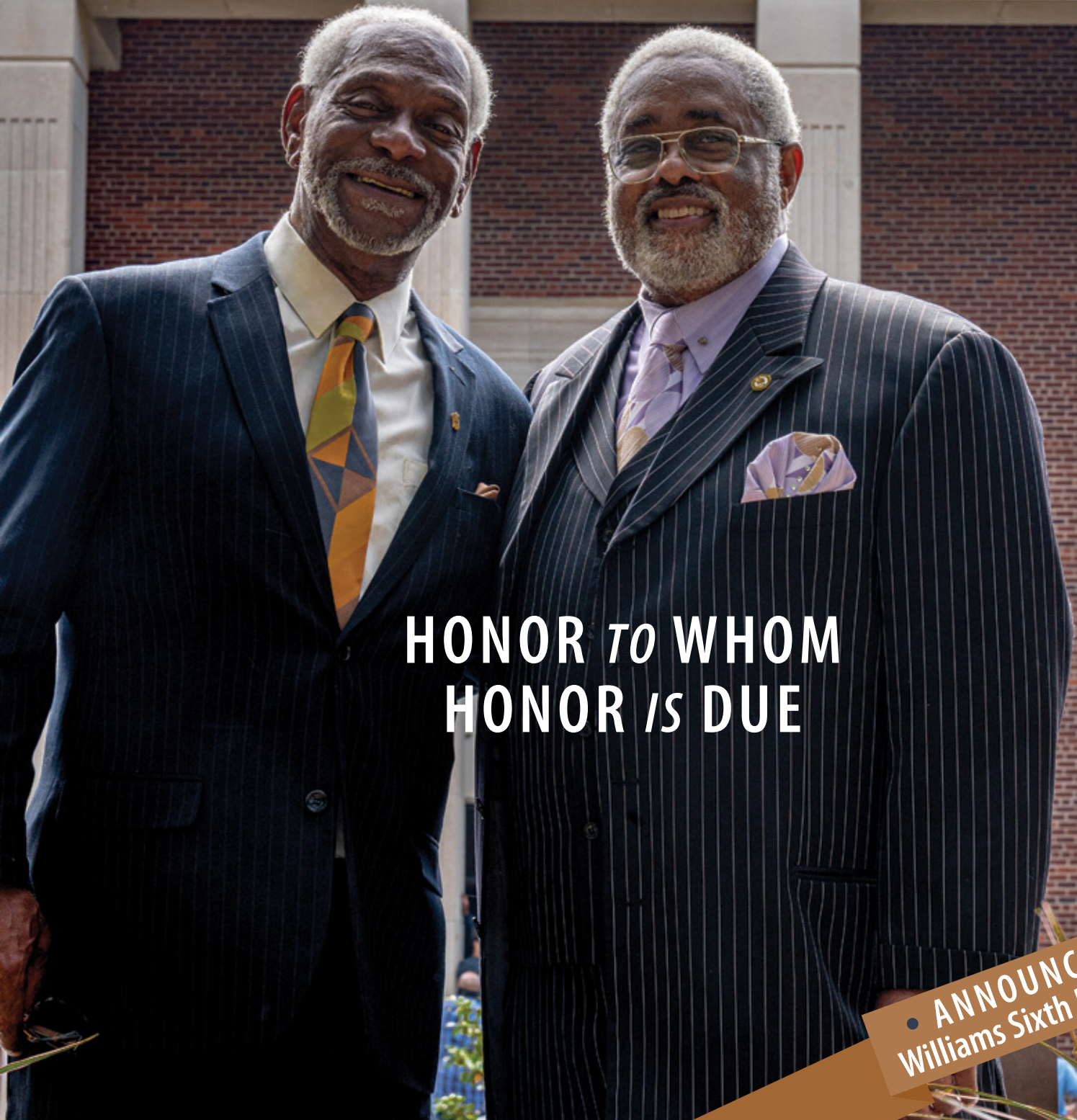


HARDING

ANTHONY & WRIGHT BUILDING

FALL 2021

HARDING COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATION AUDITORIUM



**HONOR *to* WHOM
HONOR *is* DUE**

• ANNOUNCING •
Williams Sixth President



Features

14
MAKING A DIFFERENCE
A clinical in Zambia provides Speech-Language Pathology graduate students an experience like no other.

18
LEGACY OF LOVE
On what would have been his 30th birthday, the University dedicates a memorial in honor of Botham Jean's legacy of love.

20
REUNITED AND IT FELT SO GOOD
It was definitely a Homecoming worth coming home for with more than 100 events, including the Anthony and Wright Administration Building dedication.



28



12

Departments

2 **VIEWPOINT**
A fall filled with significant milestones

3 **HU VIEW**
Nine photos from Family Weekend

4 **ONE MOMENT**
Dr. Mike Williams is named the University's sixth president.

6 **AROUND CAMPUS**
Welcome Center under construction, an enrollment increase, and other happenings around the University

12 **SPORTS**
The 10th all-sports trophy earned this spring comes 45 years after the first.

26 **CONNECTIONS**
27 | PROFILE
Leon Blue, 1972
28 | ALUMNI AWARDS
32 | PROFILE
Natalie Nill, 2011

36 **END NOTE**
Recently "graduated to glory," Fern Hill loved her Timothy Hill Ranch boys.

ON THE COVER
Bro. Elijah Anthony and Dr. Howard Wright, the first African American undergraduate students to earn bachelor's degrees from Harding, are honored and celebrated with the naming of the Anthony and Wright Administration Building during the dedication ceremony held at Homecoming 2021.

PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY

A great cloud of witnesses

By DAVID B. BURKS, *president*

THE LORD HAS REALLY BLESSED US this fall with a great spirit on campus. We are very grateful to have been able to resume in-person chapel, athletics and a full slate of campus activities. Our enrollment was up 7.6% to 4,970. I am grateful for every student who can be touched with the message of Jesus Christ.

We began the year with convocation on the first day of chapel since we were able to be together at one time. The fellowship of being together in chapel and so many other activities has been very noticeable this fall — yes, you could feel camaraderie everywhere.

Several significant milestones have occurred this fall. A large crowd gathered during the last day of Lectureship, Sept. 29, to remember and honor the life of Botham Jean (page 18) on what would have been his 30th birthday. The memorial erected across from the entrance to the cafeteria will remind all who pass by of his love for all people.

Homecoming was one of the best I can ever remember (page 20). More than 100 events occurred, and they were all well attended, and people enjoyed being together.

On Saturday morning, we held the dedication ceremony honoring seven African American alumni who blazed the path for others to follow. When those who were recognized first walked on this campus, they did so at a time that was very different from today. Racism and prejudice existed within the Harding community, and we acknowledge the pain that was felt. For this, we are truly and deeply sorry. We believe racism is wrong in any form.

The first three African American undergraduate students to enroll at Harding in the fall of 1963, J.C. Lewis Brown, Walter Cunningham, and David Johnson, had conferred upon them the degree of Honorary Bachelor of Arts as well as being recognized with a monument in front of the newly named Anthony and Wright Administration Building.

Thelma Fae Smith and Curtis Sykes were the first two African Americans to graduate from Harding with master's degrees in 1965. They are recognized and honored on a separate plaque.



Bro. Elijah Anthony and Dr. Howard Wright were the first two African American students to graduate from Harding with bachelor's degrees in 1968. Because of their significant contribution to Harding as students and as alumni, as well as their distinguished lives of service, we dedicated the iconic Administration Building as the Anthony and Wright Administration Building. During a time when both the nation and the church wrestled with a history of slavery, segregation and existing racism, walking into this building required courage. They demonstrated that courage for all of us.

We express tremendous gratitude for these individuals and the many students who have followed in their footsteps. Their faith, courage and commitment are an inspiration to us and will continue to be for generations of Harding students to come.

On a final note, as this magazine was going to press, we welcomed the news of the selection of Dr. Mike Williams as our next president beginning June 1, 2022. Dr. Williams has a rich history with Harding University and is well prepared to lead us to greater heights. He is a great man of faith, and I know he loves Harding (page 4).

David B. Burks

HARDING

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PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY

Family Weekend

INSTAGRAM SELECTIONS FROM FAMILY WEEKEND



TOP ROW: @theshirtplace, @_jordancabana_, @calebsemp54 MIDDLE ROW: @evieboyd_, @madeline_ledge, @your_mrwright BOTTOM ROW: @joelkmaners, @trey_thomas3, @kristinglenn_

HARDING

HARDING

HARDING

Dr. Mike Williams, president of Faulkner University since 2015, speaks to the crowd gathered in Cone Chapel following the announcement Oct. 27 of his selection as the sixth president of Harding by Dr. Robert C. Walker, chairman of the board of trustees. Dr. Williams said, "As I assume the presidency this summer, I want the blood of our founders to run in our veins. At Harding University we have a remarkable and a rich heritage, a legacy that needs to be remembered and honored. But the board of trustees did not appoint me to be a curator of Harding's past; they asked me to champion her future. So I aspire to be an architect, a passionate architect, of a contemporary expression of our historical mission." He will assume the presidency on June 1, 2022. His selection occurred at press time, and more thorough coverage will be contained in the next edition of this magazine.

PHOTO BY NOAH DARNELL



HARDING



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HARDING





Welcome Center to enhance hospitality

THE FIRST FLOOR of the David B. Burks American Heritage Building is undergoing renovation. After approval from the board of trustees, a Welcome Center is being built to greet prospective students, parents and guests on campus. The center, located on the site of the Heritage Auditorium and Heritage Inn desk, will include space for admissions, financial aid, and alumni and parent relations.

Steve Lake, vice president of enrollment services, believes this center will better demonstrate the Harding experience to visitors on campus.

“My overall goal for how we recruit is for us to reflect the Harding relational experience,” said Lake. “Everyone talks about how they love the relationships, people, faculty and staff, and dorm life on campus. I believe we have to recruit while reflecting that. It has to be real; it has to be personal.”

The center will provide potential students, alumni and visitors with a comfortable area to meet whether learning more about how they can pursue their education at the University or returning to their alma mater.

“We want anyone stepping on campus to

feel welcomed and invited,” said Lake. “It also will provide a space for prospective students to meet with financial aid or admission reps and learn more about what Harding represents.”

Construction for the center began in June and is anticipated to be completed in spring 2022.

In addition to the Welcome Center project, the admissions team expanded, bringing on five more recruiters and restructuring how they operate to better serve guests and personalize their visits.

“Recruiters will now work with the same prospective students from eighth grade through high school so they can build deeper relationships and better serve their needs,” said Lake.

The admissions team also has grown to include several recruiters who work remotely from cities within six hours of Searcy. This will help enhance the University’s presence in those areas and better reach potential students who may not be able to visit campus during the school year. These recruiters are stationed in Dallas, Nashville, Tennessee, and Northwest Arkansas.

As a part of the renovation, the Heritage Inn front desk will be located where public safety was originally housed. Public safety will operate on the first floor of Kendall Hall.

Enrollment up 7.6%

THE UNIVERSITY HAS reported an enrollment growth of 7.6 % for Fall 2021 with students from 49 states and more than 50 nations and territories. Overall enrollment is 4,970, up 350 from last fall. New undergraduate enrollment, including first-time-in-college and transfers, is up 3.8% at 866 with 834 last year. Graduate and professional enrollment is 1,282, compared to 1,044 in 2020, for a 22.8% increase.

“I am excited about the growth because it means even more people will be able to experience and be influenced by our mission to provide a quality education consistent with Christian ideals,” said President Burks. “I am grateful for the work of Steve Lake, our vice president of enrollment services, and the entire undergraduate admissions team who have helped make these goals a reality. I am also thankful for all faculty and staff members who assisted in creating an increase in enrollment at both undergraduate and graduate levels.”

A contributing factor to graduate and professional growth was a \$500,000 grant awarded to the Cannon-Clary College of Education to support the training of special education teachers in Arkansas. As a result, 100 teachers are enrolled through the University’s College of Education and will help address critical shortages in special education in the state of Arkansas.

Several new programs in multiple colleges and departments, as well as consistently high retention rates, are additional factors adding to the increase. This includes the Carr College of Nursing which admitted a record number of new nursing students into the college this fall. There were 26 in the inaugural class of the Master of Science in nursing initial licensure program. The University also welcomed 46 students to our new online Master of Arts in organizational leadership program.

“I am extremely proud of our students for achieving a high success rate during a challenging year,” said Marty Spears, provost. “Our retention rate is above 84% for the fourth consecutive year which indicates the success and satisfaction of our students. From the moment students step on campus, they experience an environment nurtured by our faculty and staff that strengthens and contributes to their future success.”

RENDERING COURTESY OF STEELMAN CONNELL MOSELEY ARCHITECTS

Degree programs grow by four

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OFFERINGS continue to increase with the addition of four new programs within three colleges.

The College of Allied Health has added a Master of Science in cardiac function and interventional technology to begin in Fall 2022. This program is the first of its kind worldwide and seeks to instill essential knowledge, skills and dispositions for successful careers, as well as servant leadership in cardiac device and interventional technologies with an emphasis in cardiac rhythm management and electrophysiology. Students will complete 34 credit hours over the course of 10 months and receive hands-on training from cardiac device companies on the latest equipment and procedures. They also will work with cardiac rhythm management programmers and electrophysiology mapping systems to learn the specifics of interventional technology.

“I’m very excited that we are introducing the new, cutting edge CFIT program,” said President David Burks. “It will be a great addition to our already strong set of health science offerings.”

A second graduate program, launched in August 2021, is the Master of Science in applied dietetics practice. The first program of its kind in Arkansas, it provides a challenging educational experience consistent with Christian ideals preparing entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists for evidence-based practice in all communities. This new and innovative program within the College of Sciences is one of the few in the country that is competency-based and allows students to complete their courses and required supervised learning experiences wherever they are located. A combination of distance learning and remote supervised learning experiences allows students flexibility as well as an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills directly in their communities. In addition to the 52 credit hours, students will be required to complete a minimum of 1106 hours of supervised experiential learning.

The College of Sciences also launched a Bachelor of Science in community engagement in August 2020. This program prepares students to become agents of positive change in their communities with a foundation based on theory, prevention and skill development to better meet the needs and challenges of today’s society. This includes careers in nonprofits and other human service organizations. The degree plan incorporates service learning opportunities from the local community and includes courses from Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration and social work department.

A third new graduate program, launching Spring 2022, is a Master of Education in Christian education leadership offered through Harding Online and the College of Education. This 30-credit program, the first of its kind nationwide, will prepare Christian school leaders to better serve and lead in their Christian and independent school communities. Offered 100% online, it will equip these school leaders with the knowledge of generational faith needs, financial and legal obligations, leadership effectiveness and cultural awareness.

PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY



David Hall, Andrew Baker, Mike Steelman, Logan Light and John Richard Duke

New places for familiar faces

THE SUMMER SAW continued changes in personnel as leaders transitioned into new roles and took on additional responsibilities.

Logan Light was named assistant dean of students with the oversight of social clubs July 8. This position was previously held by Kara Abston who remains an assistant dean of students but transitioned to become the new campus contact regarding chapel attendance. Light had served as director of campus life for almost 10 years.

Dr. John Richard Duke was appointed executive director of the American Studies Institute Aug. 1. In addition to his education as a historian, he brings experience from six years of teaching in the Transnational American Studies program at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany, which broadened his perspective on how people around the world view America. A faculty member since 2014, Duke will continue to teach as an associate professor in the history and political science department.

David Hall was named assistant vice president of enrollment services Aug. 4. He had been serving as the executive director of enrollment services since December 2020 and was instrumental

in the initiatives the department implemented during that time. He continues to serve as manager of the Harding University Bookstore and Heritage Inn.

Dr. Andrew Baker was named director of the Office of Community Connection and assistant to the president Aug. 17. The Office of Community Connection is focused on helping the Harding family better serve our neighbors in the community. As assistant to the president, he assists with the coordination of chapel and other special projects. Baker continues to oversee the Mitchell Center for Leadership and Ministry, Uplift and spring break missions.

Mike Steelman was appointed the inaugural director for the new accelerated Master of Architecture program Aug. 31. As principal architect with SCM Architects, a company he co-founded in 1985, Steelman designed the Farrar and Swaid Centers for Health Sciences, David B. Burks American Heritage Building and Ganus Activities Complex expansion among others. He also has been an adjunct in the architecture and design program for six years, creating practical learning opportunities as well as theoretical training for his students.



WHY HARDING Shane Ryan, a senior Bible and family ministry major, knew from a young age he wanted to serve. "Growing up, I would really get into sports for a period of time and then transition into playing video games before finding something else that interested me. Then I started to realize that I like God all the time. That didn't change. So why don't I make that my career? I knew I wanted to get into ministry, so I was definitely looking at schools that could provide me with Biblical education. Harding was one of the bigger schools that I had heard about, and there also were a lot of ministers I knew that had ties to Harding."

PERSPECTIVE From San Diego, a move to Searcy was difficult, but Ryan has found perspective. "It was a tough adjustment for me. Fitting in can be a hard thing to do when you don't think you have much in common with others. Your differences can really stick out, and that was hard at first. What made it work for me is going back and forth so much from Searcy to San Diego. Within my first year or two, I started to realize that the God I serve is God in Arkansas the same as he is God in California. My identity, my goal, my best friend is exactly the same here as it is when I'm back home."

HUMILITY In the summer of 2020, Ryan was surfing in LaJolla, California, when he witnessed a man fall from a cliff, screaming as he entered the water and in visible pain as he neared the reef. He immediately paddled over and brought the man to shore where he checked his vitals and coordinated a 911 call. This summer Ryan was honored with the Lifesaving Award Certificate of Merit, one of the highest awards given by the American Red Cross. "Since becoming certified, I feel more responsibility to be aware and to serve. Previously, I may have seen something happening and continued on or hesitated. Now with this 'badge' so to speak, it's my responsibility to act." Putting others before himself is just part of who Ryan is, as seen through his humility in receiving the award. "I was actually not too stoked to be recognized because it was just something that was my responsibility to do. I feel like I'm so undeserving of it." Shane became a certified lifeguard by taking Lifeguard Training at Harding and has worked as a lifeguard at the Ganus Activities Complex.

SERVICE Harding has helped Ryan determine what he wants to do after graduation, following a year of surfing, of course. "I want to go to grad school and earn a Master of Divinity degree and pursue ministry that would allow me to become a college professor. My major hasn't changed, but what I wanted to do with it has bounced all over the place. I think I've learned and realized what my skills are and what I'm equipped to do. I absolutely love learning about God, studying him and his Word. I love relating with people and walking alongside them. If I can fit all of this into a way to serve God, then sign me up." — Lane Gammel

LIFESAVING AWARD CERTIFICATE OF MERIT HONOREE
SHANE RYAN STRIVES TO SERVE

Everyday STUDENT



PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY

SEEN on SOCIAL MEDIA

The University paid tribute to Botham Jean by dedicating a memorial in front of the David B. Burks American Heritage building on the occasion of his 30th birthday, Sept. 29. Following are just a few of the many comments received on our Facebook posts (more coverage on page 18).

Leslie Townsend Wonderful way to honor Botham. Beautiful memorial.

Charley Cameron What a beautiful tribute to someone who means so much to so many!

Celia Belyn Your story has no end. RIP fellow Lucian.

Pauline Wolff Very touching. Happy birthday in heaven Botham!

Susan Pryor Hodges Wonderful tribute! And perfectly chosen honor for his brother!

Cindy Smelser Eason Thank you Harding! This is wonderful! I am blessed to have known Botham!!!

Carla Rogers Hester Perkins Loved Botham. What a precious soul he was. So thankful for the blessing of knowing him.

Cathy Gilpin Thank God for the resurrection! We will see each other again.

Amy Garlitz-Mathis We were in attendance today as they unveiled this memorial. It was touching to see how this University loves its alumni and families.



Kylie Flynn What a beautiful way to honor and memorialize a person who was a friend to all. There is no smile that lights up a room quite like his. Botham was my song leader while I was at Uplift. I'll never forget the love he had for Jesus! #BeLikeBo

EVENTS

JAN. 18

ASI Speaker TIM TEBOW

As part of the 2021-22 distinguished lecture series, Heisman Trophy winner and New York Times bestselling author Tim Tebow speaks about leadership, business and faith. harding.edu/asi

FEB. 11-12, 17-19

"Antigone"

The theatre department presents a classic Greek tragedy about pride and the downfall that follows, directed by Robin Miller, in the Ulrey Performing Arts Center. harding.edu/theatre

FEB. 14

Arts and Life Series

ROSA INCAICA WITH THE JAZZ BAND
Enjoy the Searcy debut of soprano and guitar duo, Rosa Incaica, celebrating music from around the world in a variety of styles and languages. Part of the annual Valentine's banquet and concert, they are joined by Andrew Cook and the Harding University Jazz Band. harding.edu/artsandlife

FEB. 18-20

Bloom Conference

Attendees of this year's women's conference will hear from keynote speakers Ann Brown, Tessa Davidson and Michelle Goff as they explore what it means to have transparent and authentic relationships with God and one another. harding.edu/bloom

MARCH 31

ASI Speaker DR. ARTHUR BROOKS

The American Studies Institute welcomes Harvard professor, bestselling author and The Atlantic columnist Dr. Arthur Brooks. harding.edu/asi

APRIL 14-16

Spring Sing Weekend

Join thousands returning to campus for Spring Sing 2022, "Moments," celebrating the many pivotal moments that make up our lives. Student performances will compete for cash donations to charities of their choice. harding.edu/springsing

BY THE NUMBERS

ALUMNI'S TOP LOCALES

21,387

ARKANSAS



9,493

TEXAS



6,678

TENNESSEE



2,545

MISSOURI



2,089

FLORIDA



OUTSIDE THE U.S.

323

CHINA

187

CANADA



MY VIEW JACK SHOCK

9/11 then and now

Distinguished Professor of Communication Jack Shock went to New York City 20 years ago to serve as a public affairs specialist at 9/11 and returned this fall to provide a real-life classroom experience.

IN THE 2002 WINTER ISSUE of this magazine, I wrote about my ground zero experiences working with the American Red Cross crisis communication team. My job was to help manage media requests immediately following the events of 9/11. My notes from that story



remind me we were balancing media questions about airstrikes in Afghanistan and anthrax attacks with providing care and comfort to the first responder heroes.

"One afternoon I managed to find an electrical closet where I could escape the chaos and use my cell phone to teach my class via speakerphone. I loved being able to share with my students what I was seeing and doing. The 1,200 miles that separated us evaporated as technology transported me back

to my classroom for 45 minutes. Their questions and eagerness to learn made me remember why I love being a teacher."

And suddenly it was 2021 and time to think about participating in the 20th anniversary 9/11 memorial experience. When I realized that many of my current students had not even been born in September 2001, I knew I had to involve them in some meaningful way. The department of communication, in partnership with the Honors College, took 11 students to New York City for the observance.

We spent hours in the 9/11 museum, and I watched students who were toddlers in 2001 dive into the ground zero story before debrief-

ing on the steps of Battery Park, discussing what we had just seen while the Statue of Liberty stood as a silent sentry just across the way. We knocked on the midtown door of Engine Company 54, and a student said, "I was not alive when you lost your friends. Can you tell me about it?" This company lost all 15 firefighters who responded to that early September morning call.

The captain opened the doors and told us we were the first visitors allowed inside in 18 months. Our campus newspaper reporter got an hour long interview with the captain, and the rest of us stood captivated in the presence of these heroes who told us about each of their friends who are now memorialized in bronze on the station wall. We saw the handwritten notes on the call board, detailing the truck positions for that shift. We saw their faces, and we read their names. None of them came back. None of us will ever forget our hour with Engine Company 54.

Even though I was in lower Manhattan on Thursday and Friday of a school week, again I didn't miss a Searcy campus class. This time, however, I wasn't confined to an electrical closet using a dying Blackberry and a speakerphone. By using Zoom and related digital technology, it was as if I were with them in the Reynolds Center, or, even better, they were with me on the New York City sidewalks. We had meaningful conversations about art, architecture and street protest, and we interviewed several New Yorkers about their memories of that fateful day.

My teaching maxim has always been "if the whole world is talking about it, we should be talking about it." If the whole world is there, we should be there. In the department of communication, we try never to miss a chance to pack a bag and chase the story.

When I think of the Septembers of 2001 and 2021, my most nostalgic memories are focused on sharing the experience with my students, helping them grow their skill sets, their confidence and compassion.

Now we're all back in the Reynolds Center, spending our days doing what we do in classrooms every day. We're using our September experiences to fuel our discussions and inspire our future. One day the phone will ring again, and we'll be ready. 📞

TOP PHOTO: BRYAN DICKSON; METER; BOTTOM PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY



NEWSMAKERS

ATHLETICS

Ashley Reeves was named head softball coach in June 2021. Reeves previously served as the head coach at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado.

ALPHA CHI

John Lim, interdisciplinary studies graduate, and Pedro Navarrete, computer science graduate, received awards as top presenters in their field at the 2021 National Alpha Chi Convention held virtually in April. Lim received the Clark Youngblood Prize in Philosophy and World Religions with his presentation titled "Hybridized Spirituality in Singaporean Christians." Navarrete was awarded the Floyd Tesmer/Strayer University Prize in Computer Science and Engineering for his presentation "Comparative Study: MongoDB vs. Elasticsearch."

BRACKETT LIBRARY

Amelia Brister was appointed public services librarian in September. She previously served as the information services assistant.

CAREER SERVICES

Jacob Farr joined the team in August as the new assistant director for career services and employer engagement. He previously was a youth minister and a rehabilitation therapist.

Lara Lauterbach was named assistant director of career and vocational exploration in August. She previously served as the assistant director of career development at Lyon College.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Dr. Paul Haynie, history professor emeritus, had an article featured in a special edition of the Arkansas Historical Quarterly highlighting best articles about the history of the University of Arkansas. His article is titled "Religion and Morals at the University of Arkansas."

Dr. Jim Miller, associate professor of communication, was appointed to the Christian Chronicle Journalism Advisory Council in August 2021.

COLLEGE OF BIBLE AND MINISTRY

Dr. Allen Diles, professor of bible and church history, published a book in July 2021. His book is titled *Let Truth Prevail: An Introduction to European Christian Renewal Movements*.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The college received a 10-year reaffirmation of their accreditation with the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs in May 2021.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dr. Susan Grogan, associate professor of education, published a book in August 2021. Her book is titled *Help Them Learn With Their Strengths: Case Studies of Students with Dyslexia*.

Dr. Carol Douglass, professor and director of special education, has been chosen to serve on the panel for the Grades K-6, 7-12 Special Education Resource Competencies with the Arkansas Department of Education.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

The 2020-21 University Baja team with members Bret Bishop, Lee DenBraber, Gabriella Fields, Ryan Hankins, Zach Marcotte-Charette, Colton Mercer, Jason Owens, Caleb Payne, Alberto Quiniero, James Rosenthal, Shelby Smith, Gray Sutherland, Logan Thomas and Bryan Wornock was awarded fourth place overall and first place in the four-hour endurance race during the Baja SAE competition in Tucson, Arizona, in May 2021.

HONORS COLLEGE

Mary Grace Golden, a double major in public administration and communication studies, and Alicen Wilcox, a biochemistry and molecular biology major, are the first recipients of the Trey Carlock Rising Scholar Award. The award was announced at the inaugural Harding University Undergraduate Research Conference in April 2021. The recipients receive a grant of \$1,300 to present their research at a major academic conference.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Craig Russell, director of public safety, was named to the North American Regional Board of ASIS International in August 2021. In January he will begin serving as secretary/treasurer.



Restaurant to open in Legacy Park

A NEW FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANT is under construction in Legacy Park. Warehouse 4, originally founded in 2013 in Vandalia, Ohio, will serve a variety of house-made baked goods, artisan hot and cold deli-style sandwiches, savory soups, fresh salads, crafted espresso drinks and rotating coffee and tea selections.

Warehouse 4 CEO and 2005 alumnus Ben Neely said the name was chosen based on the original location's history as a warehouse for airplane parts. The four refers to the four daughters of the original owner. Since 2013, the restaurant has grown to open another location in Kettering, Ohio, and now, Searcy.

"Since opening its doors in 2013, Warehouse 4 has striven to provide its customers with an inviting, community-oriented gathering space," said Neely. "The shop's spacious, industrial aesthetic is warmed by compassionate staff focused on pouring happiness with every cup."

Neely said the initial plan for the company was to focus on three things — expanding the business, having a drive-thru at every location and providing a community focus at each restaurant.

"We strive to have a coffee shop/cafe with a great product, but we also strive to have a community focus wherever each shop is located. We plan to do this, in part, by using local vendors to provide all of our produce and other goods."

The restaurant is expected to open in January 2022. Neely said they will begin promoting a schedule of events around Harding and Searcy leading up to the grand opening.

"The Searcy location is the largest space we will have for inside dining out of all of our three locations, which gives us a lot of options for events, rental space, business meetings, music events and more," Neely said.

