

WINTER/SPRING 2010

OBU

magazine

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OKLAHOMA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

A photograph of three men in academic regalia. The man on the left is older, wearing glasses and a black cap and gown, smiling and embracing the man in the center. The man in the center is also older, wearing glasses and a black cap and gown, smiling. The man on the right is wearing a green cap and gown with a gold tassel, looking towards the other two. They are standing in front of a wooden podium. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in regalia.

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Oklahomans are familiar with windy conditions. For those of us blessed to have grown up in the Sooner State, wind is a normal fact of life, somewhat similar to OBU's women winning national track championships. However, during our Centennial year, Bison Hill has been a whirlwind of activity, and the breeze has been refreshing.

Our Centennial Founders' Day celebration on February 10 reminded the OBU community that we have been blessed beyond what our founders might have envisioned when they drove down a stake to claim Bison Hill for kingdom purposes. We stand on the shoulders of giants who sacrificially built and sustained a university which would become known for academic excellence, Christian commitment and global influence.



The story is still being written as we stand at this juncture, 100 years into the history of OBU. We are not resting at the top of Bison Hill. Those who have supported OBU, including many of those reading these words, did not work to create a memorial to distinctively Christian higher education. We are at OBU to maintain an outpost for equipping future leaders who are challenged to use their gifts and abilities for God's glory.

An outstanding faculty is at the heart of any strong educational enterprise. This semester our trustees enacted a new Faculty Salary Structure which will carry us into our second century with a great tool for rewarding outstanding educators and attracting future faculty icons. That is a key part of the OBU 2020 vision, as is expansion of programs and services for our students. We are expanding scholarships. We also are finalizing plans for new housing and other facilities to bolster our strong campus resources. In this double-issue of *OBU Magazine* you will learn more about our great legacy, and learn about the success of our current students, faculty and alumni.

The winds of progress are blowing steadily on Bison Hill. I invite you to come by the campus and feel that refreshing spirit during our Centennial celebration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David W. Whitlock". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

David W. Whitlock
OBU President

OBU

magazine

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"Amid the heaping pile of shattered hopes and broken dreams of schools started and institutions shuttered,

Celebrating Answered Prayer

The vision Oklahoma Baptist pioneers had for higher education could not be derailed by tribulation over Oklahoma Baptist University's 100-year history, said Dr. Paul R. Corts, one of today's leaders in Christian higher education.

Corts, a former OBU administrator and currently president of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, was keynote speaker at OBU's Founders' Day Centennial Chapel celebration in Raley Chapel on February 10.

"Today we gather in this magnificent chapel," Corts said of the landmark building constructed on Bison Hill under the supervision of the University's longest-tenured president, Dr. John Wesley Raley. "We're reminded as we meet here in this wonderful place of God's faithfulness to Oklahoma Baptist University and his showering of blessings upon it."

Corts said higher education institutions in the United States originally were founded by Christians determined to unify sound knowledge and learning with a moral, faith-based quest for truth. Today, he said, most of higher education has lost its way, abandoning even the idea of answering students' questions about the meaning of life or how one should live.

And yet, he noted, OBU has remained steadfast to the heartfelt desire of its founders – such as W.P. Blake, the first chairman of OBU's board of trustees, who offered a prayer in 1910 on the ground which would become the University's campus: "Send down upon the school the rich gift of Thy Good Spirit, that truth may be sincerely sought, faithfully received, and obediently followed."

God planted a vision in the hearts of Oklahoma Baptists.”



“Founded on prayers of those on bended knees, chained to the Bible as the authoritative word of God, fueled by an openness to know all of God’s truth, Oklahoma Baptists set a very high standard for their university to be an extraordinary place of learning that would honor and glorify the Lord God Almighty,” Corts said.

Founders’ Day on Bison Hill marks OBU heritage: the certificate of incorporation was issued to The Baptist University of Oklahoma on February 9, 1910 – marking the official beginning of Oklahoma Baptist University – and on February 22, 1911, a large crowd of supporters gathered on Bison Hill to dedicate the laying of the cornerstone of the first building on campus, Shawnee Hall.

The first session of classes began in the fall of 1911 with 150 students enrolled. Temporary facilities were used in downtown Shawnee. The student body included men and women who were in college and others in preparatory school. At the close of the 1911-12 school year, nine students received degrees. Soon after the closing of work for the year, the president, Dr. J.M. Carroll, tendered his resignation and recommended the board of trustees temporarily close the school until the buildings on campus could be occupied and debt reduced. The school reopened in 1915, and has operated continuously since then.

“Today we remember those heroes of the faith who were obedient to God’s call in those early years and became stewards of that sacred trust,” Corts said. “They prayed earnestly, sacrificed in ways we can barely imagine in the affluence of our times, and although lights dimmed on several occasions, with their scrappy determination and God’s favor, they simply would not allow the lights to go out.”

Corts noted that faculty, administration and students have all built faithfully on the foundation laid 100 years ago – the foundation of Jesus Christ – to make OBU what it is today: one of the most consistently honored universities of its size and type in North America. He shared how God affected his own life during his five-year tenure at OBU, serving as executive vice president from 1978-83.

“We joined a litany of persons of faith who ministered here with a humble innocence of our relative youth, and poured our heart and soul into this place,” he said. “God used this place and the people of this place to impact this person, just as God has done with thousands and thousands of individuals, using Oklahoma Baptist University to transform, to shape, to mold our lives into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Today, we are beneficiaries of those who were faithful stewards following the admonition of Scripture to preserve and grow the faith that was, once for all, entrusted to the saints. Today we

celebrate Oklahoma Baptist University as a beacon of light – a very special place.”

While embracing the enormity of how God has used OBU to transform lives, Corts implored the university community to also remain faithful to God’s calling to build a strong institution for future generations.

The program also featured special guests Dr. E. Eugene Hall, OBU’s 12th president; Dr. Mark Brister, OBU’s 14th president; and Dr. John Wesley Raley Jr., a 1954 OBU graduate and son of OBU’s eighth president.

The Centennial Founders’ Day event included the premiere of the OBU Centennial Anthem, “Grow in Grace.” It also was highlighted by the presentation of honorary doctor of humanities degrees to Dr. Bob R. Agee and Dr. John W. Parrish, two longtime OBU administrators.

Agee served as OBU’s 13th president from 1982-98, achieving the second-longest tenure of the school’s chief executive officers. He led the University to records in student enrollment and achieved significant success in fundraising with three major capital campaigns during his tenure, resulting in new construction, renovation of existing facilities and growth in endowment for scholarships and academic positions. During his administration, OBU began achieving national recognition from *U.S. News & World Report*. Under his leadership, OBU initiated international programs in China, Russia and Brazil and expanded missions opportunities for students throughout the world. Agee and his wife, Nelle, a retired OBU faculty member, live in Jackson, Tenn.

Parrish, OBU executive vice president emeritus, served as OBU’s interim president from November 2007 through October 2008. He came to OBU in 1964 as director of publications and publicity. He also served as an instructor in journalism and student publications advisor. Through the years, he served as public relations director, alumni director, assistant vice president for development, vice president for institutional advancement, senior vice president for business and external affairs, and executive vice president and chief financial officer. He has received OBU’s Distinguished Service Award and Meritorious Service Award and is a member of the OBU Athletic Hall of Fame. He was named an honorary OBU alumnus in 1989. He has served as chair of OBU’s Centennial Committee since 2005, and he is in his third tour of duty as the broadcast voice of the Bison basketball team. Parrish and his wife, Mary Kay, professor emerita of music, live in Shawnee.

For more about Founders’ Day Chapel, including audio and video from the event, visit okbu.edu/magazine.

Dignitaries Celebrate Centennial

The Honorable C. Brad Henry, Governor of Oklahoma, proclaimed Feb. 9, 2010, as “Founders’ Day” in Oklahoma in honor of the day the certificate of incorporation was issued to The Baptist University of Oklahoma in 1910.

Gov. Henry was one of several esteemed guests who brought greetings and reflections to OBU during a Centennial Celebration Founders’ Day Luncheon February 10.

Henry said while it is always great to be back in his hometown of Shawnee, it was especially great to be celebrating the 100-year anniversary of an institution which has made an incredible impact not only on several members of his own extended family, but also on the entire state of Oklahoma.

“OBU is consistently ranked as one of the best liberal arts universities in the country, and focuses both on the intellectual and spiritual lives of its students, and creates graduates who are not only knowledgeable critical thinkers, but are also morally grounded people of faith,” Henry said.

“This institution has had a greater impact on the state of Oklahoma than you may know because over the seven years I have been in office, I have employed seven individuals who graduated from here,” he added. “I have taken that great knowledge and moral value system that this great institution gives to its student, and I’ve brought that to state government. I think it has served us well, and I’m very proud of that fact.”

As governor, Henry said he thinks a lot about how to move Oklahoma forward, and OBU has played a role in advancing the state.

“The best way to do that is to produce more college graduates and keep them here in our state, and that’s exactly what Oklahoma Baptist University has been doing now for 100 years,” he said, noting OBU has had more than 17,000 graduates. “Many of them have stayed here in our state and have become great leaders and contributed mightily to the quality of life in this state. Many have gone to other states and other countries and have done the same thing. It’s something for which we should all be very proud.”

Other guests who brought greetings included Linda Peterson, mayor of the City of Shawnee; Dr. Michael Arrington, executive director, International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities; Lesa Smaligo, executive director, Oklahoma Independent Colleges and Universities; Ron Fannin, senior associate executive director, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma; Dr. Kevin Clarkson, chair, OBU board of trustees;



Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry

Dr. Kevin Hall, chair, OBU faculty council; Ryan Womack, president, OBU student government association; and Carl Storm, president, OBU Alumni Association.

Dr. John Wesley Raley Jr., son of OBU’s eighth and longest-tenured president, recalled time spent on Bison Hill as a child, including befriending the campus gardener, Pete Jones. Raley, a 1954 OBU graduate, recited a poem originally presented by his father during his inauguration in 1934. Part of the text reads, “God, make this my altar, Myself the sacrifice, This task to which I put my hand.”

Known for his quick wit, longtime Oklahoma Baptist statesman Dr. Lloyd G. Minter said he felt apprehension about being part of the extensive program for the luncheon, noting “the length of the service is going to transcend my life expectancy.”

In seriousness, Minter, ’40, shared quotes from Dr. James R. Scales, OBU’s ninth president, whom Minter described as “a consummate gentleman and scholar.” During his tenure on Bison Hill, Scales was quoted to have said, “I have never thought of myself as anything but a teacher. It is the proudest title I shall ever carry.”

Representing other past presidencies, several guests shared reflections about their part in OBU’s history, including Dr. Grady C. Cothen, OBU’s 10th president, who brought greetings via video; Mrs. Ellen Tanner, OBU’s 11th first lady, whose remarks were read by Ramona Farthing, OBU professor emerita of French; Dr. E. Eugene Hall, OBU’s 12th president; and Dr. Mark A. Brister, OBU’s 14th president.

The luncheon was punctuated by responses from Dr. Bob R. Agee, OBU’s 13th president, and Dr. John W. Parrish, OBU executive vice president emeritus. Agee and Parrish were awarded honorary doctor of humanities degrees during the Founders’ Day Chapel service preceding the luncheon.

