

SUMMER 2020

# SBUlife

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

## ALSO INSIDE

*Dr. Matt Kimbrough '08 to lead spiritual development programs.*

PAGE 20



## From classroom to class Zoom

How Southwest Baptist University pivoted from in-person classes to remote learning, and the effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had across campus.

SUMMER 2020

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# IN THIS ISSUE

03

## ACADEMICS PIVOTS

*COVID-19 forces SBU academics to move online only for Spring.*

13

## MISSION PROJECTS GROUNDED

*SBU's Center for Global Connections forced to cancel mission projects for Spring, Summer.*

14

## SPRING COMMENCEMENT RECAP

16

## UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES

*Scheduled activities for student body take on a different look.*

18

## COUNSELING

*SBU's Counseling Services continues to meet students' needs during pandemic.*

19


## ADMISSIONS DETOUR


*Admissions moves visit event days to virtual experiences.*

21


## SBU NEWS

## Read what people are sharing about SBU.

 [@foltz\\_christina](#) You really realize how much you love your school and friends when you're not allowed to step foot on campus for three weeks. Wow, I miss Bolivar.

 [@DaRealJayrad](#) I can't wait to be back on campus this fall!!!! Ahhhh!!! Such fun times ahead



 [@bebravebren](#) SBU professors are unmatched. The genuine love and concern they have for their students is remarkable.

Missing this school everyday. [@sbuniv](#)



Graduation pictures look a little different this year, but I am so proud of these amazing [#Sbuniv](#) GRADS!!





## LETTER FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

### **Dear alumni and friends,**

Like universities across the country, we endured a crazy spring semester while responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In a matter of days, we transitioned to a remote teaching-and-learning environment. I have never been prouder of the resilience of our faculty, staff, and students in making these extremely difficult and Herculean transitions. You will read more about the transition from the perspectives of faculty, staff, and students in this issue.

To be sure, we firmly believe there is no substitute for a first-class Biblical worldview education, and we are committed to its importance, circumstances notwithstanding. The transition to a remote environment happened because of our commitment to Kingdom works embodied in our mission and out of a love for students, this University, and our Lord.

Once the initial pivot was complete, our Executive Cabinet turned much of its attention to developing a strategic response by developing a Sustainability Plan, announced on June 2. Details of the plan can be found online at [SBUuniv.info/Sustainability](http://SBUuniv.info/Sustainability).

Why did we need to develop this plan? A quick perusal of national headlines reveals the challenges facing higher education. The pandemic is forcing us to change the paradigm—business as usual will not suffice. This plan, however, addresses more than just enrollment concerns presented by the pandemic. It also addresses historic budgetary issues; prepares us for enrollment declines with fewer high school seniors in 2026 and beyond; and creates margin for reinvestment in people, programming, and facilities.

As you probably are aware by now, I like to pose questions—the question I first posed to our Executive Cabinet in late March was, “How do we innovate to create value?” We had to be certain, once the plan is implemented, we would be able to demonstrate we are still achieving our mission and students’ lives are

being transformed.

We also utilized our strategic plan as we developed the Sustainability Plan. We focused on Goal 10: Utilize thoughtful planning and processes that support institutional sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness, for today and in the future. This is the business at hand.

In the end, we think the plan is strategic, data-informed, and innovative. Is it perfect? No. Do we like all the elements? No. It was, however, developed with a consistently applied strategy and moves us toward being well-positioned for future success.

As for our immediate future, we are planning for in-person classes on all campuses this fall. Please make this a matter of prayer—in whatever form this looks like, this must occur. We are exploring all aspects of the campus experience and working to develop a plan for making our campus environment as safe as possible for our students and employees. Because the COVID-19 situation can change quickly, we also are doing contingency planning. As we make plans throughout the summer, we will post updates at [SBUuniv.info/fall2020](http://SBUuniv.info/fall2020).

Lest we become all consumed to the point of paralysis with the issues our society currently faces, may we remember SBU has endured the 1918 pandemic, two world wars, social unrest, and uncertainty. Through it all, the Lord has been steadfast and certain.

Thank you for your support and encouragement. Thank you for your prayers. The Kingdom work at SBU continues because of so many people, including you. May the Lord bless you, and may He bless Southwest Baptist University.

### **Shaping our story together,**

**Eric A. Turner**

President | [Romans 10:15](#)

# In-person to online

COVID-19 global pandemic sends students home to finish semester



By Denise Elson Tucker '89

On March 11, “the world changed,” and Southwest Baptist University had to change with it in order to get through and survive the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Fortunately, conversations began as early as February regarding how SBU would move forward with the remainder of the Spring semester.

“We were seeing the impact of the virus in the news; we were hearing that the West Coast was starting to deal with it, and we were feeling the wave starting to come,” said Dr. Lee Skinkle, provost of SBU. “We started to realize there was probably a point that we would have to address this, and then it started to speed up, everything started to pick up. With the rate of change that was happening, the timing of announcements like the NCAA canceling March Madness, the NBA postponing the season – the bubble very quickly popped. If an organization that is as focused on revenue as the NBA is making the decision to postpone and lose significant revenue, everybody would soon be taking the virus even more seriously.”

SBU President Dr. Eric A. Turner sent an email to the Executive Cabinet on March 2, requesting each member present their COVID responses.

“We’d been watching this early and it was kind of a slow-moving thing,” Turner said. “You didn’t know if it’s going to happen or not, but we wanted to mitigate panic. Our initial approach was a very measured response through press releases

that we were watching this. We started dialing back mission trips first and began slowly dialing back domestic travel, paying attention and watching the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Well, March 11, the world changed – and all of a sudden a measured response was not going to happen.”

The Executive Cabinet met that morning, and at that time, a select number of mission projects still were happening. Turner then received a call from a parent before the team’s afternoon meeting. The country of Colombia was starting to shut down.

“He said, ‘Eric, I see that you have trips going, and I’m concerned they’re not going to be able to get back,’” Turner said. “Well, this was new information we didn’t have that morning. So, we began shutting down the trips.”

Turner, Skinkle and the team met with the academic deans via Zoom during Spring Break, and it was then the decision was made to move the remainder of the Spring semester online. Spring Break was extended another week to allow faculty time to prepare for remote learning and staff the time to adjust to working from home.

“The flattening of the curve argument early on made a lot of sense to me,” Turner said. “I didn’t want to bring 1,000 residential students back and slam the healthcare system.”

Turner said when the gathering mandate changed in just one day from allowing approximately 500 people to gather to

***“My biggest thing was my interaction with my students, but I knew that learning could still occur online.”***



then just 10, that precipitated the decision to transition in-person classes to a virtual environment.

And, it was time for SBU's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to help with the transition.

“As soon as we made the decision, I walked out and called Angie Carr '99, senior director of the CTL, to talk about the transition,” Skinkle said. “This is what we're going to need and let's come up with a plan for how we support our faculty as best we can. We need to provide them with the tools and make those available not just in live presentation, but in recorded delivery.

“Then we came up with a schedule for what content would be presented, focusing on the basics: how to use Blackboard (learning management system), how to use Panopto (video recording and playback software), and then providing opportunity in a more general sense of a brainstorming session so faculty could come together to present concerns, things that they were facing, and learn from each other as we move forward. The Center for Teaching and Learning did a phenomenal job. Angie held those brainstorming sessions weekly, sent out encouraging reminders to faculty and pointed out what we were seeing and observing, and really helped to encourage and support faculty through the process.”

#### **ANTICIPATION, REACTION TO THE MOVE**

As the news was filled of the effects COVID-19 was having across the nation and around the world, a majority of the SBU faculty knew the university was headed toward moving all of its

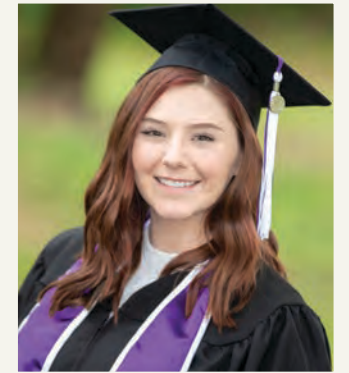
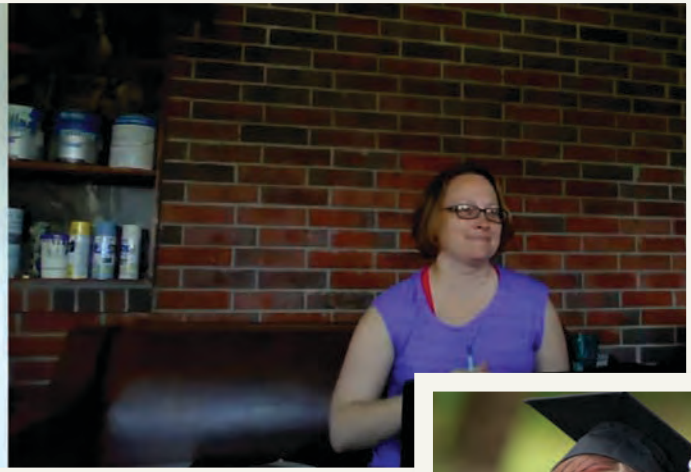
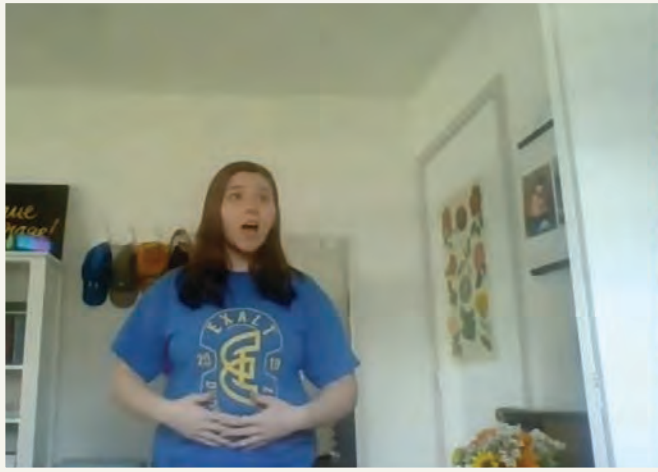
courses online, and even began preparing for the transition.

“Right before we left for Spring Break, I actually went over with my students, ‘If for some reason we don't come back for the rest of semester, this is what our class will look like online,’ and I think that really helped,” said Dr. Angie Brown-Peterson '07, '08, associate professor of business administration. “I still wasn't prepared that we actually wouldn't be coming back, but having that contingency plan and my students knowing before break kind of what to expect, was very valuable.

“The great benefit for me and my students is I already teach online; I teach in a general business online program and our online MBA program. So, for me, I wasn't as worried. My biggest thing was my interaction with my students, but I knew that learning could still occur online.”

Others assisted colleagues with the transition.

“I kind of anticipated the move for the simple fact that we knew that the game had changed for us as far as having contact,” said Dr. Duke Jones, professor of Christian education. “Trying to equip the guys and help them and Redford College to make that transition, I think, was harder for some than it was for others. I had been teaching online since 2000, so it was a much easier transition for me. This is where it got really tricky for us for the simple fact that we had to learn how to do some lectures online and learn new technologies. And for some of the guys it was a learning curve for them. It was hard because they were talking to a camera, and they're not used to that.