"Whether you're in need of a caffeinated escape, a calm environment to study or a place to converse with friends, our mission is to provide you with a personal oasis."

PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY

'Loving the STRANGER in your midst'

With only two days from challenge to finish, the student body overwhelmingly responds in chapel Sept. 9 to the Student Association's request and provides more than 100 containers of supplies for families from Afghanistan as they resettle.



The road to 10 all-sports trophies

By SCOTT GOODE, assistant athletic director for sports information

EVERYTHING ABOUT the 2020-21 school year was unusual, including athletics. Harding had 17 of its 18 teams in action, but all of the teams played only in the spring semester. When the dust settled, the University won its third all-sports trophy (the Great American Conference calls it the Commissioner's Cup) of the last four awarded by the conference. It was Harding's 10th all-sports trophy and was capped off by track and field's Matt Hipshire winning the GAC's Scholar-Athlete of the Year Award.

In addition to three in the GAC, Harding also won the 2011 Gulf South Conference men's all-sports trophy as members of NCAA Division II. Harding also won six all-sports trophies as members of the NAIA Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference. Four of those came in consecutive seasons from 1990-93, another came in 1981, and the first came back in 1976, a year that also saw a Bison win the conference's scholar-athlete award.

Harding's first season in the AIC was 1957-58, and the conference began awarding an all-sports trophy in 1963-64.

For the first 12 years, the AIC all-sports trophy went home with either the University of Central Arkansas or Southern Arkansas University.

Finally, in 1976, Harding snapped the streak. The Bisons finished with 76 points, topping second-place Ouachita Baptist at 71 points and third-place Southern Arkansas at 65 points.

In the 1975-76 season, the AIC sponsored nine sports: football, cross-country, basketball, swimming, bowling, baseball, track and field, tennis and golf.

The Bisons won the conference championship in four of them, taking titles in cross-country, swimming, bowling and tennis.

Harding placed four runners in the top 10 to claim the cross-country championship by 19 points over Ouachita Baptist. Marshall Grate, a native of Waterloo, Indiana, and a four-time First Team All-AIC performer had his highest career finish in the AIC meet, placing second in 25 minutes, 51 seconds. Grate

earned the 1978 Berryhill Award as Harding's top senior athlete and the 1978 AIC Cliff Shaw Scholar-Athlete Award as the top student athlete in the conference.

Kent Johnson (sixth), Mark Galeazzi (eighth) and Phil Hostetler (10th) all placed in the top 10 and helped the team win the fifth of 19 consecutive AIC cross-country championships.

"It's always great to win an AIC title, no matter how many times you've won it," head coach Ted Lloyd said in an interview with the student newspaper after winning the championship. "We had the leadership from our front runners all season and always seemed to have the depth when we needed it."

The next title came in the pool, where Harding won the swimming and diving champion-

ship, snapping a streak of 12 straight conference titles by Hendrix. Harding had 136.5 points with Hendrix second at 87.5 points. Harding won seven of the 12 events with Norman Kahla winning the 100-yard freestyle (52.7), 200-yard freestyle (1:56.8) and the 500-yard freestyle (5:33.7).

Kahla, a freshman, came to Harding from Deer Park, Texas, where he set the school record in the 200-yard individual medley. He also was the captain of his high school's water polo team and president of the Deer Park High School orchestra.

The 1976 triumph, under head coach Arnold Pylkas, was Harding's only conference championship in swimming. The University canceled the swimming program in 1988.

"We had just a superb effort from our entire

team. The majority of our boys outswam themselves, with most setting personal records," Pylkas told the student paper at the time. "Norman [was] as versatile a swimmer [as] I have seen in a long time. The fact that he set a school record nearly every time he swam attests to that."

Although it was not one of Harding's four national championship seasons in bowling which discontinued in 1980, the Bison keglers won their 11th AIC championship over a 12-year period. The Bisons had the top six bowlers in the conference, including individual champion and Harding Hall of Famer Zearl Watson. Steve Klaske was second, and Tim Bauer third. Harding placed fourth nationally in Kansas City. Watson led the team with a seventh-place individual finish. A year earlier, Watson was the doubles national champion with Gary Beck.

"Everyone worked hard to win this championship," Watson said at the time. "We had an extremely good effort."

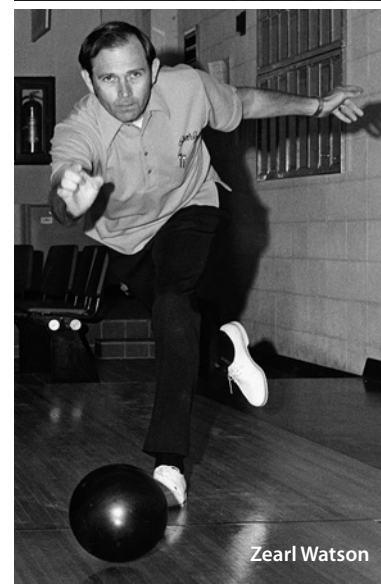
Harding closed out the season by winning the tennis championship. It was Harding's first AIC tennis title since 1970. The Bisons next won in 1981. Harding had 29 points to second-place Ouachita's 23 points, winning two of the six singles slots and two of the three doubles lines. Charles Ganus was the Division IV singles champion. Ross Cochran was the Division V singles champion. Kyle Asbill and Tim Oldham won Division II doubles. Ross Cochran and Charles Ganus won Division III doubles.

"Our team did not have any superstars," Ganus remembered, "but we had a lot of depth and were able to beat people up and down the lineup."

Harding's football team that season placed fifth in the conference but laid the groundwork for a conference championship the following season. The basketball team placed fourth in the AIC standings with Butch Gardner leading the conference in scoring at 23.2 points per game. The Bisons were fourth at the AIC track meet with Steve Celsor setting a new conference record of 6 feet, 10 inches in the high jump. The Harding baseball team was fifth with Ordis Copeland hitting .394 to place second in the conference. The golf squad was fourth, led



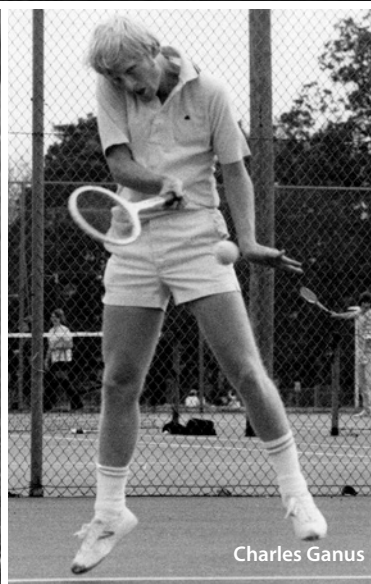
Norman Kahla



Zearl Watson



Marshall Grate



Charles Ganus

HARDING SPORTS ARCHIVES PHOTOS

PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY

For the latest sports information, visit hardingsports.com.

FOOTBALL RECORDS BY THE NUMBERS



During the Bisons 49-10 victory over Southern Nazarene Oct. 9, senior fullback Cole Chancey becomes Harding's career rushing leader, breaking the mark of 4,214 yards held by the late Alan "Snake" Dixon since 1973. Dixon's widow, Belinda, and son, Jad, are presented with a football by Coach Simmons during a brief ceremony at halftime to honor Dixon and Chancey.

284 Rushing yards by Bison Hall of Famer Joe David Smith in a 25-15 win over Arkansas-Monticello in 1975, the school record for a single game.

529 Passing yards thrown by David Knighton when he shredded Arkansas Tech with seven touchdowns in a 62-55 victory in 2007, becoming only the second Harding quarterback to pass for more than 500 yards in a game.

224 Yardage hauled in by Gerald Payne with 13 receptions and two touchdowns at NCAA Division I opponent Tennessee Tech in 2000. He is the only Bison receiver to have two games with more than 200 receiving yards.

-27 The number of rushing yards by West Georgia in 30 attempts during a Harding 13-0 road victory in 2002. The Bison defense sacked the Braves seven times.

9 The most touchdowns the Bisons have rushed for in a game, happening four times with three of those coming in the 2015 season. In fact, the team rushed for nine touchdowns in back-to-back games against Southeastern Oklahoma on Oct. 17, 2015, and East Central on Oct. 24, 2015.

10 The most Harding touchdowns in a game, occurring six times, the first in a 64-0 victory over Jonesboro Baptist on Oct. 26, 1928, and the most recent in a 70-42 victory over Southern Arkansas in 2015.

by Jeff Price, who placed fifth at the AIC meet.

Each year the AIC gave out the Cliff Shaw Scholar-Athlete Award. The 1976 winner was Bison Ken Neller, a four-year letterman in football. He compiled a 3.992 grade-point average on the 161 undergraduate hours he had completed and graduated with double majors in Bible and history. He ranked second in a class

of 604 and made A's in every course except for a B in golf and bowling.

President Clifton L. Ganus received the 1976 AIC All-Sports Trophy from LeRoy Nix, the AIC commissioner, at 1976 graduation ceremonies.

Forty-five years later, after a strange but successful season, we celebrate the 10th all-sports title. 🏆

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Speech-Language Pathology graduate clinical practicum in Zambia provides participants with more than experience as they learn to see God work in new ways

By MELANIE MEEKER, communication sciences and disorders chair



BACK ROW: Meredith Lowry and Tim Chance.
FRONT ROW: Jaime Walker, Melanie Meeker, Kaulyn Loe, Audrey Vesperman, Libby Swindle, Danielle Gibbs and Ashley Whaley

I THINK ABOUT AFRICA EVERY DAY.

Sometimes I check the weather there to see if it's raining in Zambia. I have come to care deeply about whether the crops are growing on the other side of the planet. I've closely followed their recent presidential elections and often check my currency conversion app to see if the kwacha is gaining strength. Often, I receive a message from one of the Aunties at the Haven, telling me about the growth and progress of a baby I have come to love. Almost daily I receive a message from Justin, the coach of a recreational soccer team, checking on me and wanting to know how I am doing. My skin is as white as it can be, but Zambia is under my skin and in my blood. I have brothers and sisters on the other side of the world. You do too, but you may not know them.

PHOTO BY DANIELLE GIBBS

THE SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY PROGRAM at Harding has had a presence in Zambia, Africa, since summer 2008. Drs. Dan Tullios and Beckie Weaver led an exploratory trip to determine whether developing a clinical practicum experience for students earning their master's in this new graduate program was feasible and possible. The answer was a resounding "yes!," and the first group of graduate students and faculty spent six weeks there in summer 2009. Except for 2015 and 2020 — when prevented by Ebola and COVID-19 respectively — we've been there every summer since.

The speech-language pathology profession is virtually nonexistent in much of Africa. We have approximately 2800 SLPs in the state of Arkansas. In contrast, we know of only a handful of SLPs in the nation of Zambia, a country roughly the size of Texas. Imagine individuals who have had a stroke, children with cleft lip or palate, those with cerebral palsy or Down syndrome having virtually no access to the professionals who could help them talk, learn and eat. You don't have to look far to find places to make a difference.

Much of our clinical work is done at a place called the Haven, a transitional home for babies and young children whose families are unable to care for them. Often these babies have lost their mothers, and there is no way for them to eat. Infant formula is prohibitively expensive in Zambia, and even if it were easily available, the lack of consistent clean water is a barrier to using it. The Haven is a place for these children to be cared for and loved until their families are able to welcome them back home — often by age 2 or 3. Some of these babies experienced a traumatic birth; prenatal care there is nothing like what we have in the U.S. Our graduate students provide feeding therapy, language therapy and other support to help them develop good communication and eating skills.

I gave my client the tools she needed to create speech, and she took that and my modeling and shaping and ran with it. Watching her grow and develop before my eyes was incredible, encouraging and such a gift. Her progress makes me excited to watch my future clients grow and thrive.

• AUDREY VESPERMAN, CLASS OF 2023

We quickly became friends with our Christian sisters who take good care of these little ones. These "Aunties" teach us to make nshima (pronounced shee-ma), the staple of the local diet, over an open fire in an outdoor kitchen. They teach us to use cloth diapers and expand our vocabulary of words and phrases in Tonga, the local language. They welcome our students into their homes for a weekend, which is a highlight of the trip for many. The most important teaching they do, however, is teaching the babies about Jesus. Any toddler at the Haven can recite "the truth:"

God is good.
Nothing is impossible.
Jesus already won.
Everyone is important.
I am God's treasure.
I am the one Jesus loves.

In addition to working at the Haven, we've also begun providing therapy services to a group of babies at the local physical therapy clinic. Those babies were coming to therapy to learn skills like sitting up and standing, but we quickly noticed they needed skills such as making eye contact and babbling sounds and moving their tongues and mouths properly to support eating new foods. We started doing therapy with these babies, and before we knew it, we were seeing a group of 4-5 babies three times each week. In the short time we were there, we watched them start to make new sounds, begin to smile

and eat new foods like bananas and avocados. Most importantly, we were able to teach the babies' mothers and the local physical therapists how to continue developing these skills after we were gone.

You may remember the story in the Gospel of John describing an encounter that Jesus and his disciples had with a man born blind. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" John 9:2. The idea that children are born with disabilities as a result of sin is alive and well in African culture. Partially as a result of this mindset, these children rarely have access to the services that benefit American children. Simon's School is one of just a few schools in the region to offer special education services to these little ones. This school realizes the dream of Meagan Hawley, an American missionary serving at the Haven through Zambia Mission Fund. The school is named in honor of a sweet boy whom we grew to love in 2019. Simon's life on this earth was too short to allow him time to attend the school, but we were thrilled to see it open and watch the first two little girls in their darling



school uniforms enter its doors this summer. Children in this region who have special educational, mobility or communication needs now have an opportunity to attend school and reach their full potential — what a blessing to witness! Growing our partnership with and supporting the work of the teachers at Simon’s School will be an emerging focus of our future work.

Local people in need of healthcare flock to the Namwianga Mission Hospital. By our standards, these professionals have a limited pharmacy, no blood bank or ambulance, and the X-ray machine has been broken for two years. Yet what they have in abundance is creativity, compassion and conviction. So often in Jesus’ ministry we see him attending to the physical needs of those he meets before addressing their spiritual needs. We saw this same model in action at the Namwianga Hospital and see our program fostering greater involvement with the hospital in coming years, especially with stroke survivors.

