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Corts Named Coordinator of President Bush's Education Initiatives, Resigns as IABCU Director

by Tim Fields

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Thomas E. Corts, executive director of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities (IABCU) and former president of Samford University, was named to a new position related to President Bush's international education initiatives.

Corts will be responsible for coordinating U.S. foreign aid efforts to support education around the world.

Corts, 65, was in New York September 24 when First Lady Laura Bush announced the appointment at a luncheon on global health and literacy. Mrs. Bush has demonstrated special interest in health and literacy, especially among women and children.

As one example, she pointed to a new international program announced by President Bush last May. "Through this one initiative," she stated, "the American people will partner with six nations: Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, Liberia, Mali and Yemen."

Mrs. Bush introduced Corts during the luncheon, acknowledging that "Dr. Corts has had a distinguished education career in the United States. He brings to his new job extraordinary compassion and skill." Corts will help coordinate the nearly \$1 billion spent annually by the U.S. for education programs, in a multitude of developing countries. Mrs. Bush highlighted concern for the education of girls, the need for literacy and the need for improved health and nutrition among the world's children.

In a phone interview, Corts said the foreign aid education programs are

administered through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), coordinated with the State Department, the Department of Education and other agencies.

"We are discovering the link between health and education and literacy and quality of life, so I hope we can make a real difference. This initiative has a lot of consequences for global peace and prosperity," he said.

Corts left his IABCU post September 30. "I am sorry to be leaving the organization of 52 Baptist colleges and universities," he said. "I was not out looking for a job, but I hope I can make a genuine contribution," Corts explained.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Dr. Corts," said Evans Whitaker, president of Anderson University (S.C.) and chairman of the IABCU board of directors. "We thank him for his service both as an esteemed colleague and as our executive director and wish him all the best in this important new role. The work of IABCU will continue without interruption with Tim Fields, director of communications,

who will serve as interim executive director while the board of directors makes plans for a search for a successor."

Corts said he and his wife Marla will move from Birmingham to the Washington, D.C. area, where he will work out of the USAID offices downtown. Corts said he would be serving at the pleasure of the President, which likely means his term would not extend beyond that of President Bush.

Corts retired from Samford University in 2006 after 23 years as president and last year served as interim chancellor of Alabama's troubled two-year college system.

President Bush appointed Corts to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board in 2005. As a full-time government employee, he is required to resign from the Fulbright Board.

Corts has been involved in international education throughout his career. Samford University has had cooperative arrangements with institutions around the world. Corts and his wife also sponsor a school in a remote village in Liberia. ■

IABCU Calendar of Events

Board Meeting 6:30–8:15 p.m. and
IABCU Dessert Reception 8:30–9:30 p.m.

During SACS/COC Meetings

December 10, 2007 • Hilton New Orleans Riverside

IABCU Annual Meeting and Workshops

June 1–3, 2008 at the Chateau on the Lake,
Branson, Missouri

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"Legal Notes" is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information on legal issues facing Baptist-related higher education. It is provided with the understanding that the publisher and editors are not engaged in rendering legal counsel."Legal Notes" is not intended as a substitute for the services of a legal professional. If your institution needs legal counsel, a competent attorney should be consulted.

Annual subscription is \$8.00.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR ANNUAL MEETING

International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities Branson, Missouri • June 1-3, 2008

SUNDAY JUNE 1

2:00 p.m. Exhibitors Arrive for Set-up
2:00-4:00 Board of Directors Meeting
3:00-7:00 Registration
4:30-5:45 **First Plenary Session**
6:00-7:00 Reception (Meet/greet, light refreshments)

Evening is free for shows, dinner, free time

MONDAY JUNE 2

7:30-8:45 a.m. Buffet Breakfast Meetings
Presidents
Chief Academic Officers (CAOs)
Chief Financial Officers (CFOs)
Chief Development, PR and Denominational Relations Officers (CDOs, PR, DROs)
Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs)

9:00-10:30 **Second Plenary Session**

10:30-10:45 Break

10:30-11:30 Women's Break and Fellowship Meeting (no program)

10:45-12:00 Workshops

Presidents and CAO's—Legal Affairs Briefing

CFO's

CDO's, PR, DROs

CSAO's

12:15-1:45 p.m. IABCU Business Luncheon—All groups meet together

1:45-2:00 Break

2:00-3:00 Workshops

Presidents and CAO's

CFO's

CDO's, PR, DROs

CSAO's

Evening is free for shows, dinner, free time

TUESDAY JUNE 3

7:30-8:45 a.m. Breakfast—All groups meet together

7:30-9:00 Spouses Breakfast and Program

9:00-10:15 Workshops

Presidents

Chief Academic Officers

All Others

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 Third Plenary Session

12:00 p.m. Adjourn

2:30 Golf Outing

For hotel reservation form and online meeting registration go to < www.baptistschools.org >

GOOD TO GREAT for Baptist Colleges and Universities

Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, as it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice, and discipline.