Grow In Grace

*For the Centennial Celebration of
Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma
February 10, 2010*

W.P. Blake

CHORAL SCORE
With keyboard accompaniment

Donna Butler

*Orchestration by
Claude L. Bass*

Andante Spiritoso ♩ = 88

Piano *mf*

Fervente *p* ♩ = 80

SA Al-mighty God, our Heavly Father, Al-mighty God, our Heavly Father, who

TB

Copyright 2009 © by Donna Butler Douglas

When W.P. Blake knelt to pray on the Oklahoma prairie ground which was the chosen site of Oklahoma Baptists' new venture in higher education, he probably was not expecting that his words would be set to music. A century later, the words and a new tune reverberated on the OBU campus.

Drawn from Blake's prayer first uttered on Bison Hill, OBU's Centennial Anthem, "Grow in Grace," premiered during the University's Founders' Day celebration on February 10.

The anthem was composed by 1982 OBU graduate Donna Butler Douglas. Orchestration was provided by Dr. C.L. Bass, a 1957 graduate who later served as an OBU faculty member for a dozen years.

"The Centennial Anthem is a lovely and creative use of a historic prayer given by W.P. Blake, the first chairman of OBU's board of trustees," said John Parrish, chairman of OBU's Centennial Committee and executive vice president emeritus. "The prayer was historic in that Blake and G. Lee Phelps came to the campus shortly after the school site had been determined and prayed for God's blessings on this important endeavor.

"Donna Butler Douglas' composition is faithful to Blake's original prayer and will stir the hearts of those who know OBU history and the road our Baptist forefathers traveled to bring the school to this point."

Butler Douglas said she was honored when she was invited to write the anthem because many of her musical and life models are OBU graduates or former professors.

"The challenge came of creating a musical setting lovely enough to portray the beautiful Blake poem," Butler Douglas said. "Each section of the piece was crafted to highlight different textual aspects. I composed each section independently and then wove it together with a single motive. Truly, the goal is to set each phrase in its most natural environment so that each word feels like it 'belongs.'"

"I believe that imagination manifests reality," she added. "My inspirations seem to come randomly and most often when I am not seeking them. I hear melody and rhythm in just about everything, whether it be the lilt of a person's 'hello' or the rustle of leaves. Sometimes I build songs around a single sentence if the message truly speaks to me."

An accomplished pianist, soloist and freelance composer, she has nearly 100 original works in print under her maiden name, Donna Butler.

Donna earned a master's degree in theory and composition from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 2009 she

received her 26th award from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

Butler Douglas has served at churches in Oklahoma, the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, the Kansas City area and Little Rock, Ark., for the past 20 years. She currently works as public relations specialist for Kansas City Hospice and Palliative Care.



Donna Butler Douglas, '82

Her ties to both Bison Hill and music arts are very deep. Her parents, Dr. A.L. "Pete" Butler and Jo Ann (Barbour) Butler, graduated from OBU in 1955. Donna was born in Ada, where her father was minister of music at the First Baptist Church of Ada for many years before heading the church music program at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Her mother taught music at East Central University for 15 years before the Butlers moved to Kansas City. She then served on the seminary's music faculty for 16 years.

Donna and her husband, Gary, reside in Olathe, Kan. They have four children and four grandchildren.

C.L. Bass served as a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for 24 years. He retired in 2001 as distinguished professor emeritus of music theory and composition. In addition to teaching at OBU for 12 years, he taught in public schools for eight years.

Bass earned a master's degree in music from the University of Oklahoma and a Ph.D. degree from the University of North Texas. He is a member of ASCAP.

A resident of Fort Worth, Texas, he currently serves as choir director at Agape Baptist Church. He and his wife, Charlene, have three children and two grandchildren. Their son Paul graduated from OBU in 1984.

To hear or download "Grow in Grace," visit okbu.edu/magazine.

NAIA NATIONAL CHAMPS OBUBISON



CLAIMING

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS.

For the first time in 44 years, OBU is the crown jewel of the NAIA as winners of the national men's basketball championship. The Bison claimed the title with a heart-stopping 84-83 win over Azusa Pacific on March 23 in Kansas City's historic Municipal Auditorium.





THE CROWN

Head Coach Doug Tolin and his team held the big red banner at midcourt in a scene that OBU had not celebrated since Al Tucker and Coach Bob Bass defeated Georgia Southern in 1966 in the same building.

The dramatic championship game finish capped a tournament run which saw OBU overcome significant deficits in four consecutive games.

OBU got the big basket, a big defensive stop and a celebration they will not forget.

The Bison trailed by five with 90 seconds left in the game, but Tournament MVP Nate Brumfield scored in the paint to make it 83-80 with 1:22 to go. Azusa Pacific missed the front end of a one-and-one and Brumfield got the rebound. OBU's Kevin Swinton was fouled under the OBU basket with 42 seconds to play.

Swinton, who was in pain throughout the game after an injury, was unable to go the free throw line and APU selected OBU's A.J. Hawkins to take the free throws.

Hawkins made the first free throw and missed the second, but the rebound went off the hand of an APU player and Brumfield

chased it down in the corner and flung it out to Hawkins, who smoothly dropped in a three-point shot for an 84-83 lead with 40 seconds on the clock.

The shot will live in Bison lore, as will the rebound and the assist.

The night before, in the semifinal game against Robert Morris, Brumfield hit the game-winning shot in the closing seconds.

"Last night, A.J. got the ball to him for the game-winner and tonight it was the other way around," Tolin said after the championship win. "That's what good teams do."

APU had one final chance, but their standout shooter, Dominique Johnson, missed from near the free throw line and Marshall Johnson got the offensive rebound but the game clock ticked down to zero with the ball still in his hands. His late shot went through the net and forced a quick look at the replay that delayed the celebration for just a few anxious seconds.

After the official waved off the shot a second time, the Bison celebrated the second national men's basketball championship in OBU's storied history.

OBU overcame a seven-point halftime deficit in the title game. That was relatively minor compared to trailing by 15 against Texas Wesleyan in the NAIA second round, 16 in the quarter-final against Biola, and 13 in the semifinal game.



Tolin, in his tenth year at the OBU helm, was named National Coach of the Year, and Brumfield, a 6'5" forward from Rochester, N.Y., was named NAIA Player of the Year following the game.

"To be fair, when I was fortunate enough to get this job, I felt like I owed it to the program, to Bob Hoffman and all the players and coaches that were there before me, to try to win a national championship and not just be a good program," Tolin said. "We've had some very good teams through the years that just didn't get the breaks here."

The celebration included photos, hugs and a raucous round of the OBU cheer 'Ka-Rip' by the more than 250 students, faculty, staff and friends who made the trip from Shawnee. It also included a call to Tolin from Gov. Brad Henry.

The Bison left Kansas City with the banner and the record for national tournament victories in tow, now at 54. OBU won the Sooner Athletic Conference regular season title, and finished with a 33-3 record for the season.

**For more about the championship,
including a tournament highlight video,
visit okbu.edu/magazine.**



FROM A BISON ALUM

Dear Coach Tolin, Kyle, and the 2010 National Championship Team:

As a former Bison player, I want you to know that I am very proud to be a Bison today to say the least. But there is something much deeper that I feel as a former Bison player. It is a deep feeling of gratitude for you and what you have accomplished.

As I watched the game end I realized that you were fulfilling all of our dreams as former Bison players. Since 1966, Bison players have watched the film of Al Tucker and the 1966 national championship team and dreamed of holding that banner again. For 44 years one Bison player after another put on that practice jersey every day with the hope that one more practice could get us one step closer to holding that banner. For 44 years one former Bison player after another left Bison Hill with that dream unfulfilled, until last night.

Last night you won a championship for all of us that have worn the Bison uniform since 1966. Last night I felt like all of the work and sweat that we gave was finally rewarded by your victory. You were holding that banner for your team and for our school but you were also holding it for all of us that have worn the Bison uniform.

On behalf of all of my former Bison teammates and former Bison players who spent so much time and gave so much effort for the last 44 years on the floors of Clark Craig Fieldhouse and the Noble Complex, thank you for representing all of us so well. Thank you for working so hard. Thank you for never giving up. Thank you for fighting to the very end. Thank you for fulfilling our dream.

Sincerely,

Jerry Wells
1973-1977



Resilience & Repetition

Repetition
Repetition

The Lady Bison win their third national title in six years

There is a new shirt on sale in the OBU Bookstore. The front side declares the OBU women's indoor track and field squad has won three national titles in six years. The back side sums up the situation with five words: "It's just what we do."

The Lady Bison edged conference foe Wayland Baptist by one point at the NAIA Championship Meet in Johnson City, Tenn., on March 6. They added the 2010 title to a collection which includes the 2005 and 2007 crowns.

The championship came down to the final event and the Lady Bison 4x400 relay team of Marissa Moseley, Sarah Patterson, Shondia Drew and Verone Chambers staged a national event championship with a 3:44.94 to put the entire team atop the final award stand.

Wayland Baptist finished second in the 4x400 by two seconds.

"We've won the 4x4 so many times that I knew we could win," said OBU coach Ford Mastin, who picked up his fifth NAIA Coach of the Year Award.

OBU trailed Simon Fraser by eight and Wayland Baptist by a point heading into the race and was behind after three legs of the 4x400. Moseley had given OBU a lead, but Wayland Baptist had stacked the middle with talent and overtook OBU. Chambers made up the short deficit and won going away.

The 4x400 win gave 10 points to OBU, while Wayland picked up eight for second place. Simon Fraser didn't have an entry in the finals. It marked the third consecutive year that the

national championship was determined by one point and the fourth season in a row that the title was won by less than two points.

The relay win capped a day of big moments after the Lady Bison missed on 11 points they had been counting on and had come close with some athletes who were not projected to score.

"Everyone did something to contribute to this championship," Mastin said. "These are good kids. I feel badly for some of our girls who were seventh and eighth and just missed scoring, but they are a part of our success.

"Never give up," Mastin said. "This meet was a testimony to the phrase 'never give up.' We missed some points we thought we'd get but our kids stayed sharp and we never gave up."

OBU picked up 18 points in the 400 meters with Chambers winning in 56.27 and Moseley taking second at 56.61.

