivals the most beautiful of universities. What a privilege to work in such a Kingdom enterprise. How blessed to work at an institution that views higher education as an expression of our commitment to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

As a Great Commission University, we are about sending out disciples of Christ ready to engage the world and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their respective disciplines and areas of expertise. Although a distinctively Christian university is not a church, a Christian university is the intellectual arm of the Church's ministry. As such, OBU views as part of its mission the preparation of disciples for successful leadership and service for the Kingdom. We therefore attend to the spiritual, physical, and social development of our students.

As a Great Commandment University, we are reminded of Jesus' response, in Matthew 22:37, to the Pharisees who asked what commandment was the greatest. Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

As a Christian university, we address the heart and soul, while rigorously embracing intellectual pursuits. Dr. Agee has often called us to the stewardship of experience, to use our minds and education in our service. At OBU, we take seriously our Lord's commandment to love Him with heart and soul, and we strive for the improvement of the mind in pursuit of truth. What we do at OBU matters. A life devoted to Christ and committed to the OBU mission, vision, and values is a life that matters.

Our mission, vision, values, and our constituency determine our identity as an institution. Crucial components for shaping the identity of OBU as a distinctively Christian and confessionally Baptist liberal arts university include:

Christ-Centeredness. We will continue in our faithfulness to the person and work of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible and as historically understood and believed by the Church.

Biblical Fidelity. We are committed to our belief in the Bible as the inspired Word of God, authoritative, trustworthy, and without error.

Shared Mission. We share our mission with and are accountable to Oklahoma Baptists.

Academic Excellence and Faith Integration.

Academic excellence is expressed within a liberal arts curriculum that teaches and equips students to think Christianly and serve faithfully.

An OBU education is a distinctively Christian education and as such is a rigorous academic experience taught from a Christian worldview. A biblical Christian worldview addresses the major questions of life including where we came from, why we are here, why the world is the way it is, and what happens after death. Such a worldview holds that God was "in the beginning," that all things were created by Him. A biblical worldview holds that humanity, made in the image of God, rebelled and sinned resulting in the Fall of creation. Yet, God so loved the world He sent His Son to redeem us that we might be in relationship with Him and find our purpose in glorifying Him. And finally, a biblical worldview holds that after physical death, there is judgment for those who reject Him but life eternal for those who trust Him.

I am convinced that Christian higher education taught from a biblical worldview is best expressed within a liberal arts context in which we transform students' lives spiritually, intellectually, and physically. A liberal arts curriculum recognizes that education must be more than simply moving through a set of courses that prepares one for a vocation. The liberal arts are essential because they are foundational to true learning, quality living, and service to Christ. The liberal arts celebrate who we are as humanity made in the image of God.

Although liberal arts are foundational to an OBU education, as agents of transformation for Christ, we recognize that many employment opportunities and service areas are increasingly found in professional arenas, including preparation for study in ministry, law, science, medicine and nursing, education, business, technology, and public service. These are important areas, but they, too, are best taught on the foundation of the liberal arts.

OBU's model of liberal arts education is most differentiated from secular models in the area of faith integration. We follow Augustine's approach, *credo ut intelligam*, meaning that faith is a precondition of genuine knowledge rather than a mere capstone to a body of knowledge. Genuine Christian faith is the basis of genuine knowledge, and faith and learning must be integrated rather than seen or taught as if they were two separate spheres of reality.

With this understanding of Christian higher education, my vision is to lead OBU to be a distinctively Christian university that prepares students, through the integration of faith and



President Whitlock and Dr. Stan Norman, OBU provost and executive vice president for campus life, enjoy comments at the Inaugural Convocation. The platform party, right, included, from left, Dr. Alan Day, Dr. Paul Corts, Dr. C. Pat Taylor, Dr. Bob R. Agee, Lt. Gov. Jari Askins, Dr. Whitlock, and Dr. Norman.

discipline, to be transformative servant leaders and agents of change in their families, churches, workplaces, and ultimately to influence the world.

With the outstanding faculty, curriculum, students and employees we have, OBU is positioned to be the premier Baptist university and nationally recognized as among the top tier of distinctively Christian universities.

My goal is for OBU to be known for its vibrant spiritual life, for its commitment to academic scholarship and Christian worldview, and for its nationally recognized faculty scholars and successful alumni.

As a community of scholars, OBU will demonstrate how the highest academic standards are consistent with the high and noble calling God places on His own, and how faith not only informs but also redeems and transforms culture, economics, sciences, arts, and professions.

Our guiding vision for OBU will emphasize the love of God and the love of learning, faith and inquiry, service, teaching and scholarship. These marks must be simultaneously affirmed as we build a university where students are introduced to an understanding and appreciation of God, His creation, His grace, and to humanity's place of privilege and responsibility in God's world.

I pray that the hallmarks of my presidency will be a continuance of OBU's rich tradition of academic excellence, a dedication to faith integration, a passion for reaching and making OBU accessible to our constituents, and a commitment to strengthening the ties between Oklahoma Baptists and their university.

2 VISION

I pray that I will be a faithful steward during my tenure on Bison Hill and am convinced that God has great things in store for OBU. One of my favorite verses is Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

The future of OBU is bright. God has great and wonderful plans for us – plans to give us hope and a future. He has entrusted each of us – charged each of us – with a sacred responsibility. Ours is a noble calling and this is our time to exercise our stewardship and our role in the story that is the OBU Story.

Dream with me of a beautiful campus that incorporates the most advanced technologies and instructional tools available. Imagine a renovated library and learning center with an expanded student success center, study areas, and learning resources.

Envision with me a campus master plan. This master plan incorporates new avenues of apartment-style student housing, a campus that incorporates environmental stewardship and sustainability with new facilities for housing our nursing program, our theology and ministry programs, and expanded venues for our music and performance programs.

Imagine with me a robust program for achieving our mission of engaging a diverse world. In an increasingly global society, students need to understand intercultural and geopolitical issues. Our students must be educated in a way that broadens their horizons. In all disciplines, a sound grasp and appreciation for international issues and cultural sensitivity is obligatory.

Students who travel internationally are forever changed and regardless of where they eventually serve and labor, the world will be forever on their minds. Incorporating international engagement, missional focus, and service-oriented perspectives are appropriate expressions of our liberal arts academic mission.

I challenge every college and academic program to be proactive in ensuring that students are prepared to serve and lead in an ever-increasing global environment. I challenge every academic college to work with our Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach to implement at least one international, cross-cultural experience for their students that integrates missional or service-oriented projects.





Imagine with me the establishment of OBU Centers for Excellence. These centers will capitalize on deep wells in which the university has garnered national, regional and statewide reputations. Among other activities, the centers would provide online resources and offer conferences and institutes featuring nationally and internationally renowned experts. Some of the potential centers envisioned include:

Center for Faith Integration. This center would be at the heart of the OBU mission, providing faculty, staff, and student development activities that promote and lead the effort of integrating faith and discipline; the center would sponsor workshops and summer institutes featuring speakers of national prominence.

Center for Excellence in Teacher Education. With a focus on teachers and students preparing for careers as teachers, this center would host an online journal featuring research that benefits teacher education programs and home school educators nationwide. It would also host yearly seminars and other outreach activities that bring Oklahoma teachers to the OBU campus.

Center for Sports and Recreation Leadership. This center, with initial funding from the BGCO already secured, will become the premier resource for sports and recreation leaders and will work closely with Lifeway Christian Resources.

Baptist Center. This center would incorporate a "Pastors School" each summer for OBU students, Oklahoma Baptist pastors and families, as well as OBU alumni, featuring workshops and activities on the OBU campus specifically designed to minister to ministers. Working with the BGCO and other entities, a speakers series featuring outstanding Christian leaders would be offered for ministers and current students.

Imagine with me the establishment of a University Press. This self-supporting enterprise would establish a mission statement focused on publishing works that advance scholarship and bring recognition to authors and to OBU. A particular publishing focus will be for texts and other works that promote faith integration, as well as books of general interest to Christian audiences.

Dream with me of a student research and creative arts program. First-hand experience in mentored research significantly enhances the undergraduate experience. Students benefit greatly from the opportunities to engage one-on-one with a faculty member toward a common scholastic or artistic goal. Such a program would give students opportunities to share their research and creative works at annual conferences and arts festivals.

