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*Fine Arts*  
ON BISON HILL







## In this Issue

### ON THE COVER

Virtus Sculptures. See story page 3.

### FEATURES

#### 2 President's Message

#### 3 Virtus

Bison Sculptures

#### 4 2016 Distinguished Teaching Award Recipient

Dr. Louima Lilite, Associate Professor of Voice

#### 8 Q&A

Dr. Chris Mathews, Dean of the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts

#### 12 Global Outreach

Voce Vera travels to the Dominican Republic

### DEPARTMENTS

#### 14 UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

Campaign Update  
MustardSeed app

#### 16 ON THE HILL

Second Largest Freshman Class  
Odus Compton Named Dean of Students  
Students 'Serve Shawnee'  
National Rankings/Distinctions  
Academic Installations  
Hobbs Award  
Theatre Season Schedule  
New Faculty/Deans

#### 20 ATHLETICS

Athletic Teams Begin Second Season of NCAA Division II Competition

#### 24 2016 HOMECOMING

Highlights of Homecoming Events

#### 26 ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS

Achievement Award – Judge David Russell, '63  
Achievement Award – Dr. Mary Ann Craige, '62  
Achievement Award – Dr. Karen Schaffner, '74  
GOLD Award – John Bowen, '07

#### 34 ALUMNI NOTES

Future Bison; Marriages;  
Class Notes; Obituaries

### DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Student members of OBU vocal ensemble Voce Vera and OBU music faculty spend time with children following a performance during their summer 2016 GO Trip to the Dominican Republic.

See story page 12.






Another fall semester is well underway on Bison Hill. As the weather cools and the leaves begin to turn a beautiful array of gold, orange and red, we enter a season when we spend a little more time reflecting upon that for which we are thankful.

At OBU, we are thankful for the second largest class of incoming freshman that our University has ever seen. We are thankful for our new faculty and staff who have joined the OBU family in our mission to transform lives. We are thankful for professors who pour their lives into our students and make an eternal impact for the kingdom of God. We are thankful for alumni who shine brightly for Christ in their professions and touch many lives during their careers, both here and around the world. We are thankful for our students and the amazing work they do in the classroom, in the laboratory, on stage and on the field of competition every single day.

During my Convocation address this fall, I spoke about the purpose of OBU. Our purpose, above all else, is to transform lives. We do this through educational experiences that enrich our students and expand their horizons. We do this through worship and discipleship opportunities that challenge and grow our faith. We do this through Global Outreach trips that teach us to love and serve others. We do this through serving one another with compassion and love as we conduct the business of Christian higher education on Bison Hill.

In this edition, you will read about Fine Arts on Bison Hill. You will hear from Dean Chris Mathews about how the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts inspires transformation within its students. You'll learn about our 2016 Distinguished Teaching award recipient who devotes his life for the cause of life transformation in his students. You'll read about excellence and achievement by both faculty and alumni. You'll see the impact a group of music students and faculty made in churches and orphanages in another corner of the world. And you'll see that OBU, above all else, truly is a place that transforms lives for the kingdom of God.

May God bless you as He continues to bless OBU.

  
David Wesley Whitlock  
OBU President



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# VIRTUS

## Sculptures Enhance University Landscape

Three life-sized Bison sculptures were placed on the northeast corner of campus in September. The sculptures were created by Pennsylvania artist Bill Secunda using his signature technique of welding thousands of masonry nails, giving the appearance of fur on the Bison. (Close up photo at right shows detail of the nails.) The sculptures appear to be charging ahead, poised to run. He named the new work "Virtus," meaning valor, excellence, character, courage and worth. Secunda's sculptures range from realistic animals to representations of Christ. His work can be seen in many different places, ranging from private gardens, museums, zoos, restaurants and even Disney™.

The Bison sculptures are featured as part of an art project to beautify the southwest corner of the Kickapoo and MacArthur intersection. The idea for the project spawned during the planning stages of the Kickapoo Street renovation, including input from the city of Shawnee, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and OBU. The refurbished corner also includes new university signage and landscaping.





# The Joy of the Lord in Everything

**J**oy. When one hears of Dr. Louima Lilite, joy comes to mind. A joy for music. A joy for life. A joy for the One who is the Creator and Lord over all. A joy for the very act of being alive.

The youngest of nine children, Lilite was born in Haiti to parents who were ministers, loved music and loved to sing. It was in the midst of this household where his love of music was born. Here his mother taught him many songs, hymns and choruses.

"I grew to love the Word because we took scripture and set it to music," he said.

Although there was a lot of poverty where he grew up and his family didn't own a piano, his parents provided piano lessons for his older siblings. By the time he was old enough, they didn't have the money available for him to take lessons.

Despite not receiving formal musical training, Lilite was intrigued when he heard about the North Haiti Music Camp. He attended for the first time when he was 13.

"I heard people practicing," he said. "I heard Für Elise being played and I thought, 'Wow, I didn't know real people could do that.' I had never really seen other Haitian kids doing so well in classical music. Right then and there, I said, I just have to learn."

The camp has volunteers from all over the world who come to teach music to the children of Haiti. He wanted to take piano lessons during the camp, but without any previous experience, he was trumped by other students who had at least basic piano knowledge. Instead, he took other classes and learned by observing. After the first week of camp, his older sister arranged for him to take lessons with a 19-year-old college student volunteer.

"She taught me for a week and that's all I had. So, I went back home, but we didn't have a piano. There was a local Bible school that had an old beat up upright piano with the paint peeling off and the keys weren't functioning properly. It was in a deserted room full of rejected beds and old mattresses and stinky pillows."

In the solitude of that place, Lilite began to learn to make beautiful music, juxtaposed against the backdrop of discarded items and stale air.

At age 17, he was accepted to Biola University's Conservatory of Music in California. While his family hadn't the money for piano lessons, God provided through music scholarships, church grants and scholarships for pastors' children. He studied piano and voice performance, graduating with a degree in both concentrations.





**Dr. Louima Lilite**  
ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR  
OF VOICE



"The arts invite humans to ponder mystery, to seek truth, to gaze upon beauty, to engage all the senses in a way that is memorable, in a way that is so powerful and so pungent that you can then share that with others," he said. "Those songs and pieces of sculpture and paintings and all of those piano sonatas, they speak of something that is much bigger. Music says something. You feel transported to a different place, and you're no longer where you are. The arts do that for people."

## To Teach is to Change the World

Lilite married his college sweetheart, Dephanie, and the two moved east for him to attend graduate school at Pennsylvania State University. He decided to focus on voice while his wife studied as a piano major.

It was at Penn State that his passion for teaching began to grow, studying voice performance and pedagogy. That passion was acknowledged when he earned an Excellence in Teaching Prize while studying at the Eastman School of Music.

During his time at Eastman, he learned from one of the most sought after vocal teachers at the prestigious school. There, he had the opportunity to engage in the professional world of singing, especially the world of opera. With a developing passion for teaching balanced with professional success vocally, he struggled with whether to pursue a performing career or teaching.

That struggle ultimately led him to OBU, but in a rather unique way.

"I felt led to take some classes as part of the Arts Leadership Institute at Eastman. In that program, they encouraged us to write our personal mission and vision statements for our career. When I started looking at OBU and started looking at the University's mission statement, it was almost identical to mine. So, when I came to interview at OBU, I talked a lot about the mission statement and it showed the passion that God has placed in me for life transformation," he said. "That has been the purpose of my teaching...it's about life transformation."

"The teaching itself asks me to develop what I call epistemological humility, acknowledging that I don't own the truth, God is the truth. I ask myself, 'What is God doing to me today to contribute to life transformation in the lives of my students, colleagues, administration, faculty, staff, and every constituent?'"

## A Passion for Life Transformation

Lilite received OBU's Distinguished Teaching Award in May 2016. Having won the University's Promising Teacher Award in 2010, this new recognition came

as no surprise to his friends and colleagues. It did, however, to him.

"When I was at Eastman as a teaching assistant and they gave me the Excellence in Teaching Prize, I couldn't believe it. When I was given the Promising Teacher award here, it was my second year here, and I wasn't expecting that. I felt exactly the same way for this, because for the Distinguished Teaching Award, I always think of great teachers who have taught for decades. I see myself as this little kid, still trying to learn the ABC's of teaching."

Sadly, Lilite was absent for Spring Commencement when the announcement was made, as he was out of state grieving the loss of his mother with his family.

"Debbie Bosch [retired dean of the Hurley College of Science and Mathematics] called me to say that she was so sorry about my mom, and then she said, 'Do you know what was said about you at OBU's commencement?' I thought, 'Why would they say anything about me?' She told me and I just couldn't believe it," he said.

"It was a huge mix of emotions. I was grieving, I was crying. I wished my parents could have been here, but they are in a much better place."

Lilite carries this same humility and sweetness of spirit into the classroom with his pupils.

"I hope that perhaps I have had an impact on at least one soul. I hope that there was life transformation that occurred under my teaching because that is what it's all about, that lives would be transformed by the influence of the Holy Spirit through me. I think this award could have easily gone to several others, but for whatever reason, God made it possible for me to be chosen only by His grace."

He has a passion for music and the arts, and seeks to instill that in his students every day.

"The arts invite humans to ponder mystery, to seek truth, to gaze upon beauty, to engage all the senses in a way that is memorable, in a way that is so powerful and so pungent that you can then share that with others," he said. "Those songs and pieces of sculpture and paintings and all of those piano sonatas, they speak of something that is much



bigger. Music says something. You feel transported to a different place, and you're no longer where you are. The arts do that for people.

"In life, we are all teachers, but really the real teacher is the Holy Spirit," he said. "There is truth in the sciences that we teach or the art that we teach. Otherwise, it wouldn't work. So, as I am teaching the student how to stand and how to breathe, I take the time to make them see how they have to rely on it the same way they have to rely on God to be their refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. So many times when students are having difficulties, it is really a spiritual issue. So many times when they unlock a technical mystery, it also unlocks a spiritual mystery."