—Jim Collins, *Good to Great*

Two small books continue to hold my attention as I reflect on the work we do as Christian institutions. The first is acclaimed business author Jim Collins' monograph called *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, which helps us understand why the success of social sector organizations like colleges cannot be measured in the same way as the success of businesses.

Collins points out that while business success is measured in terms of financial returns, a university's success is determined by how effectively it delivers on its mission, and on how well it makes a distinctive impact relative to its resources. He draws a connection between success and discipline, noting that mediocre companies rarely display what truly great companies do – a relentless culture of discipline – a culture of disciplined people who engage in disciplined thought and who take disciplined action. Discipline, he concludes, is not a principle of business, but a principle of greatness.

While each of our IABCU member institutions has its own individual mission statement, personality, and distinctions, we all hold in common our Baptist heritage and identity as well as our commitment to educate in the context of the Christian faith. Today, our institutions offer much evidence of our conscious choice to pursue greatness. IABCU institutions are, in fact, effectively accomplishing their missions and making a distinctive impact on the world. What makes our institutions truly special, however, is that we not only impact the world, but the Kingdom of God.

That brings us to the second book—Arthur Holmes' *The Idea of a Christian College*. In this “classic” for students, parents, faculty, and administrators, Holmes provides a concise case for the Christian college. Making clear that our institutions are to be no less committed to the ideals of serious scholarship and academic freedom than any other type of college or university, Holmes suggests that the distinctive content of Christian higher education is the intentional focus on the integration of faith and learning and the creation of supportive campus “communities” that encourage the development of well-rounded, virtuous individuals. He also suggests that the distinctive effect—although not the only effect—of Christian higher education is our desired product—the educated Christian.

Holmes offers us the example of Pat, an educated Christian, in detail:

Pat has discovered things in college she never dreamed of before. It has opened her eyes to windows in every direction. It has sharpened her mind, heightened her imagination, deepened her understanding, broadened her sympathies, kindled new interests.

Pat is widely read. She has read Plato and Augustine, Shakespeare and William Faulkner. She's acquainted with both Bach and Bartok, and enjoys Monet and Picasso.

Pat is alert to the issues of the day. She listens to the other side, rather than reacting with an outburst of ridicule or anger. She measures her judgments before she acts, and before she votes. Her vote, in the end, is the kind of vote a democracy needs—informed, principled, and caring—not just blindly partisan.

Pat is aware of some new developments in science and technology, biology in particular, and the moral dimensions of genetic research both intrigue and concern her greatly—even though her major was literature. She continues to read, to learn, to grow, for she realizes that however large the circumference of her knowledge, just as large are the borders of her ignorance. Yet she doesn't worship either knowledge, or art, or influence, or even her relationships with friends. She worships the One from whom all blessings flow, the One who gives but also takes away. Whatever her abilities, whatever her development, whatever her accomplishments, she blesses the name of the Lord.

These two little books offer some great insight and wisdom for those of us involved in 21st Century IABCU institutions. Thankfully for our institutions, greatness is not about financial returns. It is about how we leverage our limited resources to multiply our service to God and humanity.

By educating students, we make a distinctive impact in that we give society graduates like Pat who are ready and equipped to supply solutions and answers to a world full of problems, a world that groans for redemption. ■

Evans P. Whitaker, Ph.D., is president of Anderson University (SC), and is the 2007–08 chair of the IABCU Board of Directors.

Ethical Foundations for

Editor's Note: The following article is the second of three Hester Lectures delivered June 3–5, 2007 in Williamsburg, Va., at the annual meeting of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities by David P. Gushee. At the time of this lecture he was University Fellow and Graves Professor of Moral Philosophy at Union University. He is now Distinguished University Professor of Christian Ethics at Mercer University. Both schools are members of the IABCU.

by David P. Gushee

One of the most precious things to me about being a Baptist educator is the spiritual passion of my students.

They are *serious* about Jesus.

Interacting with such students is a sacred trust and an incredible joy. It is my charge to make myself available to the Holy Spirit to sharpen, refine, deepen and help direct this passion, but never, ever to destroy it.

I know that surely not every student is as passionate about Christ as those who end up in my Christian ethics classes. Yet somehow, year after year, I end up with a crew of about 25 ethics majors and minors, and what I affectionately call “friends of ethics.” Most of the time, these kids are simply spectacular examples of what Christian young people can be. Many end up as moral warriors who go into all kinds of fields with a vision for changing the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One reason we should fear loss of faith more than fundamentalization is that, in my experience, it is far easier to draw a narrowly conservative Christian student into a broadened spiritual and moral vision than it is to pull back a jaded cynic toward a meaningful expression of the Christian faith. It is not that hard to help a student who comes to me caring about Jesus to also care about justice; or one who cares about abortion to also care about poverty. It is much harder (for me, anyway) to help a student who doesn't care about anything to begin to care about something.