Our group lodges at the beautiful Namwianga Mission where we enjoy the hospitality of our Zambian friends. Andrew, Leonard and Harold prepare our meals. We enjoy American favorites such as chicken spaghetti, hamburgers and pancakes. The HIZ-Path trip is not a diet! Every Thursday at lunch we have nshima, complete with the local accompaniments. One of our favorite evenings is spent at a huge granite slab nearby called Jordan’s Rock. We roast hot dogs and marshmallows and enjoy ice cold Cokes from glass bottles. We are always joined by some children from a local village who come to see the white visitors (mwakua). Treating them to their first marshmallows is lots of fun. You’ve probably never seen the stars like you can in sub-Saharan Africa. I’d never seen the Milky Way (other than in a textbook) before going to Zambia. We probably witnessed a dozen shooting stars during a half hour of stargazing at Jordan’s Rock.

In addition to the wonders of the heavens, we also have the opportunity to marvel at the wonders of the Earth. One of the Seven Wonders of the Natural World is Victoria Falls in nearby Livingstone. The entire volume of the Zambezi River plunges 33 stories in a single sheet of water, resulting in a mist that feels more like a blinding spring thundershower. If you’ve seen Niagara Falls,

you have some context for the magnitude of Victoria Falls, which is roughly twice as tall and twice as wide as Niagara. Viewing the mist of the falls by the light of a full moon results in a spectacular sight called the “moonbow.” The locals call the Falls Mosi-oa-Tunya, which means The Smoke that Thunders. The name is apt, for sure.

God must delight in his creation and the pleasure that it brings us. While in Zambia, our students are able to get close to some amazing wildlife. They ride elephants, take a leopard for a walk and pet lions. During High Tea at the Royal Livingstone Hotel, they just might see a zebra or giraffe amble by while they enjoy tea and scones on the veranda. If they’re brave (and in good shape) they can hike down to the bottom of Victoria Falls. Some slightly aggressive baboons guard the steep stone steps descending to the bank of the rolling river, a place known as the Boiling Pot. Our safari day brings us close to crocodiles snoozing in the sun, hippo families bathing in the river or a pride of lions napping under an acacia tree. It’s an amazing experience to find yourself in the middle of 100

— MAKING A — DIFFERENCE

elephants heading to the river for a drink.

As stunning as Africa is in wildlife and scenery, if you ask any HIZ-Path alumni about their favorite part of the trip, they’ll talk about the people that they met.

The Zambian people and culture are so beautiful, relational and strong. They have so little, and yet their love for God, who is their strength and portion, is beyond anything I have seen. They reminded me of the gift it is to worship God, our savior, protector and provider. My kids at the Haven showed me the power of growth and how just a little nudge from someone can spark incredible progress in development. The people I met there showed me that great strength and joy can be found in the darkest of circumstances. My worldview has been changed by this work.

· AUDREY VESPERMAN

I love to worship with the Zambian Christians. When my Southern American voice joins with theirs in worship of the one Jehovah God, I am moved to tears every time. In Revelation 7:9 John describes worship in Heaven. “There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” Worship in Zambia gives me a glimpse of Heaven. I am blessed by the patient kindness of the Aunties who sit with us on their veranda and patiently correct our pronunciation as they tenderly teach us the most simple of children’s songs in the local language. Whether learning

“Jesus Loves Me” in Tonga or listening to the Zambians praising God with their powerful voices, worshipping with Christians there touches me deeply.

I have been so impressed by the impact the HIZ-Path program has had on the Namwianga Mission community in Zambia. Through practical application lessons and diagnostic skills, the CSD students and faculty have passed along invaluable, usable knowledge. These lessons are being implemented by the Zambians on a daily basis at the Haven as well as in other areas of the mission. Whether simple or more complex, this information has had a lasting influence for good. The HIZ-Path program has made a difference in the lives of those they have served in Zambia.

· DIANNE MYHAN, HIZ FACULTY MEMBER

It is the deepest desire of the HIZ-Path program that we contribute in meaningful ways to these people whom we have come to dearly love. Whether teaching language enrichment lessons, improving bottle feeding skills, lecturing at the local college or supporting their economy with serious souvenir shopping, we hope our presence there is a blessing. As we leave each year, however, we know that we are truly the ones who have been blessed beyond measure and changed in deep, soul-penetrating ways. We’ve experienced the grace, generosity, humor and industriousness of these wonderful people. They’ve taught us to see our God in different ways, and we are better because of it. 🙏



Audrey Vesperman engages an infant in early language development at the Haven.



The Speech-Language Pathology group visits Victoria Falls.



Ashley Whaley works with a young girl struggling to make speech sounds correctly who has difficulty communicating in social and academic settings.

CELEBRATING BOTHAM JEAN'S LEGACY of LOVE

By HAILEY PRUITT, photography by JEFF MONTGOMERY

THE DATE SELECTED FOR THE MEMORIAL dedicated in honor of the life of Botham Jean was appropriately chosen — it would have been his 30th birthday. Students, faculty, family and friends gathered Sept. 29 to commemorate this special occasion by sharing memories. The Good News Singers, of which Jean had been a member, began the program in song. Members of the social club Sub T-16 were seated in a special reserved section, all wearing club jerseys in honor of their brother.

The memorial, designed by Mike Steelman of SMC Architects and inaugural director of the Master of Architecture program, stands outside the David B. Burks American Heritage Building and includes a bronze plaque with Jean's likeness and a short description of his life and legacy. There also are benches on each side inviting anyone passing by to sit for a while and remember his impact. Dr. David Burks says he imagines this becoming a favorite location for "pictures to be taken and memories to be shared."

"#Be Like Bo," the popular hashtag on social media, seems appropriate to many who knew him. Todd Gentry, College Church of Christ campus minister, says, "Botham loved Jesus and followed him to the best of his ability." To follow in his footsteps is to be a disciple of Christ. Gentry described Jean's passion for any activity he chose to be involved in, saying that it often began hesitantly, but once committed, he was all in. No matter what group or activity he participated in, Gentry said, "he was into people." Many friends would consult Jean in times of conflict or stress. His common response was to quote James 5:13 — "Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise" — and then begin singing. His powerful voice cheered many loved ones.

Allison Jean, Botham's mother, recalls Dr. Clifton L. Ganus Jr.'s visit to St. Lucia in 2010 for the annual Caribbean Lectureship. After Ganus shared what the University had to offer, Jean was committed to Harding and couldn't be persuaded to consider any other school. When the Jean family visited campus in April 2011, Botham left his mother sitting at the fountain and talked to everyone he saw as if he already belonged here. Allison Jean says, "when I saw the sparkle and

excitement in his eyes, I knew I couldn't disappoint him." By the time he graduated in 2016, he had become a Harding ambassador, just like Dr. Ganus.

A surprise addition to the dedication program, the first annual Botham Jean Inspiration Award was presented to his brother, Brandt Jean. This award will be presented as part of the Homecoming celebration each year to a member of the Harding community who has demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity and inspired others to be ambassadors for Christ.

ALSO SEATED IN THE AUDIENCE were the four recipients of the Botham Jean Business Scholarship awarded by Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers, Jean's employer. This scholarship is given to members of underrepresented populations pursuing degrees within the College of Business. Trisha Magadu, a junior from Norton, Zimbabwe; Trinity Bolden, a sophomore from Searcy; Rollansky Darote, a junior from North Miami, Florida; and Brittany Tate, a senior from San Diego, are all studying accounting and will continue to receive the scholarship through their graduations.

Botham's family and friends continue to grieve his tragic death but not as those with no hope. As Dr. Bruce McLarty, fifth president of Harding, and the Good News Singers reminded those gathered for the memorial dedication, Jesus Christ, the living hope, is Botham's Lord and Savior.

"After his sprint of only 26 years, he finished his race in record time," said Allison Jean. He leaves behind a legacy of loving Jesus and his people. "#BeLikeBo is more than a hashtag. It's a challenge to live ambitious lives of empathy, integrity and compassion." 🙏



Todd Gentry



Bertram, Brandt and Allison Jean and Allisa Charles-Findley



Allison Jean



The Good News Singers



Sub T-16 men's social club



Allison and Brandt Jean

REUNITED

and it felt so good

By TOM BUTERBAUGH

Photography by JEFF MONTGOMERY

and MADISON MEYER

Homecoming 2021 brought a spirited fellowship to campus. Alumni returned to partake in more than 100 events, including the Heritage Circle Banquet Thursday evening, the Black & Gold Banquet Friday evening, the parade Saturday morning, a whopping 64-7 victory by the football team Saturday afternoon following a huge tailgate with several food trucks, the magical musical “Elf” Friday and Saturday evenings, and the Sankofa Gala Saturday evening.

The highlight of the weekend was the dedication of the Anthony and Wright Administration Building Saturday morning along with three monuments honoring the seven African American alumni who were trailblazers on the path of integration. Families and friends of J.C. Lewis Brown, Walter Cunningham, David Johnson, Thelma Fae Smith, Curtis Sykes, Elijah Anthony and Howard Wright joyfully participated in the moving ceremony.

Bro. Anthony said in his response, “See what the Lord has done.” Dr. Wright expressed it as “a bridge over a racial divide displaying unity, progress and love.”

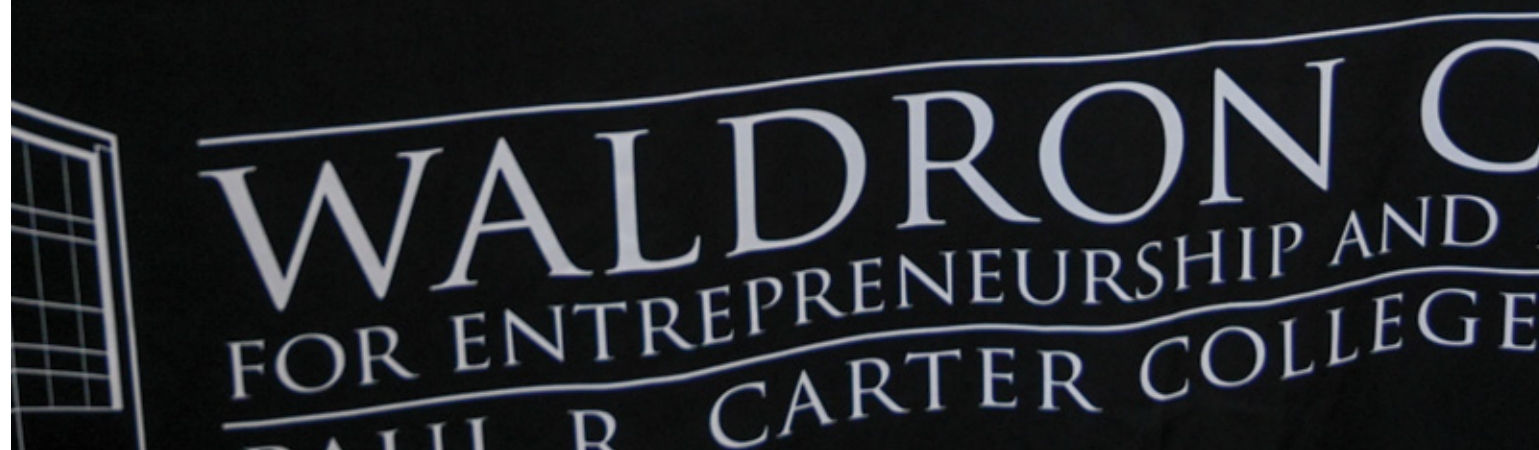
Reuniting never felt so good.

Before giving their remarks, Dr. Howard Wright and Bro. Elijah Anthony congratulate each other during the dedication ceremony of the Administration Building named in their honor.

REUNITED
and it felt so good



Their faces reflect the joy found in giving as David and Betsy Waldron endow the Waldron Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Business chair in the ceremony held Friday afternoon of Homecoming week by the Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration.



Iota Chi members ride down Park Avenue in the Homecoming parade.



Escorted by her father, Deanna Hutson, representing Delta Gamma Rho, happily reacts to her pronouncement as the 2021 Homecoming Queen at halftime festivities.

2021



Reciting a poem she wrote for the occasion, Abby Stone addresses the crowd gathered in Cone Chapel for the Sankofa Gala, a celebration of the pioneers who paved the way for integration and diversity at Harding.



Dr. Cliff Ganus directs the Alumni Chorus in the McInteer rotunda Saturday morning. The event honored Ganus on his recent retirement.



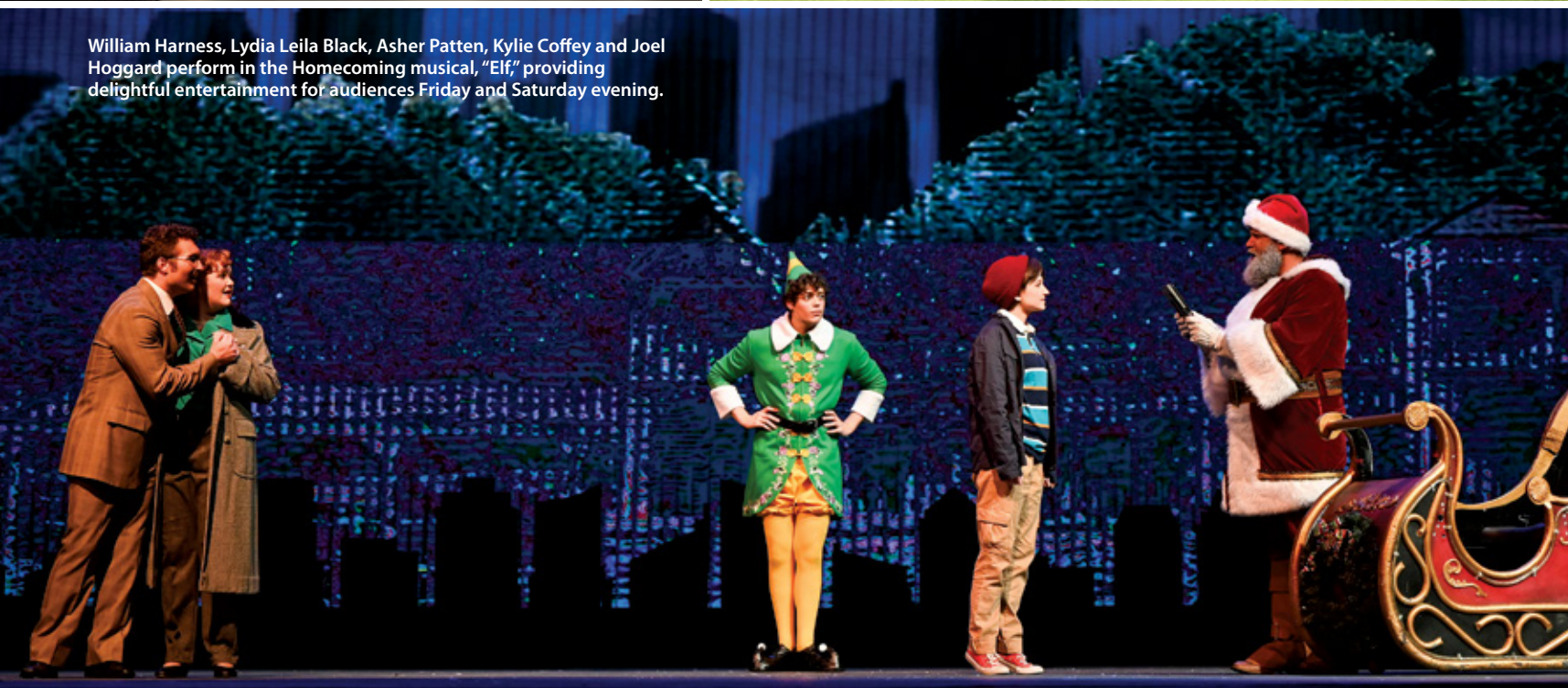
Bretton Brown, the son of J.C. Lewis Brown, one of the first three African American undergraduate students to attend Harding in 1963, looks over the program before the dedication ceremony. Brown and the other two students, Walter Cunningham and David Johnson, were awarded honorary degrees at the ceremony Saturday morning.