Just as he seeks to transform his students, Lilite acknowledges the powerful impact OBU has made on his life.

"Coming to OBU has given me an opportunity to sit under the Lord's teaching especially in terms of biblical thinking, deepening my faith in Christ. The more God draws me to spend time in His word and to understand theology as a layman, the more layers have been added to my music teaching and music training. Just working with the text, I can point students to the particular worldview that is being stressed, portrayed or taught in those songs. You engage a diverse world by analyzing those texts, to see more clearly why a particular worldview-holder would write this song, or sing this song, or object to this song. It just makes the student much more engaged. So, then we see performances that are much more transformative that way. For me, that's the mission of OBU. I don't think it's just in music. It's something that happens even in the hard sciences."

## Culinary Delight

Lilite is indeed a man of many talents, excelling not only in the concert hall, but also in the kitchen.

"I love to cook. I love to cook anything. The family loves Thanksgiving with the turkey and the stuffing and the pies," he said. "I love baking. When I was growing up, my mom taught all of us to cook and to take care of the house. It soon became clear to me that not everyone in my family liked the kitchen,

but cooking has always been very therapeutic for me. After a long semester, I get in the kitchen and start cooking for my family and friends and people in need."

While his love for cooking and serving others has grown and flourished in adulthood, it found its origin in a childhood act of sacrifice, born out of love and need.

"When I was nine, an older relative visited us and gave \$25 to each of us children. Everybody used their money to buy toys or whatever they needed. I just went into the kitchen and for the first time God opened my eyes, and I looked in the pantry and thought, 'Wow, we don't have anything.' So, I took my \$25 and didn't say anything to anybody. I asked my Mom if I could go outside, and she said yes. I was a little naughty, and I went to the nearest store. I bought enough food for the whole family with the money and came home and prepared it. Ever since then, I kept cooking."

While he loves to cook and serve others, Lilite doesn't partake in everything he creates. In fact, as a result of some digestive issues that plagued him for years, he avoids most meats and dairy. When he moved to Oklahoma, he consulted a nutritionist along with his doctor. Through trial and error, he landed on a diet of fish, eggs, fruits and vegetables.

"Now, I don't eat meat and I don't eat dairy, but I still love cooking," he said. "I cook by texture and not by taste. It's the smell and the texture."

And so it is for Dr. Louima Lilite, a man of divine musical talent, who chooses to teach and transform rather than travel and perform. A man who intentionally pours his life into bringing life transformation to others. A man who once took a gift of \$25 and sacrificially turned it into a lifelong passion for serving others. A man who delights in cooking gourmet delicacies which he himself cannot enjoy, save for the fulfillment he feels by spreading happiness and satisfaction to others.

*When apart from his duties at OBU and in the kitchen, Louima and his wife, Dephanie, enjoy spending time with their daughters, Abby and Estelle, taking road trips, playing board games or enjoying music together.*

"Coming to OBU has given me an opportunity to sit under the Lord's teaching especially in terms of biblical thinking, deepening my faith in Christ. The more God draws me to spend time in His word and to understand theology as a layman, the more layers have been added to my music teaching and music training."



Dean Mathews answers ...

WHY

# *Fine Arts* MATTER ON BISON HILL



The arts are a vital part of our world and touch countless aspects of our everyday lives. Dr. Chris Mathews, dean of the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts, discusses the College, why the arts are important, the significance of an education in the arts at OBU, and the future of the College of Fine Arts.

## **Q Why is it important to study the arts?**

**A** “In the beginning, God created.” Our first record of the work of God hints at the inventiveness and artistry of our Maker. Through His creation, we see variety, practicality, community and love. And we soon learn that the crown of His creation bears His image; an image that finds delight in the creative process.

Art, music, drama, speech and design lead us close to the call of the Garden. Artistic endeavors call us to thoughtful solitude as we hone our craft while at the same time leading us to vibrant community where we share our work as well as join in the work of others. Pursuit of the arts quiets the noise of our fallen world and causes our hearts to yearn for something greater: a return to the unblemished beginning when we join with all creation in singing the praises of Him who created us, redeemed us, sustains us and desires to dwell with us for eternity.

## **Q Why should students come to OBU if they want to pursue a degree in the fields of music, art and design, or communication arts?**

**A** People. In terms of expertise and experience, the faculty of the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts is exceptional. In terms of personal concern for the students, they are unmatched. The students that comprise the College are spectacular – talented, compassionate, intelligent, driven and dedicated to the cause of Christ. Opportunities to learn and to practice an artistic craft are certainly numerous and laudable, but I have found the most compelling reason for gifted, committed musicians and artists to attend OBU is the people with whom they will work and live. We are sincere in our desire to welcome new students, to push them toward their personal best, and to send them into the world proud of their formative years on Bison Hill and eager to lend their talents and time to expanding the influence of the Kingdom of God.





**Q What do students learn from an OBU education in the College of Fine Arts? What sets an OBU fine arts degree apart from other Christian and Baptist universities?**

**A** Generally speaking, students in the College of Fine Arts are immersed in the liberal arts tradition, learning a spectrum of subjects that further prepare them to be contributing members of society, subjects including math, science, literature, languages, social sciences, biblical studies and physical education. Simultaneously, we expect our students to dig deep into a chosen field and to develop individual skills to prepare them for graduate studies, viable careers and a lifetime of growth and success. If a designer, he will learn the history of design, tools of that trade and disciplined approaches to producing great works of art. If an actress, she will likewise learn the history of theatre, techniques of drama and stagecraft and individual skills to convincingly portray a given role. If a singer, he will know music theory and music history, will practice vocalizing, learn diverse repertoire and build confidence as a soloist and ensemble member to perform artistically in a myriad of settings. Breadth and depth, wisdom and knowledge, skill and judgement, the “what,” “how” and “why” of what artists do, are our goals for our students.

**Q When students graduate with degrees from the College, what careers are they prepared for? What types of positions or fields of study might they work in?**

**A** The possibilities are as diverse as our student body. Worship leaders, professional writers, educators, composers, missionaries, designers, performers and photographers are just a sampling of the career opportunities. I believe the degrees in the College of Fine Arts offer some of the best training for the broadest spectrum of professional skills in terms of personal discipline, critical thinking, collaborative work, creative problem solving and confident presentation. While our degrees are rigorous and focused, the experiences gained and skills acquired equip our graduates to face whatever challenges may come and to pursue whatever path the Lord places before them.

The Division of Music includes areas of study in music education, voice, piano, church music, composition and instrumental music. Students may launch a wide array of careers in music, including the fields of elementary and secondary music education, music and worship ministry, music performance, music pedagogy, music composition and more.

The Division of Music offers performance opportunities through vocal and instrumental ensembles, musical productions, recitals and private instruction. Music majors gain valuable experience in all facets of music, from theory to performance and beyond.

Pictured: OBU students from all areas of the Division of Music collaborate and perform during the University's annual Christmas celebration, the Hanging of the Green.

*(Continued)*



**Q What does the future of the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts hold at OBU? What are some of the long-term goals for the College?**

**A** Practically speaking, we hope to finish renovations on Ford Music Hall and to provide some aesthetic updates to our other buildings across campus. We will continue developing the camaraderie and effectiveness of our team, which includes seven new faculty members, one new administrative assistant and a new dean. We plan to begin a debate team, to send more ensembles on national and international tours and to see the digital animation program thriving. And, we pray for measurable growth in terms of the number of students, gifts from friends and alumni, and recognition for our faculty and student research and creative work.

In a broader light, I long for the College of Fine Arts to bring beauty to our world as we build bridges between the past and the future, tradition and innovation, scholarship and service, and the church and our world. We have a rich history to celebrate and an uncharted future to shape. As academics and artists, we hope to use our gifts to edify the body of Christ and to engage a diverse, lost world in ways that will open the door for the gospel.

**Q What has your experience been like so far at OBU?**

**A** The welcome has been warm, the possibilities are vast and the expectations are high. I realize that I have been grafted into a company of greatness and grace, and I've loved every minute of it. God has frequently confirmed our call and has placed people at just the right time to encourage and to teach me. I'm quickly falling in love with the people and the place that comprise OBU.

**Q What do you most look forward to during your first year as dean?**

**A** Meeting people and developing friendships. I have already met so many who share wonderful stories of their time at OBU, or their family members who were impacted by OBU, or their respect for OBU students, professors and leaders. I know there are many others with similar stories who share the vision of the impact OBU can have in transforming lives to the glory of Christ, and I look forward to meeting them and joining them on this great journey of faith and learning.



The Division of Art and Design includes areas of study in art, graphic design and studio art. Students may launch a career in a variety of fields, such as commercial art, graphic design, studio art, advertising design and more.

The Division of Art and Design offers many opportunities for students to showcase their work, from special displays to gallery shows, from local festivals to campus events. Art and design majors gain valuable experience creating through various mediums, such as pen and ink, pencil, paints, fabrics, ceramics, computer-aided design, and more.



## Competitive Debate Program Begins

by London Bradshaw  
*Contributing Writer for The Bison Newspaper*

Scot Loyd, assistant professor of communication studies and director of forensics and debate, kicked off a new competitive debate program this fall in OBU's Division of Communication Arts.

According to Loyd, the program will focus on public debate which emphasizes oratory and critical thinking in a unique fashion.

"We will spend this semester laying a foundation for a debate program that serves our students in the development of critical thinking and communication skills and positions them to be a part of a winning tradition," he said.

Loyd believes debate will be extremely beneficial for students because it will not only improve their critical thinking and oratory skills in the short term but also will serve them well in the long term.

"Over time, students involved in debate are uniquely poised to be of greatest benefit to the institutions they choose to serve because they have done the hard work of thinking through the difficult challenges that face our society and world. They have been challenged to not only identify problems but to articulate solutions," he said.