Dream with me of a capital campaign that increases OBU's endowment to four times its annual budget over the next 15-20 years, and establishes:

Endowments for student scholarships including instituting a scholarship program specifically designed for students who are members of Oklahoma Baptist churches;

An endowed faculty development program for continued education, and professional and scholarly activities;

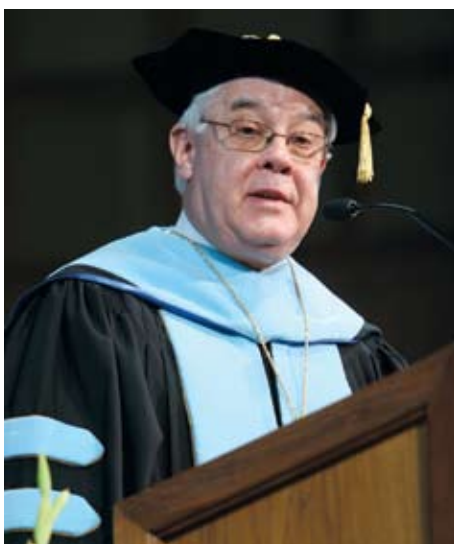
At least one endowed professorship or chair in every academic department;

An endowed missions program, with the goal of assisting students and faculty financially with international travel;

Endowment of the first-year experience program for entering freshmen with funds for student enrichment activities;

Dream with me of national championship sports teams

with 100% graduation rates. A competitive athletics program, in addition to its educational and character-building goals, plays a crucial role in promoting school spirit, tradition, campus unity and excitement. These qualities attract new students and help current students feel a sense of ownership and commitment to the university.



Dr. Whitlock's grandfather, Rev. Harold Whitlock, left, a retired church planter and pastor, offered the invocation. Dr. C. Pat Taylor, former OBU provost and current president of Southwest Baptist University, introduced Dr. Bob R. Agee, OBU president emeritus, who delivered the Call to Service.

Imagine with me a strategic planning process that drives the budget, with our priorities being employee compensation and student learning.

Our employees are our most valuable asset and critical to student learning. We must reward our employees' excellent work and commitment to the OBU mission.

Imagine with me advancing the salary and compensation packages of our faculty to the top quartile of our CCCU and IABCU sister institutions.

While students are often called the lifeblood of a university, faculty are most certainly the heart of our mission. Everything we do in fulfilling our mission revolves around student learning and the interaction between our faculty and students.

We are committed to a faculty absolutely devoted to our mission and to the integration of faith and discipline, and who are among the best compensated among distinctively Christian universities.

MOVING FORWARD

One hundred years ago, our founders may only have imagined the OBU campus of today. Could they have imagined the beautiful campus that is OBU? Could they have imagined a faculty of over 100? Could they have imagined our programs in telecommunications and media, our programs in computer information sciences? Could they have imagined then that more Southern Baptist missionaries would have been produced by OBU than any other university in the world?

What will our next 100 years look like? Can you imagine checking into your dorms with fingerprint or voice recognition? Can you imagine our best and brightest faculty teaching students around the world as their lectures and their holographic images are broadcast live and life-sized in classrooms from Europe to Africa, from the Middle East to South America?

Imagine Dr. Brad Jett's holographic image being sent from the Wood Science Building in three dimensions to a classroom in Latvia as he teaches and interacts live with students.

Imagine Dr. Bobby Kelly's holographic image being sent from Montgomery to a village in West Africa as he teaches students and young pastors preparing for ministry to their home countries.



Students participating in the convocation's brass ensemble included, from left, Kade Goforth, Sara Elliott, and Brandon Crnkovic.

Imagine Dr. Pam Robinson preparing education majors in classrooms in South America, Dr. Kristin Todd teaching Music History and Dr. Carol Humphrey teaching Western Civ to students in Athens, Dr. Bill Hagen teaching literature and Dr. Kaylene Barbe teaching communications to students on four continents simultaneously.

We cannot dream of the programs and disciplines that may exist in the next hundred years. We cannot imagine the technologies that do not yet exist but that will be commonplace in the next century of higher education. But this we know. OBU will be there, leading the way with the best faculty, the greatest students, and with a commitment to continue its rich traditions of academic excellence and faith integration. OBU will be there, educating students and continuing the OBU Story.

OBU will be there, faithful to its founders' vision of a great university preparing students to change the world, to serve Christ and His church, and to serve with distinction in their fields of expertise. OBU will be there, still committed to the Great Commission and to the Great Commandment.

OBU will be there, transforming lives and preparing students to pursue academic excellence, integrate faith with all areas of knowledge, engage a diverse world, and live lives worthy of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.

The OBU Story continues, and I pray that history records our time on Bison Hill as a time of faithfulness to OBU's mission, vision, and values.

Thank you and may God bless OBU.





Making Virtual^a Reality

*OBU has joined with
an innovative virtual
learning firm to push
the boundaries of
education.*

“It’s all about productivity and performance.”

Depending on the definitions for productivity and performance, that declaration could apply to most anything. For example, when Oklahoma Baptists debated the merits of having one denominationally affiliated university for a new state, they realized that pooled resources could enhance the productivity and performance of both faculty and students.

Today, more than a century after those early conversations, OBU is offering another tool to bolster productivity and performance. It is not limited to a single campus, a single state, or even a single continent. Through the use of

innovative 3D Virtual Reality technologies, OBU students can earn master of business administration degrees online from anywhere in the world.

OBU has partnered with Vertical Learning Curve to offer the graduate degree. VLC and OBU personnel say the virtual reality aspect provides students a simulated fast-track executive internship, and also helps the program tie in to the University's ongoing educational structure.

Students complete 36 credit hours in the online program, and participate in online mentoring sessions throughout the series of courses. Application, acceptance, enrollment, payment, and participation take place completely online. The self-paced program typically takes 18 to 24 months. By the time students enroll in MGMT 5592, the Comprehensive Exam Review, they have virtually completed the MBA degree in more ways than one.

The VLC model grew out of a concept developed by Dr. John Cragin, '69, who worked with students to create a simulation program while he was a business professor at OBU. Cragin, CEO of VLC, said the effectiveness and popularity of the simulator influenced the development of the ground-breaking company.

"The advent of virtual reality 3D technology was what it was all about, and we were watching for that technology," Cragin said.

Virtual learning offers an educational experience beyond classroom instruction, he said.

"Through a world of computer-generated characters, students are engaged in courses which tell a story," said Ken Hively, '01, VLC co-founder and vice president of information technology.

Creative writing is a key component to the success of the VLC courses, according to Hively. The story line aspect also allows courses to contain ethical challenges for students.

"The VLC structure teaches in an engaging way," said Dr. Debbie Blue, OBU's senior vice president for academic



affairs. "It is problem solving at a whole different level."

"Access to advanced degrees in business, afforded through OBU's web-based MBA degree program, is very exciting because it breaks through barriers with an approach

which closely simulates real-world experiences," Blue said.

Cragin said the flexibility of the VLC program meets an expressed need in the marketplace.

"Eighty-two percent of respondents in a recent survey said the main thing that they seek in advancing their education is finding courses they can fit into their schedule," Cragin said. "VLC does that and so much more."

The VLC concept has attracted the interest of others in Oklahoma. The company was featured in a recent episode of "State of Creativity," a monthly documentary series produced by Oklahoma Educational Television Authority. The show's website claims "State of Creativity" features "the movers and shakers in the state who are using creative thought to rise to new levels."

Cragin sees new levels for VLC training in the very near future. The program has a niche with MBA degree offerings, highlighting effective business strategy, planning and implementation. The virtual reality structure also can be used with corporate training programs, and even educational course offerings through local churches.

"The only limitation is the imagination," Blue said.

As Steve Kubicek, a VLC vice president, pointed out during a recent panel discussion on the benefits of virtual learning, the educational process is "all about productivity and performance."

Far removed from the early days of Oklahoma's statehood, OBU administrators and alumni are using different tools to increase productivity and performance. But they continue to tie those efforts to Bison Hill as the University reaches the end of its first hundred years.

To learn more about OBU's online MBA degree, visit igs.okbu.edu and click on the VLC link.
To view the State of Creativity segment, visit creativity.oeta.tv and click on the
"State of Creativity 102" link on the right side of the page.

Guided *by a* Comprehensive Vision

When Glenn Sanders started his academic journey, he admittedly did not have a clear focus. That made the first semester of college quite challenging for the academically gifted student thrust into a confluence of honors-level courses.