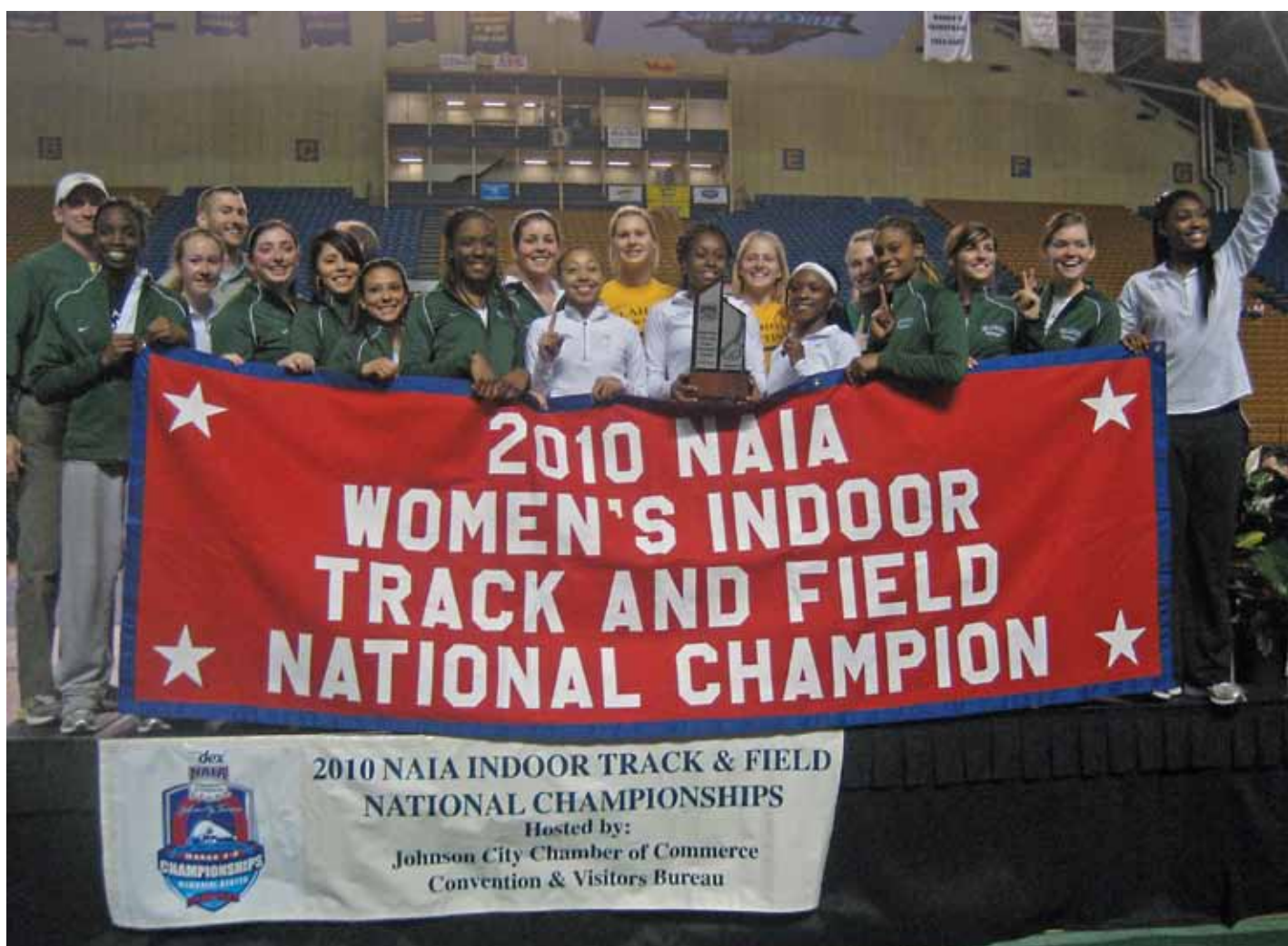
Another 18 came in the 200 meters with Gayon Evans taking second (24.26), Moseley third (24.35) and Chambers fourth (24.44).

Evans was second in the 60 meters at 7.49 for eight points and Chambers took second in the 60 hurdles at 8.63 for another eight. Brianna Shippy scored six with a third-place in the pole vault on Friday.

The OBU men's team finished third at the meet, and a total of 13 OBU athletes brought home 19 All-America honors. For the women, Moseley and Chambers had three each.

The OBU women will be among the favorites to win the Outdoor Championship at the NAIA meet May 27-29 in Marion, Ind.

Follow OBU's teams at the outdoor championship and keep up with OBU athletics year-round at obubison.com.



the Agee YEARS

A Call To Excellence
1985-1998

As part of the OBU Centennial celebration, the University commissioned Dr. Jerry Faught, Dickinson associate professor of religion, to write about the final 25 years of OBU's century of existence. The next several issues of *OBU Magazine* will include selected excerpts from Faught's writing. A glimpse of Dr. Bob R. Agee's presidency is offered in this issue.



Bob R. Agee began serving as OBU's thirteenth president near the beginning of the Reagan era (1981-1989). During this period the nation witnessed a peaceful end to the Cold War, became the world's largest debtor nation, and endured the Iran-Contra affair. The national mood was decidedly conservative and Ronald Reagan made the most of it. His designation of 1983 as the Year of the Bible resonated with a considerable evangelical constituency that had become more numerous and politically active in recent years.

During the Reagan years the national economy stabilized after the country suffered through recession and "stagflation" in the 1970s. While the national economy rebounded, the economy in Oklahoma faced a crisis in the latter half of the Reagan era. From the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s, the oil industry boomed in the state. By 1985 the boom had ended. The unemployment rate increased from 3 percent in the early 1980s to 9 percent in 1983. Unemployment still stood at 8 percent in 1986. Gradually the state economy stabilized as the state began to diversify away from the energy industry.

Although these were challenging times politically and economically, OBU flourished under Agee's leadership. The university experienced many triumphs and few setbacks. Agee led OBU to achieve a period of excellence in a number of significant facets of university life.

One of Agee's priorities from the beginning of his presidency was to strengthen ties with Oklahoma churches and with the leadership of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. Agee understood the importance of fostering good relations with local churches. He had served as a pastor in Kentucky and Tennessee from 1964-75. Prior to coming to OBU Agee served as vice president for religious affairs and special assistant to the president at Union University in Jackson, Tenn. In that position he often represented the president and the university in Tennessee churches. The 43-year-old president arrived at OBU armed with the knowledge and experience necessary to connect with Oklahoma Baptists, many of whom had lost confidence in the university. A number of Oklahoma Baptists perceived that OBU had become theologically liberal and that Oklahoma's only Baptist university did not care about serving the needs of Oklahoma Baptists. Agee discovered that the university needed to give serious attention to reconnecting with the pastors and Oklahoma Baptist churches.

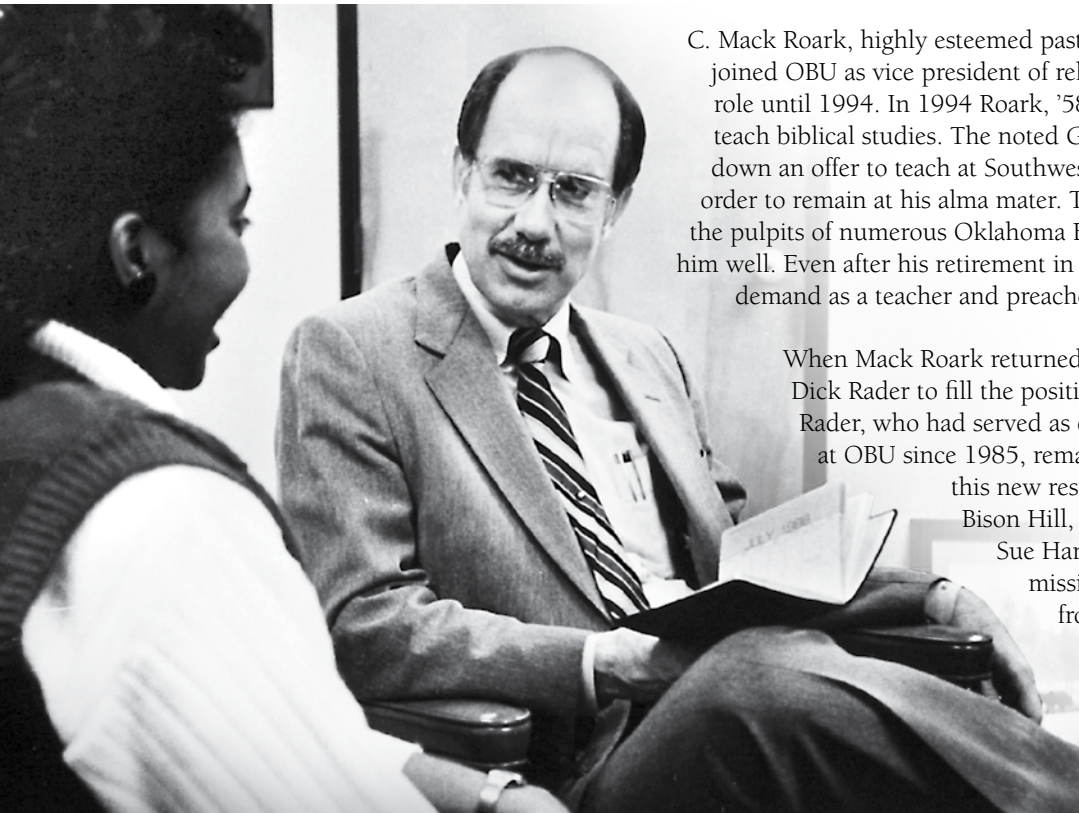
Agee took to the road in order to restore the relationship between the university and the Oklahoma churches. He set out to get into as many churches as possible to emphasize that OBU was committed to integrating academic excellence with spiritual growth in a theologically faithful environment. During his first month on Bison Hill, he wrote a letter to all the Baptist pastors in Oklahoma to share with them that he would be available to preach in their churches or assist them in any way. Any pastor who invited him, no matter the size of the church, Agee accepted if he had no other commitment. Faculty from the School of Christian Service also preached in churches. During his first nine years, Agee averaged preaching in about 50 churches a year. In 1990 a bout with leukemia slowed him down for a year. The last six years of his tenure he averaged speaking in about 40 churches a year. In short order, Agee became the face of OBU and won the support of Oklahoma Baptists, especially pastors who began to encourage their young people to attend OBU.



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Agee also reached out to the constituency by securing administrators and teachers in the religion department who had the respect of Oklahoma Baptists and who often preached in Oklahoma churches. James “Bob” Evans, well-liked pastor at First Baptist Church, Weatherford, began teaching in the religion department in 1982. During his 15-year teaching career on Bison Hill, Evans conducted numerous revivals, winter Bible studies, and served a number of interim pastorates. First Baptist Church, Durant, where Evans spent six months as interim in 1995, honored Evans and his wife, Patsy, who served three years as a lecturer in English at OBU, by establishing a scholarship in their honor upon their retirements in 1997.

Mack Roark



C. Mack Roark, highly esteemed pastor at First Baptist Church, Ponca City, joined OBU as vice president of religious life in 1984 and served in that role until 1994. In 1994 Roark, '58, returned to the OBU classroom to teach biblical studies. The noted Greek and New Testament scholar turned down an offer to teach at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in order to remain at his alma mater. Throughout his time at OBU, Roark filled the pulpits of numerous Oklahoma Baptist churches who always received him well. Even after his retirement in 2004, he continued to be in high demand as a teacher and preacher.