Dr. Vickie Ellis, communication arts division chair, said the addition of a debate team complements OBU's mission in powerful ways.

"In our program, Loyd emphasizes debaters' opportunities to use ethical and moral reasoning that brings glory to God," she said. "Furthermore, the range of both competitors and topics involve the celebration of a diverse world, a world where dynamic clash points back to God's truth."



The Division of Communication Arts includes areas of study in communication studies, digital media arts, news and information, and theatre. Students may launch a career in many diverse fields, such as acting, directing, communications, videography, broadcast news, journalism and more.

OBU Theatre stages multiple productions each year, ranging from comedy to tragedy, from classic musicals to cutting-edge drama. Theatre majors gain invaluable experience in the entire production process, including acting, singing, dancing, writing, directing and stage design.

Pictured: OBU Theatre's production of "The Music Man" hit the stage during fall 2015. The production starred OBU students, faculty, staff and members of the community in the largest musical theatre production cast in school history.





PHOTO BY OBU PROFESSOR REBECCA BALLINGER

# VOCE VERA

## Brings the Joy of Music to the Dominican Republic

Pictured above: The OBU team pauses for a photo with two workers from a local orphanage, Ronald Yesid Rodriguez and Itzel Diaz who is holding Lucas Feller, son of Dr. Mary Chung and Dr. Carlos Feller. Pictured left to right are Rodriguez, Lucas Feller, Diaz, Chung, Mason McCormick, Ariel Hawkins, Paige Shelton, Dakota Unruh, Andrea Larson, McKenzie Reece, Caleb Schantz, Katie Best and Professor Rebecca Ballinger.

Since the age of 11, Dr. Mary Chung has called the Dominican Republic home. She and her family moved there as missionaries, and she quickly fell in love with the people and culture, longing to serve them while sharing the love of Christ.

Chung, assistant professor of piano, led a group of three faculty members and eight students to the Dominican on an OBU sponsored Global Outreach (GO) trip May 25 to June 6. The trip was unique, in that all faculty and students came from the Division of Music, with the students all members of the acapella vocal group Voce Vera, Italian for “True Voice.”

“The idea from the beginning was to make this primarily a music mission trip, blessing others through the gift of music,” Chung said. “God has blessed me so much since my years as a missionary kid in the DR, and I wanted to share these blessings and His love with others.”

The trip came together as Chung felt called to lead a group of music students to her home country for a mission trip. She approached Rebecca Ballinger, assistant professor of voice and director of Voce Vera. The two decided the ensemble would be flexible enough to adapt to the different performing environments and bring a unique set of skills to help the local people in the Dominican.



"We wanted to serve God in a global setting using the talents that He gave us," Ballinger said. "You expect to go on a mission to help build houses, provide medical care or feed people, but we had the chance to help churches worship God. Now, we still fed people and helped the kids, but watching the language of music transcend language barriers to create global corporate worship was incredible."

Faculty sponsors for the trip included Chung, Ballinger and Dr. Carlos Feller, Chung's husband and OBU adjunct instructor of music. Students attending the trip included Katie Best, Ariel Hawkins, Andrea Larson, Mason McCormick, McKenzie Reece, Caleb Schantz, Paige Shelton and Dakota Unruh.

The group provided special music for worship services and assisted in the worship ministry in seven different churches in Santo Domingo and other cities, along with two orphanages, two schools and a nursing home. They served by providing special music for worship services.

"It was great getting to sing in churches and seeing how much joy it brought them to hear us, even though in our minds it's just another thing we love to do," said Caleb Schantz, a junior from Yukon, Oklahoma. "It was so beautiful to experience worshiping in another culture and language while knowing we are all still worshipping the same God."

The team delivered 30 musical instruments including six guitars, two French horns, one oboe, a keyboard and 20 recorders, made possible by generous donations from First Baptist Church of Shawnee, their members and Ada Music Center. The instruments were given to different churches and orphanages, along with a local youth orchestra, Soli Deo Gloria. Most of the students in that organization are from underprivileged communities and are unable to afford an instrument. The team also provided snacks, school supplies and craft materials to more than 500 children, while sharing the gospel with everyone they encountered.

"I loved getting to experience such a beautiful culture while sharing the love of Jesus," said Katie Best, senior from Norman, Oklahoma. "The people were very welcoming, and I was so humbled to be able to worship the Lord with them through the music that I love so much."

Immersed into the local culture, the team dined and stayed with host families. They also experienced forms and styles of worship particular to the Dominican culture, making a lasting impression on the entire group. Ballinger was touched by the impact that trips like this make, on students and mentors alike.



PHOTO BY OBU PROFESSOR REBECCA BALLINGER

Dr. Carlos Feller, adjunct instructor of music, visits with children at Iglesia Bautista El Sendero (El Sendero Baptist Church) in Santo Domingo.

"It is essential that students experience life in different cultures, meet their global brothers and sisters in Christ, and realize that God is bigger than they are. When they do, they realize He is bigger than any plan you could imagine for yourself and cares about these people who are so different from you. Then you realize that you are not so different after all."

Chung said she is grateful for Voce Vera and their director, and for the attitude and unity they expressed throughout the trip.

"Not only are they talented music students, but true servants of God," she said. "They constantly and joyfully demonstrated God's love and Christ-like character everywhere we went."

While it was her first mission trip experience, the apprehension Ballinger felt prior to going melted away during the journey.

"For those like me who think, 'Oh, someone is pushing mission trips again,' I have to say: Go. Go and meet God in your travels. Go and see the majesty of His creation. Go see your students in a new light. Go and be a part of something greater than you and your reservations. Go and answer His call to spread the light of Christ into the world. You will love the person you become."



# vision *for a* new century

The Campaign for Oklahoma Baptist University 2.0

## Campaign Update



**Dr. Will Smallwood**  
*Senior Vice President  
for Advancement and  
University Relations*

Since the University's founding, the academic disciplines within the fine arts curriculum have been an essential part of the OBU liberal arts tradition. When classes resumed in the fall of 1915, Ola Gullledge taught piano and voice, Joshua Lee instructed students in public speaking and the dramatic arts, and J. Louis Guthrie directed the University's band. By 1920, the OBU Men's Glee Club – more than 20 students strong – was already practicing for an ambitious spring semester concert tour in Oklahoma and Texas. Two years later, the Men's and Women's Glee Club were firmly established, and in May of 1925, the OBU debaters demonstrated excellence by winning 11 of 14 events at a regional debate championship.

Building upon the foundations set by those early Bison, the Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts is carrying forward the rich traditions of excellence in the areas of music, art, graphic design, journalism, theatre, digital media arts and strategic communications. With the addition of Scot Loyd to the faculty this academic year, OBU is offering courses in the areas of forensics and debate with plans to relaunch the OBU College Debaters.

At its core, the Angell College of Fine Arts provides opportunities for all OBU students to explore and experience the fine arts as an integral part of a Christian liberal arts education. The college's diverse course offerings and performance opportunities enable students to acquire a comprehensive background of artistic and performance

experiences built on the foundation of a biblical worldview.

Students in the college receive individual attention, maximizing the opportunity for artistic, academic and spiritual growth. The faculty seeks to lead students in developing an appreciation for the fine arts, artistic creation and aesthetic judgment with the purpose of transforming the lives of our students to reflect the artistry of the Creator.

In addition to bolstering the academic programs, OBU is currently raising resources for a significant investment in one of the University's major fine arts facilities. Generations of students on Bison Hill have honed their musical talents inside Ford Music Hall, the primary practice facility for OBU's Division of Music and home to the OBU Music Preparatory Department. Constructed in 1951, the facility greets



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or  
405.585.5412



guests as they enter campus on University Street from the east. A planned update of nearly \$1.4 million will allow students to benefit from this iconic building for many generations to come.

After more than six decades of continuous use, the three-story facility needs a fresh look and updates for today's music student. Renovations include a new heating and cooling system to alleviate humidity issues that impact the tuning and sound of instruments, significant interior

updates, new windows and a new roof. To further student safety, renovations call for the installation of a keyless card-access entry system to the building.

Your gift will help make it possible for students to perfect their musical craft while studying to perform, teach, lead worship, or use their talents in many other ways. Your generosity will preserve the legacy of Ford Music Hall, touching the lives of future Bison and impacting generations through the power of music.



OBU is partnering with MustardSeed to invest in the next generation of Christian leaders. Developed by the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma, MustardSeed rounds-up your credit and debit purchases to the nearest dollar and sends the change to OBU. That means a \$1.85 coffee sends \$0.15 to provide scholarships for students in need. Your new \$20.23 shirt gives \$0.77 to provide the technology needed to prepare our students for the global marketplace.

Round-ups are drafted from your checking, savings or credit card account each month. If finances are tight, you can pause round-ups at any time and resume when you're ready.

Multiplied with other MustardSeed donors, your spare change can make an impact. So whether you're getting coffee or buying groceries, you're also preparing men and women to change the world with the Gospel.

## Change the World with Your Spare Change



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Sign Up for an account at [MustardSeedapp.org/obu](http://MustardSeedapp.org/obu)



**2**  
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**3**  
Make Credit and Debit Purchases as Usual



"...If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20





## Second Largest Freshman Class in School History

OBU welcomed 566 new freshmen to campus this fall, second only to the record-setting freshman class of 580 in 2013. Coupled with 74 transfer students, they joined the upperclassmen for a total student population of 2,073.

Last year's freshman class had been the second largest in school history until the arrival of this year's class. With the largest incoming class coming in 2013, the three largest classes in school history have all arrived over the last four academic years.

"We give thanks to God for His continued blessing of OBU," said Will Brantley, director of admissions. "The admissions team did a phenomenal job working with students and their families. They each traveled thousands of miles, made hundreds of phone calls and hosted many campus visitors, all in an effort to help students find their place at OBU."