A school that draws students with spiritual passion, that seeks intentionally to nurture that passion and then direct it into deepened and broadened moral effort, that initiates students into the urgent problems of a suffering world, and that gives them the tools to begin to make a difference in such a world, is a school that is doing something important. That is what some of our schools are doing, and what all of them at



David P. Gushee

least have the potential to do. This vision is Christian, and it is Baptist, if we understand our heritage as Baptists properly.

I want to think about the ethical dimensions and opportunities of the Baptist university in four parts: the creation of a pious ethos, the development of an ethics curriculum, the fostering of morally significant co-curricular organizations and initiatives, and the nurture of a university-wide atmosphere offering broad and balanced engagement with important social ethical issues.

Creation of a Pious Ethos

The idea that the central task of the Christian college is to create an ethos conducive to the development of godly piety goes back deep into the history of most such schools. In fact, it is probably not an overstatement to say that the “common sense” understanding of what Christian colleges exist to do, at least in pietistic circles, continues to land here. Baptist (and Methodist and Quaker and Pentecostal) families send their pious kids to their pious schools in the hope that when they graduate they will still be pious, not just in formal affiliation but in their heart and in their lifestyle.

In fact, many have remarked that in traditions in which pietism and an emphasis on personal godliness run deep, the nurture of such godliness has often been seen as the *primary* task of the Christian university. Both James Burtchaell and Robert Benne notice this and see that it has long been characteristic of Baptist higher education, among other pietistic traditions. We want our universities to encourage personal commitment to Christ, which is expressed in a meaningful devotional life and rigorous moral living. I see no movement away from this expectation in my experience of Baptist higher education.

A Baptist school can decide to try to nurture such godly piety even if it does not try to do Christian worldview or faith/learning integration in the classroom. This is the now-famous “two spheres” or “add on” vision of Christian higher education, and it has characterized a number of our Baptist colleges. The two-sphere approach basically means that classroom and chapel, or classroom and dorm room, are treated as two separate spheres, in that while what happens in the classroom at a Christian college should differ little, if any, from State U., student life will be pervasively and intentionally Christian as far as possible. The Christian faith is therefore an add-on to a “solid” general education taught along accepted lines in the broader culture.¹

If this is the vision, the Christian university takes the view that it can hire faculty without significant concern about their religious convictions, except perhaps in the religion department. It is important that faculty and administrators be able

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to give their testimony, set a good “Christian” (moral) example, go to church, live a decent life, etc, but there exists no vision for any such project as integrating faith and learning or inculcating a Christian worldview, at least not in the classroom. However, outside of the classroom one can expect to find required chapel, revivals, mission trips, dorm Bible studies, Christian music and drama groups, and rather strict codes of personal morality. The goal is to get the student from orientation to graduation as a person who still prays, reads the Bible, goes to church, evangelizes, and refrains from immoral behavior, while also picking up as much “book-learning” as possible along the way.

Many concerned Christian parents and other onlookers would be happy if Baptist and other Christian universities did at least this for their sons and daughters, nieces and nephews, church members and graduates. As a parent of a college student now, I find this a crucial objective! However, observers of Christian higher education now widely recognize that, at least in our time, the two-sphere approach gives away the game before it really gets started. If ideas matter at all, and if there is any link between ideas and life choices, then the university that teaches, say, philosophical naturalism and materialism between 8 a.m. and noon cannot undo the damage between 1 and 2 p.m. at chapel, or over spring break on the mission trip, or in service-learning activities downtown. Some students might not notice that their professors are actually teaching them the ingredients of a thoroughly agnostic secular life, or they might compartmentalize so profoundly that this has no effect on their prayer life or church attendance. Evidence suggests that at least the stronger and more attentive students all too often cannot fail to notice and cannot compartmentalize. Ideas have consequences, and piety is not enough. Unless some effort is made to bring Christian convictions to bear in the classroom itself, the Christian vision and identity of the school (and of its graduates) will not long survive amidst the swirling winds of a faith-corroding culture.

This rejection of a merely two-spheres kind of pietism does not diminish the significance of creating a pious ethos as *one aspect* of an overall vision for Christian higher education. Robert Benne himself consistently emphasizes that one ingredient necessary for “keeping faith” with the founding religious traditions of Christian universities is the creation of a meaningfully Christian ethos, and he commends those schools that do this. Clearly the work of student life departments, the residence staff, campus ministry offices, and chapel programs is fundamentally important to maintaining the identity and

vision of Christian universities. Nurturing a covenant community grounded in Christian love and characterized by the fruit of the Spirit must be an ongoing goal, never accomplished and yet never abandoned. At Union, while we have rejected the two-spheres approach, it is abundantly clear that creating and maintaining this kind of Christian ethos is a high priority and a major selling point for the university with both students and parents.