When Mack Roark returned to the classroom, Agee called upon Dick Rader to fill the position of vice president for religious life. Rader, who had served as dean of the School of Christian Service at OBU since 1985, remained in that position while adding this new responsibility in 1994. Before coming to Bison Hill, Rader, '63, and his wife, the former Sue Harris, '61, served as Southern Baptist missionaries in Zambia and South Africa from 1967-79. In Zambia Rader worked as a field evangelist, teacher, principal, and director of theological education. From 1978-79 he served as lecturer at the Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Rader returned to teach at OBU in 1979, and in 1989 was named WMU Professor of Missions. He also directed OBU's Ministry Training Institute which had reached a record enrollment of 421 students in 1993 with courses offered in more than 35 locations around the nation. Oklahoma Baptists greatly admired the former missionary who spoke often at world missions conferences and filled the pulpit in many churches across Oklahoma. OBU and Oklahoma Baptists lost a dear friend and an outstanding person when Rader died on October 14, 2002, after a 10-month battle with liver cancer. Rader had retired only a few months earlier due to his illness. During Rader's tenure as dean, the School of Christian Service grew to a record enrollment of more than 525 students by the fall of 1994. The total made OBU's program in religious studies one of the largest among all colleges and universities in the nation. In addition, during Rader's tenure, OBU had more recent graduates serving in the International Mission Board's Journeyman program than any other college in the nation.

Agee not only reached out to Oklahoma Baptists, he also developed a healthy relationship with three executive directors of the BGCO. Joe L. Ingram, who served as executive director from 1971-86, became one of Agee's dearest friends. The two men felt comfortable supporting one another's goals and dreams. As a long-time staunch supporter of OBU, Ingram had been instrumental in working to increase BGCO funding to the University over the years. Agee noted that Ingram portrayed the "qualities and characteristics that we hope to instill in those men and women who graduate from our institution." Recognized for his commitment to evangelism and missions, Ingram led Oklahoma Baptists to become one of the first state conventions to send 50 percent of its Cooperative Program funds to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Agee spent extensive time with William G. Tanner, a former OBU president who succeeded Ingram as executive director, developing strategies that expanded the work of the BGCO. In 1996 Anthony Jordan succeeded Tanner. During Agee's last two years as president, Jordan called upon Agee to assist him with long-range strategic planning initiatives for the BGCO.

A constant theme in Agee's annual speeches to the BGCO had to do with OBU's close relationship with the BGCO. He pledged that OBU would take seriously its ties to Oklahoma churches and that OBU would be accountable and responsible to Oklahoma Baptists. While Agee made every effort to communicate with and be sensitive to the perspectives of Oklahoma Baptists, he expected certain things from the churches and leadership of the BGCO. In his 1989 address to the BGCO, he called upon Oklahoma Baptists and OBU to renew their covenant relationship. He noted that Oklahoma Baptists could expect OBU to be a first-rate, Christ-centered university that affirms students' confidence in the Bible as the authoritative Word of God and that would employ faculty, administration and staff who were Christians and who actively served in their local churches. He promised that OBU would provide spiritual growth opportunities for students and would inspire and equip them to serve as leaders in their churches.

Agee then asked the convention to covenant to provide trustees "who possess business and professional experience, resources, wisdom, and willingness to work, and are active members of Oklahoma Baptist churches." He implored the convention to



During Rader's tenure as dean, the School of Christian Service grew to a record enrollment of more than 525 students by the fall of 1994. The total made OBU's program in religious studies one of the largest among all colleges and universities in the nation.

demonstrate its commitment to Christian higher education by providing sufficient financial support for OBU. Agee bemoaned the tough economic times that had resulted in OBU receiving only 18.8 percent of its operating budget from the Cooperative Program in 1988 whereas the University had received 24.6 percent of its budget from the BGCO in 1982. In his final address to the convention in the fall of 1997 Agee noted that only 11.5 percent of OBU's budget came from Cooperative Program sources. While percentages did decrease from 1982-97, it should be noted that actual BGCO support increased by more than \$600,000. In any event, Agee asked the 1989 convention to encourage all Baptist young people to believe in the importance and affordability of a Christian education. Finally, he asked the convention "to be sensitive to and supportive of the role of the Baptist university at the cutting edge of knowledge."

Agee also led OBU to develop closer ties between OBU and the Shawnee community. Agee provided leadership in the Chamber of Commerce and served as president in 1997. He also was active in other community organizations.

Another of Agee's challenges early in his presidency had to do with campus morale. When Agee arrived on campus, he found low morale especially among the faculty. He recognized that before administrators and faculty could work together effectively tensions would have to be resolved. He worked to reconcile frictions between the administration, faculty, and students by "building bridges of communication." Eventually, a strong sense of community developed on the campus as faculty, students, and administrators began to share a common vision of a quality Christian university devoted to academic excellence in every discipline.

Shirley Jones



One of the major bridges in Agee's program involved the reestablishing of the position of vice president for academic affairs, a position that had been discontinued for several years. His subsequent appointment of OBU professor Shirley Jones to that position in 1983 proved to be a wise move. Jones, '58, had taught English at OBU since 1964. A gifted classroom teacher, Jones had earned great respect from her faculty colleagues with whom she worked closely in her new administrative role. She served effectively as vice president of academic affairs until 1986 when she felt the call to return to the classroom. Upon her resignation, Agee noted that one of her key accomplishments included a significant "improvement of morale among faculty and students." Jones commented that the best part of her job had been the opportunity to work with dedicated faculty and administrators who were both committed to providing students with a Christian education of the highest quality.



Pat Taylor

After a national search, Agee, assisted by an advisory committee, selected C. Pat Taylor as Jones's replacement. At the time of his hire, Taylor served as associate vice president for academic affairs at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., a position he had held since 1982. Taylor served as an administrator at OBU from July 1, 1986, until October 1996 when he left to become the 24th president of Southwest

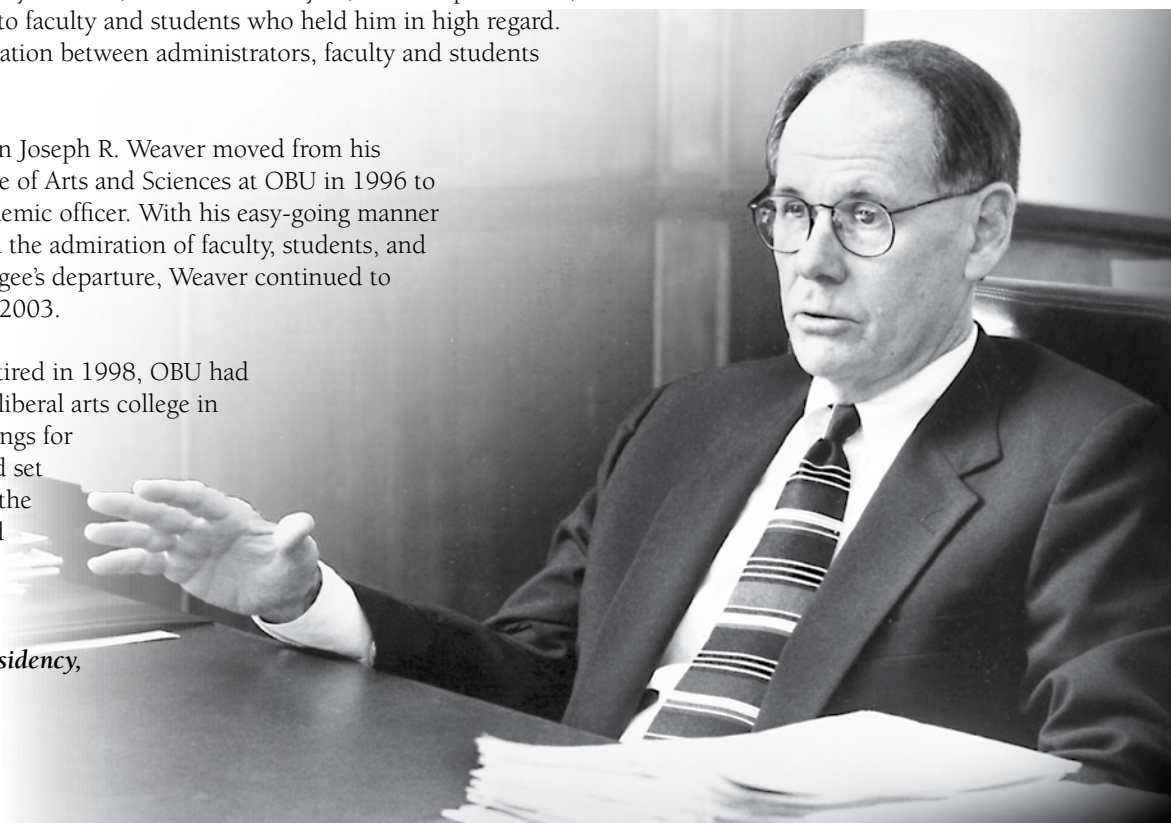
Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri. Taylor's title changed from vice president for academic affairs to senior vice president for academic and internal affairs in 1991 and then to provost in 1995. Although his new titles brought new responsibilities, essentially Taylor served as OBU's chief academic officer. In the end he was responsible for overseeing the academic programs of the university, student development, admissions, religious life, library services, and athletics. Taylor, with his personable, friendly manner, related well to faculty and students who held him in high regard. During his tenure, communication between administrators, faculty and students remained strong.

OBU lost no momentum when Joseph R. Weaver moved from his position of dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at OBU in 1996 to become OBU's new chief academic officer. With his easy-going manner and gentle spirit, Weaver won the admiration of faculty, students, and fellow administrators. After Agee's departure, Weaver continued to serve OBU until he retired in 2003.

By the time President Agee retired in 1998, OBU had been Oklahoma's top-ranked liberal arts college in *U.S. News & World Report* listings for four years. The University had set overall enrollment records in the mid-1990s and had expanded academic offerings and international involvements.

For more about the Agee Presidency, visit okbu.edu/magazine.

Joseph R. Weaver moved from his position of dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at OBU in 1996 to become OBU's new chief academic officer.



Joe Bob Weaver

Hymn To Alma Mater
(Written in 1939)

Richard Huggins '69

Continuing OBU's Rich Music Legacy

For budding musician Richard Huggins, surviving Dr. Jim Hurley's required natural science course – and earning a B – was his proudest academic moment on Bison Hill. And while Dr. Hurley certainly provoked the young man toward higher thoughts, it was Dr. Warren Angell, dean of OBU's College of Fine Arts, who impressed Huggins the most.

Before even arriving on campus, Huggins felt the influence of the University's music program through OBU-trained music ministers such as Bill Littleton; his brother, Jim, who sang with the Bison Glee Club; and renowned Oklahoma Baptist musician Gene Bartlett. Huggins was one of many teenagers attracted to OBU's program by Angell himself.

As an OBU student, Huggins said Angell taught him a wealth about not only music, but also about life in general. During a drive down a dark Texas highway late one night in 1990, all the lessons he had learned from Angell came flooding back to him.

"In the dark car, my mind did a quick inventory of all I had learned from Dean Angell about music ... about how he poured his energy and charisma into OBU and the Bison Glee Club, and how he could be so personally encouraging," Huggins said. "I reflected on how much I learned about the pursuit of excellence, the importance of staying inspired by going to hear live performances. Lastly I thought about a lesson perhaps as valuable as any other: that it's OK to have fun and be a serious musician. And he led the way. As the pavement thumped my wheels and all these things marched through my mind like a parade of principles, tears streamed down as I realized just how much I owed Warren Angell."

As much as Angell taught Huggins about being a musician, he said Hurley taught him about being a Christian disciple. Hurley taught his students to think deep, and then deeper still.

