

OBU

SPRING 2022

M A G A Z I N E

Tom Elliff Center for Missions

Advancing the
gospel of Jesus
Christ, enhancing
education in missions,
and empowering
missionaries by
connecting local
churches to OBU
and the world

PAGE 3

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theweekend

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

We continue to experience God's gracious hand on Bison Hill! In this issue I am delighted to share with you many of the incredible and innovative movements emerging within our great university. You note I say "many" of the movements, but not all...our issue is not big enough to contain them all! So, you need to come to campus to see them! I warmly invite you to make your visit just as we have hosted others in the past year.

We've had the privilege of hosting hundreds of prospective students and families as they have travelled to OBU for campus visits. One family visited for the first time after a friend shared with them their excitement about OBU. This prospective student had only been looking at schools in Texas, but by the end of the campus visit, not only did she have a positive perspective of OBU, she had also decided this was exactly where she wanted to study and grow over the next four years. She committed to OBU that very day! This story reminds us that Bison Hill is special and extraordinary. Our guests experience the difference immediately upon their first visit to our beautiful campus.

I would also like to share with you that God has been faithful during this time of pandemic. Just like you, OBU has navigated once-in-a-lifetime realities during the past 24 months, and I am thrilled to tell you that God has been so good. Like you, we have witnessed both joy and pain. Still, we have MUCH to celebrate thanks to the astounding gifts of long-time supporters and the gracious donations from new partners who believe in our mission. Our partners are crucial. We have been blessed with an amazing gift from a family who has had strong relationships with OBU through multiple generations of alumni and supporters. The Henry F McCabe Family School of Education was named last fall in honor of this gift. We have also been blessed with an extraordinary gift from new partners who graciously funded the launch of the new Tom Elliff Center for Missions.

God has also provided a new alumni director with a wealth of experience who is leading us to establish new alumni programs and services. Lea Ann Quirk joined us at OBU in October 2021 and has been enthusiastically creating and implementing plans to re-engage with alumni in new and exciting ways.

Strategically, we have expanded our capacity for investing in OBU's future through our increased resources and investments, and we have strengthened OBU's cash availability over the past year, resulting in improved financial health for the future. God has been good.

I'm excited to share with you that our recruiting numbers for the upcoming fall semester are tracking well above last year and I continue to receive enthusiastic reactions about OBU from prospective students and their parents.

I am privileged to represent OBU at speaking engagements in churches and other venues to share the OBU story. Recently, I was visiting with prospective students and their families following an event in Texas. One of the parents told me: "All I hear about right now is how OBU is the place our students should be." The word is getting out about OBU! Join us as we tell the OBU story. Join us as we advance the OBU mission. And join us as we ask the Lord to multiply our future at OBU!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heath Thomas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DR. HEATH A. THOMAS
OBU President

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OBU MAGAZINE online
obumagazine.com

OBU

MAGAZINE

A PUBLICATION OF
OKLAHOMA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY
2022 | VOLUME 16, NUMBER 1

OBU MAGAZINE
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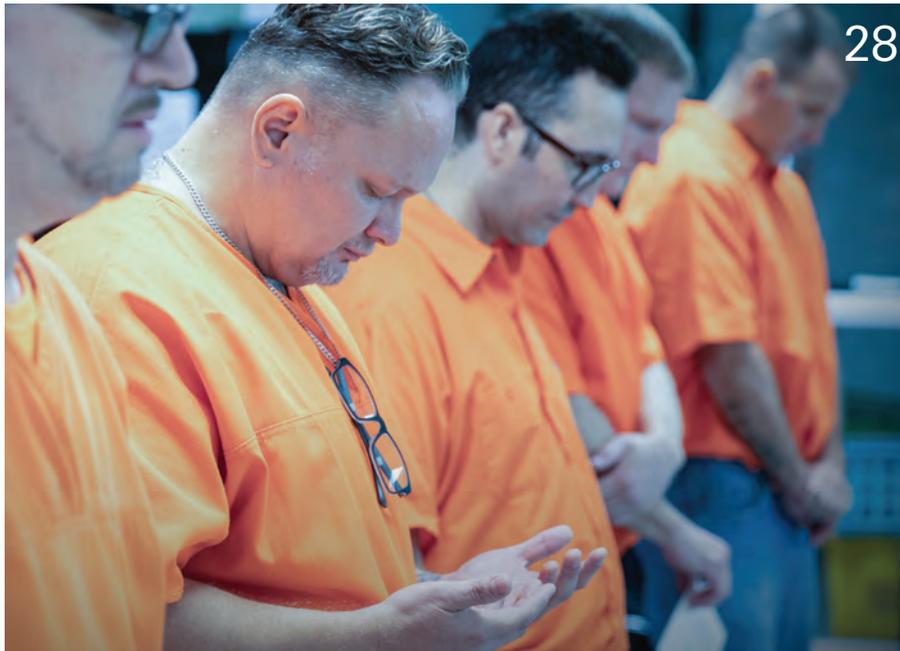
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OBU Magazine is published by the Marketing and Communications Office, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma. It is mailed to more than 15,000 alumni, parents and friends of OBU throughout the country and world. To change your mailing address, send an email to update@okbu.edu; write **OBU Magazine**, OBU Box 61275, 500 West University, Shawnee, Oklahoma 74804.

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ON THE COVER

Dr. Tom Elliff shares his desire to impact and equip the next generations of ministry leaders and missionaries for the call of the gospel.

from the
HEART OF A CARING
CHURCH



through
THE
FAITH-FORWARD EDUCATION AT
OBU



to the
MISSION FIELDS OF THE
WORLD



“The Tom Elliff Center for Missions

is positioned to help OBU be the global leader in missions education in the world.

Dr. Elbert Smith, who has trained more missionaries than anyone, Dr. Mike Hand, who will connect churches to OBU and the world, and Dr. Tom Elliff, who will be mentoring students and pouring his wisdom into their lives, all three complement a world-class faculty and enhance OBU missions education. If anyone desires to be equipped to serve Christ among the nations, OBU is the place to do it.”

OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas

STORY PAGE 4

OBU Launches Tom Elliff Center for Missions

Three leaders with incredible backgrounds in ministry and missions have been brought together at OBU to form a unique center designed to prepare students for missions opportunities throughout the world.

Launched in January 2022 on the OBU campus, the new Tom Elliff Center for Missions strategically combines the expertise and experience of former International Mission Board President Tom Elliff, former IMB Church Missional Strategist Mike Hand, and former IMB Director of Field Personnel Orientation Elbert Smith. Each of these men will play distinct roles in the Elliff Center for Missions, bringing together unique mentorship opportunities, exceptional mission field training, and vital church partnerships with a world-class OBU education.

“Dr. Elliff has spent his life reaching others with the gospel of Jesus Christ as a pastor, a denominational leader and a missionary. OBU shares his desire to impact and equip the next generations of ministry leaders and missionaries for the call to take the gospel to all the nations as we are told in Matthew 28:18-20,” OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas said. “He is a passionate advocate for advancing the gospel, and this center in his name carries that same passion for gospel advance in our day.”

Envisioning a movement of multiplying disciples following

Christ into His harvest, the Elliff Center will lean heavily on providing the training essential for a lifetime of effective service. Central to the Center’s strategy is a path that takes the student from the church through the University and to the world.

OBU students will also be introduced through the Elliff Center to key missions leaders via missions forums and other events held regularly on campus. These opportunities greatly enhance the OBU education experience provided through the Herschel H. Hobbs School of Theology and Ministry. Building strong connections with churches, recruiting students into OBU’s missions and ministry programs and providing scholarships for students participating in specific training events and missions activities, the Elliff Center seeks to effectively reinforce OBU’s purpose of equipping the next generation of future shapers to live all of life, all for Jesus.

The Center also works in partnership with the Avery T. Willis Global Outreach Center whose purpose is to provide opportunities and training for students in any OBU degree program to participate in short-term GO trips throughout the year. Students travel to locations throughout the world on GO trips offered during J-Term (in January), spring break and summer months.

A generous ministry partner has funded the work of the Elliff Center and provided resources to help achieve its purpose. Additional partners are being sought out to provide resources for an endowment that will fund long-term scholarships and a faculty chair.

ELLIFF CENTER STAFF

Dr. Elbert Smith, ’80, *Elliff Center Director and Assistant Professor of Missions*



Smith began as a church planter in Mexico, before overseeing more than 150 missionaries

from Mexico to Panama. As director of field personnel orientation with the IMB, he oversaw the orientation of more than 7,600 IMB workers from 2004 to 2019. Prior to joining OBU this year, he served as an international trainer at the Global Training Centre in Redhill, United Kingdom. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in religion from OBU, a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Doctor of Ministry in church and mission from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in applied theology: missions from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dr. Mike Hand, *Special Assistant to the President for Great Commission Initiatives*



Hand served as a pastor for 35 years before going to work for the International Mission

Board, where he served as special assistant to the president and church missional strategist. In 2016, he went to work for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma as the partnership mission strategist. Hand earned a Bachelor of Arts in music from Tennessee Temple College, a Master of Ministry from Tennessee Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in leadership from Tennessee Temple University.

Dr. Tom Elliff, *Lecturer, Mentor and Facilitator in Missions*



Elliff served as the International Mission Board's president from 2011-2014 and as

senior vice president for spiritual nurture and church relations from 2005-2009. Prior to this, he pastored churches for 42 years



Connor, a 2021 OBU biblical studies graduate, works with local children at a daycamp during a Global Outreach trip to Cairo, Egypt. The OBU GO trip team worked with WellSpring, an organization that serves youth and families throughout Egypt by providing camps that encourage campers to explore their talents, acquire new skills and be exposed to the gospel. The Elliff Center will work in partnership with the Avery T. Willis Global Outreach Center and will provide longer-term internship opportunities for students participating in one of the two related bachelor's degree programs.

in Arkansas, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma, including his service as pastor of First Southern, Del City, Oklahoma, from 1985 to 2005. He also served as an IMB missionary in Zimbabwe from 1981-1983. He served two terms as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and a term as president of the SBC Pastors Conference. Elliff earned a bachelor's degree from Ouachita Baptist University, a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ELLIFF CENTER FOR MISSIONS

Students are equipped at OBU for their callings as missionaries through one of two OBU undergraduate programs and a graduate program: the Bachelor of Arts in global marketplace engagement, the Bachelor of Arts in cross-cultural ministry and the Master of Arts in intercultural studies.