Latonya Brown, the daughter of J.C. Lewis Brown, Cortney Bradley Akins and Khim Owens Baggett pose with the plaque and honorary diploma awarded to Brown.



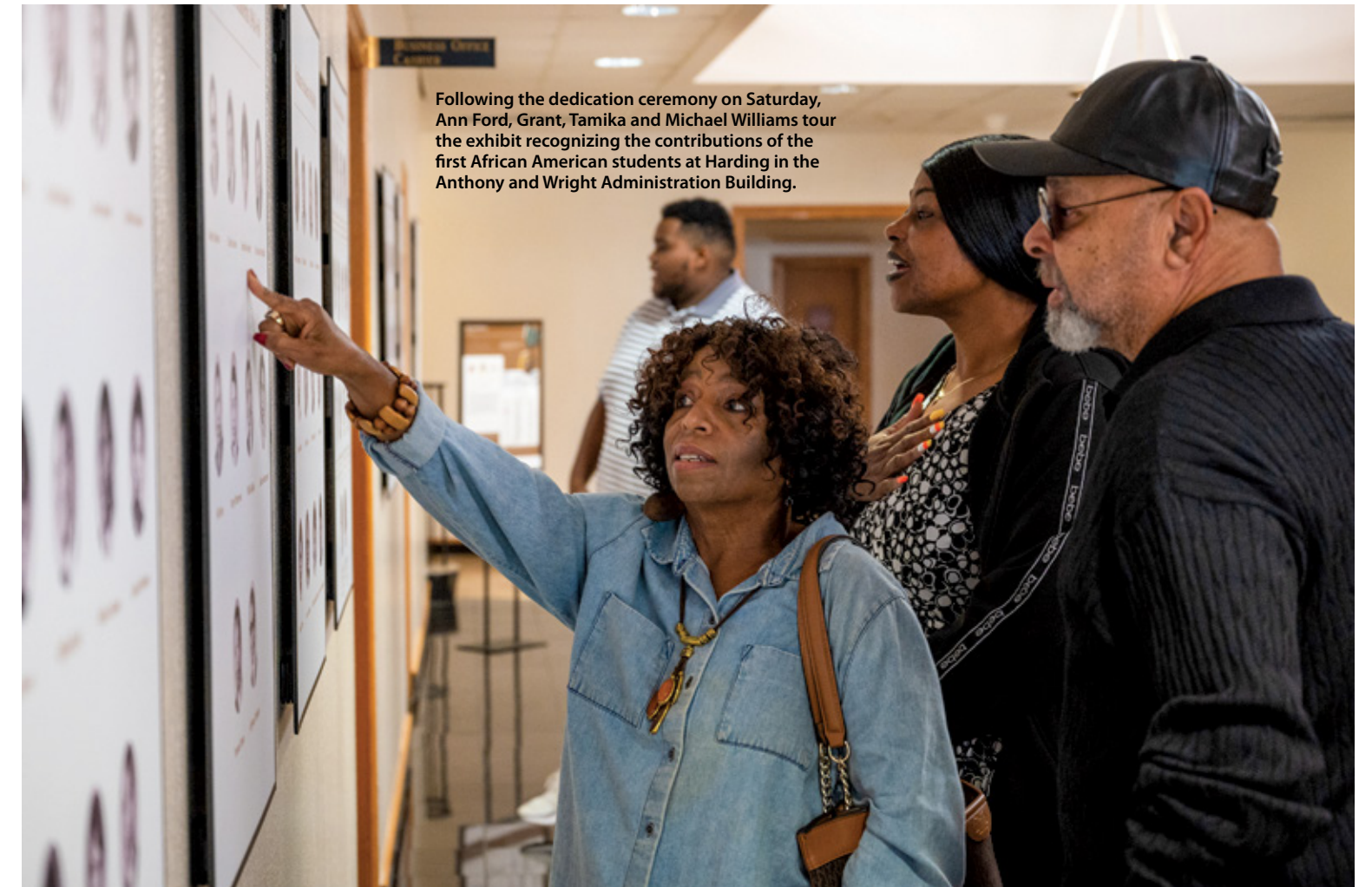
Running back Blake Delacruz gains yardage during the Bisons 64-7 victory over University of Arkansas at Monticello.



William Harness, Lydia Leila Black, Asher Patten, Kylie Coffey and Joel Hoggard perform in the Homecoming musical, "Elf," providing delightful entertainment for audiences Friday and Saturday evening.

REUNITED

and it felt so good



Following the dedication ceremony on Saturday, Ann Ford, Grant, Tamika and Michael Williams tour the exhibit recognizing the contributions of the first African American students at Harding in the Anthony and Wright Administration Building.



Corn hole is a popular activity at the tailgate before the football game.



Connections



Send us your news! Let us know about your wedding, a birth, job change, promotion, award, retirement, etc. Email your items to alumninews@harding.edu or write Harding University, Office of Alumni Relations, Box 10768, Searcy, AR 72149-5615.

1975

Tim Bixler is executive director of Delta Center Stage, a community theatre in Greenville, Mississippi. He has held the position since 2002. His wife, **Sonya Edens**, retired after being a drama teacher at Washington School in Greenville for 33 years. She is a published author in the realm of technical theatre with costuming and has been named Best Actress at the Southeastern Theatre Conference regional festival three times.

1981

Michelle Repchak Bacon was named Summit Christian Academy's 2021 Teacher of the Year. A fifth grade teacher, she joined the SCA faculty in Lee's Summit, Missouri, in 2000. She and her husband, **Dennis** ('80), have two children, **Nathan** ('13) and **Rachel** ('18).

1987

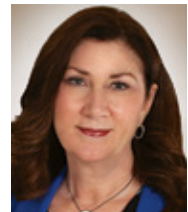
Stan Little moved to Mountain Home, Arkansas, in 2020 and began a wood carving business, Ozark Antler Creations. Some of his designs are painted by his wife, Cheryl. He preached in Arkansas, Missouri and Wisconsin before finally settling at the Farmington, Kentucky, Church of Christ from 2012-20. As a preacher, he spent time working with food banks and women's shelters and traveled the world including ministry missions to South America, Africa and the United Kingdom.

1988

Joel Reed, executive vice president and general counsel for Stanley Martin Homes in Reston, Virginia, was named to the Christian Chronicle's board of trustees. He earned a law degree from Duke University and has served as chair of Missions Resource Network's board of trustees. His wife, **Lori Adams** ('18), writes curriculum for Ethos, an online program of Greater Atlanta Christian School. They worship with Fairfax Church of Christ in Virginia.

1989

Nancy Averwater has assumed the role of Baptist Memorial's senior vice president and is continuing as chief human resources officer. She is developing and implementing the Baptist Center for Career Development. She began her Baptist career in 1993 and served in several clinical and operational leadership positions before assuming her current role.



1990

Brian Martin was named director of the Cultural Resource Center at Anderson University. He has served at Anderson since 2014 as an admissions counselor and previously served as development officer. He is married to **Heidi Nelson** ('91).

1992

Peter Phillis was hired by the city of Allen, Texas to lead their finance department. He most recently held the position of finance director for the city of Cedar Hill, Texas, after spending 20 years in the city of Mansfield, Texas, as deputy city manager and CFO. Prior to his government service, he worked in the private sector as a CFO and controller for Crouzet Corp., a senior manager at Waters and Murray CPAs, and a senior auditor at Arthur Andersen. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association and Government Finance Officers Association. He is married to **Kerry Dunn** ('93).

1994

Jeff T. Goodson has joined the law firm of Batson Nolan PLC in Clarksville, Tennessee. He obtained his law degree from the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law in 2004. He previously was deputy city attorney for the city of Clarksville. In 2020, his peers elected him president of Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Association, a position he occupied from July 2020 until May 2021. He had previously served as TMAA's vice president and treasurer. He is a published legal author and helped make new law in Tennessee before the Tennessee Supreme Court.

1996

Danilo Amoretty was named Carhartt's senior vice president of global product supply and operations. He joined Carhartt in March 2018 as vice president of supply chain operations. He previously served as director of sourcing Americas at VF Corp. and vice president of sourcing for Fruit of the Loom Inc. He earned his MBA from Western Kentucky University. He is fluent in English, Spanish and Portuguese and is certified as a Six Sigma Black Belt. He is married to **Lyn Keneipp**.

Kevin Burton has been named administrator of the new Unity Health-Jacksonville (Arkansas) hospital. He joined Unity in 2005 and previously served as the hospital system's director of patient financial services. He and his wife, **Kelley Spurlock** ('95), have two children.

Courtney Christian is the new principal of Hector

P. Garcia Elementary School in Temple, Texas. She earned a master's degree from University of Texas at Tyler in 2012 and previously served as an assistant principal at Sparta Elementary.

Beth Spurlock Pesnell received her doctorate in curriculum and instruction from University of Arkansas. She is assistant professor of elementary science, mathematics and STEM education in the College of Education at Kansas State University.

1997

Shane Jackson, president of Jackson Healthcare since 2014, received the Jerry Noyce Executive Health Champion Award from the Health Enhancement Research Organization for his contributions advancing employee health and well-being. He also received the Atlanta Business Chronicle's Corporate Citizenship Award in 2020. Previously the president of LocumTenens.com, Patient Placement Systems and NextStart Capital, he is a speaker on the conference circuit and frequently writes on the topic of intentionally nurturing a values-based culture. In 2018, he published *Fostering Culture: A Leader's Guide to Purposely Shaping Culture*, chronicling his philosophy on workplace culture. During the past four years, he has been recognized on Staffing Industry Analysts' Staffing 100. He serves on the boards of Junior Achievement of Georgia, 3DE and King's Ridge Christian School. He also is of the Health and Wellness Policy Committee for the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and vice chair of the leader-led goBeyondProfit business initiative. He earned his MBA from Emory University. He and his wife, **Celeste Walker**, have three children.

1998

Andrew L. Cooper is president and founder of Cooper Eagle LLC. He previously worked at Vanguard for more than 20 years. He earned an MBA at Villanova University and obtained his CFP certification in 2021. He volunteers at Camp Manatawney and previously served as chair of its board of directors. He serves as a deacon at King of Prussia Church of Christ. He and his wife, **Jennifer Cooper** ('95), have two daughters and live in Royersford, Pennsylvania.

1999

Hinmer Garcia is senior manager of program support at Compassion International. He and his wife, Ruth Melendez, have a son and live in El Salvador.

B.T. Irwin was named to Christian Chronicle's Journalism Advisory Council. A member of the

Rochester Church of Christ in Rochester Hills, Michigan, he is a blogger and podcaster who served as a nonprofit director, public information specialist, project leader and minister.

2000

Emily Haas Brown was named assistant superintendent of elementary education for the Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township. She transitioned to this role from director of human resources, a position she had held since 2018. In the spring of 2021, she served as the interim principal of Sunnyside Elementary School. She earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Indiana State University in 2019.

2001

David Arencibia was named the Texas Association of Secondary Schools Principals Region 11 Principal of the Year. He is the principal of Colleyville Middle School in Colleyville, Texas, and earned his doctorate in teacher leadership at Walden University.

Brian Matthews is an assistant professor of management at Texas A&M University-Texarkana and served as a city council member for Ward 4 from 2012-17. He serves as a board member for Leadership Texarkana, Main Street Texarkana, Red River Air Cargo Association, Northeast Texas Alliance of Black School Educators, Literacy Council of Bowie and Miller Counties, and is a member of Wilbur Smith Rotary and the Greater Texarkana Branch of the NAACP. He has formerly served as a board member for Texarkana Ara Foundation, United Way of Greater Texarkana, Alzheimer's Alliance, TRAHC and CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehabilitation Hospital.

2002

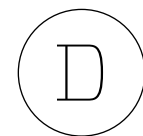
Mark Ohrenberger, who joined the Arkansas State University system in 2020 as associate general counsel, has been promoted to senior associate general counsel. He previously was legal counsel for the Arkansas State Board of Public Accountancy, assistant attorney general in the Arkansas Attorney General's office, and an associate at Wright Lindsey Jennings. He is a graduate of William & Mary School of Law.

2003

Elizabeth Stephens announces the birth of a daughter, Mary Elizabeth "Mary Beth," Aug. 8, 2019. She was adopted from Bilaspur in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh April 7, 2021.

Perfect Record

PROFILE | LEON BLUE



R. LEON BLUE ('72) HAS BEEN RUNNING for most of his adult life. From 5Ks to full marathons, he has run hundreds of miles. A cardiologist by trade, Blue graduated from Harding and attended University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences for medical school and post-graduate training. In total, with residency and his cardiology fellowship, he spent nine years in post-graduate training and education before he and his wife, Margaret Formby ('72), returned to Searcy, where he practiced for 40 years until his retirement this summer.

"I always knew I wanted to go to medical school and wanted to be a physician," said Blue. "After working in the NASA research program at Harding, I went to medical school and had an opportunity to work in a noninvasive cardiac lab and realized that was what I wanted to do."



Outside of the clinic, Blue trains to run marathons across the United States, including every Walt Disney World Marathon since the first race in 1994.

"My running buddy and I had done several 5Ks and 10Ks, but we said we'd never be true runners until we'd done at least one marathon."

After running the New York Marathon, Blue said he thought it would be one and done, but it was just beginning.

"We ended up saying 'well, if you run a marathon, you need to run the mother of all marathons. You need to run the Boston Marathon.'"