"The Christ-centered, transformational education that takes place at OBU is special. God poured out His blessings through the admissions team's hard work and we are eternally grateful."

## Compton Named AVP for Student Development



OBU alum and former director of student ministry Odus Compton was named OBU's associate vice president for student development and dean of students this summer.

Compton served as director of student ministry since 2010 and as director of church relations from 2008-10. He previously served OBU as the Baptist Student Union director and director of religious activities from 1989-2002. He is active in preaching and teaching at various Oklahoma Baptist churches, conferences and events.

"OBU is blessed to welcome Odus Compton to his new role," said OBU President Dr. David W. Whitlock. "Odus has served this University and its students faithfully for more than two decades. His dedication to excellence and his love and compassion for our students shines through in everything he does."

Compton earned a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from OBU with a minor

in religion. He then earned a Master of Divinity with biblical languages from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"The opportunity to be a part of leading the incredible student development staff

as we seek to educate, encourage and empower our students alongside our amazing faculty is a dream job," he said. "OBU has a longstanding reputation for excellence in and out of the classroom, and I count it a privilege to build upon that reputation."

## Students 'Serve Shawnee'



A group of 418 students picked up trash, painted and cleaned facilities, and completed other needed projects at 25 locations throughout the community as part of OBU's annual "Serve Shawnee" event during Welcome Week. Serve Shawnee began in 2001 to demonstrate to OBU students they can make an important difference in their communities.



## Recognition for Excellence, Affordability

For the 23rd consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report named OBU as Oklahoma's highest ranked college on the "Best Regional Colleges of the West" list. It was the University's 25th time to make the list. OBU also ranked in the top five "Least Debt" regional colleges list and placed sixth on the "Great Schools, Great Prices" list for western universities. OBU is the only Oklahoma college listed on the "A-Plus Schools for B Students" list for regional colleges.

For the 12th consecutive year, The Princeton Review named OBU one of the best colleges and universities in the western United States.

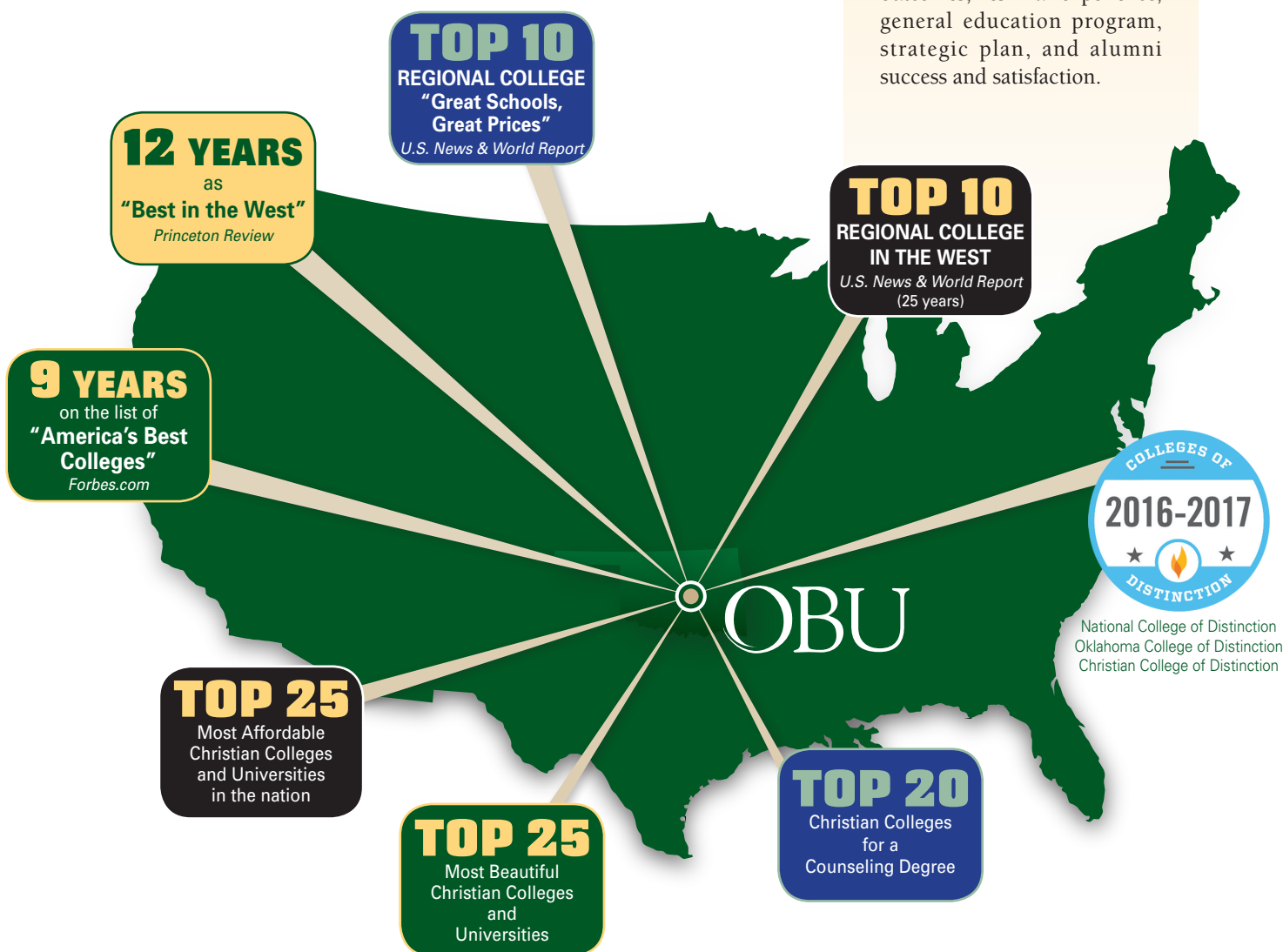
Christian Universities Online ranked OBU third on a list of the 25 Most Affordable Christian Colleges and Universities in the West for 2016. Schools were ranked according to publicly available net price tuition data. OBU's net price was listed as \$17,441.

The University's online international MBA was ranked in the top 10 nationally by BestValueMBA.net for affordability. Affordability was the sole factor in determining the rankings which used data gathered from the NCES College Navigator Database. OBU's international MBA includes an international trip in the price of tuition.

## College of Distinction

OBU was recently named a 2016-17 College of Distinction, a nationally prestigious designation for universities that demonstrate an innovative application of high impact educational practices.

OBU was recognized on three lists as a National, Oklahoma and Christian College of Distinction by demonstrating results in various selection criteria, including engaged students, great teaching, vibrant community, successful outcomes, freshman experience, general education program, strategic plan, and alumni success and satisfaction.





## Drs. Green and Jones Installed to Academic Positions During Convocation



Dr. Daryl Green



Dr. Galen Jones

Dr. Daryl Green and Dr. Galen Jones were installed to academic positions during OBU's annual Convocation service Aug. 31.

Green, assistant professor of business, is the third recipient of the Dickinson Chair of Business. He received a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Southern University, a master's degree in organizational management from Tusculum College, and a doctorate in strategic leadership from Regent University.

Before joining OBU, Green worked for the U.S. Department of Energy's Environmental Management Program for more than 27 years. He was an active member of Payne Avenue Missionary Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, serving as an ordained deacon, Bible lecturer and youth adviser.

Jones, assistant professor of church planting, is the inaugural recipient of the Floyd K. Clark Chair of Christian Leadership. Jones holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati and the Beacon Institute of Ministry in Columbus, Georgia. He received both the Master of Christian Education and Doctor of Philosophy in Christian leadership from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

Prior to joining the faculty, he served as the church planting coordinator for the Georgia Baptist Convention. In his 25 years of ministry, he has served Christ in a variety of roles including senior pastor, missionary, and church planter, as well as staff roles at churches and para-church ministries.

## Dr. Naylor Receives Hobbs Award During SBC

OBU presented the Herschel H. Hobbs Award for Distinguished Denominational Service to Dr. Rebekah Naylor during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, this summer.

Dr. Naylor served as a founding member of the advisory group for OBU's Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach, was a guest speaker during chapel services on campus and was involved in launching the partnership between OBU and India's Kai people group.

She served as a missionary to India with the International Mission Board at the Bangalore Baptist Hospital where she practiced medicine, led major expansion of the hospital, organized training programs, and established the Rebekah Ann Naylor School of Nursing. Working alongside Indian pastors and church planters in the state of Karnataka, Dr. Naylor also assisted with planting and

developing approximately 900 new churches.

The Hobbs Award is named to honor the noteworthy Southern Baptist denominational service of Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs, a prolific author and preacher. Hobbs was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City from 1949-72 and is the namesake of OBU's Herschel H. Hobbs College of Theology and Ministry.



Dr. Whitlock, Dr. Naylor and Dr. Heath Thomas, dean of the Hobbs College.

## OBU Theatre to Stage 'A Season for All'

**November 3-13** **You Can't Take It With You** – The audience is in for a wild ride as two highly diverse families try to get along.

**February 9-12** **One Act Play Festival** – Student playwrights and directors join faculty to bring these pieces to life.

**April 27-30** **Eleemosynary** – This play probes into the intricate relationship of three women in a broken matriarchy.

Tickets may be purchased online at [okbu.edu/theatre](http://okbu.edu/theatre) or two weeks before each performance at the theatre box office in Sarkeys Telecommunication Center on OBU's campus. Season tickets are available for \$30 for adults and \$12 for students. Call 405.585.4350 for more information.