I want to add a special note about chapel programming. It should go without saying that a vibrant Baptist university will offer regular chapel programs and will require student attendance at some of them. However, I think our vision for chapel should extend *much* farther than this. Chapel can become the context in which the life of faith and the life of the mind come together in extraordinary experiences of consecrated learning

and knowledgeable worship. Chapel can and should, at least some of the time, be a can’t-miss “event” in the Baptist university, a time when devout, educated, exciting speakers bring to the campus community the riches of Christian proclamation and reflection at the highest level. In chapel, at its best,

the intellectual and spiritual missions of the Baptist university become inextricably intertwined, and students go away talking about what they have experienced. Instead, too often, required chapel is the occasion for student boredom, and students go away talking about the meager offerings of a parade of intellectually undistinguished speakers who were invited for reasons apparently unrelated to the high purposes and possibilities of the chapel program.

Finally, the kind of pious ethos or atmosphere I am thinking about goes beyond what can be done by student life officials, even in the best-run chapel program. Our schools need to be communities of learning characterized by Christian spirituality and its practices and virtues. As Mark Schwehn of Valparaiso University pointed out, the academic vocation requires subtle but critically important virtues, such as humility, self-sacrifice, faith and charity, as well as a certain kind of community life, which he summarizes as *friendship in the work of spirited intellectual inquiry*.² Schwehn argues that such virtues are relevant to any academic community and, as such, have been discussed for centuries by thinkers as diverse as Plato and John Henry Newman.³ They are most likely to survive today in a self-consciously Christian educational set-

Unless some effort is made to bring Christian convictions to bear in the classroom itself, *the Christian vision and identity of the school and of its graduates will not long survive amidst the swirling*

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ting, though Schwehn and others are strongly advocating the renewal of such virtues in all institutions of higher learning. The faculty play the pivotal role. Of course, so do the students.

Here form and function, educational content and educational delivery, are intrinsically related. The British model, for example, in which a relatively manageable number of teachers, visiting scholars, and students at various stages of their journeys gather together in colleges and live according to a common schedule of study, lectures, and intense shared conversation, often around the dinner table, is different from the more mechanistic and assembly-line-like American schedule with which we are all so familiar. One is reminded also of the model of community life established by Dietrich Bonhoeffer when he served as leader of the Confessing Church seminary at Finkenwalde. This truly was *Life Together*, as the English

We need integration not only of faith and learning, but of piety and learning, of spirituality and education, of teachers and apprentices living together in meaningful and creatively designed forms of

edition of the book is titled. Bonhoeffer's community of seminarians lived together, practiced the spiritual disciplines on a common schedule, studied, talked, and worked, all in

community, and all with the goal of developing a certain shared community life characterized by a set of common virtues, and not just acquiring a body of knowledge.⁴

It seems, then, that what we need is the integration not only of faith and learning, but of piety and learning, of spirituality and education, of teachers and apprentices, living together in meaningful and creatively designed forms of community. Few American schools have been able to make such progress in changing the educational paradigm so prevalent among us, even as we increasingly recognize the significance of the communal context of our educational enterprises.

Ethics in the Curriculum

Most Baptist universities claim to be concerned with the moral development of their students. Everyone offers chapel programs and various co-curricular offerings. But few actually teach undergraduate classes in ethics, perhaps beyond a brief introduction within the religion or philosophy department. And many of the few classes that are taught in ethics are offered by people who have no training in ethics.

It might not surprise you that a person holding a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics would be interested in advancing the discipline of Christian Ethics, so you can, if you want, dismiss some portion of what I am about to say as special pleading. But after you do that, ask yourself this: if you want to advance moral character and values as part of the mission of your university, why not hire one of the hundreds of ethicists who are

specially trained to do just that? Why not design some courses that reflect the insights gained from within the discipline that specializes in this moral dimension of the Christian life? Yet most Baptist universities, and even many Baptist seminaries and divinity schools, teach entire programs of study without doing either of these sensible things.

Our morally confused culture is crying out for ethical reflection and moral renewal. We reel from one government scandal to another, one business scandal to another. From Enron to WorldCom, from Monica Lewinsky to Jack Abramoff, our national inability to meet the most basic moral standards never quite seems to get any better. The fact that many of those involved in such scandals profess to be Christians only adds to the perplexity, and for us, the embarrassment, of our moral ineptitude.

One response to this problem has been forthcoming—many professions require at least one ethics class in their professional education curricula. I myself have taught such courses in nursing, education, business, and ministerial ethics, and have guest lectured in engineering, intercultural studies, and computer ethics courses. One reason to hire an actual trained ethicist in our colleges is simply to meet the course requirements now imposed upon us by our accrediting agencies in most professional areas.