It did not take him long to find his focus. For the past 21 years, the OBU professor of history has been on the delivery side of academic challenges. In recent years, his focus became even sharper, as he provided leadership for OBU's accreditation self-study. That work resulted in a 256-page report for the University, and a greater understanding of the vital role of institutional mission for Dr. Sanders.

"I have come to appreciate the fact that as we grow older our brains change," Sanders said. "As we grow older, our comprehensive vision develops."

As chair of OBU's self-study committee, Sanders was able to practice the shaping of his vision as he coordinated review of how the University's various programs were tied to the institutional mission. The leadership role helped him tie together concepts he had explored for most of a decade regarding the faculty's role within the institution.

In 2000, as he began a one-year term as chair of the University's Faculty Development Committee, Sanders participated in a Council for Christian Colleges and Universities initiative related to on-campus faculty development. He describes it as an "intense experience."

"I think in terms of the systems that are involved in trying to get something to work, I started to realize some things about institutional improvement in terms of faculty development," he explained.

"The more you make people good teachers and the more you make them good scholars, the more opportunities you provide them, the better they do in the classroom, and the institution's mission will be fulfilled."

That focus – and comprehensive vision – made it logical for OBU's administrators to ask Sanders, who chairs the division of behavioral and social sciences, to lead the self-study project.

His efforts were recognized in the spring of 2008, when OBU awarded Sanders the University's Meritorious Service Award during Commencement. The award honored more than the countless hours he spent meeting, reviewing, writing, and guiding the study process. In a faculty forum following a five-day visit by a team from the Higher Learning Commission, Sanders challenged his colleagues to share his conviction that the institution could move ahead with a shared vision and purpose, latched to the institution's mission.

"Often our vision gets restricted either by the way we've done things or by the constraint on resources," he said. "But the mission becomes the momentary statement of collective value. Friendships and relationships are moved to the point we can say 'we can do this together.'"

"The mission provides parameters and standards," he said. "It channels energy in particular directions so to open up the horizon."

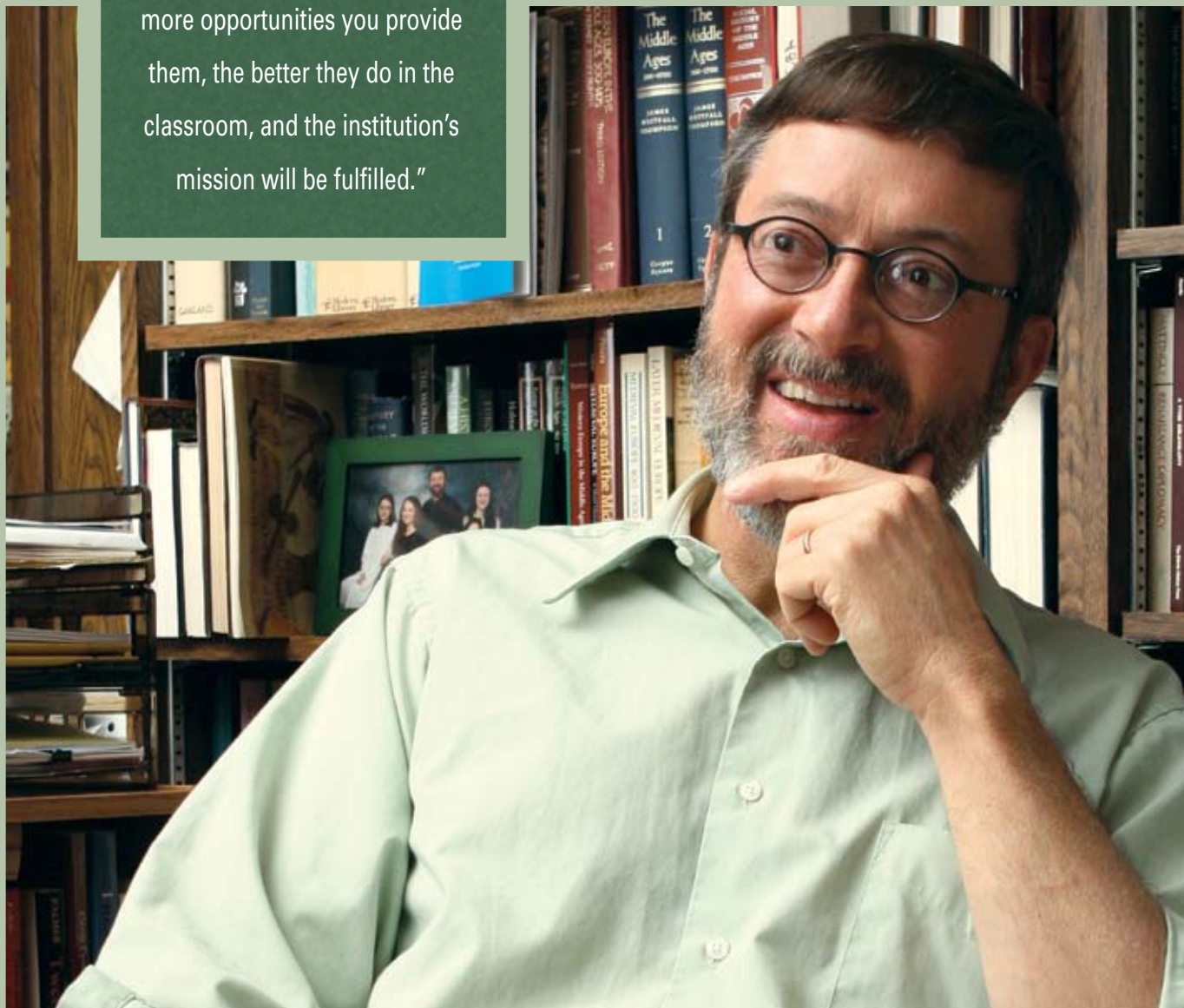
For Sanders, the academic horizon was bright early in life. At Baylor University, his start was difficult. Taking on the added rigor of honors program study, he had the opportunity to dive into advanced calculus, chemistry and English classes shortly after arriving from his home in Fort Worth.

"I well nigh killed myself trying to manage those courses," he recalled. "I wanted to try something else."

His choice was a European history survey course taught by legendary Baylor professor Robert Reid. It was something Sanders loved, and he studied it in depth from a variety of angles. He was the top student in the Class of 1982, completing a bachelor's degree with three majors: English, history and philosophy. That was followed by a master's degree in liberal arts from Baylor before he completed a Ph.D. degree in history from Brown University. While pursuing his doctorate, he received a Fulbright scholarship to complete research in England. That educational résumé drew the attention of OBU administrators in the spring of 1988.

Dr. Pat Taylor, then OBU's vice president for academic affairs, called Sanders in April and invited him to visit the campus. Glenn and his wife, Alice, were living with her parents in Fort Worth, while he completed his doctoral dissertation.

"The more you make people good teachers and the more you make them good scholars, the more opportunities you provide them, the better they do in the classroom, and the institution's mission will be fulfilled."



"My vita is almost written to teach Civ; at least Civ I," Sanders said. "The fit [with OBU] was quite apparent."

The proximity to home helped make the move from Texas to Oklahoma attractive for the Sanders. Their family was growing. Their oldest child, Mary – now a graduate student at the University of Connecticut – was born while they were in England. The family would soon grow with the births of Clara, now 20, Isabel, 18, and Edward, 14.

After a year as an instructor of history, while he finished his doctorate, Sanders was given the rank of assistant professor. He was promoted to the rank of professor in 2002, and has served as his division chair since 2004.

"Within the first 10 years, I decided teaching was a pretty good way to make a living," he quipped. Along with classroom instruction, he has provided leadership for OBU's Model Arab League team. Competing each year in regional competition, the MAL students consistently earn honors.

Sanders has not strayed from his commitment to teaching as he enters his third decade on Bison Hill, but he approaches that aspect of his work – as well as his division leadership and other faculty roles – with a deeper understanding of how they contribute to the success of the institution's mission.

Sanders continues to sharpen his focus, helping the University stay on mission as it prepares for its second century. ♦



Journey to Excellence

Linda Dorsey Merkey is on a memorable journey. The Cordell native chose to study at OBU because the University's nursing program was one of just a few quality options in the state. Three decades later, she has helped advance nursing across the state.