The global marketplace engagement degree prepares students to enter both marketplace and ministry by blending marketplace skills, ministry training and extensive internships in business and ministry settings.

The cross-cultural ministry degree provides biblical and theological foundations for cross-cultural ministry and missions both in North American and international contexts.

Students studying toward the BA in cross-cultural ministry also have the opportunity to pursue the 4+1 option. This allows students to earn the bachelor's degree in CCM and the master's degree in intercultural studies in just five years. Because of OBU's unique relationship with the IMB, students who complete the 4+1 option meet the educational requirements for career appointment with the IMB.

For more information, visit okbu.edu/elliff-center. □

multiply

Under the leadership of OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas, the University began a multi-year process in 2020 of reassessing where we are, where we need to go and how to get there together. Out of this examination came the Multiply strategy, which was formally launched in August 2021. The Multiply strategy includes 10 project teams working toward incremental improvements in numerous areas of the University over a three-year period from 2021 to 2024. The 36-month plan outlines the goals, values and projects that guide the priorities of the University.

Efforts throughout campus are focused on the strategic objectives of reaching students and families, realizing financial potential and refocusing the University. By embracing the tenets of excellence, influence, service and value, the University works toward the goals of recognized academic quality, sustainable student enrollment, positive budget variance, growing endowment, strategic pipelines in and workforce pipelines out.

MULTIPLY GOALS



TENETS THAT WE EMBRACE TOGETHER

Excellence

We value work fit for the King. We are exceptionally skilled in all facets of forming future shapers through personal growth, education, exceptional facilities, collegiality and community.

Influence

We value others. We create impact both internally and externally to reach and equip future shapers and launch them into their world for the King. Our future shapers exhibit wisdom, character and excellence.

Service

We value transforming lives by going the extra mile. We serve others sacrificially because Christ served us first.

Value

We cherish adding value to individuals and communities. We create, cultivate and offer positive impact to our communities and stakeholders. We embrace the benefits of OBU, even as we address the cost of OBU to ensure we deliver value in every situation.

MULTIPLY PROJECTS

1 Recruitment, Enrollment and Marketing

Through coordinated strategies, OBU is increasing our ability to reach more students and families within our existing markets while also developing and implementing tactics to recruit under-reached populations in Oklahoma and contiguous states. Additional efforts are underway to build awareness among parents and students in homeschool environments, Christian schools and classical schools. The goal of this project is to cultivate sustainable student populations and enrollment growth.

2 Price Structure

While OBU continues to provide incredible value in terms of quality, we must be attentive to costs, scholarship levels, discount rates and the net cost to attend OBU in comparison to similar universities. By assessing these pricing components, we can make necessary changes to maintain value through our pricing and scholarship practices.

3 Academic Focus

This project moves us to define who we are as a Christian liberal arts university. It includes assessment of the overall interest in our academic programs among student populations and the shape and viability of our degree programs to help us become more attractive and competitive in the academic landscape in terms of core curriculum, total credit hour requirements and transferability into the University.

4 Scholarships and Endowment

To ensure OBU is an affordable and attractive university

education in our state and region, we must identify and engage donors and partners to continue developing meaningful scholarships for students and endowments to fund academic programs, professorships, and academic and student life facility improvements.

5 Student Experience

Recognizing we face a competitive landscape in higher education, OBU needs to provide the best student experience possible. A significant part of a positive student experience is providing excellent facilities. This project begins to address OBU's current facility deficiencies and moves us toward excellence through a coordinated improvement plan.

6 Academic Alignment and Enhancement

Education excellence results from continuing efforts to refine academic programming by identifying and developing new degree programs along with encouraging innovation within current degree offerings. OBU will implement a continuous improvement cycle through the creation of innovation centers and labs for academic enhancement.

7 Alumni Relations

OBU will enhance and add value to our alumni through the

relaunch of the office of alumni relations. The University's new alumni director is implementing new programs and services to re-engage with alumni and friends.

8 Professional Development

The creation and implementation of an overall university professional development strategy is necessary to engage the needs of the OBU community of employees. Providing leadership, professional development and other growth opportunities for faculty and staff is essential in recruiting and maintaining a quality workforce.

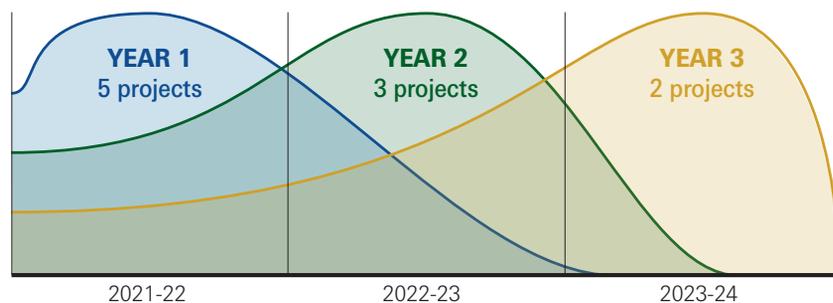
9 Streamline Processes to Improve Effectiveness

Developing a culture of continuous improvement and effectiveness in all university processes includes, but is not limited to, budgeting and purchasing processes, onboarding new employees and human resource operations.

10 Visioneering

The unique purpose of OBU requires us to strategically plan for our future by identifying improvements across the University, leveraging OBU to meet present and future needs in our state and region, and securing OBU's future by launching a compelling master plan and an ambitious capital campaign. □

PROJECT TIMELINE



Following God's Call to Bison Hill



Dr. Larinee Dennis
Dean of business, health science and education

Q What excites you most about being OBU's dean of business, health science and education?

A I am most excited to serve in this role at OBU because I know God led me here. It is a position that uses my talents, skills and experience well and I am thrilled to be a part of the Kingdom work of Christian higher education.

What are some of the most rewarding aspects of your position?

The most rewarding aspect of my position is working with the amazing OBU faculty and staff. These people are God-honoring, genuine, hard-working, intelligent and passionate about their work. It is a joy to join them.

What are some of the most challenging aspects of your position?

The most challenging aspect of any administrative position is the tyranny of the urgent. Sometimes the most important strategic work I need to be doing is interrupted by the immediate needs of a current problem which must be solved.

What are some of your main job responsibilities as dean?

There are many day-to-day responsibilities that aren't very exciting, like attending meetings and answering emails. But I believe my main responsibility as dean is to equip others around me to accomplish the work God has called them to do. My vocational mission statement is, "Humbly lead by equipping and encouraging my fellow laborers in Christian higher education to serve excellently and flourish professionally according to God's personal calling in their life." This is how I view my role as dean.

What do you think sets OBU apart from other universities?

Like many Christian universities, OBU prides itself on classroom excellence and integration of faith, and I agree we do these things well. Additionally, one of the things that I have been most surprised by is the sense of school pride and the many traditions that set apart OBU from other Christian universities.

What is something that might surprise people about being dean?

One thing that might surprise people about being dean is that the two most important things I do all day long is listen and ask questions.

Why did you decide to come to OBU?

God really led me here. Although I was quite happy in my previous role, I just knew God was asking me to consider a change and trust him with a career move.

What are some things you enjoy doing when away from the office?

When away from the office, I enjoy spending time with my husband and three kids (ages 2, 7 and 11). Additionally, I enjoy thrift store shopping and crafting. I also love serving with fellow believers at church. Before we moved to Oklahoma, I was very involved leading worship and children's ministries. I am still asking the Lord about where He wants me to serve in our new church.

Why should students come to OBU to study business, health science and education?

OBU's programs in the schools and divisions of business, health science and education are excellent. The curriculum is designed with intentionality to integrate faith, and the faculty are experts in their fields. Additionally, the faculty are committed Christians who care about the success of each and every student in their academic pursuits and their personal lives. This combination produces graduates who really understand what it means to live all of life, all for Jesus.

Dennis Brings Years of Experience in Education

As the dean of business, health science and education, Dr. Larinee Dennis leads the School of Nursing, the Paul Dickinson School of Business, the James E. Hurley School of Science and Mathematics, the Henry F. McCabe Family School of Education, and the Division of Exercise Science, Sports and Recreation.

Dennis came to OBU in June 2021 from Hannibal-LaGrange University where she served as vice president for academic administration and professor of teacher education. She began teaching at HLGU in fall 2008 and previously served as director of teacher education, interim associate dean of academic administration and assistant dean of academic administration. She spent several years teaching in public schools in Missouri, both as a fifth-grade classroom teacher and as a middle school communication arts teacher, before launching her career in higher education. She also served as vice president of the Hannibal Christian Academy school board.

She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Hannibal-LaGrange College, graduating as valedictorian with honors, with endorsements in middle school math, communication arts and social studies. She then earned a Master of Science in education in curriculum and instruction from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a Doctor of Philosophy in curriculum and instruction from New Mexico State University. Her dissertation was titled, "How are Teachers Integrating Technology in K-5 Classrooms? Studying Student Cognitive Engagement Using the Instructional Practices Inventory-Technology (IPI-T) Instrument." Her research interests include classroom technology integration, higher-order thinking instructional practices, instructional practices inventory (IPI), higher education student engagement, higher education institutional processes and higher education leadership.

Dennis is married to her college sweetheart, Chris, and together they have three children, Jachin, Jada and Jaina.

The McCabe family gathers around patriarch Henry F. McCabe for a photo during a Thanksgiving celebration in 2019. Four generations of the McCabe family are OBU alumni.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION Named for Henry F. McCabe Family

OBU FAMILY AND FRIENDS gathered together Oct. 23 in Shawnee Hall's Craig-Dorland Theatre to celebrate the life and legacy of the late Henry F. McCabe, to officially name the OBU School of Education in his honor, and to recognize the McCabe family for their extraordinary gift.