"What a giant of a man and teacher," Huggins said. "His eyes could pierce a tank and his roar could exhume the dead. But from the same man came eyes that could twinkle lovingly and a voice soft as gathered wool. Like Dean Angell, he invested his only life in OBU students and in challenging them to aim for higher goals and to be about the business of deciding their place in this world."

During one particularly low-faith point in Huggins' life at OBU, Hurley walked by and the two struck up a conversation. Huggins asked the professor, "Dr. Hurley, you're a scientist and a Christian. Do you ever have problems reconciling the

two?" Hurley looked at Huggins and replied, "I doubt ... nevertheless, I believe."

"What this means to me is that one's intellect sometimes may battle the illogic of faith, but it's no biggie to God to bounce tough questions against Him, even to express one's doubts," Huggins said. "That statement from Dr. Hurley forever dismissed the notion that it's always wrong to doubt the faith, but just as wrong to live in that doubt. And it's clear that he lived a life of hard-won faith. That this storied professor took a personal interest in someone such as me, not even one of his majors, is a story others could tell about Dr. Hurley as well as other professors. It's a key ingredient in the greatness of OBU."

Huggins said OBU provided solid groundwork for his vocation, a foundation for his faith, and lifelong friends. Even 15 years after graduating, OBU ties opened the door for his "dream job" as an editor at Word Music in Irving, Texas. Today, Huggins' work as a freelance music arranger, composer and editor speaks well to the education he received on Bison Hill. He serves as part-time worship associate at Sylvania Church in Tyler, Texas. His wife, Barbara, is a semi-retired pediatrician.

His continued involvement on campus also testifies to the impact the University had on his life. It is a fitting honor that Huggins was named one of OBU's Profile in Excellence Award

At Dean Warren Angell's 90th birthday party, alums celebrated in song, with Huggins at the keyboard.



recipients, because it was Huggins himself who first suggested the award as part of OBU's alumni board nearly 30 years ago.

Knowing the rationale for the award, Huggins is quick to claim he has not achieved "that huge accomplishment ... like all the other recipients.

"My 'main thing,' with respect to bringing honor and pride to OBU, has been to lead the alumni in honoring one of its greatest and most inspiring faculty members, Warren Angell. Hand in hand with that has been, and is, promoting the legacy and fellowship of the Bison Glee Club itself."

Huggins coordinated the 90th birthday tribute to Angell in 1997, including establishing a tribute scholarship, and he arranged a 95th birthday tribute alumni gathering in Black Mountain, N.C., which drew 106 alumni from 16 states. He helped plan the dean's memorial service in May 2006, one week shy of Angell's 99th birthday. With help from Mary Kay Parrish and Lori Hagans, he coordinated the 100th birthday memorial tribute to Angell, along with the 70th anniversary celebration of the Bison Glee Club in 2007. He also led efforts in at least four other events related to the dean.

With the 75th anniversary of the Bison Glee Club coming in 2013, it is likely Huggins' devotion to the school, the club and the dean who helped shape his life will continue to shine through his gifts and abilities to pay tribute to Bison Hill – his blessed alma mater.

"One Homecoming I couldn't stay for Harvest Court, but I stayed long enough

to have the campus almost to myself," Huggins said. "I walked from one end to the other, enjoying memories that seemed to pop around every green-and-gold corner. I thought mostly about my classmates and all the experiences we had together and about all I had learned at OBU.

"When I got to the end of my walk, the chapel chimes played the OBU Alma Mater. That was emotionally impactful and just reinforced what a blessing it had been to go to OBU." ♦

"The Dean" shares the microphone with Huggins.



Warren McWilliams '68

Learning and Teaching One Season at a Time

Most anyone who has sat through a semester of classroom lectures under Dr. Warren McWilliams can testify to his affinity for the television show M*A*S*H. Broadcast from 1972-83, the show follows a team of doctors and support staff stationed at the 4077th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital in South Korea during the Korean War. The series – which ran 251 episodes across a span of 11 seasons – lasted much longer than the actual three-year military conflict.

Not so different is McWilliams' own run at Oklahoma Baptist University, which started as a typical four-year education but has lasted an additional 68 semesters – and is still going strong.

When McWilliams was in high school considering college, OBU was the only school where he applied. Several years and two additional degrees later, McWilliams is a longtime fixture at OBU, serving as Auguie Henry professor of Bible in the School of Christian Service and helping generations of fellow Bison make the most of their University education.

During his years as a student, McWilliams said OBU impacted his life in many ways. A native of Fort Smith, Ark., he met his future wife, Patty, during their freshman year. The couple married a week after graduation.

McWilliams shared campus life experiences which mark the memories of many who have lived and learned on Bison Hill. For TWIRP Week – a week when “The Woman Is Required to Pay” – Patty purchased tickets for them to attend a concert by his favorite music group (at the time). Attending OBU basketball games was a regular activity – and still is – for the couple. The Bison basketball team won the national championship during their college days. Family-style dining for the evening meal at Kerr or Brotherhood dormitories provided a good opportunity to get to know fellow students. And OBU's music groups impressed them.

McWilliams said he was affected by “many excellent professors” as a student. Dr. Coleman Raley was his main professor in his psychology major. He encouraged McWilliams to do an honors project his senior year, which solidified the student's interest in in-depth research. Dr. Gregory Pritchard taught most of the philosophy McWilliams learned at OBU, impressing his student with the challenges of the big questions that Christians must face. Dr. James Timberlake taught many of the religion courses, including two years of Greek.

“I got to know him well when I was the only student in his second year Greek class,” McWilliams said.

As the sponsor of Ministerial Alliance, Timberlake worked closely with McWilliams, who was an officer in the organization. He helped McWilliams find places for ministry, such as his interim pastorate of a black Methodist church in Shawnee.

“These three professors, and many others, convinced me that a Christian should strive to integrate his or her Christian faith and the academic disciplines we teach and study,” McWilliams said.

It was an off-the-cuff remark from Timberlake – one of his favorite professors – that set a young McWilliams onto a path that would one day lead him back to Bison Hill. Timberlake simply mentioned that McWilliams might consider pursuing a Ph.D. degree someday.

“I had not thought that much about formal education, but the comment was one of many factors that God used to help me broaden my concept of ministry,” McWilliams said. “I had come to OBU to study for pastoral ministry, but God gradually led me into teaching as my primary form of ministry.”

McWilliams was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1968, the year he graduated from OBU. He continued his education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he served as a professor's assistant and Garrett Fellow, earning a master of divinity degree in 1971.

He pursued another master's degree and a Ph.D. degree from Vanderbilt University, graduating in 1974. His doctoral dissertation was titled, “Hegel and Transcendence: The Riddle of the Phenomenology.” During his years of formal education, he served in a variety of ministry roles in Baptist churches in Oklahoma, Kentucky and Tennessee.

His teaching career began at Stetson University, where he was an assistant professor of religion from 1974-76 and director of the extension division from 1975-76. He also was a visiting professor of Christian philosophy at Southern Seminary in 1976. But then a call came from Bison Hill.

“Although I thoroughly enjoyed my student days at OBU, I had not really considered returning to teach here,” he said. “When OBU offered me a position, however, Patty and I quickly decided OBU was the right place for us.”

Hired as an assistant professor of religion, he was installed to the Auguie Henry Professorship in Bible in 1980. He was



promoted to associate professor in 1982. In 1988, he was named to the Augue Henry Chair of Bible. He served as chairman of the Department of Religion from 1980-85, and has served three times as interim dean of the School of Christian Service.

McWilliams has worked hard to balance teaching preparations, ministry opportunities and family obligations. Patty worked at the OBU bookstore, eventually serving many years as the bookstore manager. Their daughters both graduated from OBU, Amy in 1993 and Karen in 1998. Amy works as an assistant editor for a science journal, and Karen is an assistant curator at an art museum.

"Now that Patty and I are at the empty nest stage, my concern is more about staying up to date in my teaching fields while trying to write occasionally," McWilliams said. "Teaching theology and ethics, two of my main interests, requires me to teach in an interdisciplinary way. I try to read widely, but there's always more to learn."

An avid writer, McWilliams has published eight books, many on the topics of pain and suffering, and contributed to at least five other books. He has written more than 80 articles and nearly 70 book reviews. He has written extensively for LifeWay Christian Resources, submitting more than 600 Sunday School lessons since 1988.

Also an avid reader, he brings his ever-growing self-education into the classroom. While he doesn't use M*A*S*H illustrations as much these days in his teaching (since many students are less familiar with it), he does mention it occasionally. Originally attracted to the television series by the combination of comedy and drama, McWilliams discovered he could laugh at the humor but be challenged to think about serious issues as well.

"Many of the ethical issues I still treat in my biblical ethics course appear in the series," he said. "Early in my career I explored the relation of theology to popular culture, and M*A*S*H was a prime example of that interest of mine. Across the years I've investigated theological and ethical themes in movies, novels and comic strips."

McWilliams said his own liberal arts education taught him to be a better reader, writer and communicator. Today, he communicates key truths of the Bible in the classroom, in churches and in some of his writings. He's maximizing his own OBU education, one class at a time, one article at a time and one season at a time. ♦

Sonny Miller '94

Building on a Strong Foundation

When Sonny Miller graduated at the top of his class at the University of Iowa College of Law he credited OBU with laying a foundation that propelled him ahead of students from “big name” schools such as Harvard, Yale and Brown.

Miller's success has continued beyond his success at the top 25 law school. Nominated for several years as a rising star in the Minnesota legal community, he obtained partnership in a top 100 law firm in 2007. He is a partner in the Tax, Trusts and Estates Group at Dorsey and Whitney LLP in Minneapolis, Minn., and vice president and trust officer of Dorsey and Whitney Trust Company. His work entails helping high net-worth individuals plan their estates to pass their wealth or family-controlled businesses to the next generation.

“I have the great joy of going to work every day to a job and career that I absolutely love,” Miller said. “I have had the pleasure of working with some of the wealthiest families and largest companies in our country. Many of my clients are very charitably inclined, and it has been a privilege to assist with the transition of significant amounts of wealth to help fund their charitable goals and objectives.

“The problem with success is that it often results in more business. While I thoroughly enjoy my career, I do sometimes secretly wish that I could work a little less.”

Though OBU laid a good foundation for Miller's success, in retrospect he said OBU initially was not his first choice for college. He had another private school out of state in mind. He said he felt nervous about staying in Oklahoma and whether a Baptist school would be the right fit for him. Despite his hesitation, he visited campus during a preview day at the recommendation of the pastor and youth minister of his home church.

“It didn't take long after visiting OBU to decide that I would not only get a good education, but I would also get that education from a strong moral perspective, distinctively Baptist, and unapologetically Christian,” Miller said. “I was sold, and also a little sorry that I had wasted so much time looking at other options.”

Miller earned a bachelor's degree in management and banking/finance in 1994. He said three professors specifically made an impact on his life during his time on Bison Hill: Dr. Dan Reeder, professor of business; Dr. Glenn Sanders, professor of

history; and Dr. Jim Vernon, associate professor of music and former director of the legendary Bison Glee Club.