## OBU Welcomes New Faculty and Deans to Bison Hill

### **Benjamin Baxter**

*Assistant Professor of Video/ Motion Graphics and Animation*

### **Jaime Brantley**

*Assistant Professor of Nursing*

### **Dr. Robin Brothers**

*Assistant Professor of Nursing*

### **Joshua Brunet**

*Assistant Professor of Art*



### **Matthew Caron**

*Assistant Professor of Theatre*

**Dr. Evan Chancellor** – Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music; Director of Bands

### **Dr. Antonio Chiareli**

*Professor of Sociology and Intercultural Studies*

### **Rebecca Coon**

*Assistant Professor of Nursing*



### **Marie Farley**

*Assistant Professor of Education*

### **Shaelene Fipps**

*Assistant Professor of Nursing*

### **Dr. Daryl Green**

*Assistant Professor of Business*

**Dr. Terry James** – Associate Professor of Education; Director of Teacher Education



**Dr. Chris Jones** – Dean, James E. Hurley College of Science and Mathematics; Professor of Chemistry

**Dr. Camille Lafleur** – Assistant Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy

**Scot Loyd** – Assistant Professor of Communication Studies; Director of Forensics and Debate

### **Dr. Richard Martinez**

*Professor of Management*



**Dr. Chris Mathews** – Dean, Warren M. Angell College of Fine Arts; Professor of Music

### **Dr. Chris McMillion**

*Assistant Professor of Political Science*

### **Dr. Roland Ngebichie-Njabon**

*Chemistry Instructor*

### **Dr. Lindsey Panxhi**

*Assistant Professor of English*



**Chad Payn** – Assistant Professor of Church Recreation; Director of National Sport and Recreation Center

### **Jennifer Sharma**

*Assistant Professor of Nursing*

**Dr. Benjamin Shute** – Assistant Professor of Music; Director of Preparatory Department

### **Dr. Stephen Sims**

*Assistant Professor of Music*





## BISON AND LADY BISON TEAMS

# Enter Final Year of Candidacy

This fall, OBU advanced to the third year of NCAA Division II candidacy, the final year before consideration for full membership in the NCAA and the Great American Conference.

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Through four games, OBU's Isaiah Mallory (20) is the Great American Conference's leading rusher, averaging more than 130 yards per game.

### Bison Football Eyes Improvement

OBU is competing this fall in its second year against NCAA Division II opponents. The team is a little bit wiser, a lot more experienced and ready to improve.

"I'd say that we definitely figured out what we need to do to be more competitive in the NCAA level," said OBU Coach Chris Jensen. "We know we have to improve our depth up front. You play five starters, but you need to have at least nine guys you're comfortable

playing. Last year we were closer to seven. Same thing is true on the defensive line."

Despite those needs last season, OBU played more competitively than the 2-9 record in 2015 indicated. The Bison lost two overtime games and three others were two-score games.

Quarterback play might be improved this year by younger players able to push returning starter Dez Stegall, who led the team last year in passing and rushing.

"It's shaping up," Jensen said. "We only had two quarterbacks on campus in the





spring. Both did an outstanding job in how they've progressed. Grant Gower has had a huge impact as a quarterback coach. We've got some young guys on campus who, just by their athletic ability, will be able to compete for the job and that's good for the program."

A two-horse race has developed for the running back spot with Dawson Myers and Isaiah Mallory both returning. The team has also added some size at the tight end position this year, giving the Bison offense more options.

The receiver corps will, for the first time, be without deep threat Derek Serowski.

"We have some great possession receivers who can make something happen after the catch," Jensen said. "I'm really excited about the progress and the way they developed over the summer. They're ready."



OBU has built some experience in returning starters on the offensive line. The squad has likely added depth to the defensive line. The linebacking corps has great starting experience and depth.

The defensive backs are loaded with speed and experience. Safeties D'Ante Meeking and Erik Derrow return with solid experience and talent.

"I think we'll be much improved over last year," said Jensen. "There's no control over outcomes, but you can control how you prepare. What I've seen so far in preseason, I think our players have taken it to another level in preparation. I think we're doing it the right way and hopefully it will pay dividends."

The Bison were ranked 10th in the GAC preseason coaches' poll.

## Volleyball Ready to Challenge

Coming off a season that saw them finish as runners-up in both the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) national tournament and Great American Conference, expectations are high for the Lady Bison Volleyball team heading into 2016. However, it's a new crop of faces that will be expected to answer the challenge.

"We're going to have to play consistently, which is a little bit harder when you're younger and not as experienced," said Oklahoma Baptist head coach Anna

Cadyn Laing (17) goes up to spike the ball. At press time, she was tied for the Great American Conference lead with 19 solo blocks.

Emily Sechrist ran her way to multiple Runner of the Week honors from the GAC and NCCAA this fall.

Howle. "I think these girls are ready for that. We're going to have to step up and compete, and be hungry to play."

Oklahoma Baptist returns six student-athletes from last season's squad, including two starters in Second Team NCCAA All-American Kynneddy Myers and Nicole Fleitman, a GAC Honorable Mention in 2015. Two seniors, Shekinnah Sharpe and Sierra VeraCruz, expect to see significant time on the floor after primarily appearing from the bench in 2015. They also will be tasked with teaching and guiding 11 new players, including eight freshmen, in what it means to compete for OBU.

"I think that their leadership is really strong," Howle said. "This spring they really figured out what it meant to be the kind of team that we need to be in order to be successful."

"I think Shekinnah and Sierra are doing everything they can do as seniors. They lived in Shawnee this summer, and have been working out. They've been working extremely hard. They have the right mindset. Seniors in our program really understand what it is to step up and play and be successful. I think they're both really ready for that."

## Cross Country Teams Look to Build on Success

OBU placed both its cross-country teams in the NCCAA top five last year. A fine season to be sure, but both Matt Kennedy, women's coach, and Mark Heard, men's coach, are expecting a better season in 2016.





After establishing themselves as powers in the NAIA and Sooner Athletic Conference, the teams had to adjust last year to the NCAA and the Great American Conference.

"I think as far as the GAC, we learned what that level of competition was going to be like," Kennedy said. "I thought we handled that competition pretty well."

Heard added that the GAC was a tough conference for the men.

"The GAC is tough," he said. "There are a lot of great distance programs in there. We prepared hard for it. I think our first exposure in the conference was a good one."

The OBU men return a solid core, but one in need of veterans stepping into leadership and scoring roles.

"Jacob Janzen was 25th in the NCCAA last year overall and he's our top guy coming back," Heard said. "Blaine Whitson is really getting better and better. He did a fantastic job in outdoor track. I look forward to having him back. Nathan Crowson is a fantastic runner. Tommy Uglean has a lot more foot speed and we need him to be a team leader, being a senior."

With Abby Hoover redshirting this season and the graduation of Miranda Dent, the Lady Bison lost their top two athletes.

"We lose our top two girls, but I think we are uniquely positioned to replace them," Kennedy said. "We were young last year, but we'll be even younger this year in the top seven. I anticipate Sydney Lawrence, who had a good indoor and outdoor season after she got her cross-country legs back, and Emily Sechrist, who was national champion outdoor in the steeple chase, will lead us as sophomores. Kaylee Large will be important to our success. We've always had great senior leadership, no matter where they rank on the depth chart, and I expect Lauren Franz, Emily Banks and Samantha Sweeney to lead the team this year."

Kennedy said he hoped some late season disappointment fuels this season's team.

"They're talented, they're motivated, they work well together and they compete for each other and that's a recipe for winning," Kennedy said. "Our season ended with a little bit of a hiccup last year and we didn't have the finish we wanted. I look for this team to be highly motivated and on a mission."

## Men's Soccer Shoots to Top Spot in the GAC

Following a second-place finish in the Great American Conference in the regular season and at the conference tournament, the Bison look to top the summit in 2016. Head Coach Anthony Yousey returns a sizable core in his fourth year at the

helm, including six of last year's starters, and looks poised for a strong season in which they were picked for the top spot in the GAC preseason poll.

Both the reigning GAC Offensive Player of the Year, senior forward Vicente Castillo, and GAC Defensive Player of the Year, junior David Estrada, return for the Bison. Castillo led the league in scoring a season ago, bagging 12 goals, including four multi-goal matches, while also handing out a team-best six assists. Estrada marshalled the defense to two clean sheets and also knocked in one goal.

"Vicente Castillo is taking over as captain of the team this year, so we're really looking for a lot of leadership out of him," Yousey said. "David Estrada just brings so much experience to the game with his athletic ability and knowledge of the game. He really makes us strong in the back."

With longtime starter and Second Team All-GAC keeper Marcus Oliveira now on the bench as a graduate assistant, the Bison will look to reload between the sticks this season. Leading that effort is Colin Spencer, a redshirt junior who saw action in the Great American Conference Tournament last year, collecting 14 saves and holding a .824 save percentage. Working alongside Spencer and pushing for playing time is local product Bronson Wise.





Men's and women's soccer is off to a strong start. Vicente Castillo (left) and Emmily Infante ward off the opposition. Julien Goyetche helped the Bison swim team dominate their opening meet at Shawnee Splash Park in September.

"I think the biggest key is for the guys to stay focused and take care of business on and off the field," Yousey said. "We need to realize that we have a target on our back in our conference and show them who we are as a team."

## Lady Bison Soccer Reloads

After finishing the 2015 season in sixth-place in the Great American Conference, OBU women's soccer head coach Michael White reloaded the Lady Bison soccer program with 17 new players on the roster for the 2016 season.

However, the new additions to the squad will be able to count on an experienced core to help guide them through the rigors of life in Division II. The team returns six starters, including a pair of College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) First Team All-District honorees in senior goalkeeper Emma Beck and senior defender/midfielder Kenzi Bice.

"I expect my seniors to lead us into a much better season this year," said White. "We have seniors in every area of the field. Markella Suka up top will be a handful to stop, while Kenzi Bice, Kierra Mattingly and Brenda Barnett are workhorses in the midfield. Kayla Kendall will anchor the backline, while

Emma Beck will be the final wall for opponents. They are great leaders.