**Left:** Dr. Angie Brown-Peterson '07, '08, associate professor of business administration

**Above and far right:** Darby Dougherty, 2020 music graduate, during her voice lesson with Dr. Sarah Howes via Zoom

**Right:** Nancy Delmont, instructor of nursing in the Don and Carrie Babb pre-licensure bachelor of science in nursing program on the Bolivar campus

"We did have to adjust our syllabi. We had to get creative on some of the assignments to accommodate and help our students."

For others, the change was a little more emotional.

"I was very sad because we left for Spring Break thinking that we had a week of relaxation to come back strong for the final part of the semester, and then it was like a shock," said Dr. Jennifer Fox '07, assistant professor of education. "I was sad because I didn't say goodbye to my students. I didn't hug them like I normally would have."

### CHALLENGES WITH THE TRANSITION

For faculty whose courses rely on a more hands-on approach, the transition was more challenging.

"My first reaction was, 'how are we going to prepare our nursing students to be nurses in an online environment,'" said Nancy Delmont, instructor of nursing in the Don and Carrie Babb pre-licensure bachelor of science in nursing program on the Bolivar campus. "Our nursing courses with clinical components were the ones that were most affected because we weren't able to go to the hospitals. Our clinical interactions, where we practice our skills and learn how to be nurses with patients, we didn't get to do those for half the semester."

The nursing programs on the Springfield campus experienced much of the same challenges.

"At first, it seemed a bit impossible because nursing has always relied on training students to care for patients in a

variety of clinical and simulated settings," said Dr. Renay McCarley, head of the Division of Associate Level Nursing and Health Sciences. "Our State Board of Nursing was very supportive as they provided guidance for clinical experiences. I was also sad for our students because I know how much learning and growth occurs in the clinical setting, especially for our graduating students during their practicum clinical experience."

### VALUE OF IN-PERSON LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The arts, including theatre, music and art, also rely on that in-person, hands-on experience, as does biology, exercise science and education with student-teaching and practicums.

"For theatre, the in-person advantages cannot be overstated," said Jonathan Wehmeyer '05, instructor of theatre. "Although I certainly see the value in digital course delivery and am not opposed to exploring this, theatre cannot exist without the physical collaboration that happens in rehearsal, the scene shop, the costume shop, and with the audience. As amazing as Zoom is (and it is remarkable), it cannot replicate the interpersonal connections necessary for theater training."

Collaboration also is important for music students.

"The arts thrive on live interactions with each other, whether that be on the stage between a singer and a pianist, or a choir being able to hear one another and respond to a director," said Dr. Sarah Howes, assistant professor of voice. "We need that close proximity to each other to really be able to

respond to one another's emotions, etc. Let's face it, we all, as humans, need the in-person connection. I think it is the greatest problem with this generation. It's too easy to isolate. Our souls need to interact with other souls."

Jason Halverson, assistant professor in exercise science, was able to take advantage of his college- and high school-aged children being home to help demonstrate lessons.

"I took a portable massage table home, and since my children were home, I used them as props to demonstrate activities because some of the special tests that we do for hands-on things are presented in the text, but it's so much more beneficial seeing them, of course. I would usually demonstrate that in the class and then have them practice it. I only had the demonstration, so we got a little creative. I had my kids at home. They helped me out with the modeling and filming."

### THE STUDENT ADJUSTMENT

Losing that in-person learning experience was difficult for students, but faculty also found students to be resilient and flexible.



**Above:** Blaise Torrence, 2020 accounting graduate with mother, Chastity Propst, during virtual commencement ceremony

**Top, right:** Dr. Duke Jones, professor of Christian education

**2nd, right:** Dr. John Murphy, assistant professor of biology

**3rd, right:** Jason Halverson, assistant professor in exercise science

**4th, right:** Dr. Bill DuVall, associate professor of psychology

"I think for some of my students who are more extroverts, it got a little progressively harder throughout the semester, just not having that kind of social interaction, that kind of contact," said Dr. Bill DuVall, associate professor of psychology. "Those are also the ones who were most faithful for showing up, if I did any live Zoom scenarios, instead of just video lectures. I think it was a combination of still being able to see my face as I'm lecturing, which provides at least a little bit of a sense of normalcy."

"Overall, the students preferred the in-person classes," said Kristin Hamm '09, instructor of accounting. "Learning can be more difficult in an online setting. I also missed sending off the seniors. However, the students were understanding of the situation and were flexible through the process."

Blaise Torrence, who graduated in May with a bachelor of science degree in accounting, said the quarantine revealed how vital routine is for proper learning.

"Without the structure of the classroom, the pattern of regular homework, and the camaraderie of classmates, my sense of discipline and ability to retain information plummeted," Torrence said. "But, I scheduled every hour of my day and gave myself deadlines by setting online meetings with classmates or professors to talk about the assignment."

"Professors were incredibly encouraging. They understood that education is not going to function perfectly in this kind of environment, so they generously forgave misunderstandings, relaxed deadlines, and simplified assignments that would typically involve a lot of face-to-face discussions."

### VIRTUAL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

The Spring commencement ceremony also looked different. Instead of rescheduling an in-person event, SBU held a virtual ceremony on May 16 – the original date for graduation.

"We wanted to celebrate and we wanted to provide some closure to the semester because it had shifted abruptly," Turner said of the decision to hold a virtual ceremony. "We wanted to provide something, a bookend to the semester."

"I know it looked different, but I will say, in retrospect, having the slides and the personal comments added so much to the ceremony and are elements we would like to add in future in-person commencement exercises."

Although it was not the experience they had planned for, the May 2020 graduates still appreciated being recognized.

"I graduated in my pajamas, sitting on my couch," said Darby Dougherty, who graduated with a bachelor of music degree with elective studies in business. "It honestly didn't feel like I had just graduated college. Friends and family weren't gathered round, there wasn't a graduation party to plan, and I received congratulations through social media likes instead of in-person hugs. It honestly felt very incomplete, but it was really nice of SBU to still honor the Class of 2020 and make us feel like we weren't forgotten. I appreciate the efforts the school put in."

“Though I missed out on sentimental moments with peers, this was, by far, the most comfortable graduation I have ever attended,” Torrence said. “I sat on a couch with my feet propped up, talking and laughing through the whole thing with my family. I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

#### **MOVING FORWARD**

Having made the shift to a remote learning environment, faculty are looking at what they’ve learned and how they can use that in their classrooms moving forward.

“I’ve never used online discussion boards,” said Dr. John Murphy, assistant professor of biology. “I’m not a real tech person, but my students actually really liked the discussion boards and it allowed them to kind of chat back and forth, so that’s something I’ll definitely keep in. The other thing I found is this new software that’s available – Complete Anatomy – that I used. My students just loved it, and so I think we’re going to bring that into the class and continue to utilize that as well.”

“We can be very flexible as educators and meet students where they are through technology,” McCarley said. “The Zoom sessions with students were a nice form of communication.”

#### **EXCITED TO RETURN**

The SBU faculty can all agree they are eager to see their students face-to-face this fall.

“I’m super-excited to be making art, and helping others make art, in the flesh with those students who fall in love with the process of creating with painting and drawing materials,” said Chadd Caldwell, assistant professor of art. “I miss seeing the ‘aha’ moments and growth.”

“I want to give each one of them a hug,” Fox said. “I’m not sure if I’ll be able to do that by that time, but I want to show them how much I am ready to teach them and have conversations with them and listen to them. I can’t wait. I’m kind of counting down the weeks until we can be on campus and just be able to see them. One thing

**“We had the assurance of our salvation throughout this process.”**



that I regret is not being able to do that with our graduates.”

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

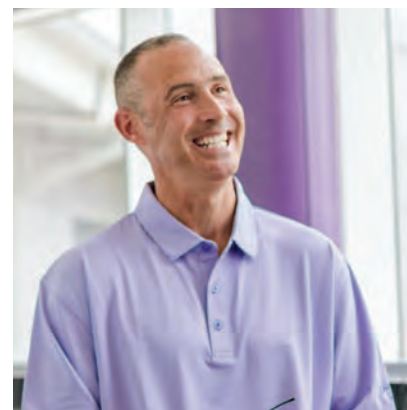
Dr. Skinkle was impressed by how the SBU faculty responded to the quick transition.

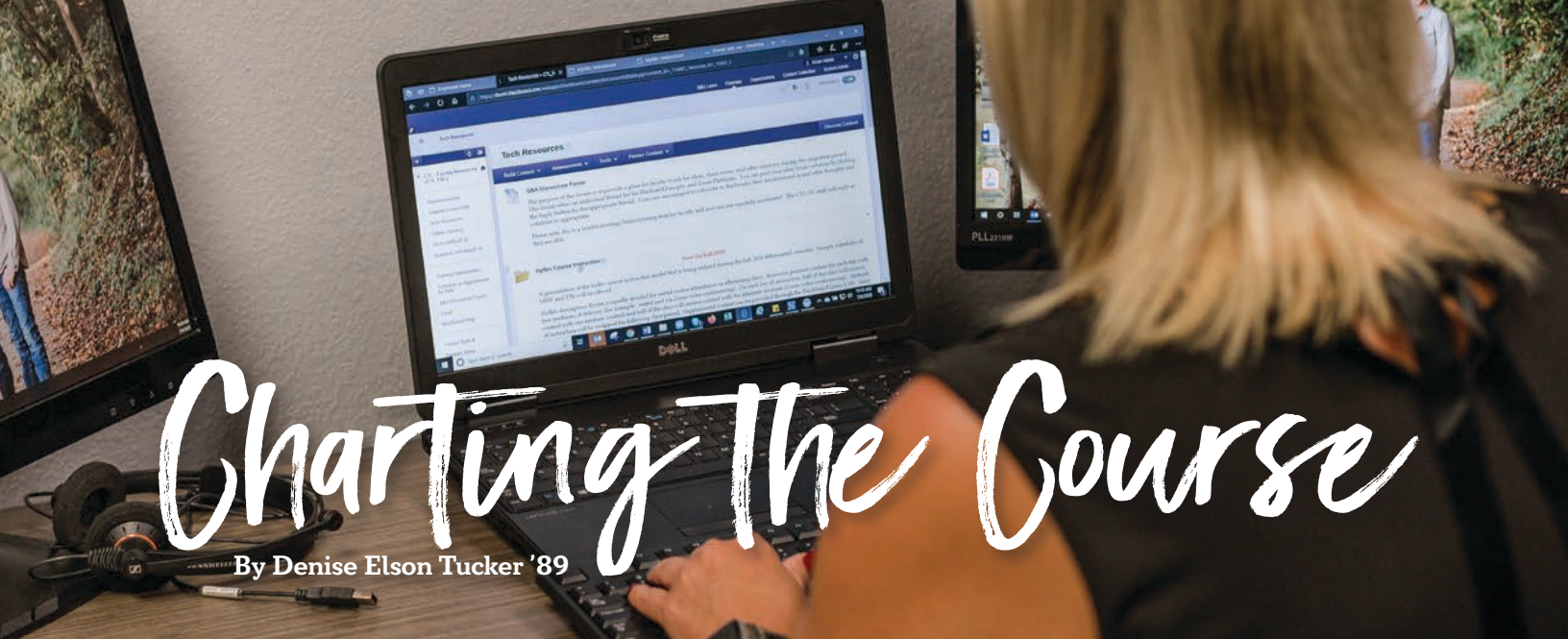
“I was blown away by how effectively the faculty were able to make the transition,” Skinkle said. “Even those who were self-admittedly not tech savvy demonstrated a willingness to make the adaptations that were necessary. And, to me, that’s one of the favorite things I have about working at SBU is the spirit of collaboration. We knew it was not an easy transition, but faculty were able to step up to meet the challenge put before them.”