Reeder, currently interim dean of OBU's Paul Dickinson School of Business, served as Miller's primary business professor and was instrumental in helping him secure a job at a local trust company during college. The job led to an interest in estate planning and ultimately a career in that field. Reeder also offered Miller perspective, such as the time he gave his student a score of 90 on an essay test.

“I approached Dr. Reeder and asked him why I had not received a perfect score as I did not see any marks on the essays I had written for the test,” Miller said. “He assured me that I had received the top score on the test, but reminded me that no essay is perfect – a humbling and appropriate lesson to learn before heading out into the working world.”

Miller said Sanders found several students who seemed to have a strong interest in history and world events and started an after-hours discussion group that met one night a week to talk about the impact of history on current events. As a freshman, Miller was invited to join the group. He also participated in the Model Arab League, which he said Sanders facilitated on a level clearly ahead of his peers.

“He was not paid for this extra effort, and those discussion sessions had a profound impact on my ability to understand the greater world around me,” Miller said.

Miller said he is forever indebted to Vernon, who took an interest in his personal well-being, acting as a counselor and guide outside of the classroom to the entire Bison Glee Club. Miller credits Vernon with making college a lot of fun, from Bison Glee Club Spectacular to cross-country tours to destinations such as the Grand Canyon, San Francisco, San Antonio, Washington D.C., and even Las Vegas.

Miller said his memories of OBU are not complete without a reference to many Campus Activities Board productions: singing in Freshman Follies, lamenting the death of small puppies during Biggie, and, in his senior year, directing “Once Upon a Spring Affair” with Pamela (Stone) West.

“It was a hilarious and musical tribute to our favorite fairy tales and a fitting end to the magical time in my life that was OBU,” he said.

Upon arriving at law school, he soon discovered the liberal arts education he received at OBU was not only Christian, but also very good. He believes he was as prepared – or arguably better – than many of his classmates who had graduated from larger schools.

“The worldview presented at law school was very different from OBU, and presented its own challenges,” he said. “I was thankful for the strong Christian worldview that I had been exposed to at OBU. I ultimately graduated as the top student in my class ... and landed a job at a top 100 law firm as well. For these achievements, I give credit to God and his merciful grace, as well as the excellent education I received at OBU.”

Miller and his wife, Amy, balance his busy work schedule with time for their two sons, Parker, age 8, and Soren, age 5. He volunteers as an attorney at the Children’s Law Center of Minnesota and serves as the third-grade Sunday School teacher at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. He also serves as a Cub Scout camp coordinator. Additionally, he seeks to pass along lessons he has learned to attorneys aspiring for success.

“The education I received at OBU helped me learn to think critically about the world and challenges around me,” Miller said. “This ability to think critically is the cornerstone of my legal practice. I have always advised younger attorneys that the best path to success is a sharp mind and hard work. You earn respect – and, accordingly, business success – by being the best in the room. I also strongly believe that we can have more of an impact in the world with our faith

if non-Christians can look at our work ethic and competence and respect us for those qualities as well.”

In Miller’s opinion, the foundations laid on Bison Hill are very firm indeed. ♦



Trustees Approve Budget, New Faculty Salary System

During their spring semester meeting on campus OBU trustees approved a \$43.37 million operating budget for the 2010-11 year, adopted a new faculty salary system, and ratified revisions to a faculty sabbatical leave program.

Randy L. Smith, OBU executive vice president for business and administrative services, said the new budget will include a projected distribution of \$12.95 million in scholarships for the 2010-11 academic year, an increase of nearly \$1 million over the 2009-10 distribution.

Trustees approved an administrative proposal for a new faculty salary system which University officials said would be a “momentous” step forward for compensation of OBU’s 110 faculty members.

“The system will set a new, transparent framework for what faculty salaries will be,” Smith said. “It will also drastically increase the minimums for our faculty.”

The new system will become effective Aug. 1, 2010. Smith said it would result in salary increases for faculty who currently are paid below the new minimum levels.

“This is Phase Two of our salary improvement plan,” Smith said. “Phase One was consistent budgeting of cost-of-living increases. We have done that.”

The salary system includes increased minimum levels based on educational degrees.

“This system is designed to reward advanced educational preparation and promotion through the academic ranks,” Smith said, as he explained a salary structure formula based on an array of factors including academic rank, educational degree, and experience at OBU.

“This will also help transform our strategic planning,” said OBU President David Whitlock.

Apart from the faculty salary system, the 2010-11 budget will include a two percent cost-of-living salary increase for all OBU faculty and staff members.

Trustees also approved a recommendation to revise a sabbatical leave program which provides opportunities for faculty to enhance “professional and intellectual development.”

“We are asking you to approve a commitment to a minimum of two sabbatical leaves each academic year,” Dr. Whitlock said to the board. “Strong sabbatical programs carry the expectation that the faculty member will return with an increased effectiveness in their profession.”

“By strengthening our salary structure and our sabbatical program, we are taking prudent steps to assure that our academic reputation will continue to flourish,” Whitlock said. “Our students, their employers, their churches and their communities will ultimately benefit from these actions.”

In other business, the board approved changing the name of the University’s graduate program from the OBU International Graduate School to the OBU Graduate School. According to OBU officials, the name change more accurately reflects the graduate offerings. The graduate school, which was launched in 2007, initially focused on an MBA degree program which included an international study component. OBU now offers a graduate degree in nursing education and anticipates more degrees which



John Parrish, OBU Centennial Committee chair, reviewed significant historic actions by University trustees during a luncheon presentation at the board’s February meeting in the Geiger Center.

would not feature specific international components.

Board members also approved senior faculty status for four faculty members, allowing continuous contracts for those educators. The faculty approved were Julie Blackstone, assistant professor of art; Michael Bruce, assistant professor of telecommunications; Dr. Keith Harman, professor of business; and Dr. Richard Rudebock, Cargill associate professor of business.

Dr. Kevin Clarkson, chair of OBU’s 33-member board of trustees, moderated the board’s plenary session. Clarkson is senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Moore.

University Revises LifeLong Learning Program

OBU's LifeLong Learning Program, introduced in the spring of 2009, will continue with new guidelines enacted for coming years. OBU trustees approved the policy changes in April.

The innovative educational benefit program for alumni will provide for up to five credit hours of free tuition per semester for OBU graduates who meet the revised guidelines. Alumni who qualify for admission will be eligible for the program two years after graduation from the University.

"The enhanced guidelines will ensure that this program remains viable for future generations of Bison alums," OBU President David Whitlock said.

OBU graduates who started study through the LifeLong Learning benefit during the 2009-10 academic year may continue in the program under the original guidelines as long as they are enrolled in consecutive fall and spring semesters. Alumni who enter the program in the fall of 2010 will do so under the new guidelines.

"OBU offers an outstanding education, and we want our graduates to know they are part of the University family after they complete their degrees," OBU Provost Stan Norman said. "The LifeLong Learning program is truly innovative. As is often the case with new programs, we found that after two semesters of existence, the program

requirements needed further refinement. The changes we have enacted will allow the program to meet its intended objective."

Dr. Norman said when OBU administrators asked the University's trustees to approve the program in 2009, they sought to offer graduates a way to expand professional development or seek a second bachelor's degree by utilizing available space in regular undergraduate classes.

Under the new policy, alumni will be able to enroll as LifeLong Learning

students no earlier than two years following OBU graduation. The policy changes will limit qualifying graduates to a maximum of five semester hours per fall or spring term. Students in the program will be required to pay a \$50 LifeLong Learning fee for each semester in which they are enrolled.

"After completing two enrollment periods during this academic year, we found that some of the policy guidelines did not achieve the intended outcome," Norman said. "OBU offers an educational product which has been recognized as an outstanding value. That value is linked to prudent fiscal management. This program has gone through a review and has been modified to assure effectiveness."

With the revisions, the University clarified how LifeLong Learning students can enroll for the educational benefit. Students in the program will be required to wait until the first day of classes to assure that space is available in a desired class. Graduates will not be able to pre-enroll for a course as a "regular" student, then opt for the LifeLong Learning benefit after being assured a seat in the course. University officials noted that all OBU nursing cohort groups are currently at capacity, which would prevent LifeLong Learning participants from pursuing nursing courses through the program.

"This program experienced some 'growing pains' in its first year, but OBU officials have worked diligently to make the LifeLong Learning benefit a reality for future graduates," said Bruce Perkins, OBU director of admissions. "It would have been easier to just back away from the program, but instead, our graduates will have a benefit which is truly unique."

Full details of the revised policy are available at okbu.edu/academics/lifelong.



OBU graduates will have a two-year waiting period before being eligible for the innovative free tuition program.

Faculty Help Chronicle Oklahoma History

Five OBU professors contributed to the new Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, published by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

The encyclopedia contains three essays by Dr. Bill Hagen, professor of English; two articles by Dr. Jerry Faught, Dickinson associate professor of religion; three pieces by Dr. Carol Humphrey, professor of history; three articles by Timothy McCollum, assistant professor of anthropology; and five articles by Dr. Bill Mullins, professor emeritus of history.

Hagen's essays are on film images of Oklahoma, the novel *Grapes of Wrath*, and the film *Grapes of Wrath*. Faught's articles are biographical sketches of

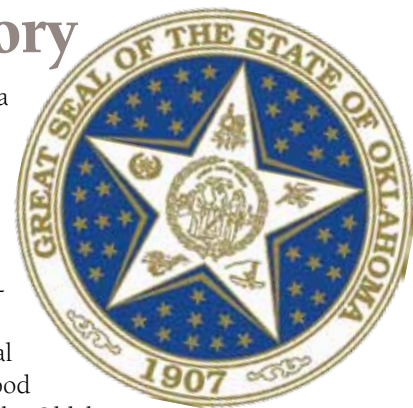
Evan Jones (1788-1872) and John McIntosh (1833-1906).

Humphrey's subjects were Freedmen Schools, Francis Falwell Threadgill, and Lola May Smeltzer Scott.

McCollum's entries each address an American Indian group residing in the state: the Quapaw, the Sac and Fox, and the Western Delaware

Mullins' articles featured the Great Depression, Okie Migration, the Works Progress Administration in Oklahoma, the National Industrial Recovery Act, and Little Dixie. Mullins also edited the entries on McCloud, Seminole, Sparks, Wanette, and Lincoln, Pottawatomie, and Seminole counties.

Oklahoma became the 46th state in 1907. To officially commemorate the Centennial of Statehood in 2007, the Oklahoma Historical Society, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, developed the Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture to be an educational resource.



A link to the online edition of the encyclopedia is available at okbu.edu/magazine.

Ballweg Returns to Bison Hill to Direct Choral Activities

Dr. D. Brent Ballweg, '78, will join OBU's Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts as director of choral activities in August 2010.



Ballweg will be responsible for OBU's choral programs, and will direct OBU's auditioned male ensemble, the Bison Glee Club, as well as

the auditioned mixed chorus, University Chorale.

After completing a bachelor's degree in music at OBU, Ballweg earned a master's degree in choral conducting from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a doctorate in choral

conducting from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music.

He currently is professor of music at Southern Nazarene University, where he directs the SNU Chorale, Women's Chorus and Choral Society. He also teaches courses in conducting and music history.