"I'm also excited about my freshmen, but if you don't have good leaders in front of them, then it can be a rough year. I've got good solid returners though, and I'm thankful for them. They've been through a lot, and that experience will help them, and it'll shine through this year."

"There's definitely the potential there to score, but it'll be a team effort," he said. "It won't be one or two players doing all the scoring this year, there'll be multiple people lighting up the scoreboard."

Oklahoma Baptist closes out October, as well as GAC play, with three-straight home matches against East Central, SWOSU and Northwestern Oklahoma State. The last match, against Northwestern, is set for Oct. 29, and is OBU's final home match of the year.

The last regular season tilt in 2016 is set for Nov. 3 in McPherson, Kansas, when the Lady Bison make a visit to Central Christian College.

## OBU Swimming and Diving Joins RMAC

OBU joined the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference as an associate

member in men's and women's swimming and diving for 2016-17.

The Bison men's team will compete with Colorado Mesa, Colorado Mines and fellow associate member California Baptist. The women's team will compete with Adams State, Colorado Mesa, Colorado Mines, CSU-Pueblo, Western State, California Baptist and Nebraska-Kearney in RMAC meets.

The Bison, led by head coach Dr. Sam Freas, collected their first NAIA national title on the men's side in their first year of competition in 2012, while the women's team was national runner-up. This was the beginning of four straight national titles for the men and three straight women's national titles after their inaugural season, totaling seven national championships in four years.

Although OBU is still transitioning into NCAA Division II, it will compete in the 2016-17 RMAC Championships. The Bison will look to take over California Baptist's reign on RMAC Swimming and Diving, as the Lancers took home both men's and women's titles last campaign.

➤➤➤ Read more statistics and highlights online at **obubison.com**.



# Homecoming HIGHLIGHTS



## Registration

Begin your Homecoming experience by stopping by the upper level of the Geiger Center to sign in, pick up your name tag, and get a Homecoming program. You can also check the list of others who are planning to be on Bison Hill.

## Veterans Day Ceremony

*Friday Morning | Gold Star Park*

This event honors those who have served our country, and will include remarks from Dr. David Whitlock, OBU President; patriotic music; and wreath laying.

## Friday Reunion Luncheons

The 50-Year Club and the Class of 1966 will be celebrating their reunions with a luncheon in the Geiger Center.

## Third Annual Worship Service

*Friday, 1:30 | Stubblefield Chapel*

This Gaither-style time of praise has been coordinated by **Walter Grady, '71**, and will feature a number of alumni. Congregational singing will be led by **Jerry Jones, '61**.

## Late Night Ice Cream Social

After the Fine Arts Showcase, make your way to the second floor of the Geiger Center for a late night sundae or ice cream float. A great time of fellowship is had by all!

## 1's and 6's Class Reunions

Take advantage of this opportunity to reunite, reminisce and share memories with your former classmates. All alumni classes are invited to attend.

## Academic Reunions

Reconnect with former professors and classmates from your division or college. Students and current faculty will be present to share the latest news from their programs.

Check online or in the Homecoming program for more details, including locations.

## Bison Sporting Events

The Bison will be taking on St. Gregory's University in basketball Friday evening and Southern Nazarene University in football Saturday afternoon. Members of the Men's '66 NAIA Basketball Championship team will be honored during both half times. Harvest Court winners will be announced at halftime of the football game. You can also take part in the action by signing up for the Friday golf tournament.

## Fifth Annual Bison Stampede

*1 Mile Fun Run/Walk, 5K, and 10K*

*Saturday, 7 a.m. | RAWC*

Proceeds benefit students who participate in Global Outreach trips. These trips provide opportunities for students to reach out to people locally, nationally and internationally. Register at: [okbu.edu/bison-stampede](http://okbu.edu/bison-stampede)

## Second Annual Arts on the Hill

This event will feature multiple art pieces from alumni through the years. The night will also include music from the Bison Jazz Ensemble and light refreshments.

Visit [okbu.edu/events](http://okbu.edu/events)

to register for Homecoming!

Take advantage of the lowest ticket pricing and avoid day-of event prices. Make online registration easier by registering for the OBU Online Community. For more information or to register by phone, call 405.585.5413.

**For a full schedule of events,  
visit [okbu.edu/homecoming](http://okbu.edu/homecoming).**



## Profile in Excellence Recipients

**Phil Albert, '81** – President, Pelco Structural LLC | Claremore, Oklahoma  
**Kevin Avery, '97** and **Dayna (DeBorde) Avery, '98** – Missionaries | China  
**Dr. Robert (Bob) Gragg, Jr., '73** – Interim Superintendent, Allen Public Schools | Shawnee, Oklahoma  
**Greg McAlister, '00** – Founder of McAlister Construction | Oklahoma City  
**Christy (Hill) Nockels, ex '93** – Solo Vocalist, Passion City Church | Alpharetta, Georgia  
**Ben Stewart, '99** – Director of Investor Relations, The Humphreys Fund | Newcastle, Oklahoma

[okbu.edu/alumni/profile-in-excellence](http://okbu.edu/alumni/profile-in-excellence)



## 50th Anniversary of the 1966 NAIA Basketball Championship Celebration

**Friday, November 11**

*Mabee Events Suite, Noble Complex*

- 12:30 p.m. Pre-luncheon fellowship
- 1 p.m. Anniv. Luncheon and Program
- 4 p.m. Adjourn

*Victor C. Hurt Heritage Center, Noble Complex*

- 7 p.m. Bison vs. St. Gregory's
- Halftime Introduction of team members (arena floor)

**Saturday, November 12**

*Crain Family Stadium at the Eddie Hurt Jr. Athletic Complex*

- Team members will also be recognized at halftime of the Homecoming football game.
- 1 p.m. Bison vs. Southern Nazarene

***Please make a special effort to attend this celebration. There may not be another occasion like this.***



## OBU Theatre Production

Thursday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. | Sunday at 2:30 p.m.  
 Craig-Dorland Theatre, Shawnee Hall

# You Can't Take It With You

and playing the xylophone in the living room. Their routine is disrupted when daughter Alice brings her fiancé and his high society family to dinner. You're in for a wild ride as these two highly diverse families try to get along!

In this madcap classic comedy, the Sycamore family seems unstable. One member is making fireworks in the basement, another has a printing press in the parlor, while others pursue dancing, painting,

**Adult \$11 | Student \$5**

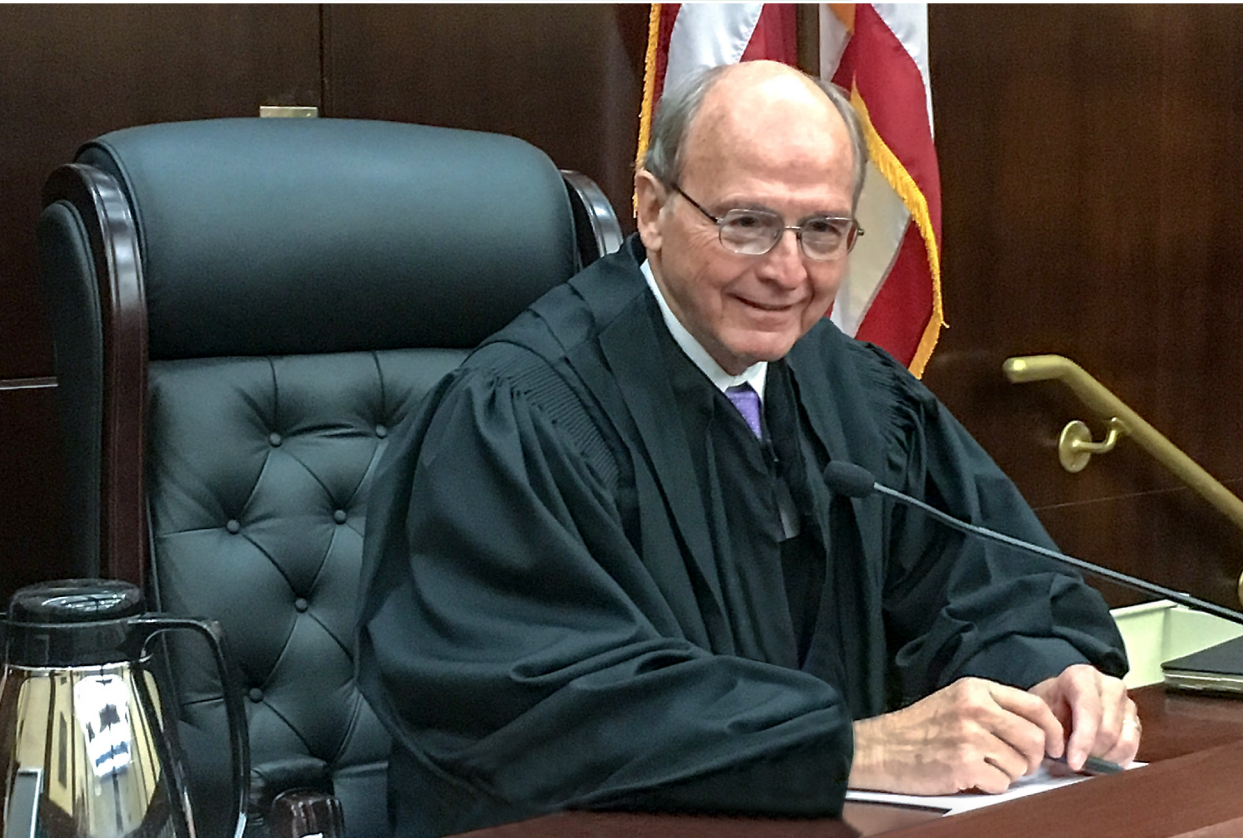
Online ticketing at [okbu.edu/theatre](http://okbu.edu/theatre). Ticket orders by phone at 405.585.4350. Box Office hours are M-F, 9a.m.-4p.m.