The McCabe gift will benefit current and future teacher education students on Bison Hill, ranging from updates and advances within the Shawnee Hall space utilized by the Henry F. McCabe Family School of Education to increased training and growth opportunities for students and faculty within the school.

Ties between the McCabe family and the University run deep through their long history of generous support of OBU, four

generations of OBU graduates and a family member on the OBU faculty.

Calling the dedication ceremony an extraordinary milestone for the School of Education, OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas thanked the McCabe family for their investment in the lives of future educators who will be equipped for their callings through the school.

"We are deeply honored to carry this distinguished name," Thomas said. "We are honored to hold this investment in the future of OBU. We pray that our stewardship of the values and the legacy of the McCabe family will lead us forward to new heights in teacher education. We are profoundly grateful."

McCabe was deeply committed to education and believed in its transformational power. He

understood the impact education has on a person's future and invested in the education of countless individuals. His deep faith guided his path through life.

"For Henry McCabe, everything he was and all that he did was for Jesus. His faith was integral and radiated from his very being," said Dr. Elizabeth Justice, chair of the OBU McCabe Family School of Education, assistant professor of special education and the granddaughter of Henry McCabe.

"OBU has historically been and continues to be unapologetically Christian, grounded in the truths of the Bible. Therefore, as we look to the future, the McCabe Family School of Education will continue to pursue Christ in all that we do. As we use this transformational gift, we pray that our every action



is a picture of Colossians 1:10, that we may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God. In the words of our president Dr. Thomas, we commit to living ‘all of life, all for Jesus.’”

Henry McCabe’s son, Verne McCabe, reflected on the influence his father had on his life saying he was “truly a man of integrity who showed love, compassion and generosity to everyone who crossed his path.”

Later that evening, the McCabe family was recognized on the field before the homecoming football game, with an announcement regarding the establishment of the Henry F. McCabe Family School of Education. Verne McCabe then performed the coin toss for the football game.

Henry F. McCabe, age 98, died Aug. 15, 2021. He was born Sept. 3, 1922, in Cleveland, Oklahoma, to William and Pearl McCabe. He attended Oklahoma A&M before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Force in October 1942. After an honorable discharge in 1946, he worked in management and sales of oil well production equipment for more than 13 years.

In 1959, McCabe made a career change and became vice president and general manager of Texas Mining Corporation which operated an oil well frac sand plant and silica flour plant. He also served as vice president and general manager of Pulverized Sand Company, an affiliate of Texas Mining. In 1967, McCabe became president and general manager of Delta Mining Corporation.

Beginning in 1976, he served as president of McCabe-Woody and Company. In 1995, following a corporate restructuring, McCabe assumed the role of chairman and CEO of McCabe Industrial Minerals, Inc. and continued to focus his energies on corporate development.

OBU alumni family members include **Lois Rolf Chappell, ex '48; Virgie Chappell, '49; Lee Chappell, ex '66; Verne McCabe, '71; Rosemary McCabe, '71; Leonard Morris Chappell, '71; Karen Burrows, '78; Michael Peercy, '92; Victoria McCabe Peercy, '94; Dr. Elizabeth McCabe Justice, '95; Chris Justice, ex '95; Karen Orr McCabe, '96; Chris McCabe, '00; Margaret McCabe Smith, ex '06; Michael Peercy Jr, '14; Karissa Peercy Cronk, '15; Dr. Andrew Peercy, '17; Kathleen Houston Peercy, '17; Tommy Peercy, ex '21; Emily Justice Humphrey, '20; Daniel Peercy**, current student; and **Bailey Justice**, current student.



No Need for Fallback Plan

Called to the ministry at an early age, Dr. Todd Fisher has followed God's calling and never looked back.

“[Dr. Wilks and Dr. Evans] put a good taste in my mouth about what ministry is and should be and the realities of it.”

Early Days

Dr. Todd Fisher, '92, grew up in suburban Fort Worth, Texas, raised in a single parent home by his mother, who was a schoolteacher. Sports were a major part of his life, whether watching or playing; especially the Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers, teams for which he is still a passionate fan.

One day, at age 14, he was watching a TV show featuring Orel Hershisier, a pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Hershisier shared his testimony, and his interviewer gave an invitation. Fisher was moved by the gospel message. He got on his knees there by his bed and asked Jesus to be Lord of his life.

Fisher had a friend whose father pastored North Fort Worth Baptist Church, where he was soon baptized and became very active in the church's youth group. At 16, he felt the call to ministry and at 18, he felt the call to pastor.

Journey to Bison Hill

OBU was never the plan, at least not to Fisher's knowledge. With numerous Baylor alumni in his family, he had planned to attend college in Waco. In fact, by spring of his senior year in high school, he was enrolled, had a roommate and even knew his future room number on the Baylor campus.

Then, one day, that all changed. Fisher had stopped by his friend Clint Paschall's house to pick him up, when his friend's father, Paul, answered the door and began talking to him about OBU. Paul was an OBU alumnus and shared openly about his love for his alma mater. In fact, when all was said and done, 26 students from Fisher's senior class attended OBU, mostly thanks to Paschall's influence.

He convinced Fisher to attend an OBU Preview Day that spring, along with some of his friends.

“I had barely left Fort Worth,” Fisher said. “We didn't go on vacations or anything like that. I thought, ‘You know...I've never been to Oklahoma. So, why not?’”

As he prepared for college, various people told him not to major in religion, so he would have a fallback plan in case ministry didn't work out. While at Preview Day on the OBU campus, and with that advice as the backdrop, he heard a very clear message from the Holy Spirit.

“There was this moment where we're walking across campus, getting close to time to leave. I've never heard God audibly speak to me, but about as clear as the Spirit has ever spoken to me, I just sensed God say to me, ‘Have I called you to the ministry or not? You don't need a fallback plan. You need to come to this place, and you need to study what I've called you to do.’”

From that point forward, he never looked back.

Shaped and Equipped

Throughout his time on Bison Hill, Fisher credits two professors for



making a profound impact on his life and ministry: Dr. Tom Wilks, professor emeritus of religious education, and Dr. Bob Evans, professor emeritus of religion.

“Dr. Wilks and Dr. Evans were very influential to me,” he said. “I love those two guys. Both of those men set me on the right path. They put a good taste in my mouth about what ministry is and should be and the realities of it. I definitely can see why God brought me here to OBU, because I was going to click with those guys.”

Fisher is grateful that both men saw potential in him and nurtured it. He also noted that they epitomized one of OBU’s greatest assets – professors who personally know and care deeply for their students.

“Those two men took an interest in me and invested in me. I knew even as a student, I could call them if I needed something. That’s what will always make OBU special to me.”

During his time on Bison Hill, Fisher gained invaluable ministry experience, serving on staff at multiple churches and preaching in many more. Beginning his freshman year, he participated in OBU’s

Ministerial Practical Experience (MPE) Days, organized by Wilks. Four or five times per semester, an association in the state would have an MPE Day and Fisher, along with several

other student preachers, would load up in a van and go preach in different churches.

During his sophomore year, he served as youth minister at FBC Weleetka, Oklahoma, where he also preached every Sunday during a six-month span between pastors. The next year, as a junior, he preached somewhere around the state almost every Sunday, preaching to congregations ranging in size from 12 to 800. He began serving as pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church in Bethel Acres, Oklahoma, during his senior year.

A Life of Ministry

Fisher graduated from OBU in 1992. He then continued his studies through Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at the extension center housed on the OBU campus while also preaching at Hopewell. It was during this time that he began dating his wife, Jamy (King) Fisher, ’94. They had known each other through mutual friends but it wasn’t until after he graduated that the two began dating. They were married in July 1994 shortly after Jamy’s graduation from OBU.

A month earlier, he accepted a position as pastor of FBC Wellston, where he and Jamy served until

1997. He next pastored Highland Hills Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, where they remained through 2003. Then, he was called as senior pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Shawnee, where he served until December 2021.

During these ministry assignments, the Fishers had three children: Zachary, Carly and Anna. Fisher also continued his education, earning a Master of Divinity in biblical languages from Southwestern, a Doctor of Ministry from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and both a Ph.D. and Th.M. from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In late 2021, Fisher was selected to serve as the executive director-treasurer of Oklahoma Baptists, a role he assumed at the beginning of January 2022. At the time of his appointment, he was serving a term as president of Oklahoma Baptists.

While leading the state’s convention was never his aspiration, he can see now how the Lord was preparing him for this role all along.

“I’ve been a pastor for 30 years. That’s all I’ve ever known,” he said. “I’m looking forward to building relationships with our pastors and churches in this state. Being present, being available and really continuing the role of our state convention in partnering with state churches and helping them accomplish the mission.

“The heart for us as a state convention is our churches and pastors. The health of our convention is going to rise and fall on the health of our churches and pastors.” □

The Ripple Effect

By returning to OBU for her career, alumna Kalyn Fullbright is helping countless others shape their futures and that of the world we all share.

“It’s easy to tell the OBU story when I know what is on the other side.”

Sometimes in life, when you know, you know. It really is as simple as that. And those moments of clarity and realization are as powerful as they are personal.

This is especially true when it comes to one’s education and future career path. Everyone’s path is unique. Most bring unexpected twists and turns, as well as a few surprises along the way.

For Kalyn Fullbright, ’15, the one thing she was sure about after graduating from high school was that OBU was the place she wanted to spend her college years. Everything else was a discovery waiting to happen. And in the end, it would lead her to a realization that would impact her life and countless others on their journey to a brighter future.

A Fateful Day

Fullbright grew up in Sallisaw, Oklahoma, just over two hours straight east from Shawnee. Knowing that any college she chose would have to provide an experience that integrated faith into the overall learning experience, she and her family made the drive west on Interstate 40 to visit OBU.

As they took in their surroundings while on campus, they noticed that

they had fallen behind their tour group. But as it turned out, that was OK.