When she came to Bison Hill in the mid-'70s, Merkey knew she wanted to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing. Looking back, she believes she chose wisely.

"OBU did a wonderful job preparing me for the real world," said the 1978 graduate. "During my senior year, my leadership experience helped me refine my clinical skills, build confidence, learn how to prioritize and, above all, taught me how to build effective working relationships."

A 2009 Profile In Excellence award recipient, Merkey recalled how the leadership of OBU professors Lana Bolhouse and Betty Gorrell positively affected her professional practice. Now dean of OBU's School of Nursing, Dr. Bolhouse has more than three decades of nursing and educational experience. When Linda was on the campus, the 1973 OBU graduate was in the early days of her career as a psychiatric nursing educator. In 1996, the Oklahoma Nurses Association gave her the Outstanding Psychiatric Nurse of the Year Award.



LINDA MERKEY, '78

"Although I never planned to practice psychiatric nursing, I learned so much from Lana about reading people and creating a safe environment," Merkey said. "These skills are a prerequisite to becoming an effective nursing leader."

Dr. Gorrell influenced not only Merkey's clinical practice, but ultimately her choice of an employer, as well.

"Betty was a wonderful nursing role model," Merkey said. "She had a true passion for pediatric nursing, and she shared that

"During my senior year, my leadership experience helped me refine my clinical skills, build confidence, learn how to prioritize and, above all, taught me how to build effective working relationships."

with her students. She always involved the parents in the care of their child and always displayed care and compassion for the family."

Merkey said Gorrell guided several OBU nursing students to choose to work at Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City.

"In my case, she wanted me to experience a more normal, typical patient population before working in a dysfunctional environment," Merkey said. "Well, I think it is safe to say it was good advice, as 30 years later I am still working for the same company."

Following her time on campus, Merkey earned a master's degree in business administration from Oklahoma City University. In the past three decades, her career has led her to the post of system-wide chief nursing officer for Integris Health in Oklahoma City. She was promoted in May 2008 after 10 years as CNO and vice president for patient care services with Integris Baptist.

At Integris Baptist Medical Center, Merkey was responsible for nurses working in emergency services, surgical services, the outpatient department and Hospice of Oklahoma County. She also served as interim president of the Integris Heart Hospital, interim administrator of Integris Baptist and administrator of Women's and Children's Services for Integris Metro Facilities. In 2007, following in the steps of one of her OBU mentors, she was honored by the Oklahoma Nurses Association. The group gave Linda the Excellence in Nursing Administration Award.

In her new post, she works closely with each hospital president and chief nursing officer in the Integris Health system to address issues which impact patient care. She facilitates the growth of nursing leadership, vision and strategies within the Integris system.

In her decade as vice president for patient care, Merkey played an integral role in leading Integris Baptist to achieve the highly coveted "Magnet" designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. The distinction represents the highest level of national recognition for health care organizations which demonstrate sustained excellence in nursing care. Only 4 percent of acute health care facilities nationwide – and only two hospitals in Oklahoma – have achieved the elite status.

"Magnet can be described as a journey to excellence in nursing," Merkey said.

According to the credentialing center, the full expression of "14 Forces of Magnetism" embodies a professional environment guided by a strong and visionary nursing leader who advocates and supports excellence in nursing practice. Merkey led Integris Baptist to excellence in the 14 forces, which encompass quality of nursing leadership, organizational structure, management style, personnel policies and programs, professional models of care, quality of care, quality improvement, consultation and resources, autonomy, community and the healthcare organization, nurses as teachers, image of nursing, interdisciplinary relationships, and professional development.

The hospital staff received word of its Magnet designation in May 2008, with congratulations pouring in from across the community and the state. Balloons and flowers began arriving at the hospital. Other hospital systems offered congratulations through radio commercials.

Outside of the hospital, Merkey has served for nine years on the Board of Hospice of Oklahoma County, a not-for-profit organization which provides end-of-life care to dying patients within their homes. The organization's mission is to enhance the quality of life for the terminally ill and their families.

"I have learned so much about the care of a patient who is actively dying," Merkey said. "Hospice is a wonderful resource to families who want their loved ones to be treated with dignity and respect during those last weeks and months of their lives. It has been a privilege to serve on the board, and it has blessed my life in so many ways."

Merkey's own family includes her husband of 28 years, Dr. Mike Merkey, a practicing neurologist in Northwest Oklahoma City, and her daughter, Madalyn, a sophomore at Columbia College in Chicago.

As a wife, mother, nurse and administrator, Merkey has taken the basic skills of a caregiver she learned on Bison Hill, and positively affected lives for 30 years. It's easy to anticipate more great things to come as she continues her work in Oklahoma healthcare. ♦



Lifelong Educator Values OBU Foundation

Although Robert Barnard's history with OBU goes back nearly 60 years, the 1958 graduate has never spent a single night on Bison Hill. However, to this day, his influence permeates the Shawnee community and the University he wholeheartedly supports.

The recipient of a \$25 scholarship, the local native enrolled in OBU classes at age 18 in 1950 with a self-professed naivety, no science or foreign language studies, little mathematics education, no understanding of good study habits, and an overall educational deficit "that would haunt me later on," he said. He gave university studies his best effort, never missing class and frequently visiting the library before he returned home for evening farm chores.

However, after five semesters, Barnard's grades reflected his deficits. He joined the United States Army, where he felt he matured and learned self-discipline. Completing his military stint, he reapplied to OBU, attending class year-round.

"I made the President's Honor Roll, which was no great achievement for many people, but for me it was," Barnard said. "I say I redeemed myself."

Barnard graduated with two majors, social studies and business education, influenced by a host of faculty who made an impact on his life. He is quick to describe their skills: Dr. James Ralph Scales made Oklahoma history and government come alive for his students; Dr. Katherine Rader created excitement in drama and action; Lenna Smock attempted to instruct education majors how to behave as a teacher; Donald G. Osborn, an "upbeat" professor and dean of students, took his classes on field trips; Dr. Joseph A. Trent taught biology and helped Barnard realize he didn't want to be a science major.

He also recalled the influence of Opal Craig, who allowed the young Army veteran to learn how to talk in front of people. Jorge Padron, a science professor, impressed Barnard with his presentation as a teacher; Dr. E.W. Thornton brought the past to life in his history lectures; and Manoi Smith Adair taught several business skills, including shorthand.

He followed the leadership of his OBU professors into an education career. He earned a master of education degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1960 and a doctor of education degree from OU in 1974. Beginning his career at Strother in

Seminole County, Barnard also served as a classroom teacher, assistant principal, principal and assistant superintendent in Shawnee Public Schools.

Through the years, he made the concerted effort to stay connected with his students. Even after retiring from education in 1981, he often sees several former students each day.

"As my education career kept going, we had the opportunity to go to other places to live, but it was a decision to stay put," Barnard said. "That has been the greatest emotional reward for having been a teacher. You get to see the 16-year-olds become mature. You see how they turned out. You can conclude success or failure. This town is loaded with people who I knew as students."

'I LOVE CHALK'

Entering the classroom for the second semester at Strother, Barnard found himself teaching seven subjects in six hours, with no planning period. He was told he also would serve as an umpire during baseball games, which he joked was a "classroom hazard" since he had baseball players in his classes. He also discovered his duties at the rural school included directing plays, managing the scoreboard during basketball games and sponsoring classes.

"If you can teach successfully in that environment, you will have accomplished an awful lot," he said.

In the fall of 1960, a job opened in Shawnee High School, which Barnard found was a tremendous change from his previous classroom experience. He taught one subject – world history – for five hours. Teaching the first year without a textbook, he would access his personal library of history books each night to prepare for the next day's lesson.

"When I got to my classroom, all I had were blackboards and chairs," he recalled. "I became an expert at using chalk on the blackboard. I love chalk. I can draw anything. I had to get everyone's attention – and I didn't have anything but me and the chalk to keep sophomores interested."

During the next 14 years in the classroom, he would draw a history of the world for his classes dozens of times. In the meantime, he married his wife, Janet, and completed graduate

“I made the students think, made them produce, made them seek out answers to questions, made them formulate the answer.”

work. He worked to inspire sophomores about topics such as ancient Egyptian history, during which he secretly earned the moniker “The Pharaoh” from some of his students. He later used the name for a personal business he developed to manage minerals.

“I made them take notes,” he said. “I’ve had people tell me, ‘That’s when I learned how to go to college,’ because you had to relate the information, putting it in a form you could review later.”