# Zip! Bang! OBU

## HOMEcoming 2016





## A Justice Balanced by Faith and Law

**Judge David Russell, '63**, has taken classes at Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Stanford, but says he's never had better professors than those at OBU.

"OBU was just ideal for me," Russell said. "I had no political interests at all and my family was pretty much apolitical. My government teacher really got me excited about politics and government. As a result, I got very involved in politics both on campus and later when I got out of law school."

Growing up with deep roots in McLoud where his grandfather owned a farm obtained through the Oklahoma land run, Russell's choice of OBU seemed clear.

"My sister was a student at OBU and our whole family was very much Baptist," he said. "My grandfather's brother was president of the Southern Baptist Convention at one time. It was close to home and I graduated from high school very young. So the whole package made it easy to choose."

Russell enjoyed the environment and the students but said the professors and faculty had the greatest impact on him and his life. Dr. Gregory Pritchard, philosophy; Dr. Allen Johnson, history; and Professor Corbitt Rushing, government, were among the most influential for Russell.



“The president of OBU at the time was James Ralph Scales and we became friends while I was there,” he said. “We maintained our friendship the rest of his life. He was also a real inspiration.”

Russell reflected fondly on his time at OBU where he lived in Baxter Hall and worked on campus waiting tables. “I had a great time and made lots of good friends who I’ve kept up with over the years.”

After completing his undergraduate degree in three years on Bison Hill, he attended the University of Oklahoma College of Law where he earned his juris doctorate at the age of 22. He also met his wife, Dana, during his time at OU and married her in 1971.

He began his law career serving as an attorney in the Navy during the Vietnam War, later working for Oklahoma Attorney General G.T. Blankenship and the governor’s office.

“When Governor [Dewey] Bartlett was elected to the U.S. Senate, I went to Washington, D.C., with him as his attorney. He and President [Gerald] Ford appointed me as the United States Attorney in Oklahoma. That position is the federal prosecutor for the western district of Oklahoma. After a couple of years when Ford lost re-election, I was replaced by a new appointee and went into private law practice.”

Following President Ronald Reagan’s election, Russell was appointed U.S. Attorney where he served for six months before being appointed to the federal bench as a judge, a position he has held for 34 years.

“A person is fortunate when he has a job he can look forward to,” Russell said. “I’ve tried a lot of very interesting cases and have great colleagues.”

Among the high profile cases Russell has tried is the Oklahoma City bombing.

“One of the things I enjoy is trying cases,” he said. “It’s just such a good feeling when you see a jury take their job so seriously. A lot of people try to avoid being on a jury. I’ve had several cases that lasted as long as four to five weeks - a long time for people to be away from their families and jobs and other responsibilities. After the trial is over, I routinely invite jurors back into my office and ask them questions about the experience. They almost always say ‘I didn’t want to be here, but it was such a great experience to see how our system works.’”

*Russell reflected  
fondly on his  
time at OBU  
where he lived  
in Baxter Hall  
and worked on  
campus waiting  
tables.*

Over the years, Russell has been awarded the Rogers State University Constitution Day Award, the Journal Record Award for Outstanding Judge, the Oklahoma Board of Trial Advocates Judge of the Year Award and the Oklahoma Bar Association Award for Judicial Excellence.

He and his wife have been members of Chapel Hill United Methodist Church for 30 years, and he has served on the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Methodist Foundation for more than 20 years. Along with being active in their church, when they aren’t at work or spending time with their grandchildren, they enjoy traveling with friends.

“We’ve been to all seven continents,” he said. “We started off with southeast Asia, then traveled to Europe, and then to Africa on a safari. Then, we went to South America and caught a Russian icebreaker to Antarctica. Our last two trips were to the Melbourne Open tennis tournament in Australia.”

Judge David Russell is a man of intellect, a man of the law, a man of faith. Whether serving senators and presidents, presiding over one of the most significant cases in U.S. history, or setting foot on the frozen reaches of Antarctica, he has impacted many and has taken Bison Hill with him to the farthest reaches of the earth.





## An Example Worth Following

Colleagues of **Dr. Mary Ann Craige, '62**, say she is a consummate music educator whose attention to music excellence, professionalism and sweet demeanor make her a role model for all educators.

A professor of music at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Craige credits her personal and professional success to a God-given passion for music and a deep desire to serve the Lord with her musical gifts.

"Music has always been a major part of my life," Craige explained. "I just did it. It's where I felt comfortable. It's where I belonged. Piano, choir, church music, from a very early age, I did it all. Then, when I was fourteen, I sensed God's call on my life to serve Him, not necessarily vocationally, but in the area of church music, so I surrendered."

Encouraged by the enthusiastic support of her family and opportunities for service provided by her home church, First Baptist Church of Durant, she wasted no time and began pursuing that call immediately.

"I started playing in church when I was just 14," she said. "Piano, organ, whatever was needed. I directed children's choirs. I even served as interim music minister for a while. Whatever there was to do in the church related to music, I did it because I loved music and I loved the church."

When the time came for Craige to go away to college, choosing a school was easy.

"I chose OBU for the positive Christian atmosphere," she explained. "Having been raised in a Christian home and in the local church, I felt like it was the natural next step to take."

Craige's undergraduate experience at OBU far surpassed her expectations.

"It was wonderful! I just loved it. I got a fabulous education, and the staff was so supportive. They made us feel comfortable and safe."

Although she found the entire OBU faculty to be "very sweet and helpful," a handful of those individuals made a particularly profound impression on her.

"Dean Warren Angell was such a talented individual," she said. "He influenced all of us by example. He could play the organ, piano, sing, direct, compose. It was amazing! It made all of us want to try harder, and even though he was so talented, he made himself available and took the time to help those of us who were just learning."

"Dr. Strickland was a fantastic Bible teacher," she continued. "Her knowledge was extensive, but the way she presented it was even more impressive. I don't know how she did it, but she made the Bible come alive for us. She made it funny, if you can imagine that! It's hard to explain, but she was a true gift to those of us who were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to learn from her."



“Then Dr. John Wesley Raley, well, he was just a wonderful man!” she said. “He knew, loved, and spoke to everyone on campus, and his wife Helen was just as warm and kind. She had a photographic memory and would give herself six weeks each year to memorize every freshman’s name. Once she knew your name, she never forgot it or where you lived. I remember that she and Dr. Raley both came to my senior recital. They did that kind of thing for everybody. They truly cared.”

Following her graduation from OBU, Craige earned both a Master of Music and Ph.D. in College Teaching and Piano Performance from University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. Even as she furthered her education, she continued to serve in the local church, playing piano and organ at First Baptist Church of Denton during her time away from home.

In 1966, she accepted an offer to teach at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, where she recently celebrated 50 years of service to her students. It was at Southeastern that she met her husband Danny, who was a dentist, 30-year Navy veteran, pilot and flight instructor. The couple became active members of Craige’s home church, First Baptist Church of Durant, and she resumed her position as church organist, one she still holds 40 years later.

A gifted teacher and mentor, Dr. Craige has had a profound influence on the lives of the Southeastern students with whom she has worked. Many of her students have gone on to pursue and obtain graduate degrees in music and/or perform nationally and internationally for known music artists and teachers on a regular basis. She is thankful for OBU professors who taught her, by example, how to invest in the next generation.

“I’ve tried to care for my students the way that my professors at OBU cared for me,” Craige said. “I make sure that they get what they need when and how they need it so they can succeed.”

Craige’s investment in her professional community has been significant as well, and her accomplishments have been many. A member of Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity, she served as both chair of the Music Teachers’ National Association composition contest and district chair of the Oklahoma Federation of Music Clubs composition contest for 35 years. In 2014, she was presented with the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Lifetime Achievement Award, and in 2016, the university named her Professor Emeritus of Music.

In 1968, she was asked to put together a show choir for Southeastern. Under her leadership, the Chorvettes were

chosen for a month-long USO tour to the Caribbean and selected as the featured collegiate show choir at the Music Festival in Sydney, Australia. They performed at four international Kiwanis conventions and made four international trips, including an exciting two-week trip to France, Belgium and Holland. In 1992, the governor proclaimed the Chorvettes “the Official Goodwill Ambassadors of the State of Oklahoma.”

“Although music is my passion and teaching is my delight, I think that having a part in broadening the educational experiences of the Chorvettes lingers with me as my greatest accomplishment,” she said. “Home stays,

visits to international universities and meetings with government officials gave these students a new understanding of cultures. What they learned in history and humanities classes actually came to life for them.”

Dr. Craige plans to retire soon from Southeastern Oklahoma State University, but she does not plan to stop serving her local church or taking on new challenges.

“I’m proud to be a music educator, but being a church organist is dear to my heart because it’s service to my Savior alone. There are many weddings, funerals, cantatas, revivals and Christmas programs. All of these call for my best efforts, but they’re always repaid fourfold.”

Inspired by her husband, Craige recently obtained her private pilot’s license and has plans to pursue more certificates in the field of aviation, including her commercial license and training in instruments. She is excited about the opportunities for volunteerism that her continued learning could provide. “I want to see how much further I can go!”

Craige is equally optimistic about the future of her alma mater and the students that currently attend.

“I’ve known David Whitlock for a long time, and I believe he is an OBU president equal to the one that I had,” she said. “It’ll be exciting to see what happens under his leadership. Sometimes, I look online and see all of the special traditions they observe on campus now. Chapel, candlelight vigils, fellowships, it’s all wonderful. OBU students shared a bond and felt a kinship back in my day without all of these things. I can only imagine the community that is being built among students now that they exist. It’s an exciting time to be a Bison!”

*Craige’s  
undergraduate  
experience  
at OBU far  
surpassed her  
expectations.*





## Changing the World

Compassionate  
and kind, **Karen  
Schaffner, '74**,  
president of Seinan  
Gakuin University in  
Fukuoka, Japan, is a  
gifted educator whose  
commitment to serving  
the Lord is matched  
only by her ability to  
love others well.