“My family and I came to a Preview Day during fall of my senior year,” Fullbright says. “During the event, we got a little behind and ended up talking to Dr. Bruce Perkins [director of admissions at that time] instead of going to a session. That conversation, along with many others that day, helped my parents feel confident in sending me to Bison Hill.”

While she would be going to college 127 miles away from her hometown, her family was confident that upon graduating Fullbright would return. “My whole family lives within about five miles of each other and they fully expected me to return after graduation,” she said.

But that story was yet to be written.

Changing Her Path

When Fullbright was deciding on a college, in addition to a school that would provide a robust Christian worldview as part of the experience, she also wanted to find a respected nursing program. It was her field of choice, and she was excited for a career healing others.

But as so often happens in life, that direction changed.

“I came to OBU for nursing. I just knew it would be a wonderful career and I would love every minute of it,” Fullbright said. “When it was time to enroll for my second semester, my advisor told me that I needed to enroll in human anatomy. She excitedly explained the benefits of OBU’s cadaver lab, which was one of only a few in the state, and the



hands-on experience our students are exposed to.”

The thought of working with human cadavers was, in Fullbright’s words, “terrifying.” So she changed her major after her first year to pursue a bachelor’s degree in communication studies with a minor in marketing. But even then, she didn’t know where that new academic path would lead her.

Nothing Short of Life Changing

Thinking back on her time as a student at OBU brings one phrase to mind for Fullbright.

“Life changing.”

From her professors, to the friends she made her freshman year with whom she remains close to this day, to the celebrations and traditions she helped form, it all puts a smile on her face.

“Dr. Vickie Ellis [retired professor of communication arts] profoundly impacted me during my time as a college student,” Fullbright said.

“Nobody challenged or supported me like she did. She is one of the most creative minds I have ever known. Nobody loves students, scholarship or Broadway show tunes more than Dr. Ellis! I also thoroughly appreciated Dr. Kaylene Barbe, Dr. Bobby Kelly, and Dr. Dan Reeder.”

Then there were the times she spent with friends and fellow residents of her dorm. They would gather on third north in WMU and engage in “hall talk” where they would sit and connect for hours every night.

“The next year, most of us lived in the same hall in Taylor together,” she said. “We always held our own ‘Last Night’ celebrations before moving out for the summer, which usually included our own version of ‘The Walk’ and thinking about the best memories of the year.”

Another Fork in the Road

After graduating OBU in 2015, Fullbright accepted a position as marketing director for a company in Shawnee that was owned by a fellow OBU alum. She also went on to earn a master’s degree in higher education.

But in 2016, she felt a calling and was presented with another fork in the road. That calling was to return to OBU and work in the admissions office. Fullbright and her husband, Aaron, ’14, simply fell in love with the community of Shawnee and couldn’t imagine leaving.

She began serving the students of Pottawatomie and Lincoln counties as an admissions counselor. From there, she transitioned to a role as admissions event coordinator,

overseeing prospective student events and the OBU student ambassador team, The Herd. In 2019, she became assistant director of admissions and in 2021, she was named the new director of admissions.

“I have the most fun job on campus,” Fullbright said. “I get to work with the very best and most fun team in admissions. We work hard, but we also have a good time together.”

Shaping Countless Futures

Just like a single impact on still water creates countless ripples emanating outward, Fullbright is now in a similar position leading admissions at OBU.

Not only is it shaping her future, but also the future of each student she helps bring into OBU and, ultimately, the impact they have on the world.

“Many students don’t choose a college knowing what might happen over the course of the next four years. I certainly didn’t,” Fullbright said. “I couldn’t have imagined that I would meet lifelong friends whom I still talk with daily. It’s easy to tell the OBU story when I know what is on the other side.”

One of those things on the other side is the profound impact OBU alumni have on the world. “Just look at the stats,” she said. “OBU grads do big, meaningful things. That’s a compelling reason to attend OBU, but students stay for their education because of the community and the people investing in them.”

And she particularly enjoys sharing with future nursing and science majors the benefits of all the hands-on experience they’ll gain from OBU’s distinctive cadaver lab. □

zip! bang! **OBU!**



Beginning in 2021,
Homecoming weekend is now known as

the **weekend**

so that it can include our entire OBU family
as well as prospective students and
members of the Shawnee community.

This past October, alumni had the opportunity to honor the classes celebrating 50 years or more and participate in activities like the **Worship Service** in Stubblefield Chapel and **Harvest Dinner**. Current students continued traditions like **Harvest Court** and participated in the **Musical Gala**.

Prospective students and their families went on tours and got to experience Bison Hill during its peak of activity.

The entire OBU family as well as members of the Shawnee community enjoyed the **BBQ on the Oval**, the **Alumni Art Festival**, the **tailgates** and the exciting **football** game, where OBU won a thriller in overtime.

Going forward, we will continue to make **The Weekend** the time when everyone wants to be on Bison Hill!



lawn**g**ames



class**re**unions



Avery Miller was crowned Harvest Queen. She is a family and community service and political science double major from Owasso, Oklahoma.

Noah DeMoss was crowned Harvest King. He is a biochemistry major from Oklahoma City. He is also the current SGA president.

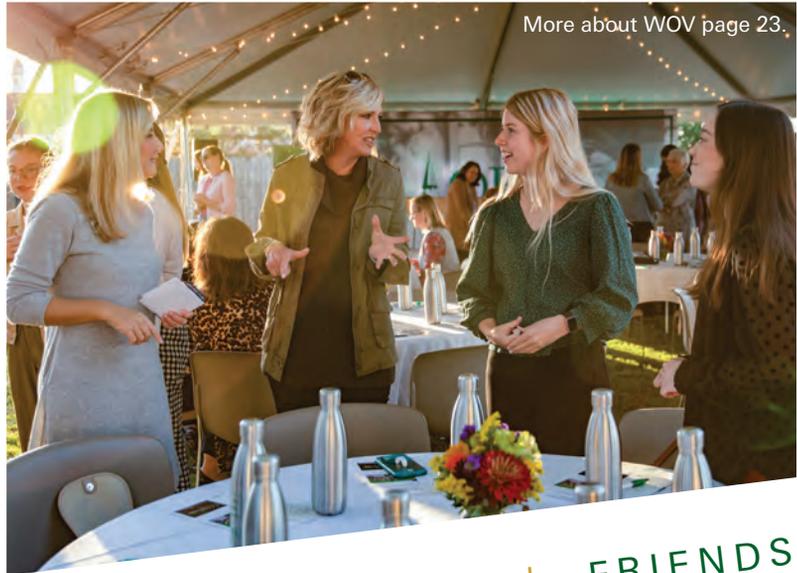
football



tailgating



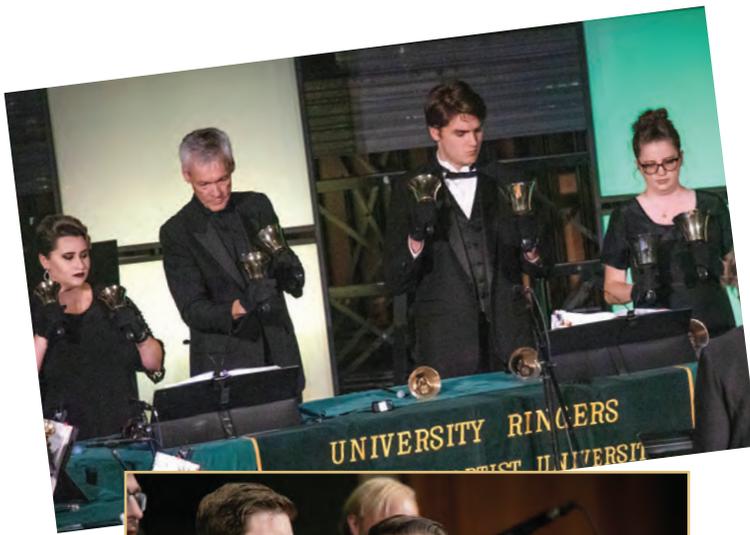
women of vision



ALUMNI | STUDENTS | FAMILIES | FRIENDS



Art on the Hill featured students, faculty and alumni displaying a variety of creations, including handmade jewelry, leather goods, pottery, a wool-spinning demo and more.



music performances

profile in excellence

2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Profile In Excellence Awards are presented to outstanding OBU graduates and former students.

Candidates are nominated and those nominations are considered by the Alumni Association's Honors and Awards Committee. Finalists are recommended to the Alumni Board of Directors for approval.

Seven recipients were recognized in 2021.

To nominate an individual for the Profile in Excellence Award, Alumni Achievement Award or Graduate of the Last Decade Award, visit okbu.cc/AlumniAwards, or follow the QR code.



CARRIE AND ROBERT CARTER

Carrie and Robert attended OBU in the early 1990s. In 2008, they became co-founders of Cargo Ranch, a program in Shawnee that mentors youth who face obstacles or struggles in their lives. They also teach the young married Sunday school class at Heritage Church in Shawnee.



MARY DUFFIE

Mary graduated from OBU in 1962 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. After graduation, she moved to Houston, Texas. Her nursing career has included running a surgical ICU, consulting in the area of home health regulatory compliance, and serving as a clinical documentation specialist, among many other endeavors.



icecreamsocial

The inaugural **Pastors Conference** during The Weekend was a success, with more than 50 pastors from Oklahoma Baptist churches attending. Dr. Hance Dilbeck, Dr. Todd Fisher and Dr. Heath A. Thomas brought encouraging and equipping messages. Pastors were able to network with each other and share best practices. OBU provided this event at no charge to pastor attendees.



pastorsconference



SAM GARLOW

Sam graduated from OBU in 1976 with a Bachelor of Business Administration. He also earned an MBA from the University of Oklahoma. He began working for Shawnee Milling Company in 1976, holding many leadership and executive level positions, and retired from there in 2019, holding the title of executive vice president for the Foods Division.



SCOTT GREENLAND

Scott graduated from OBU with a Bachelor of Arts in sociology in 2003. He also has a master's degree in intercultural studies from OBU. Scott founded Cyprus Global Inc., a non-profit missions organization that seeks to partner with local churches in assisting the mobilization of the church to the foreign mission field.