Barnard enjoyed making his students think, and when they put forth the effort on required term papers, he enjoyed seeing the results. He has saved boxes of his favorite term papers for more than 25 years.

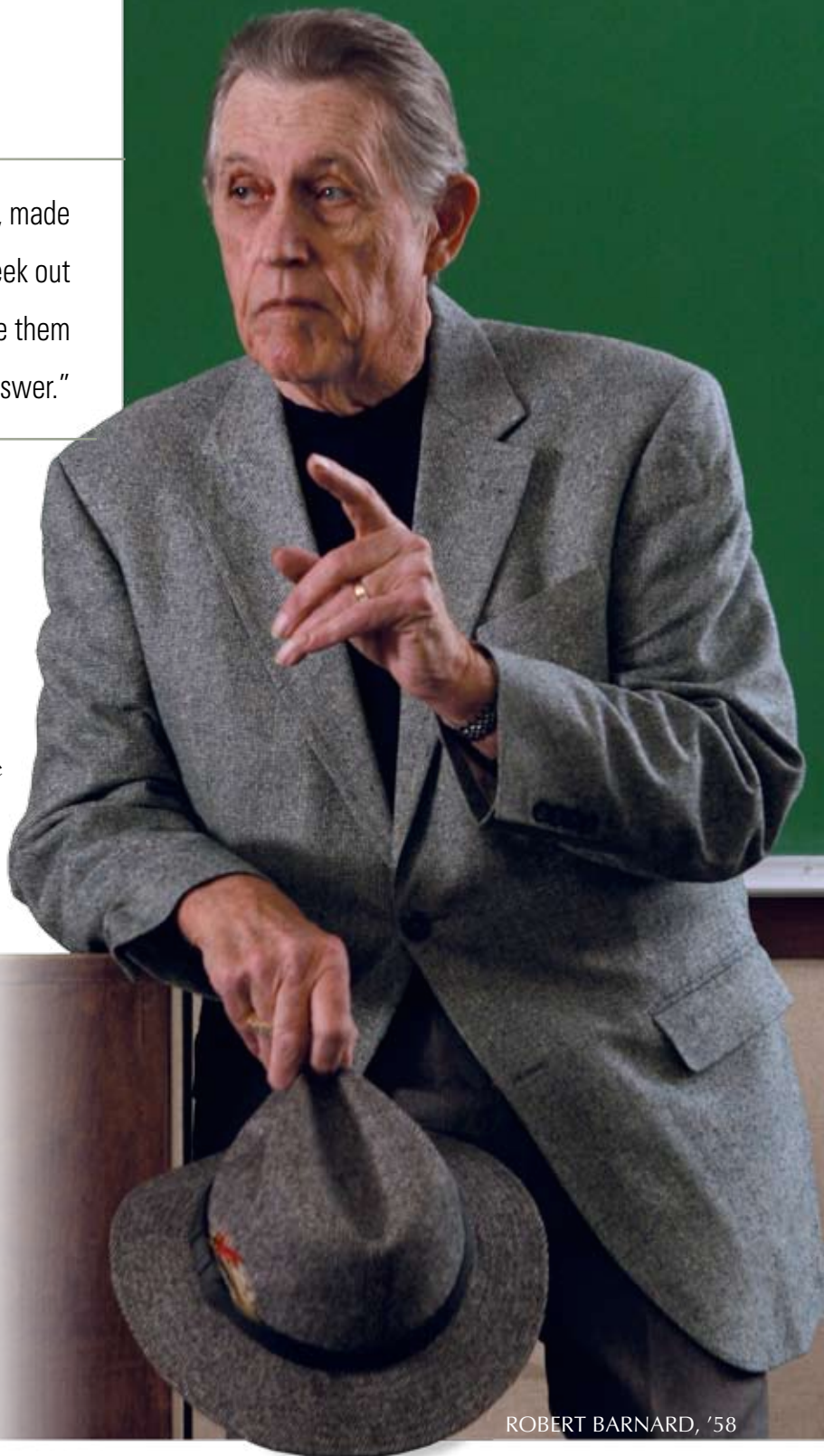
“I made the students think, made them produce, made them seek out answers to questions, made them formulate the answer,” he said. “They had to put it into 500 words. That was a task many of them couldn’t do very well, but if you don’t ask the students to do something hard, they’re never going to learn.”

Following years of inflicting thinking skills on students, Barnard took his problem-solving abilities into the community. He served in the elected position of Shawnee City Commissioner and also as vice-mayor, where he directed projects that included a new animal shelter, new exposition arena, new public works location, southside community center, special road projects and the creation of oil and gas ordinances.

Barnard also remained active in community service through numerous boards and commissions, including Shawnee’s housing authority, planning commission, farmer’s market board, hospital authority, economic development board, chamber of commerce and historical society. He has served as an adjunct professor at East Central University and Seminole State College. He helped create and is president of Development Enterprises of Central Oklahoma Inc., a not-for-profit housing corporation which has built 131 units for senior citizens and families.

The lifelong educator has seen his career come full circle – beginning at OBU, remaining in Shawnee, and now returning to Bison Hill. He currently chairs OBU’s Shawnee Advisory Board.

“The climax of my career is to help out OBU a little bit,” he said. “I had inspiration from the teachers and faculty. The culture and environment of OBU, and its treatment toward me, has given me the incentive as a local citizen to support OBU into the next century.” ♦



ROBERT BARNARD, '58



Being a Bright Light

As towns go, Golden is pretty small. But the southwest Missouri community offered Sylvia Howard Fletcher a huge culture shock.

After living in Peru for nearly 30 years, often surrounded by more than nine million, moving to a town of 18 was an adjustment for Sylvia. However, one thing that remains consistent – regardless of the population or the location – is her positive outlook and drive to be a bright light.

“People say ‘you’re happy all of the time; what is the matter?’ and I say, ‘well happiness is a choice,’” Fletcher said. “Each day is a choice. I’m grateful every morning that I get to wake up and see what the day holds.”

Sylvia felt she was called to the foreign mission field when she was 15 years old. After graduating from OBU in 1969 and spending two years as a music consultant and teacher, she began working to make the calling her reality. She enrolled at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the fall of 1971 to obtain a degree in early childhood education. That semester she ran into Woody Fletcher.

“I met him in a church in Stillwater where he was leading the music, but I didn’t know anything about him,” she said. When I got to seminary, he was there. By the third of January we were engaged.”

During a missions week at the seminary, Woody also felt called to foreign missions, so the couple applied to work with the International Mission Board. After they were approved in January 1974, they moved out of their house six days later and left for missionary orientation.