A short time later, Blue learned that Walt Disney World would begin hosting a marathon, and he was immediately on board. As someone whose family traveled to Disney for vacations frequently, he was eager to do what he loved in a place he loved and has been returning each year since.

In order to prepare for a 26.2 mile race, Blue says he will run six miles a day, five days a week with the exception of one day, which he will use to do a longer run and build up in preparation for the marathon. He does this each week until he peaks around 20 miles.

Blue has since run 38 marathons, 28 of which have been Disney marathons. When asked what races have been the most memorable, he said both the Boston and 100th Boston Marathon — a race he had to qualify for both times — and running a marathon with his daughter, who, at the time, attended Harding.

"When my daughter was in college at Harding, she said, 'Dad, before I graduate I want to run a marathon with you.' I said, 'well you know when I run. If you want to get up and go run and train with me, you can.' And sure enough she started getting up and running with me in the mornings. We have now run at least four marathons together, which has been so special."

Blue is now one of nearly 80 people in what Disney calls the 'Perfect Club,' made up of members who have run every Walt Disney World Marathon since its first year in 1994. As a part of this club, Blue is given the same bib number every year and offered free registration.

"Disney knows how to do events. It's an early start at 5 a.m. each year, but the course takes you through all four parks during which you encounter the characters and entertainment that helps motivate you and keep you going."

Blue has two granddaughters who are now students at Harding, one of whom has run a marathon with him and his daughter as well.

"That was two years ago now before COVID. The three of us ran together, and that was really cool to experience with both my daughter and granddaughter."

Blue is now training for the 2022 Walt Disney World Marathon this January, which will be his 39th full marathon. He plans to stay in that Perfect Club. 🏃 — *Katie Clement*



Lives of DISTINCTION

By HAILEY PRUITT

HOMECOMING

is a special time as many return to campus to reunite with friends and mentors and to remember and share stories in the place where it all began. As part of this celebration each year, the University honors alumni selected from a community of more than 40,000 who continue to live out Harding's mission in their chosen fields all around the world. This year's recipients continue the standard of excellence as they serve God, the church and their communities.



Outstanding Young Alumnus

RYAN WALTERS

Even in high school, RYAN WALTERS ('10) was passionate about history. "I love the stories and the people," he said. "The better I understand human nature, the better I understand life and how to make decisions, the better I understand God because we are all made in his image." His teachers helped those stories come to life, inspiring him to give back to future students in the same ways he had been blessed.

At Harding, he continued to be nurtured by faculty mentors in the department of history and political science as well as in the College of Education. "Throughout history, everyone had someone they looked up to or emulated," Walters said. He has become that somebody for so many, making a difference in the lives of students, fellow educators and communities in his home state of Oklahoma.

Walters taught high school history for eight years at McAlester High School in his hometown. In 2016 he was selected as an Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Finalist. For the past two years he has continued to teach a variety of courses, including AP U.S. History, at both Millwood High School and McAlester High School.

In addition to teaching, Walters serves as Oklahoma Secretary of Education and Executive Director of Every Kid Counts Oklahoma, an organization that launched in 2020 to empower teachers, parents and community leaders to improve the education system.

Walters sees his journey as a rewarding one. A champion of education, he seeks to provide resources and support for students as they develop their unique, God-given talents to improve the lives of those around them.

Ryan Walters and his wife, Katie Goings ('10), have four children, Violet, Ella, Benjamin and Samuel and live in Edmond, Oklahoma.



Distinguished Alumni

JOHN AND BETH REESE

JOHN ('74) and BETH PADEN ('75) REESE have continued a long tradition in both their families of serving the Lord through foreign missions. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, John's African names — Simugwagwa in Tonga and Chenzira in Shona — both mean "person of the road," a reminder that his birth took place along a rural road and an indication of the many journeys his life of service to Christ would take.

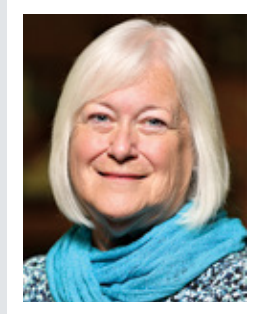
In 1970 he first traveled to the United States to attend Harding. He met Beth, and they were married during spring break of their sophomore year, following a proposal on an iconic Harding swing. From 1976-89, they planted churches and worked in personal evangelism in Johannesburg, South Africa, taking one year to serve as visiting missionary faculty at Harding in 1985. The Reeses were the first U.S. missionaries devoted full time to World Bible School follow up in Southern Africa.

In 1991, they moved to Austin, Texas, where John helped create and implement a new curriculum for World Bible School. He became the president of the organization in 2006 and also serves as editor for their *Action!* publication. In the last decade, there have been more than 2 million new WBS students, thousands of baptisms have been reported, and new congregations are being established.

Beth's education and research in family studies have long been an asset to their work as missionaries and led the Reeses to initiate InterMission, assisting missionary families with cultural transitions. John also serves as an elder at Highland Village Church of Christ in Austin, and they try to return to Africa each year. For many years they celebrated an average of 250 conversions each summer. They are writing a book entitled *The Answer is Yes*, helping to develop an orphanage in Zimbabwe called Chivero Home of Hope, and looking forward to retirement at their home on Harding Drive in Searcy.

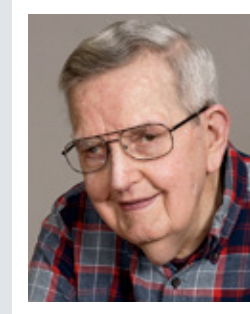
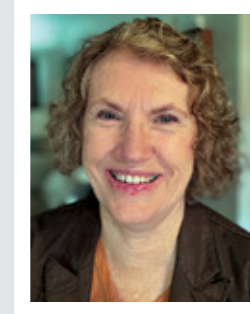
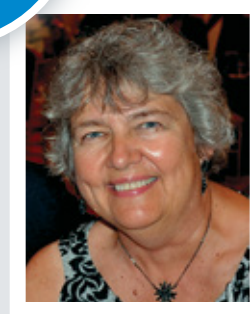
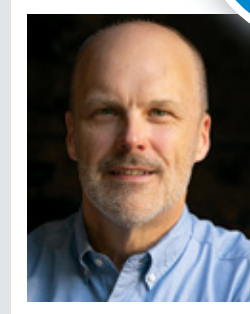
The Reeses have passed along their passion for mission work to their children, Marcus ('97), Tammy ('00), Danny ('04) and David ('07), all of whom have served in foreign fields. John and Beth have spent 49 years together in service to Christ.

REESE PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY, WALTERS PHOTO BY LEXI FLANAGAN



Outstanding Alumni

- REBECCA OLDROYD WEAVER ('73)
- RICK TRUJILLO ('91)
- JOHN D. BARTON ('89)
- ROBERT CHAMBERS ('89)
- MARY LOU DUNN (M.ED. '77)
- CATHY LOTT MCLAIN ('77)
- THOMAS BAIRD ('53)



College of Allied Health

While Dr. **REBECCA OLDROYD WEAVER** ('73) was working on her bachelor's degree, a friend suggested that they both go on to complete graduate work so they would be prepared to excel in the field of speech-language pathology. During her graduate studies, she got a call from Dr. Evan Ulrey asking if she would be interested in teaching at Harding. "That phone call changed my life," she said.

Weaver went on to become professor and dean of Harding's College of Allied Health, enjoying the daily rewards of teaching her students to "give the gift of communication to their clients." She also taught in Harding's international programs in Florence, Italy, and Athens, Greece, as well as directing the speech-pathology program at Harding in Zambia from 2010-16.

Weaver is now the director of Abilene Christian University's Communication Sciences and Disorders online program, developing curriculum and teaching online courses.

She also has served on the board of directors of the White County Group Home as well as volunteered with Arkansas Special Olympics. She has been a member of both College Church of Christ and Cape Cod Church of Christ. A lover of adventure, she spent a summer traveling the entire globe.

She and her husband, Gene ('73), live in East Sandwich, Massachusetts, and have one daughter, Reagan Dennison ('00).

College of Arts and Humanities

RICK TRUJILLO ('91) has made a career of capturing others' stories on camera. Currently the camera operator for Texas Rangers Baseball Club and for Dickies Arena in Fort Worth, Texas, he

has covered many significant events including the 1992 Presidential Election, Columbine High School shooting in 1999, the 2002 Winter Olympic Games, and the Oklahoma City bombing memorial. From Alaskan dog sled races to NCAA basketball to red carpet interviews, Trujillo has seen it all. He is thankful that the Lord gives him the opportunity to meet people from all across the world and to make their days a little brighter. His work has been featured on many national and international news networks as well as The Food Network and HGTV. Most notably, he spent 20 weeks with police departments filming the Paramount Network TV show "COPS."

Trujillo graduated from Harding with a bachelor's in radio and television and later earned a master's in education. "I didn't pick photojournalism. Photojournalism picked me," he said. A man of many talents, Trujillo also was a Harding cross-country letterman at age 18 and again at age 35. He has lent his talents behind the scenes to the Legacy Church of Christ emergency response team, The Hills Church of Christ and Royal Family Kids Camp.

Rick and his wife, Julie, live in North Richland Hills, Texas.

College of Bible and Ministry

Dr. **JOHN D. BARTON** ('89) met and married Sara Gaston ('91) at Harding, and they have devoted their lives and careers to mission work and Christian education. From 1994-2002, John and Sara worked in church planting and development as part of a mission team in Jinja, Uganda, and John completed a doctorate in African philosophy at Makerere University.

In 2002, they returned to the U.S. where John served as professor of philosophy and Christian

studies and, later, as vice president of academics and provost at Rochester College. Since 2014, John and Sara have lived and worked at Pepperdine University. John now serves as director of Pepperdine's Center for Faith and Learning and also teaches in Seaver College's Religion and Philosophy Division, the Graduate School of Education and Philosophy, and the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at the Caruso School of Law.

He is active in domestic and international interfaith initiatives and currently serves as the president of Kibo Group International, a nonprofit organization that partners with East African communities for sustainable development. He serves on the board of Missio Dei Foundation which focuses on the theology and practice of mission in the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement.

John and Sara recently celebrated their 30th anniversary, and they have two grown children: Nate, who is married to Falon Opsahl, and Brynn.

College of Business Administration

When **ROBERT CHAMBERS** ('89) graduated from Harding with a Bachelor of Business Administration in accounting, he could not have imagined how many different opportunities he would have to serve in the financial world. Beginning his career with a large audit firm, he worked for several years with boutique investment firms. His current position with a global bank came through a connection with another Harding alumnus. As the Global Head of Product Management for Alternative Investment Services at The Bank of New York Mellon Corp., Chambers continues to see the blessings of relationships with colleagues, clients, fellow church members and friends. "My life is exponentially richer because of those who have poured themselves into me," he said. "My

hope and prayer is that I am ready and able to share with others from that abundance."

In addition to his work in finance, Chambers also served on the board of trustees of Rochester College in Rochester Hills, Michigan, from 2010-19 and currently serves on Kibo Group's board of trustees, a position he has held since 2018.

Robert and his wife, Chrystal, have three sons, Cort and Caden, who are current Harding students, and Rhett, who is in high school. They live in Larchmont, New York.

College of Education

As a high school senior, **MARY LOU DUNN** (M.Ed. '77) volunteered at The Sunshine School for developmentally disabled students in Searcy, and that experience led to a lifelong mission of teaching special education and ministering to her students and their families.

She received a bachelor's degree in education from Arkansas State Teachers College in 1971 and a master's in special education from Harding in 1977. Dunn began her career teaching special education in grades 4-6 at McRae Elementary while also serving on the board of directors for The Sunshine School. In 1979, she became the executive director, and under her guidance, The Sunshine School grew into the thriving school it is today, serving 75 students with a staff of 30 in a new, larger facility that opened in 2011. Also under Dunn's leadership, the White County Group Home opened in 1986, and today it provides residential services for 15 adults with developmental disabilities. She retired from The Sunshine School in 2018 after 40 years of service as executive director.

Dunn also served on the board of directors for Special Olympics Arkansas-Area 6 for many years.

She worked with the Performing Arts Center on the Square, was a member of the Searcy Civitan club, and an active supporter of United Way in White County. She also served as a women's social club sponsor at Harding for many years.

Dunn died Feb. 27, 2021, but her legacy of service continues.

College of Nursing

As a child, **CATHY LOTT MCLAIN** ('77) dreamed of becoming Florence Nightingale, a missionary nurse who would help care for people's bodies and souls. At Harding, she said, nursing was taught as a ministry, and she is thankful for training that equipped her to share the love of God in her career.

For the last nine years, McLain has worked as a nurse practitioner at Baptist Palliative Care in Little Rock, Arkansas. She walks alongside families of patients with serious illness, which currently involves many cases of COVID-19. She cares for patients in their last days and considers it a privilege to be able to minister to them at that crucial time. "I love caring for people until their very last breath. ... It's so important to be there with someone at that moment and help families through that process so that they won't ever be alone. It's a deep kind of joy."

McLain also has worked as a community health nurse, certified school nurse and nurse practitioner for primary care physicians in addition to spending 12 years as a missionary in Brazil.

McLain loves playing with her grandchildren, walking and running. She and her husband, Billy ('77), have two daughters, Julie Dorsey ('07) and Lori Guelker ('10). They are members of Northside Church of Christ in Bryant, Arkansas.

College of Sciences

THOMAS BAIRD ('53) came to Harding in 1949 from the small town of Williford, Arkansas, and graduated with a bachelor's in math. After one year of teaching high school math in Bragg City, Missouri, he served two years in the U.S. Army. He completed his master's degree in 1963 at the Missouri School of Mines in Rolla — now the Missouri University of Science and Technology — and taught math and computer science there until his retirement in December of 1994.

In the mid-1960s computer science developed as an academic discipline, and Baird became a charter member of the computer science department in 1965. Throughout his career, he spent summers working on research projects for the Bureau of Mines and Metallurgy and IBM. He also taught operations research in graduate programs at Fort Leonard Wood in St. Louis, and in Saudi Arabia.

Baird mentored many students, including Harding alumni Gene Dugger and Harmon Brown, both of whom returned to Harding as math professors. In the early 2000s, he helped many students from Albania, where his brother-in-law was a missionary, and from Rolla to attend Harding. Supporting the growth of Rolla Church of Christ, he served as one of the first two elders from 1968-2001 as well as teaching Bible classes and counseling families. He also served as chair of the board for Little Prairie Bible Camp.