MICHELE HENRY

Michele graduated from OBU in 1991 with a Bachelor of Music Education. She went on to earn her Master of Music Education from the University of North Texas and a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Minnesota. She is currently the division director and professor of music education for the Baylor University School of Music.



CHRIS SUDDUTH

Chris graduated from OBU in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in biology. He completed his medical training at the University of Oklahoma; then completed residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at the OU School of Community Medicine in Tulsa. He has practiced extensively as a hospitalist physician.

Connection Points

FROM THE DESK
OF TIM RASNIC



As I sit here in my office in the Cargill Advancement and Alumni Center, I find myself reflecting on this past year. I feel grateful for the privilege I have to serve in my

role at OBU. It has been inspiring to continue learning more about this historic university and the important impact OBU has played in our state's history. We have a rich and storied history of success as a respected institution of higher education.

My reflections help me realize the importance of connecting with those who have been a part of our valued history, and those who will be a part of our future. Our connections and relationships with alumni, donors and friends of OBU are vital in providing increased opportunities to our current and future students and to all members of the OBU community.

The start of 2022 has proven to be an exciting time on our campus! We are well on our way in implementing bold and strategic steps based on a visionary initiative launched

by our president, Dr. Heath A. Thomas, last fall. Dr. Thomas' unveiling of the Multiply Strategy has established specific and measurable goals for each area of our university.

I can affirm the Office of University Advancement and Alumni is actively engaged in this strategy and is excited about what awaits us! It is incumbent upon us to find additional engagement opportunities with those who strive to support OBU and enhance the student experience. In order to reach our fullest potential, it will take a corporate effort, extended by all of us, to optimize these connection points.

We are upgrading opportunities for alumni engagement with a collection of new programs, events and activities. With this goal in mind, we recognize our outstanding alumni and donor base who desire more opportunities to become involved with OBU. We are passionate about creating more avenues for them to engage together and to give back in a variety of ways that include volunteering their time, influence and financial resources.

This past year, our team members have enjoyed touring the state of Oklahoma and other regional areas as Dr. Thomas has been invited to preach and speak at various churches and events. We are grateful for all who have joined us there or who have attended activities through our Bison Connection events. We look forward to continuing to connect with you through these events as

we enlarge the scope of our active OBU alumni and friends network.

One program of significant importance is the OBU Annual Fund. We are increasing our focus for this program because it provides the greatest avenue for supporting OBU and elevating the excellent opportunities for our students, faculty and staff. Giving to this program on an annual basis helps us fulfill scholarships for students and offer support throughout campus. Gifts of every amount collectively bring together our alumni, friends and donors to provide a distinct difference by enhancing our university. Please review the information offered in this issue of the magazine and look for upcoming details about our special Day of Giving to be launched in April.

As you can see, our emphasis on outreach and connection is important for our growth as a university. We are excited about the increasing number of opportunities for our alumni to participate and support OBU. In whatever way you have contributed in the past or seek to contribute in the future, we say thank you. Every connection and contribution makes a difference!

We look forward to continuing to serve you and the entirety of the OBU community. We ask for your continued prayers and support as we strive to make a difference for OBU and for the Kingdom of God.

Respectfully,
Tim Rasnic
*Vice President for University
Advancement*



Women of Vision Select 2022 Project

The Women of Vision selected the project their collective donations will fund during their annual meeting and dinner held on the lawn of the Cargill Advancement and Alumni Center in October 2021. More than 70 women attended the event, helping to generate substantial contributions to positively impact students and the entire OBU campus community.

The members selected the renovation and extension of the Cargill Center patio to provide additional space for hosting events for students, alumni and campus guests. This area has been used in the past for numerous gatherings and meetings, including Courage and Connections events for female OBU students led by First Lady Jill Thomas, OBU Alumni Association celebrations for graduating seniors, student meetings and gatherings, alumni and friends events, and the Women of Vision dinner. The renovation will include extending the patio with brick pavers to

the north, constructing a firepit for visual appeal and adding seating. Additional enhancements will provide a new on-campus destination where multiple groups may gather, host events, build community and enrich the overall campus experience for students, employees, alumni and friends.

Women of Vision is a giving circle dedicated to empowering women through promoting philanthropic endeavors that aid in promoting OBU's mission. Membership in the Women of Vision allows members to meet and network with other women and help direct financial resources to make major lasting impacts on Bison Hill. Membership is open to alumni and friends of the University who believe in the potential women have in making a lasting impact on OBU. Each member contributes \$1,000 annually with a special rate of \$500 annually for faculty, staff, students and recent graduates or their spouses.

For more information about Women of Vision or to sign up to participate, please visit okbu.edu/wov.

Bison Connections Events Provide Networking and Learning Opportunity

Bison Connections is a popular event providing the opportunity for alumni, business leaders, members of the community and friends of OBU to gather for a meal, fellowship and networking. These events provide quality speakers and content that will encourage and equip participants to cultivate ethical, positive and productive workplaces.

Past speakers include Dr. Nathan Mellor, CEO of Strata Leadership; Mona Sabah Earnest, author, speaker and HR consultant; Thomas Hill III, CEO of Kimray Inc.; Steve Green, president of Hobby Lobby; Clay Martin, '99, NFL official and Jenks High School basketball coach; and Jeremie Kubicek, '93, executive chairman of GiANT Worldwide.

Upcoming speakers include Berry Tramel, sports columnist for The Oklahoman, on Thursday, April 14, at 11:30 a.m. at the Hobby Lobby Headquarters in Oklahoma City; and Dr. Andy Taylor, '91, pastor and Army veteran, on Thursday, May 12, at 6 p.m. at Evergreen Baptist Church in Bixby.

Bison Connections events are free but pre-registration is required. For more information, contact University Advancement at 405.585.5412 or development@okbu.edu

Quirk Returns to Her Alma Mater to Lead Alumni



OBU's new Alumni Association Director Lea Ann Quirk, '02, joined the OBU staff in October just in time to lend a hand during The Weekend,

which will be one of her many responsibilities this fall.

Quirk is an OBU alumna, graduating in 2002 with a Bachelor of Arts in communications. She worked for the majority of the past two decades for the University of Oklahoma, beginning as a special events assistant for the OU Office of Public Affairs from 2003 to 2007. In 2008, she served as undergraduate programs coordinator for OU chemical engineering. In late 2008, she began her work with the OU Alumni Association, where she served for 12 years, working as the director of alumni travel and director of alumni programs. During 2020, she moved to the OU office of advancement as director of principal gifts cultivation and stewardship. In 2021, she took on her most recent role as assistant director donor relations, broad-based, for the University of Oklahoma Foundation.

Quirk is excited to be back at OBU and to be leading the University's Alumni Association.

"Bison Hill is a special place that holds a lot of great memories for

me," she said. "I'm excited to have the opportunity to build new relationships with our OBU alumni and friends."

She looks back fondly on her time spent as an undergraduate student on Bison Hill, with some of her favorite memories including taking The Walk both as a freshman and senior, hanging out with friends late at night in Kerr, participating in the live "News30" weekly student-led newscast and attending OBU sporting events. Her love for OBU, born out of her own personal experience, has given her a passion and eagerness to serve the University by reconnecting other alumni to their alma mater.

"As alumni director, I look forward to building programming, activities and services that will allow alumni to reconnect with their alma mater in new and unique ways. I want to challenge current alumni to reengage with the University and to help us make the case for OBU to the next generation of students.

"I believe OBU is poised to differentiate itself and show the state, and the world, why it's a leader in quality, Christian education. Alumni are critical to helping us spread this message because they are our living proof that OBU produces future shapers."

Tim Rasnic, vice president for advancement, is delighted Quirk has joined the alumni and advancement team at the University and is excited about

the impact she is making and will continue to make on alumni relations at OBU.

"As we work to build our alumni and advancement programs at OBU, we know that we need outstanding, top-quality individuals to take the lead in a variety of areas. Bringing Lea Ann Quirk back to Bison Hill certainly meets those expectations. She is a wonderful and engaging leader for the OBU Alumni Association. This is a vitally important time for OBU and I am pleased Lea Ann has returned to Bison Hill to lead our alumni efforts.

"I have had the privilege of knowing Lea Ann for many years and she has earned the respect and admiration of many colleagues who have seen firsthand the excellent manner in which she leads programs and interacts with dedicated alumni. She has the experience and energy to enhance our alumni engagement in a way that will benefit OBU for many years to come. She has been well-received by our OBU alumni and I know they will continue to enjoy working with her to make positive strides for our University."

Quirk grew up in Ardmore, Oklahoma, graduating from Ardmore High School in 1998. She and her husband David have been married for 14 years and have one daughter, Hannah Joy. Her father, Dr. Alton Fannin, is the pastor of FBC Ardmore and has previously served two terms as a member of the OBU Board of Trustees.

OBU Alumni Association: Celebrating Each New Day

God blesses us each new day with the chance to come beside Him to advance His Kingdom and continue His work. New days can bring hope and anticipation. It's a new day within the OBU Alumni Association and we have the chance to build new hope and anticipation that will reach alumni, families and students. Over the next year, you will see some exciting opportunities for engagement and connection with your alma mater. Stay tuned and stay plugged in so you don't miss anything! You can do this by making sure we have your correct contact information, including email address, and by following OBU on social media. Call us or go

to our website with any contact information updates at okbu.edu/alumni/update or 405.585.5412.

One of the most meaningful and immersive ways to be involved with the OBU Alumni Association is through our Alumni Board. This group of individuals meets several times throughout the year here on Bison Hill with the goal of advising and supporting new initiatives that allow alumni to strengthen their affinity and connection to OBU. I can't thank the current members enough for standing by our team through the uncertainty of the last two years and for filling the gaps when called upon.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the OBU Alumni Board, please contact me at leaann.quirk@okbu.edu or by calling our office at 405.585.5412.