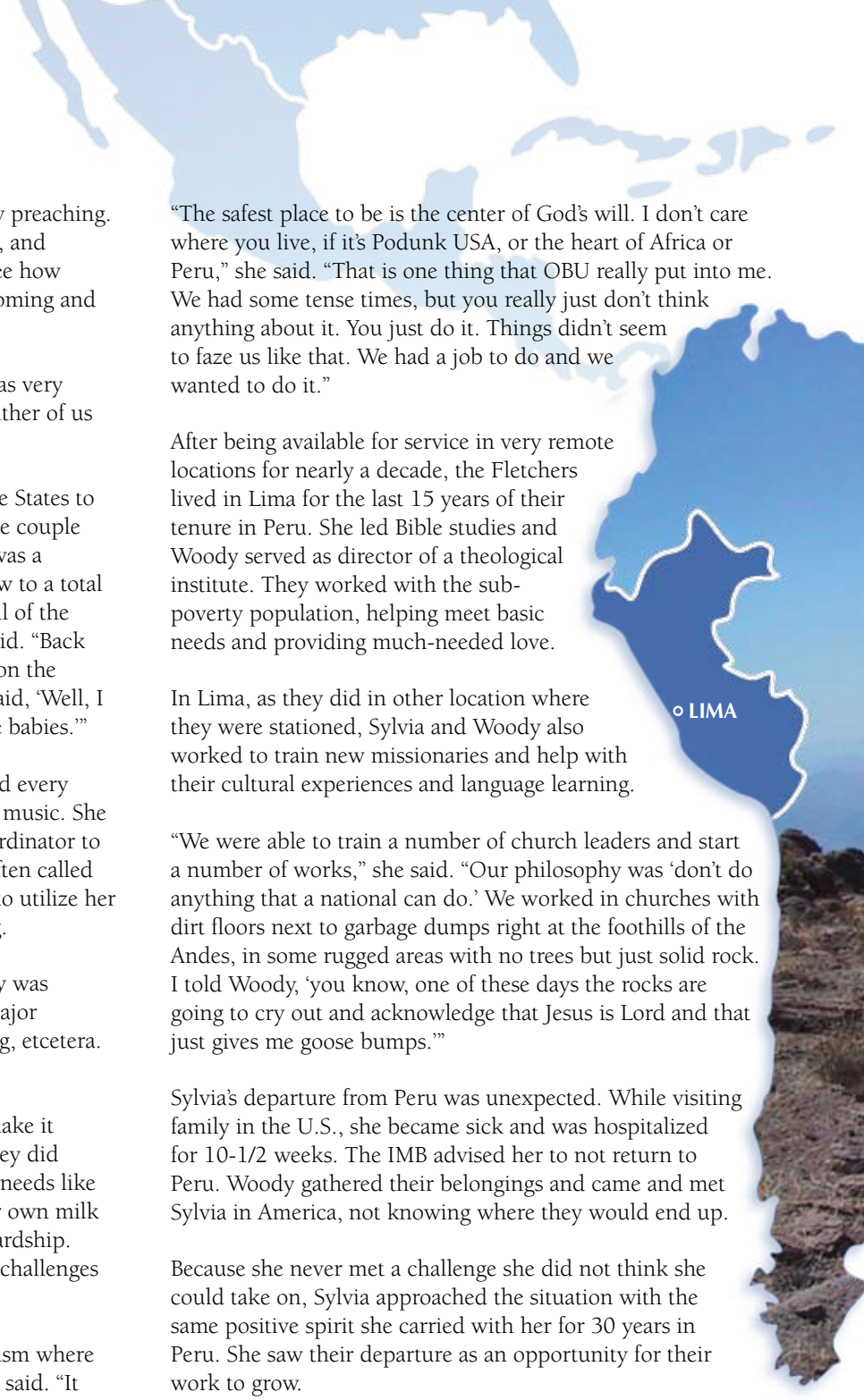
“We did things rather quickly,” Sylvia said. “Things started to head towards Peru. They were looking for what at that time they called ‘field evangelists,’ translated today to be ‘church planter.’ By that time we had a little girl who was not even 18 months old. I wasn’t sure that I wanted to go anywhere because I didn’t want to take the baby, but the Lord showed us that it was OK.”

The Fletchers began their first term in the Peruvian mountains, and began to work with the local church immediately upon



SYLVIA FLETCHER, '69

“We worked in churches ... at the foothills of the Andes in some rugged areas with no trees but just rock, solid rock. ... One of these days the rocks are going to cry out and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and that just gives me goose bumps.”



arrival – Sylvia playing the pump organ and Woody preaching. Though they had the only little child in the church, and another on the way, Sylvia said it was amazing to see how God surrounded them with people who were welcoming and accepting.

“It was not scary ... it was exciting,” she said. “It was very different, but I guess we were fortunate because neither of us expected anything.”

After a year in the mountains, Sylvia returned to the States to sell the rest of their possessions in a garage sale. The couple then lived in Peru’s capital city, Lima, where there was a growing need for field evangelists. Their family grew to a total of six just a few years after they moved to Lima. “All of the children were born during our first term,” Sylvia said. “Back then, the board voted [before] you could go back [on the field]. They asked why I wanted to go back and I said, ‘Well, I would like to go and do something other than have babies.’”

Sylvia returned to Peru for a second term and seized every opportunity and outlet to serve, especially through music. She played piano, led music and served as a prayer coordinator to help meet needs in the churches. The family was often called to churches in many different areas of the country to utilize her talent with music and Woody’s passion for teaching.

“The ministry that we had with the church basically was a healing ministry, helping churches to heal after major problems,” she said. “We’ve done a lot of counseling, etcetera. Basically, we try to just be a bright light.”

The family faced experiences that would seem to make it difficult for them to be a ‘bright light.’ For years, they did not live near a supermarket or have access to basic needs like disposable diapers. They needed to pasteurize their own milk – yet Sylvia considered that part of life and not a hardship. Beyond the living conditions, she met even greater challenges at the national level.

“We lived in Peru through 15 years of severe terrorism where bombs went off and buildings were blown up,” she said. “It was a daily event. Woody was even kidnapped at one point. We’ve had tremors where everything would fall off the shelf in the kitchen. We’ve been under curfew. We’ve tried to get to people to help them and have seen them die on the way just because they couldn’t get out from where they were. It hasn’t all been easy.”

However, their determination was not broken. In tense times Sylvia reflected on her experience at OBU: the service opportunities she gained through the Baptist Student Union that helped her prepare for her tenure in Peru, and the lessons she learned which deepened her commitment to God’s will for her.

“The safest place to be is the center of God’s will. I don’t care where you live, if it’s Podunk USA, or the heart of Africa or Peru,” she said. “That is one thing that OBU really put into me. We had some tense times, but you really just don’t think anything about it. You just do it. Things didn’t seem to faze us like that. We had a job to do and we wanted to do it.”

After being available for service in very remote locations for nearly a decade, the Fletchers lived in Lima for the last 15 years of their tenure in Peru. She led Bible studies and Woody served as director of a theological institute. They worked with the sub-poverty population, helping meet basic needs and providing much-needed love.

In Lima, as they did in other location where they were stationed, Sylvia and Woody also worked to train new missionaries and help with their cultural experiences and language learning.

“We were able to train a number of church leaders and start a number of works,” she said. “Our philosophy was ‘don’t do anything that a national can do.’ We worked in churches with dirt floors next to garbage dumps right at the foothills of the Andes, in some rugged areas with no trees but just solid rock. I told Woody, ‘you know, one of these days the rocks are going to cry out and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and that just gives me goose bumps.’”

Sylvia’s departure from Peru was unexpected. While visiting family in the U.S., she became sick and was hospitalized for 10-1/2 weeks. The IMB advised her to not return to Peru. Woody gathered their belongings and came and met Sylvia in America, not knowing where they would end up.

Because she never met a challenge she did not think she could take on, Sylvia approached the situation with the same positive spirit she carried with her for 30 years in Peru. She saw their departure as an opportunity for their work to grow.

“You know there is a time that you have to leave, not only for yourself, but for the work to move out,” she said. “That is what we did a lot of while we were there, helping work move out – training and taking off. It’s been neat, just like watching your children grow, to watch the new believers grow, too. People you have prayed for, for so long, that were just too rebellious to the Lord, finally are very active in the church.”

Now connected to Peruvian Christians through their church in Golden, Sylvia continues to see how her family’s work moves on, and how her drive to be a bright light influences people around the world. ♦



Board Approves Lifelong Learning Program

During their spring meeting in March, OBU trustees launched a new lifetime learning program for graduates, approved the operating budget for the 2009-10 year, and established a campus police department.

The new lifelong learning policy for OBU graduates provides tuition for undergraduate courses taught on the University's Bison Hill campus. The policy, which became effective June 1, 2009, allows OBU graduates to audit courses or take them for letter grade credit working toward a second bachelor's degree from the institution. The benefit is available for courses which have available seating at the start of an academic term.

The board approved a \$40.87 million operating budget for the coming academic year. Randy L. Smith, OBU executive vice president for business and administrative services, presented an overview of the proposed budget. Smith said the University projected distribution of \$11.5 million in scholarships for the 2009-10 academic year.

Smith told board members the University anticipated a decrease in endowment income due to the national economic downturn. However, he noted that due to OBU's alternative investments managed through the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma, the investment losses were less than national benchmarks.

The 2009-10 budget will include a 3 percent cost-of-living salary increase for OBU faculty and staff members.

Trustees also approved a resolution to establish a campus police department. OBU officials said the University will develop a campus police force with CLEET certified officers. David Shannon, who has supervised OBU's campus safety office since November 2007, has been named chief of university police.

"The university police department and local agencies working together will allow the agencies to provide assistance to one another and allow for joint training to benefit all agencies involved," Smith said. "This will provide for a safer university community."

In his state-of-the-University report to the board, OBU President David W. Whitlock introduced trustees to two new administrators. Dr. Stan Norman, OBU provost and executive vice president for campus life, and Dr. Mark McClellan, dean of the University's Joe L. Ingram School of Christian Service, joined the administration early in the spring semester.