And, Jones said it was important how quickly SBU was able to react to the global pandemic.

“I think we were more proactive than we were reactive,” Jones said. “And, for me as a faculty member and even for our students, and for our alumni, we didn’t miss a beat. I think that shows you the Christ-centeredness of us as a university, that we had the assurance of our salvation throughout this process. Knowing that and taking away the fear and the anxiety allowed us to go into action.”

“I’m very proud of my faculty. I’m very proud of the students. I’m very proud of the staff and the support and the administration to get us through this, and I think the Lord came out on top. For me, that’s what discipleship is all about.” ■





# Charting The Course

By Denise Elson Tucker '89

## ***SBU's Center for Teaching and Learning provides guidance for remote learning***

**T**he Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at Southwest Baptist University has a full slate when it comes to designing and developing online courses for SBU faculty, while also managing dual credit courses.

But, when the decision was made for SBU to transition from in-person to online-only learning, the workload for the CTL was ramped up in a hurry.

Leading the transition for the team was Angela Carr '99, senior director of the Center for Teaching and Learning.

"We all started having conversations," Carr said as the transition to remote learning was beginning nationwide. "I'm a part of a lot of groups associated with other universities, and that was the topic for about two weeks coming in.

"So, while things were happening on the East Coast, it seemed crazy to think it would happen here. But, we started talking; more so about 'What's our capacity? What could we do? How many courses could we design quickly?' That's where my brain went first – how many courses could we design super-fast to get through the rest of the semester. And, I think our answer emerged before we even had a chance to think, 'We can't design. We just can't do it. There's not enough time.'"

David Marsch '97, associate director of online independent study and online dual credit, said conversations began as early as a week or two before Spring Break.

"We were thinking through what might be essential structures that might need to be in every course and that type of thing," Marsch said of the early discussions. "It came together surprisingly well and easy."

Carr said once she was notified that SBU would transition to remote learning, she spent the next 24 hours putting together a resource on Blackboard, SBU's learning management system (LMS).

"This was before our team even had a meeting or anything," Carr said. "I just stayed up all night and put together a resource. Then, we all had a Zoom meeting on the Sunday before Spring Break was supposed to start."

At that point, said Peggy Walden '07, instructional designer for the Springfield campus, the CTL thought it was still going to have the opportunity to conduct face-to-face training sessions with faculty.

"We thought we were going to do the whole 10-people limit face-to-face trainings, back-to-back all day long," Walden said. "Then, Angie said, 'I've already put this course shell together and we're just going to do this online.'"

Carr said the thought of doing multiple face-to-face trainings with faculty, while also practicing social distancing, felt overwhelming at the time.

"We were thinking we were going to be running simultaneous trainings, somebody's going to have to be fielding the phones and the emails, and we knew that there was a rush that was going to come," Carr said. "We knew what topics we needed to cover. Our main focus was Blackboard, which is the LMS, Panopto, so instructors could make video recordings, and then Zoom, so they could host online classes to synchronous video."

Carr said the CTL basically took what it planned to do seated and quickly migrated it to an online environment.

"I feel like we kind of did that pre-emptively," Carr said. "We might have done that maybe a day or two before we realized it wasn't even going to be an option to go seated. I remember just asking Dr. Lee Skinkle – SBU provost - 'Is there any way we could do this in terms of offering webinars.' Then, we had a meeting and laid out all our topics. We did 13 different training sessions, and we literally had no starter content provided at all."

The team would meet every morning for about an hour to prep itself for the day ahead.

"We knew that we were not only training, we were also fielding emails and taking one-on-one appointments," Carr said. "We had to come up with a way to kind of triage one-on-one appointments."

The CTL would repeat the same routine each day: meet at 9 a.m., discuss what happened the previous day, and conduct hour-and-a-half-long training sessions with faculty.

"We recorded every single one of them and then uploaded them into that resource that was built inside of Blackboard," Carr said. "At the same time, we were continuing to build resources. We really felt like we had five days to get all 270 faculty members ready to present their first online course."

Walden said it was like a week's worth of Groundhog Days.

"It was some of the longest days I think I've ever worked," Carr said. "I can't remember ever rolling out of bed and working, and then just working into the night. But, we talked about it. We were oddly invigorated that week."

Austin Bunn '05, lead instructional designer and assistant director of online learning, added, "Working from home was very productive. We didn't say, 'We can't do this. We're not in our element.' We were still in our element, and we capitalized on it."

On the suggestion of a faculty member, the CTL team began hosting weekly meetings that allowed faculty to learn and share ideas about remote learning.

"We started doing them every single week, and people just kept coming," Carr said. "We would meet as a team every week, and there was really no agenda; it was a lot of updates. It was refreshing to see different departments come together, graduate and undergraduate, and different campuses be represented. Everybody just shared ideas and asked questions."

"Our faculty really stepped it up. Our theme was 'just do your best.' That was what we encouraged people to do was just 'do the best that you can do.' As long as you do your best, your students are going to be OK – and they did."

Carr said the purpose of the CTL is to promote online learning – "it's what we do."

"The things that we taught people to do are things we've wanted to teach everyone to do for a long time," Carr said. "It's just now it was a necessity, and so we were really happy to be able to have the opportunity to do that."

And, the team has learned to expect the unexpected, and to be prepared for anything.

"I would hope that what we've learned from this is not just a solution for a pandemic, but for any disaster, whether it be a tornado or the next ice storm, or whatever," Walden said. "I

would hope that we've learned as a university that we can be flexible and agile for disasters. And hopefully, the faculty will tuck that in the back of their head, and be like, 'OK. I can do this, if I have to.'"

Carr said SBU may have been caught off-guard in March, but there is no reason to be caught off-guard in the future.

"This fall, we can prepare," Carr said. "I'm telling everybody to plan their classes like they're going to have to be online, and then if they're not, you're still ready."

"We are not facing the fall semester with fear. We're actually just ready to serve in any way that we're needed."

### **ITS ALSO PROVIDES SUPPORT**

In order to ensure approximately 300 faculty and staff would be able to work from home and students were able to complete coursework, SBU's Information and Technology Services had to identify potential problem areas and find solutions.

"We had faculty, staff and students that did not have the technology to work from home or take classes online," said David Bolton '79, chief technology officer at SBU. "From a technology perspective, the University's computer systems

were in good shape. Having moved most mission-critical systems to the cloud proved to be extremely beneficial."

Bolton said the transition to working and learning from home went as smoothly as

possible. He also said that everyone was patient as ITS worked through technical issues such as providing tools and hardware to those who needed it, providing telephone communication and managing security issues.

"I was honestly so blessed by the cooperative spirit of our faculty, staff, and especially students," Bolton said. "Faculty and staff were appreciative, patient and understanding, and our students were grateful for the assistance we were able to provide many of them. I was pleasantly surprised and very appreciative of our technology partners. We had companies providing free software to students so they could continue their studies. Many companies expanded their services and waived usage fees to provide us with what we needed. The higher education technology market stepped it up during this time in providing products, services, and assurance that they were in our corner and willing to assist in whatever way needed."

"I think overall the University adjusted well. Of course, there were some bumps in the road. When you have to transition in a matter of days to a whole new way of teaching and conducting business, there will be issues. ITS received many emails and words of encouragement and thanks from faculty and staff for being available to them when needed." ■

We are not facing the fall semester with fear. We're actually just ready to serve in any way that we're needed.



# OUT AT HOME

## ***SBU spring athletes lose seasons, careers to COVID-19***

**By Denise Elson Tucker '89**

**W**hen the National Basketball Association announced on March 11 it would be suspending its season indefinitely, that appeared to be the domino that set the rest of the sports world's schedules in motion as organizations began to postpone or cancel seasons and events.

"When I talk to people about the COVID-19 situation, most of them had an 'aha' moment when they realized this was a lot more serious than they had imagined," said Mike Pitts '85, '10, athletic director at SBU. "My own 'aha' moment was on Wednesday, March 11. I was with my wife and best friend at a local restaurant at about 8:30 in the evening when I saw on Twitter that the NBA had canceled its season. I couldn't believe it.

"That was only a little over three months ago, but it seems like three years ago. Very soon after that announcement, many other sports leagues and associations started canceling, which included the NCAA contests."

On March 12, the NCAA canceled the men's and women's basketball championships and SBU decided to suspend activities for that weekend, while the Great Lakes Valley Conference announced on March 13 it was suspending all intercollegiate athletic activities and canceling the 2020 GLVC Championships.

"When we met the Wednesday before Spring Break, we had talked to the team," said Chris Martin '07, '09 (pictured above), SBU head baseball coach and associate athletic director of operations. "When I came to practice that day, I kind of thought we were probably in a little bit of trouble with our season. So, we talked to the guys at the end of practice that day and I addressed the situation and said, 'Hey, we're going to get impacted by this. I don't know to what degree, but we're going to be impacted by it.

"Thursday, we came to work and we had Illinois-Springfield coming to town that weekend. They were in St. Louis practicing, and Mike Pitts and Dr. Eric Turner (SBU president) met and decided to suspend activities for SBU for that weekend. We were

able to get Springfield to turn around and go home, and we had a meeting that afternoon with the guys. We kind of figured it was over at that point. We hugged and that was it. That was the last time I saw the guys."

At that same time, SBU's men's and women's indoor track and field teams were competing at the NCAA National Championships in Birmingham, Ala., when they learned that not only were the indoor championships canceled, but so was their entire outdoor spring season.

"We were all getting ready to go out and have our pre-race meal on Thursday when I received the notification," said Corey McElhaney '06, '12, SBU head track and field and cross country coach. "We immediately packed up and started toward Bolivar. Qualifying for Nationals is a big accomplishment, so on the way home, we tried to stop and have a nice meal and let the team enjoy each other's company in the midst of what was going on. We knew it would be difficult missing out on Nationals. With it being Spring Break, once we arrived in Bolivar, everyone said their goodbyes and went their separate ways."

### **SEASONS LOST, CAREERS ENDED**

Of the spring sports in session, seasons were shut down beginning with men's and women's tennis on March 8. The tennis programs had played eight of their 21 scheduled matches, baseball had played 18 of its 50 games, softball had competed in 19 of its 55 games and track and field had its entire spring season wiped out.