Visit our Upcoming Events web page to find out where the herd will be gathering next! Visit okbu.edu/alumni/upcoming-events.

God Bless OBU!
Lea Ann Quirk, '02
Alumni Association Director

Check out
Alumni
Upcoming
Events



Alumni Association Calling for Award Nominations

The OBU Alumni Association is accepting nominations for its annual awards. A nominee must be a former student, not necessarily a graduate, who has demonstrated recognizable accomplishments in his/her profession, business, avocation or life service in such a way as to bring pride and honor to the University. Awards are approved by the OBU Alumni Association Board of Directors upon recommendation by the board's executive committee. Documentation of the nominee's contribution need only be presented by a letter of nomination. However, supplementary documentation is encouraged. Awards are presented each fall at Harvest Dinner during The Weekend.

CALLING FOR
alumniaward
N O M I N A T I O N S

Three Awards
include:

- Alumni Achievement GOLD**
(Graduate of the Last Decade)
- Profile in Excellence**

For more information
and to access the award
nomination form, visit
okbu.edu/alumni-awards

The OBU Annual Fund is a Vital Piece of the Puzzle

As individuals, we enjoy the personal satisfaction received in knowing that we made a positive impact in someone's life. It is fulfilling to realize that we are a piece of the puzzle that helps complete the big picture in someone's journey, experiences and personal growth.

LIKE INDIVIDUAL PIECES of a puzzle fit together to create a beautiful picture, OBU shares examples of two students whose opportunities fit together to create their beautiful journey on Bison Hill. Here students' lives are being changed, academic goals completed, ministry callings fulfilled, financial needs met and lives equipped to carry the gospel to the nations.

The need is deep. The reach is wide. And OBU's Annual Fund serves as the foundation in providing these rewarding avenues and dreams to students.

LILY HUFF
Scholarship Recipient



What exactly is the OBU Annual Fund and who can participate?

The Annual Fund is an ongoing fundraising effort through the OBU Office of Advancement that receives contributions with no restrictions on how they are used. The OBU Annual Fund covers a wide expanse that solicits support from recent graduates, long time alumni, friends, family and ministry partners of OBU's mission. Donors contribute at whatever level they can and are encouraged to make this an annual practice in hopes of creating a greater impact. No amount of giving is too small to make a difference.

Donors can rest assured every dollar given goes directly to OBU and most often in the form of scholarships that help supplement the cost of a student's tuition. 100% of students at OBU receive some form of scholarship to bridge the gap and assist with the cost of tuition. The OBU Annual Fund contributes to these scholarships as well as the overall operations and enhancement of the University through innovative and value-

added programs, career resources and other significant aspects of the University. It also helps attract and retain the best faculty and provides them with professional development.

Through the generosity of alumni, friends, partners and supporters of our 112-year-old University, the OBU Annual Fund continues to impact students on Bison Hill. It provides students the opportunity to receive a high-quality distinctively Christian liberal arts education and to be known as future shapers who are challenged to impact the world for God's glory.

Who benefits from the OBU Annual Fund?

OBU Senior **Lily Huff**, a journalism and mass communication major from Oklahoma City, says that her decision to attend OBU was completely determined by the amount of scholarship dollars the University was able to provide. Those scholarships are a direct result of thoughtful, intentional donors contributing through avenues such as the OBU Annual Fund.

Serving as the current OBU senior class president, Huff will graduate in May with three valuable internships under her belt, thanks to the personal relationships she has established with her professors. She says that the smaller university setting allows her to be seen and known by the faculty and other students, an environment she truly values.

Huff also serves as co-chair for The Herd, OBU's student tour guides, where she participates in

Scholarships are a direct result of thoughtful, intentional donors.

many campus events related to student recruitment. She is senior co-chair of the OBU University Concert Series, has participated in study abroad through OBU and is a member of a social club on campus.

"OBU has afforded me many spaces to grow as a leader and to work and collaborate with others," she said. "My family was so thankful when I had the chance to receive several scholarships from OBU. It helped relieve a lot of the financial pressure that we felt. It was a blessing to know those scholarships would help me be able to attend school on Bison Hill."

Taylor Mante is an OBU senior majoring in exercise science. Mante came to OBU from his

hometown in British Columbia after being offered both an academic and athletic scholarship. He plays defensive tackle for the OBU Bison football team and will graduate December 2022. Mante says he was thrilled to have the opportunity to fulfill his childhood dream of playing NCAA football in college.

"I reached out to many Division II schools sending my highlight reels and stats. When I heard back from OBU and was offered the scholarships to make it happen, I said to myself, 'dreams come true.' I wouldn't be here if I hadn't received those scholarships."

Mante says he has grown so much as a young man through the many opportunities afforded him at OBU. Whether taking courses in Old Testament and New Testament, developing friendships with other international students, or enjoying the incredible bond



TAYLOR MANTE
Scholarship Recipient

with his football teammates and coaches, Mante credits OBU for these life-changing experiences.

Because of the OBU Annual Fund, students like Lily Huff and Taylor Mante are deeply enriched. It is the result of a thoughtful and generous gift contributed by someone who is willing to be a piece of the puzzle that makes a student's dreams come true. Individually, each piece, no matter how large or small, makes a difference...adding beauty, enrichment, growth and meaning to the amazing landscape of students found on the campus of OBU.

Please consider being a piece of the puzzle by making a gift to the OBU Annual Fund.

There are three ways to contribute:

- 1** CONTACT Crystal McKee, Director of Administrative Development – crystal.mckee@okbu.edu or 405.585.5412
- 2** FILL OUT and return your gift in the included remittance envelope.
- 3** VISIT okbu.edu/fund or follow the QR code to the right.





Dr. Bruce Perkins, left, OBU associate professor of religion and director of the Prison Divinity Program, and Dr. Heath A. Thomas, right, OBU president, gather with students in the PDP program during the Fall Convocation ceremony at the Lexington Assessment and Reception Center.

Transforming Lives in Prison and Beyond

One of the main components of OBU's mission statement is to "transform lives." This driving principle of life transformation inhabits every aspect of University life, from classrooms to chapel services, athletic competitions to residential life experiences. While life transformation is at the core of all OBU academic programs, perhaps its impact is most visible in one of the University's newest initiatives, one which educates inmates inside prison walls.

The OBU Prison Divinity Program includes 40 full-time students, all inmates serving time at the Lexington Assessment and Reception Center (LARC) with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC). The students are taking classes, taught by OBU professors, to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Christian studies, receiving instruction in the same Christian liberal arts curriculum as the students attending classes on Bison Hill. The program is the first-ever four-year

bachelor's degree to be offered inside an Oklahoma prison. The University plans to begin the next cohort of 40 students in fall 2023, raising the number to 80 students on an ongoing basis, launching a new cohort every two years thereafter as an earlier cohort completes the program.

OBU launched the Prison Divinity Program in partnership with ODOC and Oklahoma Baptists to positively transform the inmate population within the Oklahoma prison system through moral rehabilitation. During their studies, students will intern with prison chaplains and help lead discipleship classes. Then, upon completion of their degrees, graduates will be sent in teams of three or four as field ministers to other prisons throughout the state system. The LARC was specifically selected as the location for the program because inmates transfer to and from this facility to other prisons around the state.

The program is entirely funded through the generosity of donors, support through the Oklahoma Baptists and facilities provided by ODOC. While these sources have provided funding to launch the program, more support is needed for the future since the program is self-supporting.

The 40 men enrolled in the full-time program were selected from 172 applicants and 65 interviewees. In addition to their academic studies, these students are learning the traditions of Bison Hill and what it means to be an OBU student, including learning the famous school chant "Ka-Rip." They also participate in worship and Bible study, similar to OBU students on the Shawnee campus.

Dr. Bruce Perkins serves as the director of the Prison Divinity Program and is also an associate professor of religion at OBU. He assumed his role as the founding director of the program in



June 2020, following a successful tenure as OBU's associate vice president for enrollment management.

Perkins is excited about the positive exponential impact this program is making on so many lives.

"The Prison Divinity Program is an expression of the OBU mission in that it seeks to transform lives through Christian liberal arts education. This transformation begins in the lives of the students and extends to the prison population where they reside, their families, the communities where the families reside and the prison culture throughout the Oklahoma prison system."

OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas began working on this program while serving as the dean of OBU's Hobbs College of Theology and Ministry. The idea was hatched several years ago through conversations with state senators who were passionately seeking ways to impact prisoners' lives. Visits were made to prisons in other states to observe how similar

programs have been implemented and assess their impact and feasibility in Oklahoma.

"OBU exists to transform lives by equipping students," Thomas said. "When I think about the prison population in Oklahoma, there is an opportunity for gospel advancement. This provides moral rehabilitation while helping inmates understand the gospel, what it is to live well before the Lord, and what it is to make a positive impact in a community. We are thrilled about this opportunity and we are very grateful for this partnership with the Department of Corrections."

The Lexington Correctional Center's LARC facility houses dedicated space for the effort, with a self-contained classroom, office and library, as well as the resources necessary for the students to succeed. Perkins noted that the warden, chaplain and other administrators of the site had been praying for several years that their facility would be chosen to launch the program.

Last September, the University held a special Convocation service at the LARC to officially begin the fall 2021 semester, a service similar in nature to the one held every fall in Raley Chapel on the OBU campus in Shawnee. Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt, a strong supporter of the program, was on hand to encourage and congratulate the students on beginning their journey toward earning their college degrees. Stitt personally invested time and resources into the program since its inception and advocated for the program's creation, after reviewing studies on the effectiveness of moral rehabilitation programs within prisons.

Stitt encouraged the students to persevere in their calling to ministry. "God has his hand on your lives," Stitt said. "There's no telling what He is going to do for you and through you."

For the students in this program, God's hand is guiding them to a future filled with life transformation and gospel proclamation. □

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



EARTH ANGEL

OBU nursing alumna Pam Malloy shows “the power of being present” for patients at their most vulnerable stages of life.

For some, life’s calling is simply more challenging, more touching, more human. And these are the chosen ones who, upon answering that call, describe it as *their* privilege and *their* honor.