But if doctors, nurses, engineers, business leaders, and computer scientists need to learn something about professional ethics, don't regular undergraduate students (not to mention seminarians) at our Christian colleges need a basic introduction to Christian ethics? Might it be that they would benefit from even more ethics courses than that?

I am grateful that at Union I had opportunity to develop and deliver a full-fledged Christian ethics major and minor for the last decade. Courses include studies of western moral philosophy and Christian ethical foundations, major social issues ranging from poverty to abortion to war, the history of Christian moral thought, great moral leaders such as William Wilberforce and Mother Teresa, ministerial ethics, the sanctity of life, marriage and divorce, the Holocaust, specialized studies in moral thinkers such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Reinhold Niebuhr, and analysis of moral traditions such as African-American and Roman Catholic Ethics. Located within the School of Christian Studies, ethics majors graduate with 18 hours in ethics to go with 19 hours in other fields of Christian thought.⁵

This ethics program has served as the seedbed not just for exciting professional accomplishments for our graduates, but also for a morally serious student community life. On the former, I am excited to have sent graduates to such schools as Emory, Yale, Vanderbilt, Princeton, Duke, Fuller, Boston University, Boston College and Northwestern Law School; Beeson, Truett and Mercer; and Southern, Southeastern and Southwestern. Some of these are working their way through the academic world and soon will be ready for you to hire to serve in your schools. Others are going into missions, the local church, human rights activism, social work, international relief and development organizations, and policy advocacy. They care about a range of issues: racial justice, abortion, sex trafficking, AIDS, child abuse, marriage saving, bioethics, creation care, peacemaking, poverty, you name it. These will be

the moral thinkers and moral activists of the next generation. Why can't more Baptist colleges get into this important work?

Co-Curricular Organizations

The growth of a number of morally serious, student-driven organizations has been a wonderful surprise to me over the past few years. Let's reflect on the role of such co-curricular initiatives at our schools.

One of the surest indicators of the kinds of people who come through our universities and of the Christian vision we are communicating to them is what they voluntarily choose to do with their free time.

I am regularly struck by the numerous Bible studies, worship experiences, accountability groups, and book studies that are established not *for* our students but *by* our students. I am equally impressed with the hundreds every year who go on mission trips to various places around the world. Many are also involved in serving in local churches and parachurch ministries, often working with youth.

There is, though, a weak spot in our historic default setting as Baptists, and one that is pretty widely shared in the evangelical world. Beyond our commitment to evangelism, we have not consistently been involved in meaningful social/ethical engagement with the world. We have lacked a shared vision of the public ethics of the Christian faith. We have pieces of a vision, but not the whole of it. This may be one reason why we have been so susceptible in recent decades to uncritical embrace of various political ideologies. There has been a vacuum, and politics has moved to fill it.

One reason for this lack of a social vision is that many still operate with the implicit belief that winning the world to Christ, one soul at a time, is the only way Christians will change the world. Personal evangelism is certainly a primary way God uses Christians to change the world, but it is not the only way.

Several student organizations on Union's campus reflect interest in broader forms of social engagement. I would like to highlight five: International Justice Mission (IJM), Friends of Ethics, Student Association of Social Workers, ProLifeProChrist, and Common Ground. There are signs that more are on the way.

IJM, one of the most important and most popular organizations in the evangelical world, is "a Christian ministry led by human rights professionals that helps people suffering injustice and oppression who cannot rely on local authorities for relief." The IJM campus chapter holds events to promote awareness of gross violations of justice around the world, organizes prayer support for victims of injustice and those who seek to aid them, and empowers students with practical methods for pursuing a just world.

Friends of Ethics is "a gathering place for students who are passionate about a vision of Christianity that is actively dedicated to advancing the kingdom of God here on earth." Students affiliated with this organization are involved in study, community service, and activism on various moral concerns. They have fanned out into the social ministries of Jackson and

west Tennessee.

The Student Association of Social Workers "assists in developing professional social work identity and provides an opportunity to be involved in community service." This organization has a long track record of serving the Jackson community and inculcating the practice of caring for those whom Jesus called "the least of these."

ProLifeProChrist is a new student group committed to addressing the issues of abortion and euthanasia, along with other life-related concerns, through prayer, study, advocacy, and service. This group shows special interest in helping to serve the local crisis pregnancy center and its clients.

Common Ground is "a student-led organization that seeks to improve campus unity by chipping away social barriers, raising intercultural awareness, improving communication, and taking the initiative on issues related to race, culture, and society." This organization emerged entirely as a student initiative and has played a key role in advancing the critical work of racial

reconciliation on our historically white campus.

Organizations like these—and the students who lead them—offer hope that Baptist and evangelical Christians in the next generation will build on the best of our piety while extending it into a more consistent practice of Christ-centered service and activism on behalf of a suffering world. I believe it should be our hope and our prayer that all of our colleges develop groups like this.