For most of the 45 senior athletes, their careers were over, though the NCAA ruled that Division II spring athletes could return for one more season, if they so chose.

"We tried to make sure we took care of them, if they wanted to come back, if they didn't, if they were graduating, etc.," Martin said of his 17 seniors. "That was the first thought, that process

to help those guys out, and then just work through the next steps as far as scheduling.”

McElhaney said he had a hard time sharing the news with his athletes, 17 of whom were seniors.

“It was devastating and very difficult to tell the team,” McElhaney said. “Each one of them had worked extremely hard and earned the opportunity to compete for their university on the national stage. To have that taken away was heartbreaking. There were a lot of tears shed and, to be honest, I told them I didn’t have a good explanation or answer.

“I have always believed things happen for a reason and a bigger purpose than we can comprehend. I just tried to help them see that side of things, but was struggling myself. I relied on faith in knowing God had a plan.”

#### **REMOTE LEARNING**

Not only were athletes faced with their seasons coming to a halt, they also were faced with finishing their academic semester at home online.

“Traditionally, our program’s been strong in the classroom,” Martin said. “This was our 10th straight semester over 3.0 – we ended up with a 3.24 as a team. I felt like the guys really did a good job working with the excellent faculty and staff we have here and took care of business, so we’re really proud of the work they did. While they were away, they probably had more time to focus on what they were doing without baseball, but I thought they did an outstanding job taking care of their academics.”

“One of the best things about SBU is the atmosphere and loving faculty and staff,” McElhaney said. “I think the team really missed that aspect going online and will appreciate in-person classes more now.”

Pitts said what makes this situation unique is “there is still so much we do not know,” and noted that SBU’s coaches have been flexible the past three months.

“I have 5-6 meetings each week with different stakeholders, who are trying to

unwind this and think about the future,” Pitts said. “I think back to when this all hit us in mid-March; it is astonishing to think about what we did not know at that time. We did our best to keep our programs updated with information as we received it.

“I know this has been incredibly difficult for our coaches and teams, but they have responded like champions.”

#### **LESSONS LEARNED**

With every disappointment, there can always be something learned from those difficult times – especially in sports.

“This pandemic was something that was out of our control,” Martin said. “For us, there’s going to be difficulties in life, and baseball, I think, can prepare you so much for life because there’s so many things you can’t control. But, you can’t let that affect the way you prepare, the way you treat people.

“Hopefully, our players see this was a great teaching point. If we can get through this with a great attitude and perseverance, we can attack a lot of things when we get out in life. That’s really the point of sports.”

McElhaney hopes his athletes learn that life is special and that they will take advantage of relationships they have and blessings they receive.

“It’s so easy to take all the blessings we get on a daily basis for granted,” McElhaney said. “It is also very easy to get entangled in all the negatives and stress in life and start feeling sorry for ourselves. Romans 5 serves as a good reminder that even through all our trials we can have hope in God and his love for us.”

In the end, Pitts said, everything is really about relationships.

“I know that going through hard things together is a great way to strengthen relationships,” Pitts said. “I don’t know that we will ever get back to where we were, but I do think we can come out of this closer and stronger and more prepared for unexpected things that life throws at us in the future.” ■

## **2019-20 ATHLETIC HONORS**

### **INDOOR TRACK & FIELD**

#### **USTFCCCA All-Region honors**

DJ Davis, Trenton Finley, Tahje Parrish, Elysia Burgos, Tamia Rayford, Alexis Barber, Tabitha Weber, Meleah Ridenour

#### **USTFCCCA All-Americans**

DJ Davis, Trenton Finley, Tahje Parrish, Elysia Burgos, Tamia Rayford, Alexis Barber, Tabitha Weber

### **ACADEMIC HONORS**

#### **GLVC Brother James Gaffney**

##### **Distinguished Scholar Award Winners**

In SBU’s first year as full-time members of the Great Lakes Valley Conference, 42 SBU student-athletes earned the GLVC Brother James Gaffney Distinguished Scholar Award. Named after Brother James Gaffney FSC, former President of Lewis University for more than 27 years and two-term Chair of the GLVC Council of Presidents, the award is presented annually to student-athletes competing in GLVC-sponsored sports who achieve a 4.0 grade point average during the course of the academic year. SBU’s 42 representatives helped the conference to a record-breaking 554 student-athletes who received this award.

#### **SBU’s Gaffney Distinguished Scholar Award Winners**

Ryan Carmack, Baseball

Langdon Gorgon, Baseball

Aaron Head, Baseball

Blake Hobbs, Baseball

Blake Lutgen, Baseball

Brett Mitchell, Baseball

Kaitlyn Root, Women’s Basketball

Regan Tibbits, Women’s Basketball

Daniel Garrison, Men’s Cross Country/Track & Field

Blaine Jimerson, Men’s Cross Country/Track & Field

Samuel McCormick, Men’s Cross Country/Track & Field

Garrett Morey, Men’s Cross Country/Track & Field

Colby Sutton, Men’s Cross Country/Track & Field

Brocklyn Barber, Women’s Cross Country

Amanda Berkstresser, Women’s Cross Country

Memphis Coble, Women’s Cross Country

Cory Hanger, Football

Armani Morato, Men’s Soccer

Alberto Rodriguez, Men’s Soccer

Raegan Edwards, Women’s Soccer

Madeleine Gillman, Women’s Soccer

Lauren Hudak, Women’s Soccer

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ►**

Cassie Katen, Women's Soccer  
 Laura Manuel, Women's Soccer/Track & Field  
 Toni Paterno, Women's Soccer  
 Mikayla Shaughnessy, Women's Soccer  
 Paige St. Pierre, Softball  
 Adham Gaber, Men's Tennis  
 Dona Abohabaga, Women's Tennis  
 Diana Cabrera, Women's Tennis  
 Lola Cincunegui, Women's Tennis  
 Constanca Crespo, Women's Tennis  
 Emma Davis, Women's Tennis  
 Jill Van den Dungen, Women's Tennis  
 Jared Breig, Men's Track & Field  
 Madison Hicks, Women's Track & Field  
 Rachel Holt, Women's Track & Field  
 Chloe Keyes, Women's Track & Field  
 Emma Sloan, Women's Track & Field  
 Chanelle Boldride, Volleyball  
 Makenzie Bouse, Volleyball  
 Mikhaela Cochran, Volleyball

### GEICO TEAM ACADEMIC ALL-CONFERENCE HONORS

In SBU's first year as full-time members of the Great Lakes Valley Conference, seven programs earned GEICO Team Academic All-Conference honors. The GLVC recognizes each team from member institutions that have maintained a 3.30 grade point average for the academic year. The total of 207 honorees shatters the previous Conference record of 152 set last year. Of the 207 honored programs, 138 came from women's sports and 69 from the men's side.

The SBU Women's Tennis team had the highest GPA in the conference for the 2019-20 academic year at 3.91. The other SBU programs that maintained a 3.30 GPA for the year were: Women's Cross Country (3.55), Men's Tennis (3.52), Women's Golf (3.43), Women's Track & Field (3.39), Women's Soccer (3.36), Softball (3.35).

Three league sports – women's soccer (16), women's tennis (15), and women's swimming (10) – saw all of their teams above the 3.30 standard. Among the other notables, women's golf, softball, and volleyball followed with 15 school winners, while men's golf, women's cross country, and women's track and field boasted 13 each.

### GEICO INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC ALL-CONFERENCE HONORS

In SBU's first year as full-time members of the Great Lakes Valley Conference, 201 athletes earned GEICO Academic All-GLVC honors. The GEICO Academic All-GLVC honor is bestowed upon student-athletes

who meet a cumulative GPA of 3.30 over two semesters of an academic year at the institution. These students helped contribute to the GLVC's record-breaking 4,016 students who earned this honor.

**BASEBALL (23):** Kenyon Breedlove, Ryan Carmack, Hayden Crabtree, Blake Ford, Langdon Gordon, Devin Greaff, Aaron Head, Blake Hobbs, Andrew Jones, Caleb Lasher, Ty Lumley, Blake Lutgen, Brett Mitchell, Dalton Morrow, Ryan Rodgers, Bryant Rose, Joshua Scott, Matthew Scott, Kyle Smith, Logan Sorrell, Evan Turnquist, Drew Wagner, Adam White

**MEN'S BASKETBALL (7):** Cameron Altena, Lucas Brueggemann, Mitch Ganote, Houston Johnson, Quinn Nelson, Damian Prgomet, Brady Smith

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL (7):** Brylee Graddy, Alexis Johnson, Bailey Rezabek, Kaitlyn Root, Regan Tibbits, Zahria White, Megan Worthington

**MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY (13):** Daniel Frazee, Daniel Garrison, Tyler Goatley, Jeremy Inman, Jordan Inman, Blaine Jimerson, Matthew McConnell, Samuel McCormick, Jacob McCrackin, Garrett Morey, Will O'Keefe, Colby Sutton, Austin Wilson

**WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY (11):** Alexis Barber, Brocklyn Barber, Amanda Berkstresser, Elysia Burgos, Jordan Campbell, Memphis Coble, Allison Green, Ashley Knoll, Lilly Uding, Morgan Waisner, Lainy Williams

**FOOTBALL (19):** Coleman Baker, Asa Carter, Mason Dunn, Jarvis Funk, Kyle Ghetes, Cory Hanger, Connor Hicks, Jack Huffman, Andrew Jones, Quincy Jones, Jacob LaSalle, Matt Lechuga, Connor LeClair, Jarrett Massie, Luke McKinzie, Trevor Morehead, Dylan Mountain, Nathan Schaffner, Ryan Skeens

**WOMEN'S GOLF (4):** Jaidee Akers, Kathryn Kelley, Makenna Krysl, Kasydie Shipp

**MEN'S SOCCER (8):** Kyle Asbury, Alan Aviles, Nicolas Mattaldi, Armani Morato, Javier Munoz, Alberto Rodriguez, Luis Romero, William vanHoornbeek

**WOMEN'S SOCCER (22):** Samantha Boese, Maya Cofield, Rocci De Felice, Raegan Edwards, Emma Garner, Ashlyn Gibbs, Madeleine Gillman, Rheagan Hancock, Morgan Houston, Lauren Hudak, Cassie Katen, Cat Kubacak, Lexi Lanzafame, Laura Manuel, Sheena Nichol, Toni Paterno, Regan Resz, Raquel Rodriguez, Kylee Ryan, Mikayla Shaughnessy, Mallory Smith, Kailey Weiskopf

**SOFTBALL (14):** Kaitlyn Bagby, Rachel

Brown, Alexis Dock, Taryn Elia, Emma Ezzell, Renae Gillmore, Aubry Hernandez, Nicole Horstman, Morgan McMullin, Samantha Moran, Reilly Rupert, Megan Schellert, Paige St. Pierre, Emma Wood

**MEN'S TENNIS (9):** Ferenc Agoston, Carlos Corser, Logan French, Adham Gaber, Kaden Katzer, Ilyes Khelifi, Alvaro Nunez, Maximiliano Sanoja, David Szeri