Norman fills one of two executive vice president positions in an organizational structure Whitlock announced on Feb. 2. Smith, who has served as the University's chief financial officer since December 2002, was promoted to executive vice president for business and administrative services.

"This new structure offers us the opportunity to streamline our administrative structure and move forward with a model that facilitates our vision for OBU," Whitlock told the trustees.

OBU Student Government Association President D.H. Dilbeck reported on recent work of the SGA, including the reactivation of the SGA's Volunteer Action Committee. The group has worked with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity and is working on renovation of a community center facility in the Dunbar Heights neighborhood.

The board approved promotions for nine OBU faculty members. Five were promoted to the highest academic rank. Dr. Jeanne Akin, who joined the faculty in 1997, was promoted from associate professor of teacher education to professor of education. Dr. Kaylene Barbe, who joined the faculty in 1990, was promoted from associate professor to professor of communication arts. Dr. Brad Jett, who joined the faculty in 1998, was promoted from associate professor to professor of biology. Dr. Bobby Kelly, who joined the faculty in 1997, was promoted from associate professor to professor of religion. Dr. Craig Walker, who joined the faculty in 2000, was promoted from associate professor to professor of economics.

Dr. Paulette Belshe was promoted from the rank of assistant professor to associate professor of education. Dr. Benjamin Myers was promoted from assistant professor to associate professor of English. Dr. Charles Swadley was promoted from assistant professor to associate professor of English and Spanish. Julie Blackstone was promoted from instructor of art to assistant professor of art.

Students Minister on Three Continents



OBU Global Outreach teams worked on three continents early in 2009. Teams traveled to the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, south central Mexico and Branson West, Mo.

Three of the teams worked during January Term. The Middle East team, which worked with medical personnel, was led by nursing faculty members Wanda Robinson and Gerry Milligan. The South Asia team worked with OBU's adopted people group, the Kai. The Africa team worked with people in Kenya during January.

Teams working in Mexico and Missouri invested their spring break in the mission endeavors. Two priorities for

both teams involved church planting and prayer walking. In Branson West, students worked with Carpenters House, a local church. Students on the Mexico mission worked in Guadalajara, León and Guanajuato.

"We have stated goals of continuing to be the premier missions-sending university in the country and would like to see students fulfill the biblical calling of living holistic, mission-minded lives in whatever vocational role they end up in," said Steve Winterberg, OBU global outreach coordinator.

Through the Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach, OBU schedules GO Team trips throughout the year.

Blitz Week Benefits Family Promise

Blitz Week, an annual OBU student-led fund-raising drive, raised more than \$5,000 to benefit Family Promise of Shawnee in April.

A non-profit organization providing homeless families temporary housing and supportive services, Family Promise is operated through local churches seeking to equip the families for a self-sustaining financial future.

The week of April 18-25 was filled with events, including an art auction sponsored by Mortar Board which raised nearly \$1,000. Auctioned pieces were created by students during a campus-wide paint-a-thon April 14.

The week also included a faculty-versus-varsity basketball game, a Friday '80s event, and OBU's annual Stampede of Stars competition on Saturday.

"We hope that the money provides relief physically while also having an affect on the organization that is bigger than just monetary help," said Corey DeGiacomo, a senior from Inola who served as a Blitz Week co-chair.



PHOTO BY MEGAN SUAREZ

Senior Taylor Byrum Named 2009 Goldwater Scholar

Taylor Byrum, an OBU senior physics major from Bentonville, Ark., is one of only 278 national 2009 Barry M. Goldwater Scholars.

The endowed recognition program was established by the United States Congress to “foster and encourage excellence” in science and mathematics. The Goldwater Scholars were selected on the basis of academic merit. A total of 1,097 mathematics, science and engineering students were nominated by the faculties of colleges and universities nationwide.

“The recipients of these scholarships typically go on to earn their Ph.D. degrees in mathematics, science, engineering or computer science,” said Dr. Debbie Blue, OBU senior vice president for academic affairs. “They are our nation’s best hope to help find

solutions to the world’s energy, climate, resource consumption and production, and health and nutrition problems.

“To have someone of Taylor’s background, who not only has the ‘head’ knowledge, but also the values and Christian principles to guide him as he prepares to step into a leadership role on a whole new plane, is tremendously encouraging to me,” Blue said.

Byrum credits his success to instruction by OBU faculty members Dr. Albert Chen, professor of physics, and Dr. John Nichols, associate professor of mathematics, as well as Dr. Lin Oliver from the University of Arkansas.

“I looked at some of the students that received Honorable Mentions, and I saw that there were students from very prestigious schools, like Yale, California-

Berkeley and Stanford,” Byrum said. “It made me feel really good for OBU’s name to be on the list of schools of Goldwater Scholars.”



Byrum

Byrum said he believes the award indicates the quality of OBU’s science program, as well as the quality of OBU science students.

According to the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation, the scholarships will cover the cost of tuition, fees, books, and room and board up to a maximum of \$7,500 per year.

IGS Graduates Second Cohort

As they completed a new level of education, graduates of OBU’s International Graduate School were urged to focus on life’s inalienable rights during IGS Commencement March 7.

Five graduates received master of business administration degrees during the ceremony at University Baptist Church in Shawnee. They are the second graduating class for the graduate program which began in February 2007.

“You are now equipped with skills that will enable you to pursue, even greater, the passions and the calling that God has on your life,” said Dr. Kyle Tresch, dean of OBU’s Paul Dickinson School of Business, told the graduates.

“Knowledge for knowledge’s sake is not the end goal,” Tresch said. “Use your knowledge and skills to make the world that you live in a better place.”

OBU Inks Agreement with Brazilian University



In an effort to enhance the education provided by both institutions, Dr. Debbie Blue, OBU senior vice president for academic affairs, and Padre João Batista Gomes de Lima, president of Centro Universitário São Camilo in Espírito Santo, Brazil, signed an agreement to promote cultural and academic involvement between the universities. The agreement also aims to equip the Brazilian university through continuing education in select academic disciplines, to offer students from both institutions opportunities to study abroad, and to strengthen professional development programs at both universities. The Central University of São Camilo includes eight campuses and 32 hospitals and has approximately 22,000 students.

OBU Theatre Wins Regional 'Best Play' Honor

OBU Theatre's presentation of "As It Is In Heaven" was honored with a top award at the Region VI Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in San Marcos, Texas, early in

the spring semester. The play received the Richard A. Weaver Award, which honors the best play in the festival as chosen by directors participating in the competition.

of the cup, which is presented to the winning school each year.

OBU qualified for the regional competition for only the second time in the school's history. The festival's Region VI includes schools from Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The only other Oklahoma school represented at the regional level was the University of Oklahoma. OBU's first trip to regional competition was in 1976 with its production of "Godspell," which was selected as an alternate to go to the Kennedy Center Festival in Washington, D.C.



Byland, holding trophy, with the OBU production's cast.

The OBU troupe received a large silver cup traveling trophy. The name of the school, the name of the director, and the title of the play will be engraved on the side

Lady Bison Reach Fab Four For First Time

For the first time in the program's history, the OBU Lady Bison advanced to the national semifinal round of the NAIA Women's Division I Basketball Championship Tournament in March. OBU reeled off three tournament victories to reach the "Fab Four" before falling to eventual national champion Union University. The OBU women's season record was 32-5.

Taujhnae Travis, a junior guard from Humble, Texas, earned Sooner Athletic Conference Player of the Year honors and was an NAIA First-Team All America selection. In less than two full seasons with the Lady Bison, Travis has scored 981 career points, including 701 in the 2008-09 campaign. She averaged 18.9 points per game and was National Player of the Week in February.

OBU's lone senior starter, Jennifer Jupin, finished her career with 1,401 points, placing her 10th on the program's all-time scoring list.

Head Coach John McCullough's team compiled OBU's best single-season mark, with a school-record 32 wins. The team also had a school-record 17-game win streak, which included a school-record eight consecutive conference road wins, helping the Lady Bison earn the conference regular season title outright for the first time since 1983.



Taujhnae Travis

For more details about OBU athletics, visit www.obubison.com.

Online Community Offers Instant Access

Alumni have a new way to stay connected with members of the "OBU Family" through the launch of the Oklahoma Baptist University Online Community.

Part of OBU's Web site resources, the Online Community offers free access to the University's alumni directory, class notes, and a calendar of upcoming events designed for graduates and former students.