Public Ethical Engagement

I have been reflecting on the ethical dimensions and opportunities of the Baptist college. I have argued that our task includes nurturing a morally rich piety, teaching Christian ethics, and inspiring students to develop morally significant co-curricular organizations. My final point is this: the Baptist university needs to offer a context for public ethical reflection and engagement.

By public ethics I mean to make a contrast with both personal ethics and with the ethical demands of the Christian faith within the life of the church. Both are critically important and have been intended in what has been said thus far. Public ethics, though, has to do with the moral witness of the church to the broader culture. In particular, it concerns what we say and do about the most significant public policy and social issues facing the nation and the world.

Many through the years have dreamed of making the university a context of public engagement and even social transformation. Some (not all) remember the massive campus protests of the 1960s as a high point in the modern history of the American university. Certainly around the world college campuses have many times been the scenes of major social protests that have led even to the changing of unjust laws or even the downfall of corrupt regimes.

Within the evangelical literature on higher education one

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One of the surest indicators of the kinds of people who come through our universities and of the Christian vision we are communicating to them is *what they voluntarily*

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can find this “education for social transformation” current. An example is the work of Nicholas Wolterstorff, a brilliant philosopher and prolific scholar who played a crucial role at Calvin College and now teaches at Yale University.

As long ago as 1982, Wolterstorff proposed that Christian colleges needed to shift to a new stage, moving beyond “integration of faith and learning” to “a collegiate commitment to social transformation.” Working out of a “peace and justice” interpretation of Scriptures and Christian identity that reflected the convergence of his vision with the progressive evangelicalism of thinkers like Jim Wallis, Wolterstorff proposed that the Christian college should become a force in society for engaging such issues as “peace and war, nationalism, poverty, urban ugliness, ecology, crime and punishment.”⁶ Wolterstorff has continued to work with such themes in various articles and books.⁷ Eastern College sociologist and itinerant lecturer Tony Campolo has also made similar proposals in lectures related to what he calls “the radical Christian college.”⁸

Wolterstorff’s proposals made little headway at Calvin, which never really became an engine of progressive social transformation. Only a small number of evangelical Christian colleges are sufficiently left-leaning to be able to unite around the idea of building progressive social transformation into the actual mission of their schools.

This does raise the interesting possibility that a similar project might be attempted from the evangelical right. Given that most evangelical colleges serve politically conservative constituencies, one could easily imagine that some of these would embrace the advance of such an agenda as part of their mission. I think that this has in fact been the case at schools such as Liberty and Regent, or new Catholic colleges such as Christendom and Ave Maria. It is far more likely that if a Christian college swung its mission in the direction of social engagement it would articulate a socially conservative, pro-business, God-and-country message rather than a progressive or leftist agenda.

Catholic scholar James Burtchaell worries that capitulation to such political and economic conservatism is simply a variant of the corruption of the mission and identity of Christian universities, this time from the right rather than the left.⁹ He suggests that on balance it is probably better to avoid shifting our sense of mission in this more political direction—whether from the right or from the left.

So let’s say that we do not attempt to move our Baptist colleges too deeply into the arena of public witness or policy activism. There are good missional reasons not to do so. But I do think that this does not quite settle the issue.

Especially in a politically polarized society, we need to be aware of the political signals that we send by the many choices we make for special lecturers, fund-raising dinners, co-curricular activities, and so on. If every special guest

speaker we invite is a liberal Democrat, or on the other hand a conservative Republican, a liberal social activist, or a conservative one, we send the signal that “only *our* social and political kind” need feel at home here. We communicate a university commitment to this particular public ethical vision, whether intentionally or not. I think that this happens all the time in our universities.

The best solution is probably not to stop inviting special guest speakers. Instead, we should be aware of the entire range of public ethical opinion, from left to right, both within the Christian world and beyond it. And within a certain range dictated by prudence and confessional boundaries, we should throw our doors open rather widely to allow a broad range of leading voices representing a variety of perspective to make their perspectives heard on our campus.

In a new book that I recently finished for Baylor, I argue that the typical left-right polarization is grossly inadequate to describe the spectrum of evangelical Christian opinion today.

The most visible groups are on the evangelical Christian Right. They include Focus on the Family (led by James Dobson), the Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America, the American Family Association, the Traditional Values Coalition, and dozens of others.

Generally, their agenda these days focuses on opposing gay marriage and abortion, and encouraging a return to traditional moral values.

There is no question that the Christian Right is taken seriously in Washington. Most of these organizations have Washington offices and know how to pick up the phone to the White House when they choose to do so. They have excellent access to the president, or at least to Karl Rove, and they make full use of the fact that they represent as much as 40 percent of the Republican constituency. They find many supporters among Baptists in the south.