**WOMEN'S TENNIS (8):** Dona Abohabaga, Sarah Brown, Diana Cabrera, Lola Cincunegui, Constanca Crespo, Emma Davis, Jill Van den Dungen, Catarina Zheng

**MEN'S TRACK & FIELD (20):** Austin Acosta, Jared Breig, Asa Carter, Wayd Davis, Jordan Dueker, Trenton Finley, Daniel Frazee, Daniel Garrison, Tyler Goatley, Jeremy Inman, Jordan Inman, Blaine Jimerson, Matthew McConnell, Samuel McCormick, Jacob McCrackin, Garrett Morey, Will O'Keefe, Colby Sutton, Drake Wilkerson, Austin Wilson

**WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD (24):** Jaidee Akers, Alexis Barber, Brocklyn Barber, Amanda Berkstresser, Bailey Bowe, Elysia Burgos, Jordan Campbell, Britney Clark, Memphis Coble, Paige Cummings, Alexa Fredrick, Allison Green, Macie Halderman, Madison Hicks, Rachel Holt, Chloe Keyes, Ashley Knoll, Laura Manuel, MeLeah Ridenour, Emma Sloan, Aubrie Sorrell, Lilly Uding, Morgan Waisner, Lainy Williams

**VOLLEYBALL (12):** Lindsey Barton, Chanelle Boldridge, Makenzie Bouse, Mikhaela Cochran, Lauren Compton, Ashleigh DeWees, Sydney Ernsbarger, Samira Ibarra, Rachel Pfeifer, Greysen Roster, Delanie Tipton, Emily Thompson

### TENNIS

ITA All-Americans: Adham Gaber, Jill Van den Dungen, Catarina Zheng

CoSIDA Academic All-District: Jill Van den Dungen

### FOOTBALL

Cory Hanger received the GLVC Council of Presidents' Academic Excellence Award. Those who receive the award, "exemplify the outstanding student-athletes in the GLVC. Each honoree has exhausted his or her eligibility in the intercollegiate sport in which they participated and maintained at least a 3.5 grade point average throughout their academic career. In addition, to be eligible for the award, the student-athlete must have competed in the GLVC for a minimum of two years and completed 96 credit hours. A student-athlete can only earn the distinguished honor one time in his or her career."



# Projects put on hold

## COVID-19 cancels CGC mission projects

By Denise Elson Tucker '89

Part of the mission of Southwest Baptist University is to prepare students to be servant leaders in a global society. But, as the world began to shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic, SBU's Center for Global Connections had to keep its mission project teams home as the campus transitioned to remote learning for the remainder of the semester.

"I believe one of the strengths of this university is the personal relationships that are formed between students and faculty/staff, and an online education is much less personal and relational," said Diana Gallamore '91, director of the Center for Global Connections and Travel Stewardship. "I was disappointed in knowing that the spiritual growth and education students could gain would now be altered due to the inability to participate in a cross-cultural learning experience. I recognize the need to keep our students safe, and agree with the decision made, but disappointment cannot be avoided."

The CGC had four mission projects planned during Spring Break, but a few days before those teams were to depart, the University had to make the decision to cancel those trips in order to ensure the teams' health and safety as conditions surrounding COVID-19 were changing rapidly worldwide.

The CGC faced additional challenges of communicating with students who were no longer on campus, reaching airlines to inquire about cancellations and dealing with the disappointment of paying for costs "that were expended on a mission that was not completed," Gallamore said.

About a week after the Spring Break trips were canceled, the 10 summer projects also were called off.

"Since the students were so far along in the process of preparing for their summer mission, a decision was made to continue their mission education training online to complete their educational instruction, although this greatly affected their learning and experience since they could no longer participate in

the actual mission," Gallamore said.

Kelly Rehm, assistant director of the CGC, said that the Spring and Summer teams continued to meet by Zoom and students still will receive academic and Community, Life & Worship credit for their missions.

"I've been very encouraged to see many student missionaries planning to use their refunds and airline credits for a future mission trip," said Rehm, who noted a positive that came from the cancellation of the Colorado mission project originally planned for August.

"This setback resulted in a new expanded year-round outdoor ministry club, 'Wild at Heart,'" Rehm said. "Thus far, the student interest has been tremendous. This new endeavor for the CGC comes after years of outdoor ministry in Russia and Spain, as well as many weekends hiking and camping in Arkansas."

The Wild at Heart team will travel to sites in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Michigan and Colorado, where they will camp, hike, share their testimony and the Gospel on this physically demanding trip. Locally, the Polk County Team transitioned the Good News Club ministry to email and mail for the children at Bolivar Schools.

Although their immediate plans did not come to completion, Gallamore said that's out of the CGC's hands.

"God is in control," Gallamore said. "He always has been and always will be. We can make the best plans and have great goals, but ultimately,

the service and ministry that we work to provide for our SBU students is for His glory. He still calls each of us to share that good news with others, regardless of where we are – in our homes, with our family during a quarantine, in our schools, on our campuses and among the nations. We have a story to share that can change others' lives and that isn't determined by our location." ■

**CGC events originally scheduled for Spring Break, Summer 2020**

**SPRING BREAK**  
Honduras  
South Dakota  
Mexico  
Colombia

**SUMMER**  
Pyrenees  
Colorado  
Cheyenne River  
Greece  
Ireland  
Central Asia  
Poland  
Cuba  
Uruguay  
Ukraine

⦿Projects for 2020 included 30 teams and 273 participants.



# *2020 GRADUATION*

320 undergraduate. 210 graduate. 530 total graduates.



1.



3.



2.



4.



5.



6.

**1. LIFE BEAUTIFUL AWARDS:** The award is given annually to an exceptional man and woman in SBU's spring graduating class whose outstanding scholarship and character demonstrates that they live a "life beautiful."

Sam Jones '20, graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor of science degree in mathematics and computer science. He has served as a resident assistant at Gott Hall, participated and led a "Freedom in Christ" men's discipleship small group and volunteered with Polk County K-Life's student ministry, where he led a middle school small group. He will be employed at Duck Creek after graduation.

Jones is the son of Drs. Tom and Sarah Jones of Bolivar.

**2. Sarah Lewright '20** (Life Beautiful recipient), graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of social work degree with a minor in intercultural studies. She is a member of the Phi Alpha Honor Society and was named as a 2020 outstanding social work student. Sarah has participated in five global projects with SBU's Center for Global Connections, including to Baja, Mexico, Zimbabwe, Senegal and Cuba. She has volunteered as a leader for church camps, has led worship, served as an AWANA leader and a committee member of Mid-Lakes

Baptist Association, and has volunteered with Exodus Ministry.

She is married to Hayden Lewright and is the daughter of Ken and Stacie Spurgeon of Stockton.

**3. COMMENCEMENT CONGRATULATIONS FROM SBU ALUMNI:** This year, in lieu of a normal commencement address, a group of SBU Alumni, representing all four campuses and a large variety of programs, was assembled to deliver words of encouragement and congratulations, via a video presentation, to the Class of 2020.

"Bearcats, in the words of one of my favorite authors, Morgan Harper Nichols, 'Keep on being you. Keep on doing those beautiful, impactful, honest things you do. Out here in this world, we need more people like you.'" – Emily Raines, Class of 2018, '19

 Watch full video at [SBUuniv.info/Congrats2020](http://SBUuniv.info/Congrats2020)

**4.** 2020 graduate, Jordan Martin, celebrates commencement from home.

**5.** @emmakayezzell (via Instagram): Graduation Day! Here's to more school.

**6. ORIEN B. HENDREX AWARD RECIPIENT:** Dr. Bill DuVall, associate professor of psychology on the Bolivar campus, received the Orien B. Hendrex Distinguished Teacher Award.

DuVall has been a full-time faculty member at SBU and a part of the Bearcat Family since the fall of 2015. He is married to Julie, a University Success Center faculty member. They have three children, Elijah, Aidan and Abbey.

The award is presented annually to a faculty member who has been judged by the previous three years' graduating classes to be outstanding in both teaching ability and personal guidance. The SBU Board of Trustees designated this award in memory of Hendrex, a former academic dean.



# Online Community

By Denise Elson Tucker '89

## University Activities forced to get creative during pandemic

An essential piece of the college experience is the social component, and it can be hard when that is taken away.

When campus closed down, sending everyone home to transition to remote learning, also meant that the University Activities Council (UAC) had to find a way to fill the social void left because of COVID-19.

"I had kind of come to grips with it beforehand," said Dr. Nathan Penland '06 (pictured above), director of leadership and student engagement. "I meet with my students on Friday mornings, and that Friday morning I gave them a heads-up and said, 'You need to tell your friends, see you later for now.' They didn't expect it. They thought maybe two or three weeks and I said, 'No, you really need to.' You didn't anticipate that it might be for the rest of the semester.

"I actually told my wife that morning, 'I'm going to tell my students goodbye this morning,' and it was hard. I wasn't surprised, but disappointed, because we're here to be with students, not to be online."

And, being there with – and for – the students is key to the UAC's mission.

"It's essential," Penland said. "Studies have shown that involvement increases even academic success. So, I don't see us here just for entertainment. It's for their overall health and overall success of their academics. Our programming is here for fun, but it's also here to intellectually stimulate and provide emotional support."

Not only did the student body miss out on the UAC events in person, but the leadership also was faced with the disappointment, as well as trying to find a way to keep students encouraged and engaged from home.

"It was incredibly discouraging for myself, personally, as I was excited for the student body to experience what we had spent the past few months planning," said Sarah Chipman, a senior biology/pre-physical therapy major and marketing and publicity chair of the UAC. "We had a full lineup of activities planned, including a concert with Tim Halperin, guest speakers hosting a discussion on the enneagram and the Mozarkian (SBU's formal).

"I think these activities are of paramount importance for all SBU students. UAC events were how I met some of my first friends as a freshman at SBU. I love being a part of the community building that happens within each activity we put on."

The week before Spring Break was to start, SBU had just wrapped up the annual Mr. and Miss Southwest pageant on March 6. That would be the last in-person event to be held during the spring semester, so the UAC had to quickly come up with a plan.

"The extra week sure did help," Penland said. "I think SBU was smart to have a second week of Spring Break to allow for all of us to figure that out, but we had to move pretty

quick.

"What we learned through the process, though, was as we started planning, the mantra that I kept reminding my students was 'something is better than nothing.' So, whether I was in class or we were doing activities, it's good to have something on the calendar and offer something better than nothing."

But, Chipman also wanted that "something" to be meaningful. "One of the biggest challenges we faced was how to encourage student participation in the activities we were putting on," Chipman said. "It was an obstacle to make sure that our events were not becoming white noise with so many other

Our programming is here for fun, but it's also here to intellectually stimulate and provide emotional support.

programs and activities also being online.”

And, how did the UAC make that possible?

“We almost had to start with a clean slate, then use the connections that we had to come up with something very quickly,” Penland said. “We typically take the summer or December and January to make a full calendar. We had a week to figure it out.