He met Lovera Jackson ('54) at Harding, and they married in 1952 and celebrated their 65th anniversary shortly before her death in 2017. They have four children: Tom Jr., Tim ('79), Jeanie and Jim ('86). Six of their grandchildren also are Harding graduates. 📷

WEAVER PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY; TRUJILLO AND BARTON SUBMITTED PHOTOS

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



2004

Corey Fipps was hired as University of Pikeville's seventh head football coach. He most recently served as head coach at Kentucky Christian University for four seasons. He also served as the offensive coordinator at NCAA Division II Missouri Southern State University, NAIA Montana Tech, Sacramento City College and Faulkner University, where he piloted an offense that ranked first in the country. He and his wife, Jennifer Weaver, have three daughters, Kensley, Caroline and Emery.

Kyla Diles Glasser was named Searcy School District Teacher of the Year. She has taught seventh and eighth grade science in Searcy School District since 2005. She serves on the district's Capturing Kids Hearts team and as student government sponsor.

Tiffany Phillips has joined the women's basketball coaching staff at University of Central Arkansas after six years as head coach of the Southwestern Assemblies of God University women's basketball team. While at SAGU, she had an 80-72 record, was named the Central Region Coach of the Year in 2018,

and led the program to its first ranking in more than 20 years. She also has coached high school basketball in Arkansas at Marshall, Sacred Heart, Hector and Bryant. She is no stranger to UCA as she was an assistant for the Sugar Bears from 2006-11.

2006

Trevor Goertzen has been named a Digital Principal of the Year for 2021 by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. He is principal of Spring Hill Middle School in Spring Hill, Kansas.

2007

Shawn Brazas was promoted to sergeant and also supervisor for Zone 10 with the Missouri Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in 2008. He and his wife, Jacquelyn Fredendall '08, have two sons, Luke and Beau.

Aaron Moore is a software developer at Mainstream Technologies in Little Rock, Arkansas. He has 12 years of experience in software development and previously worked at Applied Technical Systems of Silverdale, Washington. He is married to Stacey Wright '06.

2010

Ryan and Billie Pierters Bentley announce the birth of a daughter, Alcey, March 21, 2021.

Sara Vinzant Crouch published a novel, A Summer in Shady Springs, a contemporary Christian romance in August 2021.

2011

Kurstin Koch traveled to China in 2014 to teach English while earning her master's degree in human environmental studies. Upon returning to the U.S. this year, she was hired as a dietician by Ozarks Healthcare in West Plains, Missouri.

2012

Brian Grant has joined Warburton Capital as a client service specialist. He studied biological and physical sciences at Broward College before attending the University of Charleston (West Virginia), where he received his master's in physician assistant studies. He previously practiced full time as a PA. He has served with medical mission teams in Haiti as well as volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and Remote Area Medical. He resides in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, with his wife, Taylor Metts, and their two children: Connor and Marlee.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

2013

Megan Rose Cleveland graduated with honors from University of Mississippi Medical Center with a master's in occupational therapy in 2016. She is employed with TIRR Memorial Hermann in Houston and is a certified brain injury specialist occupational therapist working on the brain injury and stroke team.

2014

Derek K. Mountford joined the business litigation practice in the Jacksonville, Florida, office of Gunster, a full-service business law firm. He earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. He is married to Brianna Bach.

Erica Beaman Olascoaga graduated from Texas Tech School of Medicine, completing both her Doctor of Medicine and Master of Business Administration. She has been matched into residency at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas for physical medicine and rehabilitation.

She is currently completing her transitional year at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas.

2015

Joshua Jones is an assistant coach at Northwestern State University, coaching safeties, following a short stint at University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff as their safeties coach. Prior to that, he coached cornerbacks at South Alabama for three seasons (2018-20), spent the 2016 and 2017 seasons as the cornerbacks coach at Central Arkansas, and began his professional career as an assistant coach at Henderson State. He played professional indoor football for the Green Bay Blizzard and the Utah Blaze.

2016

David Ellis was promoted to head soccer coach at 6A Mansfield (Texas) High School. He lives in Cleburne, Texas, with his wife, Whitney Walker.

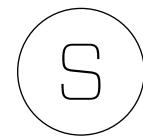
2017

Genevieve Davis (MSN) is a board-certified family nurse practitioner at Lovelace Medical Group Gastroenterology. She is a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and is a former part of the inflammatory bowel disease team at Albany Medical Center.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Loving her neighbor

PROFILE | NATALIE NILL



SELFLESSLY DONATING ONE OF HER KIDNEYS in March 2021 has proven to be a valuable lesson for Natalie Nill ('11) in the biblical teaching of loving one's neighbor — a lesson she carries throughout every aspect of her life, including her engineering career at Boeing Co.

Nill's donation story began in September 2019 when she read a story about a mother of three whose only kidney was failing. "The story stuck out to me partly because the mom was my younger sister's age and partly because it was a God thing," Nill said. She kept praying about it, and she eventually signed up for testing. The lengthy process took her to San Francisco in January 2020, and she was approved a month later. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put Nill's donation on hold for an entire year. During her extended wait, Nill learned the mother she intended to donate her kidney to had already received the help she needed, but Nill still felt called to donate. She decided to do an undirected donation, which meant her kidney would go to the first person who needed it.



Nill finally donated her kidney in March 2021 to an anonymous woman in California. Nill said the experience and the recovery she had to go through was all worth it because of how much she was able to change another person's life with just one decision. "I was back to 100% life as normal within

two months, and the person who received my donation has a new lease on life," Nill said.

Nill's time at Harding heavily influenced her decision. Nill donated blood for the first time while a student at Harding and is now a regular donor. As a student, she was inspired by many of her professors and peers to be selfless and compassionate. "Harding was a time in my life where my faith grew, where I saw a Christian faith integrated into professionals' daily lives, and where I had teachers who set an example for me by going out of their way to look out for me," Nill said. "These are themes that have continued to develop in my life over the years."

A founding member of Harding's chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Nill gained helpful skills in leadership and management. She also credits Harding for helping her think of others within her career. Nill has worked at Boeing Co. since 2011 and has received many incredible opportunities such as working as a mechanical systems engineer on U.S. Air Force planes.

Reflecting on her life thus far — her career, health, family and friends — Nill is thankful for it all and gives God all the glory. Nill cited the biblical command of looking out for the alien, orphan, widow and any other marginalized communities who may need help for why she gives back. "For me, [donating my kidney] was one big way I could love my neighbor," Nill said. "And now, as I'm six months post-donation, my challenge is remembering that I can also love my neighbor in the small, everyday things." — Luke Humphrey



2019

Cheyenne Brown is the new assistant coach for the women's basketball team at Southwestern Assemblies of God University. She previously was an assistant coach at the junior college level for Jacksonville College.

Austin Hayes received the highly competitive David L. Boren Fellowship to study in Indonesia for the 2021-22 academic year. He is currently a student in Oklahoma State's School of Global Studies where he is pursuing his master's degree.

G. Scott Weston (MBA) was named dean of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Charleston (West Virginia). He began on July 1, 2021. He previously served as associate dean for faculty affairs and chair and professor of pharmaceutical sciences in Harding's College of Pharmacy.



2021

Audrey Jackson became the Christian Chronicle's associate editor for print and digital in August.

Passages

Thelma Ellenburg Revel '48, 95, of Augusta, Arkansas, died June 24, 2021. In 1946 she began her teaching career in Augusta where she was a member of First Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, John William. She is survived by two daughters, Patti Dewberry and Deborah Middlebrooks; five grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Jacqueline Canada Dunlap '51, 91, of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, died May 7, 2021. She earned her medical technologist training at Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Her career took her to Pine Bluff where she worked at Davis Hospital and for the Jefferson County Health Department as a medical technologist. She was a member of First United Methodist Church in Pine Bluff, where she taught Sunday school and worked in the nursery. After her husband, Martel, died in 1982, she took over the family business, Dunlap Monument Co., which she owned and operated until her retirement in the late 1990s. She is survived by her two children, Lee Ann Boop and David; and three grandchildren.

Curtis Kenneth Ward '51, 91, of Richardson, Texas, died June 23, 2021. He pursued a career in finance, aviation and banking in both Wichita, Kansas, and Dallas, Texas. He was a member of Poplar Avenue Church of Christ in Wichita and Waterview Church of Christ in Richardson. He was preceded in death by his first wife of 53 years, Mary Wood; his second wife, Peggy Cooley; and a

son, Warren. He is survived by two children, Roger and Melinda Adwon; a brother, Wendell; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Henry Kenneth "Ken" Rhodes '53, 89, of Lubbock, Texas, died July 1, 2021, from cancer. He completed his master's degree at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales. In 1968, he completed his doctorate of education at Texas Tech. He joined the nascent staff at Lubbock Christian College in 1959 and taught Bible and history. He served in the LCC administration as dean of students where he was known to balance the letter of law with both humor and grace until he retired in 1993. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Carolyn Poston '52; four sons, Brant, Kent, Kevin and Kerry; and five grandchildren.

Doris Elaine Harmon Fulks '53, 89, of Apopka, Florida, died July 16, 2021. She spent most of her life as a homemaker. She was a volunteer at Lee's Summit (Missouri) Elementary School. She worked for a candy factory and in her parents' radio store and grocery store in Chicago, and the Owens-Illinois Glass Co. in Huntington, West Virginia. She taught school at Pangburn, Arkansas, and retired from Jones Store in Kansas City in 1994. She was baptized into Christ by Andy T. Ritchie while a student at Harding. She was a Bible class teacher for many years and was a member of Plymouth Church of Christ. In 2008, she and her husband established the William and Doris Fulks Distinguished Chair of the College of Bible and Ministry at Harding, which became active in 2015. She is survived by her husband of 69 years, William "Bill" '53; a sister, Thelma Griffin; two children, Wanda Jean Ritchie and Michael; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Barbara Oteka Kee '54, 91, of Wichita Falls, Texas, died April 28, 2021. She and her husband planted churches in the Northeast, including Levittown, Pennsylvania; Salisbury, Maryland; and Collinsville, Illinois. They then spent 20 years as missionaries in Cameroon, West Africa, and later worked in Belize. She is survived by her husband of 67 years, Windle '53; three children, Carl, Paul and Alicejoy Taylor; a brother, Bud McFarland; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Susie Jewell Combs Ozbirn '55, 90, of Searcy, died May 8, 2021. She taught school until the arrival of her first son and then was a full-time homemaker until the last of her four sons enrolled. She then returned to teaching, supervising the Migrant Education Program at White County Central Schools. She was honored as a Teacher of the Year in the migrant education statewide program. She completed a master's degree in education at the University of Central Arkansas and retired in 1992. She was a long-time member of the White County Iris Society and a member of



Connections

the Daughters of the American Revolution. She was a member of College Church of Christ since 1947. She was preceded in death by her husband of 64 years, **Wade** ('49). She is survived by four sons, **David** ('78), **Randall** ('88), **Clark** ('85) and **Gregory** ('87); three siblings, C.V. Combs, **Geneva Lawyer** ('62) and Shirley Murray.

Ewing Marsh Goodson II ('57), 85, of McMinnville, Tennessee, died Dec. 11, 2020. After graduation, he became head football coach at Harding Academy in Searcy. During the early and mid-1960s, he held various coaching positions including track coach at David Lipscomb University and head football coach at high schools in Rockwood, Tennessee, and Griffin, Georgia. In 1967, he became a member of the inaugural faculty at Jackson State Community College in Jackson, Tennessee. He was Jackson State's first athletic director, first baseball and basketball coach, and was instrumental in charting a course for the school's future athletic success. In 1968, he assisted in founding the Tennessee Junior and Community College Athletic Association, now the Tennessee Community College Athletic Association. He served as its president in its second and third years. He obtained his master's degree in physical education from George Peabody College and in 1975, he obtained his doctorate in physical education from Middle Tennessee State University. He then returned to Jackson State to work in campus administration for nearly two decades and instituted Jackson State's night school program, managed the school catalog and coordinated graduation. He retired in 1999 as Jackson State's assistant dean of academic affairs. In 2013, he was inducted into the Tennessee Community College Athletic Association's Hall of Fame. Upon his retirement, he moved to McMinnville, Tennessee, where he was a member of Central Church of Christ. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Katharine Pearsall; two children, **Marsha Dennison** ('86) and **Jeff** ('94) and four granddaughters.

Carl Ray Russell Sr. ('57), 87, of Manchester, Tennessee, died May 18, 2021. On Sept. 22, 1949, he suffered a broken leg during a high school football game which never fully healed. Resilience and toughness became his defining characteristics from that day forward. He earned master's and specialist degrees in education from Middle Tennessee State University. He taught and coached at East Junior High in Tullahoma, Tennessee, and Coffee County Junior High. In 1966, he began teaching at Coffee County High School and ultimately became the vocational director and assistant principal. He was named Outstanding Tennessee Vocational Administrator in 1991 and retired in 1998 after 41 years of service. Life after retirement was filled with community service and church ministry. Among other pursuits, he served as a Coffee County commissioner, board chairman of Coffee County Chris-

tian Housing, and board member of Manchester Chamber of Commerce. During his long career in the pulpit, he served the Berry (Alabama) Church of Christ, Hillsboro Church of Christ, Hickerson Station Church of Christ and Trousdale Church of Christ. He held many gospel meetings in Tennessee and Alabama. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, **Carol Stubblefield** ('58); three children, Ray, Jeanne Newton and Julie Edwards; a brother Gerald; and seven grandchildren.

Nadine Fern Pasley Hill ('58), 86, of Riverhead, New York, died May 17, 2021. She and her husband, Jerry, co-founded Timothy Hill Children's Ranch, a place where troubled children could live, be loved, feel safe and have wide open spaces to ride horses. They started this organization after a tragic accident ended their son Timothy's life at age 13. To commemorate his life, she wrote a book entitled *Graduation to Glory*, referring to Timothy's graduation from this life into heaven. Decades later, she authored *Gifts from Glory*, which is the true account of prayers God answered during her lifetime, hoping to let others know of God's desire to hear their hearts. She and her husband were named Harding's 2004 Distinguished Alumni. She was a loving person who focused on encouragement and hospitality. She was preceded in death by two sons, Timothy and Thomas. She is survived by her husband of 65 years, **Jerrell** ('61); three sons Titus, **Thaddaeus** ('95) and **James** ('99); and five grandchildren.