Such is the case with Pam Malloy. For the past two decades, Malloy has devoted herself and her exceptional skills as a nurse to bringing comfort to patients in the most vulnerable stages of life one can imagine – living with cancer diagnoses and other terminal illnesses in hospice and palliative care settings. It’s a mission and purpose that was born years ago in California after Malloy earned her master’s degree and has since taken her to countries around the world.

But it’s true beginning was at Oklahoma Baptist University.

A Local Girl

Having grown up in Oklahoma in a devout Baptist family, Malloy was well aware of OBU early in life.

Eventually she became more familiar with the Shawnee community and got a closer look at the campus, culture and people.

Her impression only improved. Malloy also believed that the nursing program at OBU was the best in the state, and since that was the academic discipline she was most interested in pursuing, her choice was clear.

“It was just a great place with great faculty and so much personal attention,” Malloy said. “I wasn’t interested in going to a large college. OBU was a smaller school and a unique place where I knew I’d get extra attention.”

Equally significant, Malloy said, was the fact that OBU was a place where faith would be incorporated throughout her learning experience. “That was very important to me,” she said. “Being able to incorporate my faith into what I was doing, the good times, the friendships, the care,

and the fact that everyone really wanted the students to succeed. It was just a special place.”

Westward Bound

After earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from OBU, she spent time working at Presbyterian Hospital in Oklahoma City before moving west to California. She had visited the state during a previous summer and fell in love with it, so she applied and was accepted into the Master of Science in Nursing program at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

“I’d been landlocked my whole life and my roommate at OBU was from California,” Malloy said. “Plus, many of our texts had been written by UCLA faculty. I thought that was impressive. It took a little convincing of my parents for me to make the move, but I was able to. And once I got there, I realized that OBU provided me with such a great foundation. I was very thankful for that.”

“[OBU] was just a great place with great faculty and so much personal attention.”

Upon completing her studies at UCLA, Malloy set forth on a whirlwind of accomplishment and advancement as a nurse. She held positions as an oncology clinical nurse specialist at renowned medical facilities including St. Joseph's Hospital in Orange, California; UCLA Medical Center; and the George Washington University Hospital in Washington, DC.

But *where* Malloy's career unfolded is only part of the story. It's *what* she spent her time doing and the nature of the care she provided that is the true measure of her impact.

“It Just Always Felt Like the Right Thing to Do”

Throughout her 45-year career, Malloy spent most of her time working with patients in hospice and palliative care settings who were at the final stages of life, dealing with terminal diagnoses from diseases such as cancer and HIV/AIDS.

The work was challenging on every human level one can imagine—emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually. But if you ask Malloy, it was her honor to step up and be there for her patients.

“I've always felt it was a privilege to provide care for people during their most vulnerable time,” she said. “To take that end-of-life walk with them, to listen, to be present. It's an honor and a privilege.”

The work was so important to her, she eventually took it around the world helping to educate and mentor future nurses who wanted to follow the same professional path.

She developed palliative care nursing leadership curricula, taught, and mentored nurses throughout Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. She served as the national director of the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) Project as well as Special Advisor on Global Initiatives at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. And she collaborated with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to develop the ELNEC-For Veterans curriculum, which was presented to over 500 nurses representing every VA hospital across the nation.

One of her most fulfilling endeavors has been her work with Living Room International, a faith-based organization founded by a nursing colleague. The organization built and established a 26-bed hospice center providing end-of-life care to people in Kenya.

“Education is power,” Malloy said. “Africa has had its share of pain throughout history. I felt it was really important to develop meaningful relationships with people there.”

“As a Christian it just always felt like the right thing to do,” she said.

“Death is part of life. We always celebrate birth, but we don't always escort people to the next world the way we should. I feel it's very important to make sure nurses are educated and prepared to provide that sacred care to patients in the final stage of life.”

Retired, With Purpose

In 2020, Malloy retired in Santa Ynez, California, along with her husband Bill, an aerospace engineer. They met as students at UCLA, raised a family and are now looking to continue spending their time in a way that has impact and meaning. From volunteering weekly, to remaining active in her church, to continuing her work on the Board of Directors at Living Room International, retirement is anything but dull.

“We just didn't want to fill our lives after retirement with busy work,” Malloy said. “We wanted to continue living life with meaning and purpose.”

And she often thinks back to her time at OBU and how the experience laid the foundation for a life and career that could be described, in a word, as extraordinary.

“I am so thankful for the OBU nursing faculty who role modeled safe, compassionate and equitable care to those who were seriously ill and injured – the most vulnerable in our society,” she said. “My goal has always centered around living in a way that is pleasing to God and seeking to have a purposeful life of service. The lifelong friendships I made at OBU have always been an extreme blessing to me.” □

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



A LEGACY OF FAITH AND GIVING

For OBU alumnus Steve Whitaker, the power of preaching and lifting communities in need is a family legacy.

Faith and giving. It's a powerful combination that can, quite literally, transform lives and lift up communities.

From preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, to providing the essentials of food, clothing and shelter to those who are most in need, few callings in life have more impact or purpose.

Nobody understands this more than Steve Whitaker. For him, living this life of faith and giving isn't something he *does*. It's more about *who he is*. He sees it as part of his personal DNA, passed down from family members who, for generations, have devoted their lives to helping others through faith and relief work.

Still, his is a story that is as unique as any of them.

A Path All His Own

Whitaker's path to and through college wasn't a traditional one. Originally from Missouri, his family moved to Oklahoma and, upon

beginning his college experience, he met the love of his life. They married and had a child. It was then that Whitaker realized that carrying a full academic load while also working two jobs to provide for his family simply wasn't going to work.

So, he took a hiatus from school. Then, during his early 20s, Whitaker experienced a moment that would shape the rest of his life.

"I had an epiphany. I had a moment where God spoke to me and called me to the ministry," he said. "There was absolute and complete clarity at that moment. I can still hear that voice from that moment. And I'm grateful for that. I'm grateful that God was that definitive with me because my ministry has taken me far from a typical pulpit ministry. It's been helpful for me to have that clarity that never leaves, regardless of where I am."

This calling and journey would take him to OBU, the one school in the

state that he believed would most strongly align with his Southern Baptist upbringing.

His vision for the future now clear, Whitaker would set forth to become the 10th generation minister in his family and follow in the footsteps of his father and others who spent their lives integrating faith with mission work.

His "Happy, Hard Days"

Whitaker himself would be the first to tell anyone that his time at OBU as a student was anything but easy. But it wasn't that the academic work itself was too difficult for him to handle. It was the fact that he was so focused on his future in the ministry that he struggled to understand the purpose of some of his courses.

"It was kind of difficult for me because I was Christ focused," he says. "It took a couple of my professors who had to explain to me 'Steve, you're here to get an education, not an indoctrination.'"

One such class was Western Civilization. “Who wants to read *The Gulag Archipelago*? It has nothing to do with ministry,” he said. “But I ultimately found that in fact it had everything to do with ministry.”

A key for Whitaker’s realization was the guidance and mentorship of his advisor, Dr. James “Bob” Evans, who told him to dig in, and that the academic work that seemed far and foreign from ministry had its purpose and its place. Dr. Evans advised him to learn everything he could learn in that class, read everything he was asked to read and have faith.

“Dr. Evans would say ‘Steve, this is going to prepare you to talk to anyone you encounter, whether they have a terminal degree with a Ph.D. after their name or just an average guy on the street,’” he said. “You’re going to read things that are going to inform you.”

Whitaker discovered that his professors were provokers, in a good way. Another class he took involved extensive writing. He found it challenging, but invaluable. “Some people are great speakers and orators, but they can’t write worth a darn,” he says. “And with what God was calling me to do, I’ve had to be competent in both worlds.”

To this day, Whitaker still has those books on his bookshelf, including *The Gulag Archipelago*, as a reminder of his days at OBU.

A Family Legacy

Back when his family moved from Missouri to Oklahoma, Whitaker’s

father, Paul, was a member of what’s known today as the North American Mission Board. He was also a minister and a church planter with Native Americans.

Watching the work of his father and knowing of the similar relief work his earlier relatives were involved with instilled in Whitaker a deep belief in the importance of helping disadvantaged individuals, families and communities.

“My dad worked with Native Americans, who have struggled and continue to struggle with deep poverty,” he said. “You can’t be a part of that and be the shepherd and not be involved in relief work at a significant level. So, he was always looking for some way to bring in food and bring in clothing.”

In 1989, Whitaker was called by John 3:16 Mission in his home community of Tulsa for the purpose of innovating ministry outreach to inner city youth and families experiencing homelessness or deep poverty. This was his opportunity to immerse himself in relief work on a macro scale.

He introduced programs for children, youth and adults that eventually led to the creation of the John 3:16 Mission Family & Youth Center facility in North Tulsa. And in 2001, he became the Mission’s senior pastor and president.

“If we’re talking about relief work and people who could be at their very worst moment, there’s comfort and power in the gospel of Jesus Christ to win the lost,” he said.

Today, under his leadership, John 3:16 Mission has been transformed from a small soup kitchen style shelter with limited programming into a ministry offering the most comprehensive faith-based care and recovery in Tulsa.

“My buildings are nice, they’re clean, they smell clean. You get a clean bed and clean scrubs to put on at night. There’s a counselor to speak to, a chaplain available and a five-star meal,” he said. “And then if you’re going to deal with the men you’ve got to deal with the families and that’s why I started work with families and youth and working with disadvantaged youth. You can’t let the kids flounder while dad is in recovery.”

Whitaker, who’s been married to the love of his life, Sandy, now for 45 years, continues to lead the Mission toward the completion of the largest expansion of programs in its history, leading to even more lives being transformed in Christ’s name. This past Thanksgiving, he oversaw the Mission’s distribution of more than 5,000 turkeys and food baskets to disadvantaged families in the community.

And the driving force behind all of it can be traced back to observing his father serve others through relief work while preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and seeing his grandfathers who were Baptist preachers taking action whenever they saw people in need.