“Our approach was to make sure we had weekly connections with students through social media, through the portal, through whatever means we had. My students would often do a live broadcast every week. We would have anything from an instructional ‘this is how you do something’ event to having Dr. Turner on one week. We had guests from the events we were coming up with who would do interviews.”

Having to quickly find a way to turn in-person, social activities to an online format has prepared the UAC for alternative ways to present activities to the student body in the future, should social

distancing still be in effect and/or travel restricted.

“I think we have to have some things in our back pocket ready to go at any moment because we saw how fast they could change,” Penland said. “I think what’s really neat about what happened

was that we can think about activities differently. One of our most successful events during the pandemic was Tim Halperin’s concert. We probably averaged 300 viewers at a time. The next day, there were around 5,000 views. It was awesome.”

The quick turnaround was also a teaching moment for the UAC leadership.

“This has spurred me to think more creatively and out of the box in planning future events,” Chipman said. “I have learned the value of flexibility and having

a contingency plan while getting ready for activities. I learned that though this was not the reality I anticipated, it was not wasted time. There was a purpose for the way the semester unfolded, and this motivated me to simply be faithful where God had put me, each activity, each day at a time.” ■



**Tim Halperin performing during his livestream concert sponsored by SBU**



Chance Bedell, an interdisciplinary studies major from Odessa, and Paige Phipps, an athletic training/pre-physical therapy major from Ozark, won the titles of Mr. and Miss Southwest at the annual pageant on March 6 – the final UAC in-person event of the semester.

Eight candidates were nominated by SBU faculty and staff and voted upon by the student body for the purpose of selecting a pair of students to represent the Bearcat family for the next year.

This year’s candidates also included: Lindsey Appleby of Springfield, Mo.; Ashton Hensley of Istanbul, Turkey; Sarah Swainston of Warrensburg, Mo.; Jordan Ashford of St. Louis, Mo.; Trevor Bellmyer of Odessa, Mo.; and Brooks Lucas of Divernon, Ill.

The pageant featured introductory videos and a talent presentation by each candidate, followed by a round of

online voting to determine the top four candidates, who then participated in question-and-answer sessions. A final round of voting determined the winners.

Mr. and Miss Southwest 2019 – Parker Hall and Kailee Knudsen – invited the 2018 Mr. and Miss Southwest, as well as the 2020 candidates, to participate in a community service project they hope will continue. The 2020 project was at Service Oriented Aviation Readiness (S.O.A.R.) in Bolivar, which is a nonprofit corporation whose primary purpose is mission aviation.

The beginnings of the “Miss Southwest” pageant date back to the 1930s, with “Mr. Southwest” being added in 1963. The pageant, which was organized by the students of SBU’s University Activities Council, was one of the keynote happenings of Bearcat Days, a visit event in which admitted students considering SBU attendance were hosted on campus. ■



Dr. Debbie Walker and Bill Walkup, SBU Counseling Services

# Counseling IN A PANDEMIC

By Denise Elson Tucker '89

Life for a college student is difficult enough without a global pandemic being thrown into the mix. At SBU, students have counseling services available to them to not only deal with everyday issues, but those related to the remote learning that ended the Spring semester because of COVID-19.

Dr. Debbie Walker '87, a licensed psychologist and coordinator of the SBU Counseling Services for the past five years, manages more than a full caseload during a regular semester with the help of Bill Walkup '83, a licensed clinical social worker and assistant professor of psychology at SBU, as well as three master's-level counseling interns from neighboring universities.

With campus being closed and classes moved to online delivery because of COVID-19, SBU Counseling Services had to find a way to deliver its services.

"Right before Spring Break, we learned that our break would be extended by one week, so I began realizing at that point, chances were we would need to implement some telehealth services," Walker said. "I looked into Zoom, but the free version of Zoom we have is not really HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) secure and HIPAA compatible. So, I had colleagues sending me information about free webinars, which are not generally free. But, during the COVID crisis, many of these agencies, including the American Psychological Association (APA), offered free training for telehealth.

"Over Spring Break, myself, Mr. Walkup and my three interns, as well as Jennifer Maloney on our Springfield campus, registered for all the telehealth training so that we could begin implementing. It was a process – hours and hours of training, getting ourselves ready. It requires all new consents because the students have consented to in-person treatment, they have not consented to telehealth. We had to send students a document, which they signed electronically consenting to telehealth."

Walker also said there are some things Counseling Services was

not able to do through telehealth.

"We tried very hard to continue working with the students who were already receiving our services on a case-by-case basis," Walker said. "Our students who went back home out of state, we were not able to continue services for them because we're licensed only in Missouri.

"I ended up researching their community, trying to figure out what was close to them. If a student had insurance, I could do some research and see which providers were within their network and what the options were for the student."

Walker said that while having the technology available to be able to continue providing mental health services to students during the pandemic, nothing beats the benefits of in-person classes and counseling sessions.

"There was so much isolation, just no contact all of a sudden with your classmates and with your friends," Walker said. "The seniors, especially, there were people they just simply weren't going to see in person anymore because that was just it. There's just no substitute for that in-person interaction, even if you are having to maintain physical distance of 6 feet. You're still in the presence of other people, and there's that potential for dialogue, that potential for interaction, and just the energy exchange between people."

Walker has been impressed with the flexibility and adaptability of everyone on campus during the pandemic, and considers SBU a pro-mental health campus.

"I know there's still stigma and that's something we've been battling since I entered this profession, but it's generally a very pro-mental health campus," Walker said. "Student Life and our resident directors are very well trained to spot problems, and they're very quick to refer.

"I think the faith community, in general, may have room for growth in that area, but I think SBU, specifically, is maybe a little bit ahead of the game. They're very, very supportive of mental health efforts." ■

## SBU Counseling Services provides:

- Short-term counseling for students
- Assistance for students for referrals to off-campus resources
- Skills development for academic success
- Support, brief counseling for students recovering from sexual violence and/or interpersonal violence
- Assessments and referrals to other campus resources and/or community resources
- Mental health consultation, education and outreach programs
- Pre-marital counseling

# Recruiting takes a detour

By Denise Elson Tucker '89

Not only has the COVID-19 global pandemic had an effect on the lives of current SBU students, it also has changed how the Office of Undergraduate Admissions recruits and welcomes prospective students and their families to campus.

"Having to pivot so quickly to working from home was a challenge for the admissions team, but one that everyone handled with determination and grace," said Becky Van Stavern, director of undergraduate admissions at SBU. "The Zoom platform was utilized daily to stay connected as a team as we navigated the 'new normal.' While we changed where we were working, our commitment to serving our students and families remained strong."

When campuses closed for Spring Break, and was then extended a second week, events already were either being postponed or canceled. And, once the decision was made to move the remainder of the Spring semester online, most every faculty and staff member on campus moved their offices to their living rooms or kitchen tables – and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions was no different.

"With every change presented by the pandemic, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions changed with it," said Reece Tabor '18, senior admissions counselor. "Every time there was something new, we were able to address it and ultimately overcome it. From virtual visits, to virtual tours, to virtual Summer Orientation for incoming students, the team pivoted in quick and important ways to address the ever-shifting landscape of COVID-19."

On-campus individual visits were suspended and group visit events canceled in order to follow local and national health department recommendations. Individual online visits were offered as SBU worked to develop online experiences for group visit events such as Monday @ Southwest, Bearcat Days and Summer Orientation.

Other temporary adjustments made were to the application process. With the ACT and SAT canceling spring testing dates, Admissions lifted those test requirements and offered students

the option to take the online Classic Learning Test (CLT) to potentially improve academic scholarship eligibility. Also, a student's high school grade point average (GPA) could be self-reported if the student was unable to obtain their official transcript from their school.

"Prospective students may have had concerns about not having access to information needed to complete an application, so we removed those barriers," said Darren Crowder '98, vice president of enrollment management.

"The cancellation of the spring ACT and SAT dates also created concerns for prospective students who had not yet taken those tests."

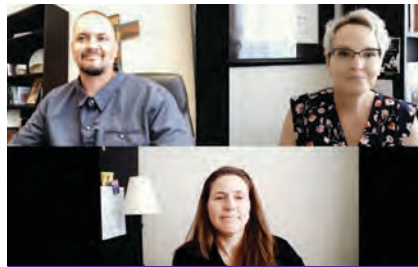
As communities began opening back up and the Admissions staff could return to campus, in-person visits once again were available beginning June 1 – in addition to virtual visit experiences – with health and safety protocols in place.

A few of the in-person visit health and safety measures include:

- All enrollment personnel, faculty and staff interacting with prospective students and families will wear face masks during visits. Masks are not required for visitors, but available upon request.
- Visits will only take place in limited numbers and in rooms where proper physical distancing of each family group can be accommodated.
- Tour group sizes will be restricted to individual guests or family units.
- Physical distancing will be required by enrollment personnel while conducting tours.

"The priority application for seniors opened July 1, and we are excited to work with the incoming Class of 2021," Van Stavern said. "With so much uncertainty on the availability of standardized testing and even how learning will occur at some high schools this fall, we are constantly

evaluating our processes and adjusting as needed to best serve our students, and encourage students and parents to contact our office with any questions about the admissions process." ■



University Success Center's Kevin Marcum '02, Julie DuVall and Dr. Jodi Meadows '92 give a presentation during a visit event.

## Admissions events moved online due to COVID-19:

- **All personal visits (on-campus visits opened back up on June 1 with limitations)**
- **Monday @ Southwest (April 13):** Basic visit day
- **Bearcat Days (April 17-18)**  
Normally an admitted student weekend with overnight stays that, for some students, is instrumental in confirming their decision to attend SBU.
- **Summer Orientation (Combined May 30 and June 20 to one event on June 20)**  
First step for new students in the orientation process to SBU. Important event to connect incoming students to their academic advisors, current SBU students, and their fellow classmates.
- **Summer Showcase (June 29)**  
Basic visit day promoted to rising juniors and seniors

# Kimbrough named Assistant Provost for Spiritual Formation

BY CHARLOTTE MARSCH '97

**"I'm very excited about Dr. Matt Kimbrough's new assignment as the leader of the Redford Division. Greene County Baptists have watched Matt grow from a young, wet behind the ears, associate minister to a full-fledged Kingdom leader. He will do an outstanding job and the Redford Division and SBU will benefit greatly from his ministry and leadership."**

**MIKE HAYNES**

Director of the Greene County Baptist Association

**"Our church has had the privilege to watch the Lord develop Matt Kimbrough into a genuine servant of Christ. His desire to see believers grow to maturity is abundantly clear. I have personally benefited from his teaching, preaching and wise counsel."**

**JARED PROCTOR '99**

Lead Pastor of Springhill Baptist Church, Springfield

**"I am so grateful for Dr. Kimbrough and the new position God has called him to at SBU. Matt's heart is set, facing one direction. For the glory of God, he is committed to following the word and way of Jesus and to helping others know and follow Jesus. He is exemplary in his service in the church and in his love for his wife Emily and his children. I know great days are ahead for SBU through his humble leadership. Praise the Lord!"**

**KENNY QUALLS '92**

Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Arnold

**D**r. Matt Kimbrough '08 will lead spiritual development programs at Southwest Baptist University through a new position of Assistant Provost for Spiritual Formation in addition to being an Assistant Professor of Theology.