Jack William Case ('60), 90, of Mesquite, Texas, died June 25, 2021. He served two years in the U.S. Army before completing his bachelor's degree at Harding. He worked for the federal government, first at the Internal Revenue Service and then retired from the Veterans Administration Regional Office as the personnel director after 33 years of service. He was a member of Windsong Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, where he served as an elder for 50 years. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Janece Morgan; two children, **Michael** ('79) and Susan Walker; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Jerry Wayne Thompson ('61), 83, of Cordova, Tennessee, died May 28, 2021. He had the desire to dedicate his life to full-time Christian ministry from his youth, expressing his faith, being baptized and then accepting preaching appointments while in high school. In 1962, he became minister of the church of Christ in Cyril, Oklahoma. Beginning in 1965, he served as a missionary for eight years in Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies, where he helped establish the Mona Heights congregation and the Jamaica School of Preaching, both of which have grown and continue to serve the island. In 1973, his family returned to the U.S., serving eight years in Memphis, Tennessee, at Holmes Road, 12 years in McCrory, Arkansas, and 12 years in Jonesboro,

Arkansas, at Nettleton. In 2005, he and his wife returned to the Memphis area to Woodland Hills Church of Christ in Cordova, Tennessee. He is survived by his wife, Linda Forrester; two sons, **Tim** ('86) and **Danny** ('88); and five grandchildren.

Johnny Ray Bryant ('62), 83, of Paragould, Arkansas, died July 31, 2021. He was a teacher and coach at Ross High School and then Bourbon High School. He also became a preacher and spread the gospel on the radio. He is survived by three children, Dew, Tami and Jen Lewis; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Marlin D. Hilton ('67), 75, of Richmond, Virginia, died April 21, 2021, from ALS. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps for 30 years, retiring with the rank of colonel in 1998. He then started a career in the trucking industry and served as vice president of safety and compliance with CalArk Trucking for almost 20 years before his second retirement in 2017. He was a member of the church of Christ who loved helping others, his family and reading. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, **Karen K. Mayhall** ('67); and two daughters, **Holly** ('93) and **Heather** ('95).

Hiroko Sando Robertson ('68), 75, of Searcy, died May 9, 2021. Roki, as she was called by those who knew her, dedicated her life to making sure that everyone felt valued and loved. Born in Hachioji, Japan, she loved tending to the Japanese students who attended Harding. She was preceded in death by a son, **Kenny** ('97). She is survived by her husband, **Marvin** ('69); three children, **Andrea Baker** ('94), **Wilson** ('00) and **Jill** ('08); a sister, Keiko; and 11 grandchildren.

Sara Lou Keesee Gibson ('69), 74, of Commerce, Texas, died July 17, 2021. Upon graduation, she and her husband moved to Scranton, Pennsylvania, to work with the church. In 1976, the couple moved to Abilene, Texas, where she started a sewing business to supplement the family income as her husband completed his Master of Divinity at Abilene Christian University. In 1980, the couple moved to Commerce, Texas, to work with the Commerce Church of Christ. She hosted hundreds of church members, college students and visitors. She also taught the nursery class for many years and often accompanied her husband visiting the sick and shut-ins. She also ran an in-home daycare for a number of years and catered meals for the Commerce Rotary Club. She is survived by her husband of 52 years, **David** ('69); four children, Melissa Dalbert, Andy, Monte, and **Susan Darnell** ('09); a brother, Carl Keesee; and eight grandchildren.

Richard "Terry" Fruzia ('70), 78, of Dallas died June 10, 2021. He served his country in the Army, active and reserves, for 24 1/2 years, attaining the rank of master sergeant. His service time included Vietnam and Desert Storm. His first job after graduation from Harding was in Kouts, Indiana,

teaching fifth and sixth grade in a team teaching setup. He also worked as an installer for GTE for 25 years. He was a member of Waterview Church of Christ. He is survived by his wife, **Karen Mason** ('72); two children, Tony and Laura Farthing; two siblings, Gerralyn Osborn and Gerald Fruzia Jr.; and three grandchildren.

Dena Broadfoot Roberts ('72), 72, of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, died March 17, 2021. She was a long-time employee of Allstate and ABS Title Co. She is survived by two daughters, Jade and Ashton; and three grandchildren.

Linda Kendrick Fitte ('72), 70, of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, died May 18, 2021. She earned her master's in education from George Mason University. She retired from Virginia Beach Public Schools as a teacher and administrator. Her career in education was highlighted by many adventures including writing and producing her own opera and accepting a scholarship to the Fulbright-Hays Program where she taught in England for a year. She finished her career training fellow educators in math curriculum. She was a member of Kings Grant Baptist Church. She is survived by three sons, Cliff, Matthew and Jonathan; her mother, Allene Kendrick; two sisters, **Karyn Douglas** ('69) and Betty Lou Turner; and six grandchildren.

Glenn Haddon Goree ('74), 69, of Port Ludlow, Washington, died May 16, 2021, from liver cancer. He earned a master's in missiology from Harding School of Theology. He served as a missionary in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe from 1975-81. After returning to the states, he served as a mental health therapist for 30 years. He retired three years ago to Washington state and has written numerous books detailed on his website, glenn Goree.com. He is survived by his wife, **Valerie Massey** ('72); and two children, **Colleen** ('00) and Kirk.

Will Ed Warren (MAR '76), 92, of Mesquite, Texas, died June 24, 2021. He graduated from David Lipscomb College and began his preaching career in Detroit, Michigan. In 1974, he became a Bible professor at Harding, where students began affectionately calling him "Will Ed", while his wife, Micky, launched the nursing program. He retired in 1999, and he and his wife moved into a home at Christian Care Center in Dallas. He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Micky, and a daughter, **Karen** ('80). He is survived by his daughter, **Donna Lake** ('86); and a granddaughter.

Florence Marie Johnston Craven ('79), 74, of Searcy, died May 9, 2021. She taught first and second grade at McRae Public Schools for 25 years before retiring. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Charlie; a son, Steven; and nine siblings,

Emma Taylor, Margaret Johnston, Kathy Roberts, Nancy Cole, Marsha Cullum, Bill Cleaver, Freddy, Richard and Gary Johnston.

Mandy Ann Arena ('94), 50, of Bedford, Indiana, died June 15, 2021. She worked as a surgical technician in the healthcare field. Most recently, she stayed home to care for her mother. She is survived by her parents, Mike and Nancy Jeskewich Arena; and a brother, Sam.

Melissa King Madigan (MFT '01), 64, of Little Rock, Arkansas, died July 26, 2021. She earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Vanderbilt University in 1980. She held positions at St. Vincent's Hospital; Arkansas Children's Hospital, Burn Unit; and Arkansas Cardiology Clinic. She was in private practice in the field of marriage and family counseling, later serving as family service coordinator for central Arkansas hospitals and in-house coordinator for Arkansas Children's Hospital for Arkansas Regional Organ Recovery Agency. She was a member of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew and sang in the Cathedral Choir. She is survived by her four siblings, Chris Madigan, Sallie Holliman, Kathy Muehlman and Steve Madigan.

Marion Davis "Honey" Craig (MAT '05), 71, of Beebe, Arkansas, died Aug. 13, 2021. She taught school for more than 30 years, serving at Kensett and Pulaski County, Arkansas; and Memphis, Tennessee. After retirement, she volunteered her time to promote Christian education at Light-house Christian Academy. She is survived by her husband, Mike; four children, Davis, Dustin, Mikki Daveluy, and Kelsey Garland; a sister, Peggy Herrin; and eight grandchildren.

James Winfield "Jim" Winner ('11), 67, of Searcy, died July 8, 2021, from COVID-19. He attended Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas, from 1981 to 1984, graduating from their ministerial program in 1983, and then completing graduate work in doctrine. He ministered for more than 30 years as pulpit minister for several church of Christ congregations in Texas, Illinois, Iowa and Arkansas. He continued his education in Dixon, Illinois, at Sauk Valley Community College, earning an Associate of Science in psychology in May 1995. In the fall of the same year, he earned an Associate of Arts in criminal justice. He earned a bachelor of Religious Education in 1996, then completed his master of Religious Education in 1997, both through Theological University of America. He then furthered his biblical studies in the CAMT program at Harding, earning a Bachelor of Ministry. He was preceded in death by two children, Karen and Kerry. He is survived by his wife, Jamie Hayes; six children, Nicholas Carrigan, Joseph Carrigan, **Bobby Winner** ('00), Sarah Martin, **Caitlin Forcier** ('14) and Brittny Spampinato; five siblings, Douglas, Tina Miller-



Connections

Cooper, Melody Blankenship, Melissa Syries and Renee Syries; and six grandchildren.

April Warmka Frazier ('13), 49, of Searcy, died July 4, 2021. She worked as a residence life coordinator for Harding for almost 15 years, during



which time she developed relationships with other RLCs, staff members and students. Though busy raising a family and working a full-time job, she pursued her passion for psychology and completed her bachelor's degree at Harding.

Her interest in mental health, social justice and human rights led her to continue her education in Harding's Mental Health and Wellness program. She is survived by her husband, **Bryan** ('93); daughters, **Ally Francois** ('18) and **Lydia** ('18); her mother, Barbara Nannery-Warmka; three siblings, Adam Warmka, Alex Warmka and Angie Foster; and a granddaughter.

Patsy Ruth Howard, 80, of Searcy, died July 31, 2021. She worked at Harding as an administrative



assistant for 28 years. She was a member of College Church of Christ for 52 years, where she taught various Bible classes and volunteered at His House. She was preceded in death by her infant son, Phillip. She is survived by her husband of 58 years, **Tom** ('69); three daughters, **Cindy Gurchiek** ('86), **Christy Perry** ('91) and **Beth Collins** ('93); a brother, Frank Rogers; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Emma Jo Evans Choate, 94, of Lawrenceville, Georgia, died Aug. 6, 2021. While working as a switchboard operator at Southwestern Bell in Fort Smith, Arkansas, she met her husband. In 1952, the family moved to suburban Detroit near family members who migrated from Arkansas to work in the automotive factories. She went to work in 1966 at the Automobile Club of Michigan (AAA), first as a switchboard operator, then as a travel counselor, and she quickly became a supervisor. In a short hiatus from AAA, she worked from 1974-76 at Harding as a dorm supervisor and director of housing. She attended College Church of Christ, sponsored the cheerleaders and co-sponsored Ko Jo Kai Social Club. In 1976, she returned to Michigan, again working for AAA as a branch supervisor. She hosted a young professionals Bible study for more than a decade. In 1993, she retired from AAA. She volunteered at the church office at Campus Church in Norcross, Georgia. She was preceded in death by her husband of 23 years, Herbert. She is survived by three daughters, **Deborah Shepherd** ('71), **Beverly Dowdy** ('75) and **Kimberly Thames** ('78); six grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

WARREN UCM FILE PHOTO; FRAZIER PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY; HOWARD PHOTO SUBMITTED



‘Practically perfect in every way’

By LINDA WILLIAMS BATEMAN

IT WAS THE SIMPLE THINGS. It was the motherly way. It was her loving heart. It was Jesus shining through her busy day. He was her constant.

Chinese checkers with the boys, working in the flower beds with the boys, Bible study at the kitchen table with the boys — Fern loved her Ranch boys unconditionally. She wanted them to know Jesus and the true love available to them.

Oh, how she loved her own boys at home, Timothy, Thomas, Titus, Thaddaeus and Theophilus (better known as James). Fern and her husband, Jerry, lived in Scripture.

She loved us all in the same way. She loved sharing the Word with tender hearts in a teenage girls’ class or an auditorium of women gathered to hear her tell of answered prayers. I can hear her songs of Scripture as she gathered the ladies of the community around her dining room table. She loved the friendships developed in her kitchen as she prepared a meal. Hospitality was woven into each day as she welcomed new friends and lifelong dear ones.

As gentle as she was, she was tough. Her strong, sometimes stubborn, Oklahoma heritage fortified her when life’s struggles would have taken most women down. Fern kept doing what needed to be done. If a dear neighbor needed a kidney, Fern Hill was ready, even at 70, to fill that need. If her sweetheart, Jerry, needed to go across the country for a fundraising dinner, she would pack her little bags of work to do and ride along beside him. If a group of 15 or 20 volunteers suddenly came in her front door, she would have taco salad on the table within minutes. Then she would join Jerry in singing “welcome to our family,” as hands were held and tears flowed.

Fern wrote her first book, *Graduation to Glory*, in 1974. It was the story of the too-short life of her son, Timothy, and his dreams of serving at-risk and hurting boys. With proceeds from that book, Jerry and Fern began the journey to fulfill Timothy’s dream, and today young men are lovingly housed in four states.

It was sitting alongside her as she wrote her second book that helped me see into the heart of Fern Hill. In *Gifts from Glory* she shares her trust and dependence on God to answer her requests. As a Father, he wanted to hear her prayers. Time and time again, her requests were answered, often in surprising ways. She knew she was a daughter of the king.

Struggling with cancer was a difficult 10-year journey. Yet, when asked how she was doing, she responded with, “practically perfect in every way.” She protected her body as much as possible. Fern took vitamins and supplements, did a little workout most mornings to remain flexible and mobile, purified her water, and made opportunities to swim as often as she could. She was busy in her kitchen making brown bread, granola or popcorn to share with Jerry during a movie night. She found pleasure in sharing moments with her grandchildren, whether they lived nearby in Riverhead or were visiting from Tennessee. She was determined not to let cancer get in her way.

Even in her final week, I believe she pleaded with her Lord, “Give me just one more!” and then witnessed a stranger become white as snow. How did she lead him to Jesus when

she had little breath left in her weary body to teach? She asked him to sit at her bedside and read the book of Acts. She always said Scripture would do the teaching. Within days, they made the journey to the neighborhood lake where he became her brother in Christ.

In October I drove to Long Island to spend a few days at the Ranch. It was my first time visiting when Fern was not there. However, her light, her fingerprints, her words will continue to encompass that campus for many years to come. Lives have been touched, a legacy left like no other. Fern continues to grow, and she is now “perfect in every way!”

Linda Williams Bateman ('66) serves on the board of Timothy Hill Ranch. Her close friend, Fern Hill, co-founder and matriarch of the Timothy Hill Ranch, Riverhead, New York, died May 17, 2021. Hill's obituary can be found on page 34.

ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER ALLEN



A Time for RENEWAL



We want to give you an opportunity to support our students and Christian education at Harding University.

Every gift, big or small, makes a difference in the lives of our students!

Please make a year-end gift to the Harding Fund by Dec. 31.

“... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength ...”

ISAIAH 40:31

Final Frame

PHOTO BY JEFF MONTGOMERY



The baton passes from Dr. Allen Black to Dr. Mark Powell during Harding School of Theology's Convocation Aug. 23, 2021. Powell, who has been with HST since 2002, became the eighth dean to serve.