“When I had an opportunity to do it on a macro scale, which is a 300-bed shelter and a staff of 60,” he said, “it’s just something I felt called to do.” □

Dr. Robert Dawson, former OBU WMU professor of missions, died Jan. 30, 2022. He was 76 years old. He joined the OBU faculty in 1985, retiring in 2011. He played a key role in developing new academic programs at OBU in cross-cultural ministry, including the first full program in orality studies to be offered in any Baptist school. Dawson was also the co-founder of the Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach and founder of the Don R. Kammerdiener Center for Missiological Research. He was instrumental in the formation of Good Shepherd Ministry and Mission Shawnee.



Dr. Ronda Lou Hall, former OBU professor of Spanish, died Feb. 21, 2022. She was 75 years old. She served for two years as a journeyman for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in small towns in Mexico and in Acapulco. In 1980, she married Joe Hall, an English professor at OBU. She served as professor of Spanish at OBU from 1973-2011 and as chair of the Spanish department for more than 25 years. She was honored as the second-ever recipient of the University's highest faculty honor, the Distinguished Teaching Award, and was inducted into the OBU Faculty Hall of Fame in 2015.



Paul Hammond Leaves Legacy of High Standards of Excellence in OBU Fine Arts

“OBU has always provided a balance of professional preparation, critical thinking and writing skills, and Christian growth. Our students make a difference because they can stand on equal footing with their peers and show Christ through their personal lives.” – Dr. Paul Hammond

As he retired in the spring of 2011 after 25 years as dean of the Angell College of Fine Arts, Dr. Paul Hammond ruminated on his greatest vocational achievement: bringing beauty to the world through arts education. Leading the college through a time of growth and challenge, he was a steady hand of leadership and created opportunities for students and faculty to pursue their dreams. Hammond passed away unexpectedly Jan. 24, 2022, in his home in Choctaw, Oklahoma, survived by his wife, Anne, who served OBU as associate professor of English and as chair of the language and literature division.

According to Dr. James Vernon, chair of the OBU Division of Music, Hammond personified what it took to be a leader.

“He carefully selected the people he wanted to work in the College of Fine Arts,” Vernon said, “and then spent his energies assisting them in making the most of their time at OBU. He never wanted to be the focus for the college; he wanted the faculty and the students to achieve great things and he dedicated his years at OBU to that goal. He was a true Christian servant.”

Only the third dean of the College of Fine Arts since 1935, Hammond came to OBU from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, where he served as chair of the church music department. Hammond oversaw expansion of the College of Fine Arts in several areas and initiated the Friends of the Arts program to encourage support among alumni and friends of OBU. During his tenure, the College of Fine Arts became more diverse with the addition of a vibrant art and graphic design division, the expansion of the theatre program, and the addition of the journalism and mass communication program. In addition to his duties as dean, Hammond taught courses on church music, music history and fine arts. One of his most satisfying achievements was the establishment of the OBU/Shawnee Community Orchestra. Celebrating its 20th season this year, the OBU/SCO was a dream of Hammond’s and he worked with foundations and other institutions to find ways to fund such an ambitious project.

During his tenure, Hammond published a variety of articles on such subjects as “Hymns and Hymnody in Revivalism,” “The Christian Lyre and Its Influences on American Hymnody” and on shape-note hymnody in America. He served as managing director for the Oklahoma Alliance for Liturgy and the Arts, program chair for the DaVinci Institute, an evaluator for the

National Association of Schools of Music and chairman of the board of trustees for the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art in Shawnee. He was also a member of the Program Review Advisory Board of the Commission on Teacher Preparation for Oklahoma. Upon retirement he became the interim dean of fine arts at Morehead State University and guided them through financial transition and an accreditation process.



Hammond’s years of leadership were years of initiatives and change in addition to upholding the high standards of excellence expected in the OBU College of Fine Arts. With his support and leadership, the college embarked on The Oratorio Project, where every two years the music students and faculty worked together to present a full-length oratorio with a nationally known guest conductor. He also developed partnerships with Oklahoma professional organizations, such as the Tulsa Philharmonic, to bring musical groups and professional groups together for performances. He was instrumental in re-building the OBU theatre program back to prominence by searching for outstanding directors and giving them the support and wisdom necessary to increase the size and scope of that department. His support of the studio art program and the initiative to bring a graphic design program to OBU continues to reap benefits in this wide-reaching program.

As news of Hammond’s passing spread, the University was inundated with remembrances and messages of support for his family.

“I am very sad to hear of the passing of Paul Hammond,” wrote Clark Jolly, ’92 OBU church music graduate. “He was absolutely a ‘gentle’ man. He is the reason I wound up in Edmond. He made the recommendation that I play the piano for a local Baptist church that needed someone just for Christmas. I was with that church for the next 25 years. I also have fond memories of him teaching music history and having difficulty with the sharpie cap not being on! Such a great guy and good leader for OBU during that time.”

Another graduate, Jonathan Clark, ’95, church music graduate, remembers Hammond fondly. “I loved that I could visit with

continued

Hammond, continued



him in my struggles with basic concepts, and he would return to me respectful encouragement, clear feedback, and then follow up on my progress in the next weeks. When I started at OBU and found a church choir to join, I honestly didn't recognize that the person singing next to me in choir was my dean. He let me befriend him with his kindness and sincerity, and I gained a huge respect for

him before I knew who he was on campus. Hearing about his passing into life I am deeply moved. I know I was the one privileged by our shared time and I am very grateful."

His friend and long-time colleague Dr. Jim Hansford, retired professor of music and director of bands emeritus, remembers his 20 years of collaboration with Dean Hammond. "He was the person who hired me, and it was a privilege to work with him," Hansford said. "His kind and collaborative spirit were his greatest assets. Although he was firm and demanding as a dean, he was never overbearing or autocratic. I could not have asked for a more supportive supervisor. In 2001, he and I worked together to establish the OBU/Shawnee Community Orchestra, which could not have happened without his administrative acuity and determination."

Honoring his wishes, memorials can be made to his passions: OBU Music, Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Shawnee, and the Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art in Shawnee. The University plans to honor Dr. Hammond's service and life in the coming months, but his legacy lives on in the lives he touched, and in the inspiration and encouragement he gave to hundreds of Christian artists in the OBU College of Fine Arts who have left to influence others and the creative world.

Special thanks to Dr. Jim Vernon, Chair of the Division of Music and Burton H. Patterson Professor of Music, for honoring the memory of Dr. Paul Hammond and sharing this memoriam.

Anita Gail Jones, ex '61, died Jan. 25, 2021, at the age of 81. Residents of McLoud, Oklahoma, Anita and her husband, **Don Jones, '59**, served OBU faithfully for many years, with Don in advancement and Anita in admissions. She was born at St. John's hospital in Tulsa Oct. 26, 1939, to Robert William and Jessie Catherine Randell. After graduating from Central High School in 1957, she



attended OBU. She and Don were married June 14, 1959. They served in pastoral ministry together for more than 61 years. She also worked in a variety of secretarial positions and was a talented seamstress, soloist and musician, playing and teaching piano, directing children and youth choirs, and singing with the Singing Churchwomen of Oklahoma for more than 25 years. Together, they created the Don B. and Anita Jones Scholarship for students attending OBU to help provide financial support for students who do not qualify for federal need-based grants. She is survived by OBU family members **Don; Donna Johnson, ex '62; Dr. Susan Willis, '83; Doug Jones, '86; Jana Jones, '85; Graham Jones, '14; Bethany Jones, '14; Audra Jones, '18; and Olivia Jones, '19.**

Norma Sue Harris Rader, '61, died Sept. 23, 2021. She was 82 years old. She was born May 5, 1939, to Henry Bennet and Joyce Annabel (Wiles) Harris. She graduated from Madill High School as valedictorian in 1957. While at OBU, she met her husband,



Dr. Dick Rader, '63, and they were married June 11, 1961. She served God as a pastor's wife, missionary, choir member and mother. Her love for Africa and its people was a central focus in her life. She and Dick served in Africa from 1967 until 1979 when they returned to Oklahoma and Dick began teaching at OBU. He retired in June 2002 as dean of the School of Christian Service and vice president for spiritual life and died in October 2002. Sue and Dick coordinated ministry programs for OBU students who were the children of missionaries and established the Cousins MK Scholarship to benefit children of evangelical Christian career missionaries. During her later years, she was an avid Bible scholar and author, using her unique style to publish several books that she was always eager to discuss with others. In honor of Dick and Sue Rader's dedication and service to OBU, the Rader family provided a donation in 2018 to remodel a portion of the Geiger Center which is now named the Dick and Sue Rader Office of Student Life. OBU family includes **Dr. Michael Rader, '84; Steven Rader, '86; Darrell Rader, '87; Daniel Rader, '97; Leah Rader, '97; Bennett Rader, '13; and Magdelon Rader Gilbert, '15.**

Helen Raley Weathers, '58, died Feb. 7, 2022, at the age of 85. She was born Nov. 8, 1936, in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and was living in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at the time of her death. She grew up on the OBU campus with her parents, Dr. John Wesley Raley and Helen Thames Raley, and her brother, John Jr. After graduating from OBU, Helen relocated to Waco, Texas, to attend Baylor University.



Soon after, she met James Roberts Nash and they married in 1958. They had one daughter, Sandra. Helen was passionate about community involvement and volunteered for the Waco Chapter of the American Heart Association, the Stroke Club, Camp Fire Girls and the Junior League. She was a board member for the Waco Art Center, Brazos Forum and Fuzzy Friends Rescue. In 1989, she married Robert Weathers. They enjoyed many social and traveling adventures with friends during their time together. Robert preceded Helen in death in 2010. In 1995, Helen suffered a life-altering brain aneurysm and spent months in the hospital and rehab. The story of her miraculous recovery garnered national attention, including the publishing of her account in the Chicken Soup for the Soul book series. It was during this time that Helen became an inspirational speaker for stroke education and recovery.



**We'd love to hear from you ...
and so would your classmates!**

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