"Starting in July 2018 with my first visit to campus, I talked about the importance of spiritual development, including the integration of faith and learning," said SBU President Dr. Eric A. Turner.

"Quite simply, this makes us distinctive – helping students develop in all facets, including their spiritual development, and this is true for all of our campuses. This new structure elevates this critical aspect of our mission."

Kimbrough will oversee the academic Division of Theology and Ministry; University Ministries, including Chapel and the Community, Life + Worship program; and Church Relations.

"I will strive to unify the many opportunities to engage students – including Chapel, student life initiatives, and the classroom – under a single umbrella, giving focus and intentionality to spiritual formation at SBU," Kimbrough said. "There is no dichotomy between academics and spiritual growth. Our students are whole people, created in the image of God. Likewise, spiritual formation happens across all facets of campus life: from the classroom to the dorm room, from the chapel to the cafeteria, from the football field to the administration building. There is no venue or activity God refuses to use as he conforms individual lives into the image of Christ."

A comprehensive vision of spiritual

formation at SBU reinforces the Biblical view of personhood and discipleship, according to Kimbrough.

"In Deuteronomy 6:5, Moses summarizes the most foundational command of Scripture to love God with heart, soul, and strength. God calls the Israelites to teach the love of God to their children 'when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.'" he said. "In other words, spiritual formation both then and now is comprehensive."

Kimbrough plans to start by listening so he can encourage and enhance the faithful work of faculty, staff and administrators.

"I am thrilled to hear stories of spiritual formation already taking place at SBU. But I also want to hear from students we may easily miss, such as non-traditional or graduate students, and to find creative ways to encourage spiritual growth across SBU's many campuses."

Kimbrough also will focus on partnering with churches to further God's work in Missouri and throughout the world.

"It is amazing how God sovereignly prepares you for a role you never expected," he said. "I am excited to continue building SBU's relationship with Missouri Baptists. I was saved and baptized in an MBC church, first truly sensed the presence of the Spirit at an MBC youth camp, led my first person to the Lord on an MBC-sponsored mission trip, pastored in an MBC church, and am now training the next generation of MBC ministers. I am truly humbled and blessed by this opportunity." ■



**S**outhwest Baptist University received notification that its nursing programs have been granted continued accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

SBU hosted the ACEN for a multi-program, routine site visit in October 2019, and recently learned that the accreditation for the Associate of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Master of Science in Nursing programs will continue for eight years, with the next site visit planned for fall 2027.

“Participating in specialized accreditation for our nursing programs provides us the opportunity to confirm our commitment to delivering quality nursing education,” said Dr. Brittney Hendrickson ’08, ’11, ’12, dean of the College of Health Professions. “It

ensures we are continuously assessing and improving our programs to meet expected standards.”

The need for registered nurses in our communities continues to grow. In a study published in the May 2012 edition of the American Journal of Medical Quality, each state’s nursing shortage was graded using a reliably developed model. By 2030, Missouri is projected to have a shortage ratio of 27 RNs per 100,000 people. SBU is helping address the nursing shortage issue by preparing professional nursing graduates.

“Through maintaining accreditation, our students have greater marketability for employment as many employers require nurses to have completed their nursing education through an accredited nursing program,” Hendrickson said.

## SBU Nursing programs granted continued accreditation



“We strive to prepare our students to continue their education as they serve the healthcare community as servant leaders in a global society. Students who graduate from an accredited program have increased transferability to advance their education in the nursing field.” ■

## SBU students participate in prestigious events

**J**oseph Wilson, a senior chemistry major and Gordon and Judy Dutile Honors Scholar at SBU, was one of 14 college students selected to participate in the 2020 Wheaton College Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Symposium, which was held virtually on May 26-30.

In order to apply to this selective symposium, students must be at the incoming junior or senior status, enrolled full time in a Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) institution and nominated by a faculty member. The application process also includes a writing submission.

“Joseph is a chemistry major; however, he reads widely and is generally curious,” said Dr. Jodi Meadows ’92, director of the Dutile Honors Program at SBU. “In our interdisciplinary honors Colloquium classes, he is consistently engaged, asks excellent questions, and does high-quality research. Wheaton sends the invitation to every school in the CCCC, which includes around 180 colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada. Only 14 students are selected for participation.”

Accepted students participate in the art of interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as interact with other college thinkers who share a passion for cross-disciplinary conversations, according to the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at Wheaton College.

The symposium is designed to benefit students by learning about key issues regarding liberal arts interdisciplinarity, especially from a Christian perspective, practicing academic literacy skills

and gaining insights into complex problems facing contemporary society.

**Chipman, Schmidt selected for Governor’s Student Leadership Forum:** Sarah Chipman and Ethan Schmidt were two of 98 college students nominated to represent their schools during the 33rd annual Missouri Governor’s Student Leadership Forum on Faith and Values early in the Spring semester.

The three-day Leadership Forum on Faith and Values encouraged these students by challenging their decision-making, values and belief systems using the platform of servant leadership.

“The Missouri Student Leadership Forum is a great opportunity for those who are currently leaders at their school or plan to be leaders in the future,” said Schmidt, a political science and history major from Richland.

Student leaders studied the principles of reconciling relationships, standing for truth and loving others as they love themselves. The Missouri Governor’s Student Leadership Forum challenged students’ character development and encouraged them to reflect on their own decision-making skills, values and belief systems.

“I had a great time and the conference related to all kinds of majors and showed how we can integrate faith and leadership into all different types of careers,” said Chipman, a biology major from Gladstone. “I loved meeting students from across the state and discovering new ways of leadership that I can use at SBU.” ■

## SBU announces Dill, Chaney scholarship recipients

Three Southwest Baptist University students were named the recipients of two of the University’s prestigious awards – the Stanley H. Dill Distinguished Scholar Award and the Chaney Scholar Awards – which are among SBU’s largest endowed scholarships.

“The Stanley H. Dill Distinguished Scholar Award and the Chaney Scholar Awards are unique in that they do not go through the traditional scholarship process but are announced each year at the Academic Awards Banquet,” said Dr. Brad Johnson, vice president for institutional advancement at SBU. “The scholarship awards are determined through faculty nominations provided to the Deans Council, which narrows the nominations to a group of finalists, then to the president for final selection.

“Charles Chaney and Stanley Dill ‘56 deeply loved Southwest Baptist University and their legacy of love for SBU is passed on through the scholarships that bear their names.”

Spencer Van Sickle, a senior Christian ministry major with an emphasis in pastoral ministry from Neosho, Mo., is the recipient

of the Stanley H. Dill Distinguished Scholar Award. The award is presented to the student who has demonstrated exemplary academic performance, campus leadership, Christian character and involvement in church ministry. Van Sickle has represented SBU as a member of the forensics program, and has served as a pastoral intern, helping lead a youth group and teaching a Sunday school class for fifth- and sixth-grade boys.



Spencer Van Sickle



Lauren Wineinger



Joel Ridenour

The Chaney Scholar Award is presented to one male and one female student who prove themselves to be exemplary in their academic endeavors and character, potential for professional development, and leadership in campus, church, and community activities.

Lauren Wineinger, a senior cybersecurity major from Topeka, Kan., is the female recipient of the Chaney Scholar Award. She is a member of both the Alpha Chi Honor Society and Phi Eta

Sigma Honor Society, and has completed successful internships with the Kansas Information Security Office and the United States Government. Wineinger serves as a student lab instructor for the Computer and Information Science Department, is a member of the Concert Choir, performs in theater productions and serves as an SBU Ambassador and Campus Host. She also serves as a volunteer for community-outreach events, helping lead worship at church and youth camps and being involved in the SBU Exodus Mission Team.

Joel Ridenour, a junior psychology and Christian studies major from Monett, Mo., is the male recipient of the Chaney Scholar Award. Ridenour

is a member of Psi Chi, a psychology honors organization, and has served on the Integration of Faith and Culture Committee and the University Activities Council, as well as a Resident Assistant and on mission trips to Baha, Mexico. For several semesters, he was the band leader and guitarist for chapel services. When not serving on campus, Ridenour helps lead worship at New Site Church as assistant worship pastor. ■

## Crowder College and SBU sign agreement for transfer opportunities

Crowder College and Southwest Baptist University finalized an articulation agreement on May 28, allowing students to seamlessly transfer from Crowder into SBU’s bachelor degree programs.

“Crowder College strives to expand partnerships and opportunities for all of our students to continue their academic journey beyond graduation,” said Keith Zoromski, associate vice president of academic affairs at Crowder College. “This articulation agreement serves as evidence that Crowder College values coordinating with each of its university partners to mutually support its students.”

The partnership also allows SBU the opportunity to engage

students currently enrolled at the Neosho, Mo.-based community college, who are wanting to pursue a bachelor’s degree at a liberal arts Christian university.

“We are excited to partner with Crowder College in providing an avenue for students to earn their bachelor’s degree at SBU,” said Dr. Lee Skinkle, provost of SBU. “This agreement helps make that transition for students an easy one as they join the Bearcat family.”

This agreement will impact students pursuing an Associate of Arts degree at Crowder. The A.A. often is referred to as a “transfer degree” because it is designed for students who plan to continue their education beyond the associate degree level. ■

## SBU students awarded academic honors for 2019-2020

Southwest Baptist University students were recognized for their contributions to their academic departments and colleges during the 2019-2020 academic year.

### SPRING 2020 GRADUATES HONORED INCLUDE:

- Outstanding Music Graduate – **Cameron Collins**, El Dorado Springs, Mo.
- Outstanding Art Graduate – **Jessica Griffis**, Eldon, Mo.
- Outstanding Elementary Education Graduates – **Makenzie Bouse**, Willard, Mo.; **Emma Sloan**, Branson, Mo.
- Outstanding Physical Education Graduate – **Dylan Mountain**, Preston, Mo.
- Outstanding Exercise Science Graduates – **Aaron Canfield**, Tulsa, Okla.; **Zahria White**, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- Outstanding Sport Management Graduate – **Danielle Turner**, Farmington, Mo.
- Outstanding Criminal Justice Graduate – **Adam White**, Ozark, Mo.
- Outstanding Sociology and Social Work Graduate – **Sarah Lewright**, Stockton, Mo.
- Outstanding Psychology Graduates – **Emma Hale**, Springfield, Mo.; **Katelyn Brantingham**, Noble, Mo.
- Outstanding History and Political Science Graduate – **Ryan Skeens**, Lebanon, Mo.
- Outstanding Social Science Education Graduate – **Quincy Jones Jr.**, Fort Worth, Texas
- Outstanding Accounting Graduate – **Bailey Rezabek**, Sunrise Beach, Mo.
- Outstanding Computer Science Graduate – **Mitchell Northern**, Bolivar, Mo.
- Outstanding Computer Information Science Graduate – **Marrah Delmont**, Halfway, Mo.
- Outstanding Mathematics Graduate – **Mitchell Northern**, Bolivar, Mo.
- Outstanding Biology Graduates – **Toni Paterno**, Elmhurst, Ill.; **Molly Liggett Jones**, New Haven, Mo.
- Outstanding English Graduate – **Josie Leigh Fidler**, Stockton, Mo.
- Outstanding Communication Arts Graduate – **Hailey Trimmer**, Lee's Summit, Mo.
- Outstanding Organizational and Strategic Communication Graduate – **Kailee Knudsen**, Kearney, Mo.
- Outstanding Christian Ministry Graduate – **Sarah Baldinger**, Sedalia, Mo.
- Outstanding Theology Graduate – **Luke Winfrey**, Lebanon, Mo.
- Academic Excellence & Servant Leadership Award – **Will Raines**, Marshall, Mo.
- Gordon & Judy Dutile Honors Program Graduates – **Emma Hale**, Springfield, Mo.; **Mitchell Northern**, Bolivar, Mo.; **Blaise Torrence**, Festus, Mo.; **Hailey Trimmer**, Lee's Summit, Mo.; and **Joel Walley**, Bolivar, Mo. ■

## SBU adds new Education Specialist degree, offers evening courses for master's certification degree

Southwest Baptist University is adding a new graduate-level degree for educators. Applications are being accepted now, with courses beginning Spring 2021, for the Education Specialist in Curriculum and Instructional Leadership degree.