Yet such voices do not exhaust the perspective of evangelical Christians or of Southern Baptists. One can today find increasingly vocal representatives of what might be called an evangelical left. They are evangelicals in that they affirm belief in biblical authority and therefore biblical morality. But they are evangelical left because they read the Scripture in such a way as to find typically “progressive” kinds of moral and social priorities.

For example, the evangelical left tends to focus considerable attention on the plight of the poor, both domestically and abroad. They tend to be much more supportive of environmental activism or creation care. They tend to oppose U.S. military actions, especially the most recent war in Iraq. They often emphasize human rights issues. When they speak about abortion they usually couch their opposition to it within a broader emphasis on the social services needs of pregnant women and the children they carry. While they generally share the Right’s opposition to gay marriage, they tend to downplay the relative importance of the homosexuality issue overall. I have already named the two most visible

The Baptist university needs to offer a context for *public ethical reflection and engagement*.

evangelical left leaders: Tony Campolo and Jim Wallis.

I appreciate some emphases of both the evangelical right and left but find myself most at home with what I am calling an emerging evangelical center. The evangelical center is only now beginning to come into its own in such a way that one can see it taking shape. It is the focus of my book. I think it can be found in such magazines as *Christianity Today* and *Books and Culture*, in many evangelical Christian colleges and universities such as Wheaton and Calvin, in activist groups like Evangelicals for Social Action and justice organizations like IJM, in numerous evangelical relief and development organizations like World Vision, in many key megachurches and their leaders (such as Rick Warren and Saddleback), and in the public stance of the National Association of Evangelicals.

There is a refreshing biblical balance in this emerging evangelical center. These groups care about both the “right” and the “left” issues insofar as they are biblical concerns. Thus they are able to draw on the best and richest insights from both right and left. They seek to avoid getting sucked into partisan politics and so far are better at retaining their political independence than either right or left leaning evangelical groups. They are doing a better job at avoiding the confusion of biblical faith with American civil religion that so often is a problem among evangelicals.

You will probably not know the names just now emerging in the evangelical center. They include David Neff, editor of *Christianity Today*, Sam Rodriguez of the Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, Jim Skillen of the Center for Public Justice, and Rich Cizik, director of governmental affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals. But they are doing important work, they are being taken seriously in both the church and Washington, and their emergence is a hopeful sign in our bitterly polarized “culture wars” environment.

Conclusion

What does any of this have to do with Baptist higher education?

First, our own internal Baptist divisions are partly earthly-political, and not just denominational-political, and so it is important that we face up to the way those political convictions manifest themselves in our schools and divide us one from another. It would be a helpful exercise for Baptist college leaders to assess the extent to which their various stakeholders represent the political or evangelical right, left, and center, and ways in which this affects who we are and what we do. It is also a helpful way to assess the tensions that exist within the family of Baptist colleges, and within each particular college. Do you have to vote Republican (or Democrat) to be at home at your school? What mix of opinions is represented on the bumper stickers in the school parking lot? How wide is the tolerance for diverse opinions?

Second, understanding the social-political divisions that

afflict the Christian world and American culture is part of the mission of any university today. So much is at stake. Secular newspapers are constantly covering these issues. I talk to reporters regularly about where evangelicals stand on this or that issue. Learning this landscape should be part of our students’ educational experience. We should invite everyone from Jim Wallis to Jim Dobson to our schools, even to our chapel services. We should study the Christian organizations that are playing such a key role in our nation today.

Third, even though Baptist colleges are not political organizations, each Baptist school should consider identifying a few key social-ethical issues that the vast majority of their constituency can agree on, and work toward making a social impact on those issues. We can’t do this through lobbying, but we can through coursework, lectures, and student engagement. Perhaps it can be AIDS, or racial reconciliation, or refugee resettlement, or

adoption, or Third World economic development.

Finally, part of our vision for the kinds of students that we graduate should be that at least some percentage of them will develop and pursue a sense of calling to public activism and service. The university qua university probably should not aim to become an engine of social or policy transformation. But we can certainly aim to send off graduates who nurture the dream of playing precisely such a role—in the name of Christ—for the land that we love.

Notes:

¹ Benne, *Quality with Soul*, pp. 112-113.

² Mark Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

³ On Newman, see his classic, *The Idea of a University* (New Haven: Yale, 1996), and Frederick Aquino, “The Craft of Teaching: The Relevance of Newman for Theological Education,” *Christian Higher Education* 2:269-284 (2003).

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: Harper and Row, 1954).

⁵ To see the entire curriculum, go to <www.davidgushee.com/teaching>.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43, quoting Wolterstorff.

⁷ Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, *Educating for Life*, edited by Gloria Goris Stronks and Clarence W. Joldersma (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002). Compare his *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).

⁸ Tony Campolo, “The Radical Christian College,” in *Integrating Faith and Academic Discipline*, op. cit., pp. 146-154.