"We are delighted to offer this new resource for our alumni," said Lori Hagans, executive director of the OBU Alumni Association. "The Online Community offers a password-protected directory alumni can use to reconnect with former classmates."

The Online Community was developed through work with Agilon, a relationship management company which provides database software for OBU's alumni office. The company's online tools offer OBU alumni the opportunity to update their personal information for the University, and to maintain their own profile pages. Information may be displayed or hidden through the profile pages, similar to how information is maintained on popular social networking Web sites.

"While the Online Community is a strong resource for our alumni, it really depends on the involvement of alums," Hagans said. "Profile information is only displayed after an alum has logged in and approved the profile viewing."

Along with the Online Community, OBU's alumni office is encouraging alumni to stay connected to their OBU family through participation in the "Six Degrees of OBU" effort. Alumni who have provided the alumni office their current e-mail addresses will have the opportunity to participate in the effort and compete for prizes. The e-mail-based campaign will begin in June.



For more details about the Online Community, visit www.okbu.edu/alumni.

Greetings from the OBU Alumni Oval Office

(Which is really the front room of my house ... and is not at all oval ... but it reeks with power!)

I know a lot of people. At least my friends think I do. I even know most of the people that are my friends on facebook! However, though they can take some good pictures and have funny status updates about their favorite television show or how much they loathe folding laundry, neither of those accomplishments are truly that noteworthy or honor-earning.

So, **we need your help** as the OBU Alumni Association's board of directors selects our 2009 and 2010 Alumni award recipients. Each year we seek to recognize and honor fellow alums who have achieved significant success in their field. We want them to know they are making a difference. We also want others – even those outside of the OBU family – to know about these successful alumni. Three different awards are presented annually by the OBU Alumni Association: the Alumni Achievement Award, Profile in Excellence Award, and Graduate Of the Last Decade Award (aka "the GOLD Alum of the Year").

You can help us find these fantastic former Bison. You can nominate an alum for any one of these three honors. Nominations are reviewed by the board's honors and awards committee, and those selected for the honors are recognized during Homecoming each November.

Growing up as a child of OBU graduates, I have had the privilege of being part of the OBU family since birth. Along with my father and mother, my brother, my wife and I all earned our degrees on Bison Hill. It is a family relationship I hold with a great amount of pride and gratitude. Being a Bison means you have shared in an education and an experience designed to bring out the best in each of us. Our OBU experience has helped to shape the successful lives of thousands of graduates. We want to celebrate those who carry that great name and legacy on a broad stage.

Please take the time to consider alumni who you know to be excellent examples of the spirit of OBU as well as recognized leaders in their field. You can find nomination materials online at www.okbu.edu/alumni/awards.html. As we enter our Centennial Year, this is a key time to make sure we are recognizing those who have helped to raise the reputation of our alma mater in their circles of influence. Frankly, when we brag on successful alumni, we're bragging on OBU. I invite you, as a fellow family member, to join us in bragging on our "relatives."

Jay Sampson, '93
OBU Alumni Association President

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Celebrate OBU With The Centennial Book Series

You can own the first three books in OBU's Centennial Book Series.
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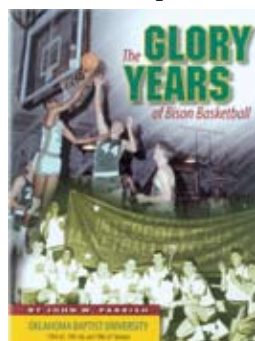
paperback work which takes the reader into the heart and mind of one of OBU's most revered faculty members. The late biology professor wrote many prayers, several of which have been

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Oklahoma residents: \$12.95 + \$1.10 tax + \$2.00 shipping/handling = \$16.05

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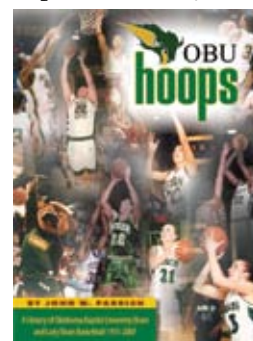
1965-66, and 1966-67 Seasons chronicles one of the greatest runs in NAIA history. Coach Bob Bass and standout Al Tucker led

the Bison to three consecutive national championship games. They brought home the 1966 championship banner, marking the pinnacle of Bison basketball success. Relive those memorable years through this hardback book by John W. Parrish.

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Oklahoma residents: \$20.00 + \$1.70 tax + \$3.00 shipping/handling = \$24.70

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To order any of the Centennial Series books, call 405.878.2706 or visit www.okbu.edu/100/books.html

Artistic Expressions

By Misty Hamilton

Through art, individuals express emotions, manage struggles, seek clarity in life stages and even worship. Seven OBU senior artists showcased their work this spring in the Art Division Gallery on Bison Hill. Each artist displayed favorite pieces in accordance with their chosen themes. This semester's featured artists included Lisha Newman, Summer Perkins, Jacob Lonsinger, Morgan Zabriski, Lacy Abbott, Chris Cochran and Sarajane Harris.

"The senior exhibition is an integral part of their experience as an art student; it is equivalent to the senior recital in music," said Steve Hicks, OBU's Odom professor of art. "It acts not only as a capstone experience to the art curriculum but also as valuable experience in planning and laying out an exhibition. Seeing the artwork in an environment other than the studio can be educational for both the artist and the viewer."

Newman chose "Viewer Interpretation" for the theme of her show. She said she hoped to allow the audience to capture their own meaning through her work, rather than one particular meaning. Inspiration is a key component in the life of any artist, and Newman, a resident of Shawnee, said she has no trouble finding inspiration for her work in every aspect of existence.

NEWMAN



Most of the pieces in Perkins' show were oil paintings with some multimedia additions, pencil drawings and a few ceramic works. Her display focused on a series of four paintings, representing the four seasons.

PERKINS



"My art speaks of how I view life; how I process and attempt to communicate with God; how I make sense of mankind's proclivity in forming relationships; and how I find beauty in the mundane," said Perkins, a studio art minor from Cooper, Texas.

LONSINGER



Lonsinger, a resident of Ponca City, said he most enjoys created art inspired by literature.

"Several of the pieces in my show were inspired by works of literature, for example Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Raven,' and the three witches from Shakespeare's Macbeth," Lonsinger said. "Some of the other works I featured were commissioned by clients for use on t-shirts or business cards and logos. Commissioned work is fun because I get to see other people use my artwork for something."



ZABRISKI

Zabriski's pieces use mediums including glass, fibers, clay, paint, charcoals and pastels.

"My series of paintings from photographs taken while in Italy, along with my large mosaic, were the central pieces in my show," said Zabriski, who is from Plano, Texas.

Abbott's theme employed a mix of technical work, fibers and colors. The Tecumseh senior said her work has been stretched and her style transformed through instruction from professors. Inspired by various colors, patterns, designs and textures, Abbott said everyday things such as tile patterns, magazine pages and clothing – often overlooked by the average observer – serve as inspiration.

Through his theme, "I'm Still Alive," Cochran said he tried to connect with people who are unsure about what the future has for them and are questioning the next step of life.

ABBOTT



"From my own experiences, I know that those kinds of doubts can 'kill' something inside of us, kill some desire to push on or pursue or love other people more than you," said the Oklahoma City senior. "I'm Still Alive' is, in a way, my struggle to survive that period of unrest in my life, to still search for the beautiful that I'm capable of, and I know that we are all capable of."

COCHRAN



Harris titled her show "Kaleidoscope" because each piece was inspired by a variety of things.

"I love being a graphic design major because there are so many different types of design and so many ways to express yourself," said the artist from Aurora, Colo. "I have a passion for art, and I can't remember a time when it wasn't a part of my life."

HARRIS



View the artists' works online at www.okbu.edu/obumagazine.

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Let the Celebration Begin!

OBU's Centennial Celebration
begins this summer.

Plan now to be a part of the festivities!



First Centennial Convocation
September 2, 2009

**Singing Churchwomen of
Oklahoma Concert**
October 20, 2009

Homecoming Centennial Kick-off
November 13-14, 2009

First Centennial Hanging of the Green
December 5, 2009

Centennial Founders' Day
February 10, 2010
Convocation at 10 a.m.
Centennial Worship Service at 6:30 p.m.

For details on these and other Centennial activities, visit www.okbu.edu/100.