"We are filling a need to provide continuing educational and leadership opportunities for classroom teachers who desire to become better teachers and leaders within their educational setting, but not administrators," said Dr. Kevin Patterson, chair of the Department of Graduate Education. "Graduates with this degree will be able to fill instructional leadership roles that do not require administrative certification."

Graduates of the specialist degree could hold positions such as district leaders for curriculum, teacher trainers, department heads, and any other leadership position that does not require an administrative certification.

"This program is designed to provide a comprehensive and thorough study of the current issues that face our teachers and provide a path to enable the creation of aligned learning environments that support students both today and tomorrow," said Nancy Colbaugh, associate professor of education.

A master's degree in education is required to enter the new Education Specialist program. The program is 33 hours with students required to maintain continuous enrollment until the completion of the field study.

SBU also has a new evening course option for students completing a Master of Science in Education with Teaching Certification for elementary education.

Internet access is required for students to participate in the evening Zoom class sessions. Students also will have to complete required classroom field experiences and student teaching during the day when schools are in session. Students pursuing certification in specific subject areas for middle school or high school may continue to do so on the Bolivar campus.

SBU's Department of Graduate Education provides six master's degree options, two specialist degrees and a doctoral degree for visionary teachers and aspiring leaders.

For more information about the new degree or other graduate degrees in education, contact Nicki Harmon, associate director of graduate admissions, at (417) 912-5303 or [nharmon@SBUuniv.edu](mailto:nharmon@SBUuniv.edu). ■



## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF **DONOR RELATIONS**

As I reflect upon the last four months, I must confess I have had a wide range of thoughts and emotions. At times, I have had anxiety and fear due to so many unknowns. I have enjoyed the slower pace of life. I have been concerned about family members and elderly friends. I have loved the extra time with my husband and daughter. I have been confused about what is the exact right thing to do, or not do, to keep myself and others healthy. I have been disappointed in our world as we battle racial inequality and hate.

But within all of these fluctuating feelings, I am thankful that I have also had hope. It gave me hope when I saw the many first responders willing to work long, hard days for the good of those suffering. It gave me hope when I saw our community members coming together to print 3D respirators, to sew masks, to care for the elderly, and to feed our students. It gave me hope when I saw that many of these people making sacrifices and putting themselves at risk were you our SBU alumni! You are living

out the mission of being servant leaders in your community, and I am grateful.

As I have struggled with these many emotions, I have been most grateful for Jesus. Unlike any other time in my life, I have been thankful for the hope and peace that He provides. My favorite verse is Matthew 11:28 - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." I am thankful that the Lord of hope and peace wants me to come to Him. I am thankful that I can rest in His Sovereignty over all the burdens we are facing in our world today. I am thankful that He continues to work through His people in the midst of challenging times.

I pray we will continue to serve, and to seek justice, love and mercy. I am confident that Bearcats will continue to make a difference in our community.

**Blessings,**

**Ashley Dinwiddie**

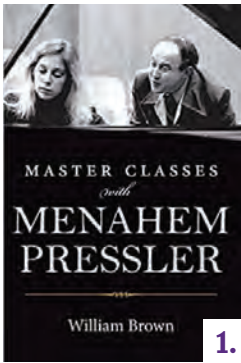
Director of Donor Relations

Alumni@SBUuniv.edu

(800) 526-5859, ext. 1835

# Homecoming Central

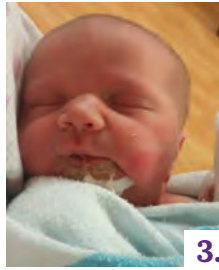
Visit [advance.SBUuniv.edu/Homecoming](https://advance.SBUuniv.edu/Homecoming) to fill out a Reunion Class Update and find the most up-to-date information for Homecoming 2020!



1.



2.



3.



4.

## 1960s

**James Wilcox, Jr. '61** lives in Springfield, Mo., is now serving in his ninth interim pastorate since retiring in 2000 and has been on 11 mission trips. James can be reached at jimwilcox35@att.net.

**Carol (Ammerman) Bartholf '66, '67** lives in Burleson, Texas. Her husband passed away in 2018. Carol can be reached at gene.bartholf@gmail.com.

**Barbara (Young) Jester '65, '67** and her husband, **Harry '65, '67**, live in Mount Juliet, Tenn.

## 1970s

**Ruth-Ann Clurman '72** lives in Kansas City, Mo., and can be reached at ra@clur19.com.

**Thomas Hilton '77** lives in Kansas City, Mo. He has a YouTube channel – Tom W Hilton – of mostly hymns and inspirational songs he plays on piano. Thomas can be reached at tom.w.hilton@gmail.com.

**Milton May '77** and his wife, **Joan (Verner) '80**, are residents of Twin Oaks Senior Living in Wentzville, Mo. Milton served as a professor in the business department at SBU, teaching management and marketing classes. Two of the Mays' three children also earned degrees from SBU. Milton can be reached at mdm162rock@aol.com.

**Alberta (Gomes) Smith '78, '79** lives in Springfield, Mo., and can be reached at albertasinger@gmail.com.

## 1980s

**Mike Franzone '82** lives in Melbourne, Fla., with his wife Leasa. Mike hosts "The Conservative Mic Podcast," which can be found on his website mikefranzone.com. He can be reached at michaelfranzone@yahoo.com.

**Teresa (Lococo) Cooper '83** lives in Livermore, Ky. She and her husband, **Dana '83**, were married 38 years until April 2020 when Dana went home to be with the Lord. They met on the SBU campus and married in December 1981 during their sophomore year. Since graduating from SBU, the Coopers served in law enforcement, ministry and education. Teresa continues as a substitute teacher with Daviess County Public Schools in Owensboro, Ky., since retiring from the social work/counseling field in 2000. She can be reached at Amazingone@bellsouth.net.

**Tracey Bacus '85, '07** lives in Blue Springs, Mo.

**Capt. Michael Hall '87** currently is serving as the Chaplain to the Chief of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C.

## 1990s

**Shawn Jones '99** and his wife, Dr. Shannon Jones, live in Blythewood, S.C. Shawn can be reached at zionjones21@gmail.com.

## 2000s

**Robert Catts '01** and his wife, Camila, live in Grapevine, Texas. Robert recently became an Air Force Reserve chaplain, and can be reached at robert.catts@gmail.com.

**Umang Chadda '02** lives in Tinley Park, Ill., and can be reached at umangrkl@hotmail.com.

## 2010s

**MariaLynn (Jaeger) Crosby '17** and her husband, **Brian '17**, live in St. Louis, Mo.

**Jason McAdoo '19** lives in Clever, Mo., and can be reached at mcadoo.jason@icloud.com.

## IN THE NEWS

**1. Dr. William Brown**, professor emeritus of music and provost emeritus at SBU, has written "Master Classes with Menahem Pressler," which was published by Indiana University Press in October 2019. Dr. Brown is a former student of Pressler, who is a world-renowned piano soloist, master class teacher and member of the acclaimed Beaux Arts Trio. His book brings together Pressler's teachings of additional 37 piano masterworks from Johann Sebastian Bach to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

**2. Niki (Brummett) Lenz '02** had her second book, "The Stepmom Shake-Up," published in June. The book follows the adventures of Grace and her friend who set out to derail Grace's dad's plans to start dating since the loss of his wife/Grace's mom.

## FUTURE BEARCATS

**3. Amanda (Hoard) Collins '10** and husband, Clayton, welcomed **Douglas Ray Collins on October 10, 2018. He was born six weeks early and spent 28 days in the NICU, but is healthy and thriving now!**

**4. Marissa (Wilson) Fuller '13** and her husband, David, welcomed daughter Melba Jean in February. They live in Gonzales, La. Marissa can be reached at marissadwilson@gmail.com.

## IN MEMORY

**Dana W. Cooper '83** of Livermore, Ky., passed away peacefully on April 3 at the age of 59. Dana was a graduate of Carrollton High School '78, Southwest Baptist University '83 (BS) and Southwestern Theological Seminary '96. Dana served in law enforcement in Sedalia, Mo., K-9 and SWAT Team/Unit officer upon graduation from SBU before joining the Columbia, Mo., police force and SWAT Unit. He retired in 1993 after being injured in the line of duty. Dana served 22 years in the pulpit and service ministries until 2018, retiring from LifeWay Christian Resources. He was employed with Owensboro Health Regional Hospital, Owensboro, Ky., as a security officer upon his death. Dana is survived by his wife **Teresa S. Cooper '83**; daughter Rachel Boland and son Caleb Cooper. Dana is remembered for his joy for life and laughter, and reaching others for Christ.

## The alumni office at SBU has grown!

**Holly Stockard Bridge '08, '20**, director of alumni engagement, and her husband, **Dr. Levi '08, '09**, assistant professor of business administration and MBA Coordinator, welcomed son Grayson William on April 23, 2020. "While we certainly didn't anticipate having a baby during a pandemic, we are grateful for the Lord's protection," Holly said. "Many things were different with his arrival: the waiting rooms and nursery were closed, eager grandparents, family and friends anxiously waited outside to see him through an exterior hospital window. But one thing remained true: the Lord's loving faithfulness can be seen throughout his entire arrival into this world! We are so thankful for the welcome Grayson received from his SBU family."



# SBUlife

Southwest Baptist University  
1600 University Avenue  
Bolivar, MO 65613

# 2020 Homecoming

**OCTOBER 2-3**



Southwest Baptist  
UNIVERSITY

*\*Due to the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, this event and/or date is subject to change.  
Visit [advance.SBUniv.edu/Homecoming](https://advance.SBUniv.edu/Homecoming) for up-to-date information.*