Before joining SNU, he filled college conducting positions in Texas, Arkansas, Arizona, Oklahoma, and Missouri. He has served as the artistic director and conductor of the Plano (Texas) Civic Chorus, assistant director of the Kansas City Symphony Chorus, and founder and director of the Northeast Arkansas Chorale.

In 1996, Ballweg was invited to represent the United States as a participant in a conducting master class at the International Federation for Choral Music Fourth World Symposium on Choral Music and World Choirs Festival in Sydney,

Australia. In 1997, he was invited to conduct in master classes with the Phoenix Bach Choir at the Southwest Conductor's Symposium.

Ballweg has served as the American Choral Directors Association national chair for two-year college choirs and as past president of the Oklahoma Choral Directors Association and Texas Two-Year College Choral Directors Association. He recently was elected president of the ACDA Southwestern Division for 2012-14. His professional affiliations include the American Choral Directors Association, International Federation for Choral Music, Oklahoma Choral Directors Association, Music Educators National Conference, National Collegiate Choral Organization, Oklahoma Music Educators Association, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.

Ballweg is active as a guest conductor, clinician and adjudicator for various music contests, festivals and workshops across the country.

Prof Launches Interactive Media Journal

Dr. David Byland, OBU associate professor of communication arts, recently published the first issue of the Journal of Media Education, the first interactive academic journal to be published online. Byland was selected as founding editor of the publication by the Broadcast Education Association board of directors.

Byland has served the BEA in several administrative capacities, most recently as president of the association. The new journal is focused on pedagogical issues in all areas of media education and is the only interactive academic journal available for media educators.

As the editor of the journal, Byland receives manuscripts from authors all over the country. Most of the manuscripts are submitted by professors, but some articles come from media professionals. Since JoME is an editor-reviewed publication, Byland reads each submission, decides if it fits with the mission and purpose of the journal, and then notifies the authors if their articles have been accepted or rejected. Byland receives about 45 submissions for each issue and selects about 12 for publication.

Byland makes editorial comments regarding content and focus then sends stories to the copy editor, Sarah (Byland) Williams, '07, a graduate student in English at the University of New Mexico. Byland uses the edited copy to work on publication design and layout with creative editor Scott Davis, an instructor at Ball State University.

Byland and Davis work together to select the photographs, video and other media elements that will be included in each article. They ensure the embedded hyperlinks are active and any downloadable appendices are linked to the document. They design page headers, graphics and article layout.

"Once the publication is complete and all interactive elements embedded, we beta-test the publication with selected colleagues around the country," Byland said. "When



all the 'bugs' have been worked out we publish the journal online through Calameo and also provide a downloadable PDF version at the BEA Web site. It's quite a challenge to produce a quarterly journal with only three people."

Byland said the publication of the inaugural issue brought to close nearly eight months of planning, writing, creating and editing.

"The Journal of Media Education is the first interactive academic journal to be published online," Byland said. "Articles have been written about the possibilities of interactive academic publishing, and some articles included bits and pieces of interactivity when published on blogs, but the BEA is the first academic organization to take that step."

When he was selected as founding editor in April 2009, Byland said he was committed to ensuring BEA stayed on the cutting edge of both pedagogical practices in media education and the technological applications to enhance pedagogical practices.

"I think JoME does both, and does them well," he said. "The feedback has been incredibly positive, and our online readership numbers are very positive."

For more about the journal, visit okbu.edu/magazine.

McQuade Nets NATS Honor

Dr. Mark McQuade, OBU assistant professor of music, has been honored by the National Association of Teachers of Singing with the esteemed Emerging Leader's Award.

McQuade was given the award for his committed involvement

in NATS on the chapter, district and regional levels. The cash award is intended to cover costs for individuals planning to attend the



NATS National Conference. This year's conference will be July 2-6 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"Attending this kind of conference is of vital importance in my field," McQuade said. "It allows me to stay in touch with current developments in scholarship and performance throughout the world."

After attending the conference, McQuade will develop a program and present it at the NATS Texoma Regional Conference.

NATS serves as the largest organization for teachers of singing in the world. The group has more than 6,500 members from nations across the globe.

"It provides great networking and continuing education for voice teachers," McQuade said. "As I continue to educate myself and develop my skills as an educator and performer, my students reap the benefits."

Reeder Serves As Interim Business School Dean

Dr. Kyle Tresch resigned as dean of OBU's Paul Dickinson School of Business in January, and former business dean Dan Reeder stepped into the role of interim dean.

Citing personal reasons, Tresch said he submitted his resignation to OBU Provost Stan Norman, effective Feb. 1.

"My desire is to be back with my family in Tulsa," Tresch said. "It has been an honor to work with faculty members in the Paul Dickinson School of Business. There are very bright days ahead."

Tresch, '86, returned to his alma mater in 2008 as dean and Minter associate professor of business. Previously, Tresch worked with McQueen, Rains and Tresch, LLP. He was a founding partner in the Tulsa-based law firm.

Reeder joined the OBU faculty in

1991 as the University's chief finance professor. He moved from the classroom to the dean's post in February 2000, serving in that role for four years before returning to a full-time teaching role.

"With Dr. Reeder accepting the role as interim dean, we are able to continue our tradition of success in the School of Business," said Norman. "He can provide solid leadership as we begin the search for a new dean."

Reeder earned bachelor's and MBA degrees from the University of Tulsa and completed a Ph.D. degree from Oklahoma State University. He received OBU's Promising Teacher Award in 1995, and has served as the University's Faculty Council chair.

OBU's School of Business had an enrollment of 165 students in the fall



2009 semester. The school has 10 faculty members and offers eight majors and three bachelor's degrees. Students in the School of Business scored in the top 5 percent among business students nationwide in the spring 2009 Major Field Test. The test, conducted annually by Educational Testing Service, is designed to "measure the basic knowledge and understanding achieved by students in a major field of study."

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These works currently include *Bison Bon Appétit*, a unique collection of written prayers by the late Dr. James E. Hurley, and two books about OBU's storied basketball history.

Glory Shakes the Ground: Written Prayers of James E. Hurley is a



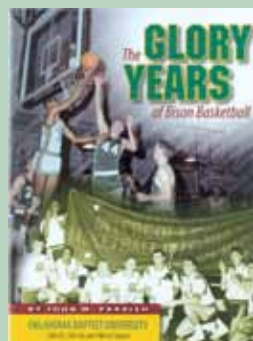
paperback work which takes the reader into the heart and mind of one of OBU's most revered faculty members. The late biology professor wrote many prayers, several of which have been

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The Glory Years of Bison Basketball: Oklahoma Baptist University 1964-65,



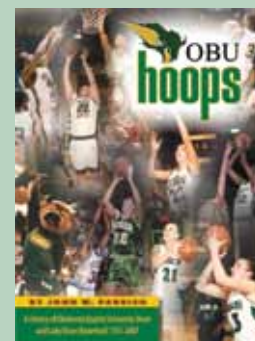
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Two New Faculty Installed to Endowed Positions

Two faculty members who joined OBU in the 2009-10 year were installed to endowed academic positions in OBU's Joe L. Ingram School of Christian Service at the start of the spring semester.

Dr. Scott Pace and Dr. Alan Bandy filled two of OBU's 26 active endowed chairs and professorships.

Pace, who joined the OBU faculty in January 2010, was installed as the Jewell and Joe L. Huitt assistant professor of applied ministry. He served for more than a decade as a student pastor, associate pastor of doctrine and, most recently, as teaching pastor and administrator at the First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla. Pace previously served as a corporate accountant and in the private sector as a business manager.

A native of North Carolina, Pace earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from North Carolina State University in 1997. He completed a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2002 and earned a Ph.D. degree in applied theology from the seminary in 2007.

From 2003-05, he served as a teaching fellow for Dr. Bill Bennett, professor of preaching and chaplain at Southeastern seminary.

Bandy, who joined the OBU faculty in August 2009, was installed as the Rowena R. Strickland assistant professor of Bible. Before arriving at OBU, Bandy served as assistant director of Ph.D. studies for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and as an adjunct professor of biblical and theological studies in Liberty University's Distance Learning Program. He also served as assistant professor of Christian studies at Louisiana College.

A native of Bethesda, Md., Bandy earned his bachelor's degree from Clear Creek

Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.; and pastor to children/youth at Calvary Baptist Church in Loyall, Ky.

He has written several journal articles, most recently "The Layers of the Apocalypse: A Holistic Approach to Revelation's Structure," published in the Journal for the Study of the New Testament in June 2009.



Bandy receives the Strickland Professorship medallion from OBU President David Whitlock.



Pace is installed to the Huitt Professorship during the first Chapel of OBU's spring semester.

Baptist Bible College and his master's degree from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. He earned his doctorate from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Bandy has served in several ministerial church positions including pastor of Teachey Baptist Church in Teachey, N.C.; pastor to students at National Avenue



Visit the new OBU Graduate School Web site at okbu.edu/graduate.

Visionary Willis Honored by Global Missions Leaders

Missions leaders from Southern Baptists and other global agencies gathered to honor the legacy of longtime outreach strategist Avery T. Willis Jr., '56, during a banquet titled "Tribute to a Vision" at OBU March 4. In greetings which arrived from around the globe, Willis' peers stated that only eternity would reveal the impact his vision has had on the world.

"Many would recognize those of whom the world is not worthy, and that is the reflection I would have about your life," said Dr. Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board. Other friends shared the same sentiment about Willis. "If anyone has walked with the Lord in obedience, you are the man," Rankin said.

In early January, Willis, 76, announced he had been diagnosed with leukemia. In good spirits during the banquet, Willis announced that while his disease is in remission, it means his leukemia is "on the run," but not yet cured. He asked all attending to pray for a cure.

"I hope the Lord doesn't take too seriously what everyone had said about this world not being worthy of me – at least for awhile," Willis said with levity, in reference to his health battles. In all seriousness, Willis noted he hopes to continue his journey of faith, joining God at work.

Willis testified that, as a student on Bison Hill, he roamed what then were nearby fields, in deep spiritual search of God's plan for his life. He said he made an agreement with God: "I am so ordinary. If you do anything with my life, you will have to get all the credit." God took Willis up on the agreement, directing him around the world to envision plans that would eventually lead countless people to faith in God, followed by deeper discipleship opportunities.

"Avery is, without question, the greatest visionary I have ever met," said Dr. Tom



Dr. Avery Willis Jr. shares how God called him to a life of ministry during his days as a student at Oklahoma Baptist University. Willis said he told God, "I am so ordinary. If you do anything with my life, you will have to get all the credit."

Elliff, a fellow Southern Baptist leader who counts Willis as a close personal friend.

"He has an incredible sense of vision and can communicate that vision better than anyone else," Elliff said. "I've seen him walk into a room and talk to people about something impractical and even impossible, and they believe they can do it."

Willis, a native of Lepanto, Ark., has maintained close ties to his alma mater. The University's Global Outreach Center is named in his honor. He earned master of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has received honorary doctorates from OBU and Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

"I can think of no finer graduate to point to than Avery Willis," said OBU

President David Whitlock. "There is no question that because of his leadership OBU continues to lead in the number of graduates who serve as international missionaries. More OBU graduates serve than from any other university in the world."