Uniquely equipped with an uncanny knack for language learning, a desire to help others learn and a sincere interest in other cultures, Schaffner began to explore and pursue God's call on her life at a very early age.

"I guess I've always wanted to be a teacher," she said. "My mother's parents were both teachers, and they always gave us old textbooks that were going to be thrown away. I can remember lining up my dolls, giving them those textbooks and playing school."

"My sixth grade teacher, Robert Cornell, had a big influence on me. My classmates and I were a varied group. Some were from Mexico. Some didn't even speak English. But Mr. Cornell met the needs of everyone and challenged us. He helped every child find something they were good at. I remember thinking, 'That's what I want to do!'"

Schaffner's love of learning and desire to teach intensified when she attended academy classes at OBU between her junior and senior year of high school.

"Professor Bill Mitchell was our instructor, and he made us think. We covered the whole gamut of content – western culture, history, literature, art, music – and looked at big issues. It was amazing, and I realized that OBU was a place where I could really grow."

As an OBU undergraduate student, Schaffner discovered that she had a God given gift for language learning and found a mentor in her German professor, Dr. Rosemarie Lones.

"She helped me see what teaching really involves. German is a difficult language, but she made it fun by involving her students in creative ways."

Schaffner graduated Summa Cum Laude from OBU in 1974 with a Bachelor of Arts in German and spent two years serving as a journeyman in Ghana, broadening her exposure to other cultures and deepening her love for teaching.

"Missionary work had always been there in the back of my mind," she said. "My mother was my GA [Girls in Action] leader and I found it very interesting to learn how the missionaries lived and about what was important to people in other countries."

When the time came for Schaffner to return to the United States, her OBU family helped her make the transition home



and gave her a place to belong. Her mentor, Dr. Lones, offered her a position teaching beginning German and running a language lab. Professor Rhonda Hall, who had served as journeyman in Mexico, helped her readjust to daily life in the states.

Schaffner's position at OBU required her to continue her education while teaching, so she began taking classes at Middlebury College during the summers where she earned a Master of Arts in 1980. She then moved to Fort Worth, Texas, where she earned a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and tutored Cambodian refugees in English.

"For a while, I thought, 'Well, I don't need to go overseas to be a missionary. They're coming to me!' But I knew in my heart that God had something else in mind," she said.

After graduating from SWBTS in 1982, she accepted a position with the International Mission Board teaching German to Japanese students at Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka, Japan.

"The IMB asked me whether I was a student worker or an educator. I told them that the only thing I was qualified to teach was German, and they said that was the very subject they needed me to teach!"

By the time Schaffner taught her first class at Seinan, she had mastered the Japanese language, impressing colleagues and students alike with her aptitude for language learning and ability to understand the manifestations of culture embedded in a language. She soon mastered Japanese traditions as well, assimilating to her new home without losing her sense of purpose or calling.

"Going to OBU helped me to work out in my mind not only what I believed, but why," she said. "We weren't ever allowed to just say that something was so because that's what we'd always heard or believed. Our professors made us explain ourselves. That helped tremendously when I began working with people who had a different set of values and standards. I was able to determine how much of who I was and what I believed in was cultural and how much was actually me."

In the classroom, Schaffner did her best to instill a sense of purpose and hope in her students, earning her the loyalty of her students and the respect of her peers.

"At OBU, I watched professors teach students from a Christian standpoint and express their faith, but still give them room to have their own opinions. They gave their students things to talk about and think about and then challenged them to think beyond themselves and consider what they could accomplish in this life. That's what I've tried to do with my students. I want them to understand that one person can change the world. I want them to know that we all have something to offer."

Schaffner's professional and administrative responsibilities increased over the years and varied in nature as she gained her supervisors' trust. Some of her favorite memories at Seinan involve a student bell choir that she was asked to direct.

"We spent a lot of time together, practicing, traveling and staying up until the wee hours of the morning playing UNO," she said with a laugh. "It made it much easier for them to open up and talk to me about their struggles, ideas, dreams and problems. Much of the music we played had Christian themes, too, so I had the opportunity to explain what it meant and talk about my faith. It was a blessing."

In 2014, she was elected president of Seinan Gakuin University by its faculty and became the first woman to hold the position. Surprised and humbled by the vote of confidence from her peers, Schaffner accepted the position at the urging of her mother.

Although she misses the classroom, Schaffner strives daily to be a good steward with the opportunity to shine the light of Christ from this God given position of authority. Those who know and work with her have no doubt that she will succeed, as this humble servant embodies both a work ethic and drive forged on Bison Hill, along with a selfless love characteristic of a sincere and devoted follower of Christ.

“  
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but why.”



## Life Saving Leadership

**John Bowen, '07,** came to Bison Hill with a plan for his career but left with much more – a purpose and a calling to serve others through healing and compassion.

When Bowen graduated from OBU with a degree in political science and philosophy, he knew exactly what he wanted to do: become a lawyer. He took the LSAT during his senior year, but decided to take a year off from school, just to be sure. Upon reflecting back on a law office internship experience, he realized that law was not his calling.

After praying and looking at different options, he chose to enter health care administration. He earned a Master in Health Services Administration from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. It was during that time where he was mentored by the CEO of Baptist Health in Arkansas, Russ Harrington, a man of God who showed Bowen how he could use his faith to minister to people while serving them as a hospital administrator.

“I get the opportunity to insure that patients receive quality care,” Bowen said. “When people are at their lowest point in life and are hurting, I get to work with physicians, nurses and others to insure that patients receive quality care. Since I work for a faith-based system, we have the opportunity to provide spiritual support as well. Healing was an important aspect to Christ’s ministry on earth. I believe that healthcare is a special, holy calling.”

By the time Bowen finished graduate school, he and his wife, Emma, had two young sons, William and Elliott. Bowen found a position in Corpus Christi, Texas, and the family relocated. He served in various administrative positions for CHRISTUS Spohn Health System, a six-hospital system and the largest in that region of Texas.

In 2012, they returned to Arkansas where he went to work for Baptist Health Medical Center-Little Rock as assistant vice president and night administrator. The quality of his work was rewarded a year later, as he was promoted to assistant vice president/administrator at Baptist Health Medical Center in Arkadelphia.

“During that time, I had the pleasure of opening three clinics in rural areas that expanded healthcare access. We got to see the hospital grow, we had several quality improvement initiatives that were successful, and our hospital won the 2015 Small Hospital of the Year Award from Arkansas Business Healthcare Heroes.”

It was also during this time that John and Emma’s family grew from four to six, through the births of their son Charlie and their daughter Lily.

In May 2016, Bowen was promoted once again, this time to serve as assistant vice president of patient services for the Baptist Health hospital in North Little Rock.



OBU ties run deep in Bowen's family, but from two different OBUs.

"My high school principal was a mentor to me, and he was an OBU graduate. He suggested Oklahoma Baptist. My father and sister had attended Ouachita Baptist and had great experiences there, but I wanted to try something different. As soon as I visited Oklahoma Baptist, I knew it was where I wanted to be."

Bowen is excited that his alma mater stepped up to NCAA Division II competition and joined the Great American Conference last year with Ouachita Baptist. He and his father attended the OBU vs. OBU football game in 2015 and plan to make it a yearly event, traveling to both of their alma maters and representing their schools with pride.

"It is also turning into a recruiting rivalry between my dad and I to get my son to want to go to college at each of the schools," he laughed.

Bowen attributes the impact of two professors in particular on his success beyond his college days.

"Dr. Tony Litherland [retired professor of political science] was my advisor. He was great and pushed me on political beliefs. We would have great discussions on things we agreed and disagreed on, both in and out of class. He was a wonderful professor, and he gave me advice on my career even after I left OBU. Dr. John Mullen [former assistant professor of philosophy] pushed me to think deeper and to not always go with the obvious answer."

His time at OBU also taught him the importance of relationships. His fondest memories are of time spent with friends in the dorms, playing jokes on one another and making memories that still endure.

"During one prank, we broke our window. It was November and the cold air was freezing. My roommate, who was also from Arkansas, and I had to patch it with something temporarily. The only thing we had was a donut box so we duct taped the donut box to the window to cover the hole. We received a lot of Arkansas jokes while the box was taped to our window."

Beyond the value of relationships, he learned many valuable lessons.

"OBU taught me to think critically through my liberal arts education. I learned that I did not want to be a lawyer, and that it is just as important to know what you do not want to do as to know what you want to do."

"Many of my experiences at OBU reinforced my desire to have my career be an extension of my faith and to serve others. Healthcare was a perfect choice for me based on what I knew I wanted to do from my OBU experience."

While healthcare is Bowen's calling and the work is rewarding, it does come with its challenges.

*Many of my experiences at OBU reinforced my desire to have my career be an extension of my faith and to serve others.*

"Healthcare is constantly changing. Understanding regulatory changes, what their impact will be on a health system and then communicating those changes to staff, patients, and physicians is very challenging."

While Bowen already has seen great success in the first decade of his career, his greatest passion and joy comes from spending time with his family.

"My biggest activity is keeping up with my four children. My oldest son, William, was born the day after I graduated from OBU. He was my inspiration to work hard and make sure I provided for him. Elliott was born while I was in graduate school. He is my little buddy. He is non-

verbal and autistic, and he has taught me to take joy in the small triumphs in life. His smiles are the most wonderful thing in this world."

"My youngest son, Charlie, is a human bowling ball of energy. His favorite saying right now is 'Yum, that is so delicious' when he eats something he likes. My youngest child is Lily. She is our only daughter and my little princess."

"My wife, Emma, is my best friend. I have known her since high school. She knows me better than anyone and challenges me to be better at everything in life, faith and work."

When not working or spending time with his family, Bowen is also an avid sports fan, cheering on the Chicago Cubs, Arkansas Razorbacks, Dallas Cowboys, and his OBU Bison.









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