Willis and his wife, Shirley, served as Southern Baptist missionaries to Indonesia for 14 years before returning stateside in 1978. While Willis said he didn't understand at the time why God brought him back to the United States from the mission field, in retrospect, his ability to visualize possibilities for expanding God's Kingdom have reached far and wide. He served as director of discipleship programs for the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources), developing the MasterLife discipleship materials which have been translated into 50 languages and used in 100 countries around the world.

“As is always true in Avery’s life, he had the world in his eyes and in his heart,” said Dr. Jimmy Draper, retired president of LifeWay Christian Resources, pointing to Willis’ work both through discipleship materials and his move to an international missions endeavor.

In 1993, Willis became senior vice president for overseas operations at the International Mission Board, overseeing the work of the board’s entire missionary force around the world until his retirement in 2004. Rankin attributed much of the planning and decisions still made at the IMB – as well as other accomplishments during his tenure as IMB president – to Willis’ mission for global advance of the Gospel.

Rankin said Willis possessed a vision which was unsurpassed as he visualized an entire world worshipping Jesus Christ, a focus which kept the IMB from being diverted by trivial pursuits, and

a passion that enables Willis to motivate and inspire others. He said, like Abraham, Willis never lived for selfish gain but was willing to sacrifice so everyone may come to faith in Christ.

After retiring to Bella Vista, Ark., Willis has continued active work in missions, traveling internationally approximately 25 weeks per year. He has served as a consultant to the Southern Baptist Convention’s Great Commission Task Force. He also has served as a consultant to missionaries, as well as chairman of Epic Partners, a coalition of global missionary organizations, including the



Willis listens as Dr. Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, tells how Willis’ vision, focus and passion have positively affected the board’s work. Rankin presented his comments via phone after his flight to Oklahoma City was cancelled.

IMB, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Campus Crusade for Christ and Youth With A Mission.



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GO Teams Continue Tradition of Involvement

OBU students fanned out to four parts of the world during January term, continuing a tradition of international involvement. The work was coordinated through OBU's Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach.

During GO Trips, students have the opportunity to take what they learn in the classroom and use it in a practical manner. The GO Center sends the student volunteers prepared and equipped, but team members said the best way to embrace missions is to experience it firsthand.

SOUTH ASIA

One of the January 2010 trips was to OBU's adopted people group, the Kai.

A team of students worked with the people group in south Asia. The team visited local villages and hosted church services.

One team member said the Kai people are very hospitable and very giving, but at the same time have many needs, both spiritually and physically. He said while the spiritual need isn't as obvious walking around the streets, the team encountered a sense of hopelessness in some homes and in the temples.

"I learned a lot about sacrifice, and how hard it is when God calls us out of our comforts of home, and how resistant I am to that in a way I didn't think I would be," said Sarah Griffin, a junior nursing major from Bartlesville.

"The believers there were a huge challenge for me as well in the way they live out their faith, completely praise

God, rely on Him and share Him with all the people they know," she said.

MEXICO

For several OBU nursing majors, the chance to serve on a mission trip in Oaxaca, Mexico, provided the opportunity to not only meet spiritual needs, but also physical needs by practicing their medical skills.

"I wanted to go on a medical mission trip and be able to share not only God's Word, but actually live it and show it to others," said Taylor Dickinson, a senior nursing major from Enid.

"OBU prepares its nurses well to go out into the world, even in the infancy of our experience in the program, to provide care and compassion to the patients entrusted to us," Dickinson said.

The group conducted free medical work for three local villages. They served hundreds of people. The team was able to assess and diagnosis patients and get useful experience in the world of medicine.

PERU

Six students and a faculty member traveled to Peru during January Term.

"Our main purpose was to build relationships with the people, learn about their culture and lay a foundation for the Gospel through chronological Bible storying," said Dr. Alan Bandy, OBU's Strickland assistant professor of New Testament. "Our days consisted of working alongside the people as they went about their daily tasks of clearing fields to plant yucca, carrying logs from

deep in the jungle to build a new hut and whatever we could find to do along with them. The ladies were able to begin a Bible study with several women in the village, which turned out to be a major blessing to all involved.

EAST ASIA

An OBU team worked with Southern Baptist representatives who live in East Asia during January, helping teach English and build relationships with the college students in the area.

One team member said she returned with a greater understanding that "God is everywhere."

"He is definitely not just a God of America," said Hannah, an OBU junior psychology/pre-counseling major. "He is the God of the whole world, and he loves all His children, even when they either don't love Him back or don't believe in Him."

Establishing a bond with the local students was important to the OBU students who sought to share God's love through genuine relationships.

"While we were there, we prayer walked around the city we were in, and encouraged fellow believers however we could," said Heather, a junior applied communications major. "And if the opportunity arose, we shared the Gospel with them."

For more information about the Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach, go online to okbu.edu/go. To read more about the January Term work, visit okbu.edu/magazine.

Quilting Effort Covers Hundreds

There is a certain level of care that goes into sewing something. Consider quilts: meticulously weaving the thread in and out, knowing that with every stitch, a little piece of you is finding its way into the quilt. Think about your favorite quilt – the one you pull out in the winter. There is just something special about it. There is thought to it. There is probably a story to it, too. And then, there is the care that went into making it.

Patty Hasbell cares. She cares about people. An OBU senior mathematics education major from Shawnee, Hasbell expresses her care by making quilts for local senior citizens.

“I have wanted to make quilts for senior citizens since I started sewing at 9 years old,” Hasbell said. “I felt it was a calling to take care of the individuals that took care of us as children and taught us the fundamentals of history and the stories of the old days.”

Hasbell doesn't just make quilts for senior adults – she makes hundreds of lap quilts for senior adults. Hasbell is quick to point out, though, that the quilt-making process is a team effort.

“I have great friends and family,” she said. “I also volunteer to two quilters in town, and they help me get donations to make the quilts. For this year's quilts, the materials were all donated to my cause. We completed 205. Last year I only made 68.”

Hasbell's team of quilt makers includes four generations of her family: her son, Tyler, a sophomore at Shawnee High School; her mother, Patricia Welch; her grandmother, Mavis Moore; and herself. The Eagle

Class at Gordon Cooper Technology Center, where Hasbell serves as math instructor, tied 101 of the 205 quilts in two hours.

The quilts were distributed to senior citizens at both the Shawnee Care Center and the Golden Rule Home in December through Age 2 Age, an OBU ministry that meets every Monday at 6 p.m. The ministry is part of OBU's Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach. Through Age 2 Age, OBU students spend time with the residents of local care centers to build relationships. Every other week, the students lead worship services for the residents.

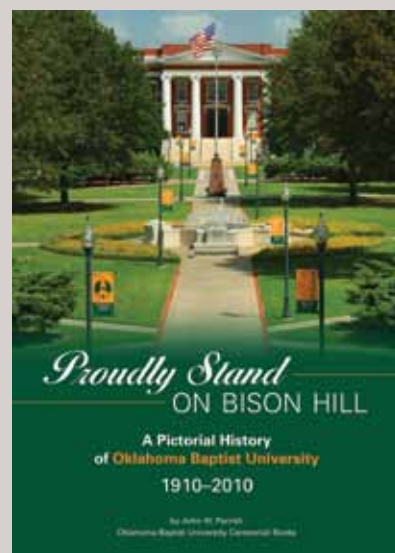
Hasbell said making quilts for others brings her joy. She knows her calling, and she lives it.

“My most rewarding moment of all is to see the expressions on the individuals' faces when they receive them, and I know how much they enjoy them,” said Hasbell.



Bethany Burke (right), a sophomore from Dallas, Ore., greets a senior adult at Shawnee Care Center who received one of 205 lap quilts distributed through Age 2 Age, OBU's ministry to senior adults

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Touching Lives Through Harvest Farms

By Tyler Parker

Riding a horse can be a freeing experience. From a simple turn of the wrist to control direction to a gentle nudge of the heel to increase speed, a horse rider gains confidence. Harvest Farms, a therapeutic horse riding center in Shawnee, takes these principles and creates a refuge for area children.

Harvest Farms was designed in 2004 by former OBU employee Dr. Jackie Wilks as a place for children who have physical or mental disabilities or who deal with emotional issues, traumas or stresses. Many of the children who attend Harvest Farms like horses but do not get a chance to be around them otherwise.

In every sense, Harvest Farms is a safe haven. It provides children and their families a place where they can relax and not worry about how people are going to respond to them. At Harvest Farms, people are accepted exactly as they are with complete genuineness and authenticity. None of it is contrived, and everyone is loved.

OBU students and faculty have found an opportunity to share their love with Shawnee-area children through the Harvest Farms ministry, which is supported by OBU's Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach.

The volunteers who work at Harvest Farms have a true love not only for horses, but also for people. One faithful volunteer is Dr. Kaylene Barbe, OBU professor of communication studies.

"I enjoy horses and children and Harvest Farms offered a chance to work with both," Barbe said. "When people are with animals, it changes them. We become more relaxed. It has been rewarding to see children change by participating in the program. I have seen children become physically stronger, more interactive with others, and more confident."

Volunteers at Harvest Farms therapeutic horse riding center lead a young participant through horse riding skills. Several members of the OBU community have ministered through Harvest Farms, including (from left) Dr. Kaylene Barbe, professor of communication studies; Stacie Newton, a senior from Cherokee; and Becky James, a senior from Roland, Ark.

Another volunteer, OBU junior Janeth Carreon, shares Barbe's enthusiasm for the work of Harvest Farms.

"For me, it has been a sharing of time and love through games, arts and crafts, Bible stories and horse riding," said Carreon, who is from Seminole. "It has been a time for me to become God's love put into action."

"There is something peaceful and beautiful about the country and a farm with children running around happy," Carreon said. "To see the children learning to ride a horse, learning about Jesus and smiling and laughing makes everything worth it."

The volunteers say the beauty of Harvest Farms is found in the smiles of the children and families who go there. It is about that for that moment – however brief – that a person experienced joy.

"There's nothing more rewarding than seeing a kid smile," Barbe said.



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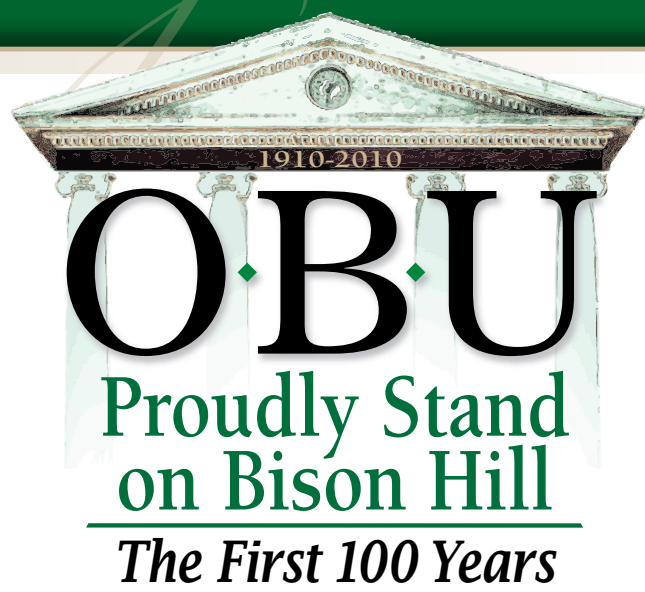
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