⁹ *Dying of the Light*, p. 780. ■

There is a refreshing biblical balance in this emerging evangelical center. These groups care about both the “right” and the “left” issues insofar as they are biblical concerns.



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ENDURING INSTITUTION • SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR CHALLENGES
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U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges Ranking Lists 42 IABCU Member Colleges and Universities

by Thomas E. Corts

Forty-two members of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities are cited in the 2008 rankings of "America's Best Colleges" by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine.

A strong Baptist presence is among the 1900 colleges and universities rated, with 26 IABCU institutions individually ranked within their peer categories. Ouachita Baptist University is ranked number one among Baccalaureate Colleges–South, a category of southern colleges primarily offering undergraduate liberal arts programs, but with fewer than 50 percent of students receiving degrees in traditional liberal arts disciplines.

The magazine's rankings are based on data provided by the institutions, themselves, and by a reputational survey of colleagues. To ensure that they are compared with reasonably similar institutions, colleges and universities are grouped into four major categories, following a system devised by the Carnegie Fund for the Advancement of Teaching. The two larger groups are further sub-divided according to geographical regions.

The National Universities category involves 262 private and public universities with a wide range of undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree offerings, many strongly emphasizing research. Only Baylor and Samford are in that group. Because of the number of doctoral degrees it awards in law, pharmacy, divinity and education, Samford was re-classified this year from its former classification with primarily master's degree-granting institutions in the South.

The greatest number of Baptist institutions is in the Baccalaureate-South division. Among them, in addition to Ouachita Baptist, are Campbellsville University, Shorter College, University of the Cumberlands, Blue Mountain College, Mars Hill College, Anderson University, Louisiana College, Bluefield College, Virginia Intermont College, Williams Baptist College, Brewton-Parker College and Chowan University.

In the Baccalaureate-West division, Oklahoma Baptist, East Texas Baptist and Howard Payne Universities are listed. Judson College of Illinois and Hannibal-LaGrange Colleges are listed among the Baccalaureate-Midwest institutions.

The Master's degree category includes colleges and universities granting primarily undergraduate and master's degrees, but few, if any, doctoral degrees. Since 574 institutions fit that description, they are further identified with geographical areas. The Master's Degree–South category ranks Mercer,

Belmont, and Union Universities, as well as Mississippi College, Campbell University, Gardner-Webb University, the University of Mobile, Charleston Southern, Palm Beach Atlantic and William Carey Universities. The Master's-Midwest group, includes Missouri Baptist and Southwest Baptist Universities. The West category of Master's Degree campuses cited Hardin-Simmons, California Baptist, and Houston Baptist Universities, as

well as the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Dallas Baptist and Wayland Baptist Universities.

Liberal Arts Colleges are defined as emphasizing undergraduate education and granting at least 50 percent of their degrees in arts and sciences. Under that heading, Carson-Newman and Georgetown Colleges appear, along with Judson College of Alabama, and North Greenville University. ■

Some College Officials Question Importance of U.S. News Annual Best College Rankings

This Article condensed from an STL.com article by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* by Kavita Kumar

After the much-scrutinized and much-maligned annual college rankings put out by *U.S. News & World Reports* this summer, many schools quickly issued the customary round of news releases celebrating their inching up the list. But leaders at other schools caution against placing too much stock in what they call a beauty pageant.

About 60 college presidents, including Missouri Baptist University's R. Alton Lacey, signed a letter recently pledging to no longer participate in the magazine's peer survey, the most heavily weighted part of the rankings, in which presidents and administrators are asked to rate the reputations of other schools.

Miriam Pride, president of Blackburn College, stopped filling out the thick survey about five years ago. She said didn't feel she knew enough about most of the hundreds of schools to rate them.

She also grew disgusted by the piles of glossy, color magazines that would fill her mailbox from universities she had never heard of in what seemed to her attempts to increase the schools' reputation score.

"It has provided an incentive for some institutions to send extraordinary amounts of material to us," she said. "That's money those institutions ought to be spending on education."

Washington University Chancellor Mark Wrighton said he doesn't have a problem with the survey, even though he fills out only about 75 percent of it.

"I value what my peers think and value the assessment that my peers provide," he said.

Moreover, Wrighton values the rankings for presenting useful information about schools in a concise, easy-to-read format and in a widely-read publication.

But some critics assail the rankings as elitist for rewarding schools that take students with high SAT and ACT scores and turn away

a large number of students. Others dislike them for favoring certain kinds of schools; residential universities with traditional students are much more likely to excel than schools that reach out to first-generation, older and working college students.

The rankings are subjective to be sure, said McKendree University President Jim Dennis.

"It's just like trying to figure out who is No. 1 in football," he said. "You can't figure it out until you play. But academically, you can't play against another school."

Lacey says there is almost no way Missouri Baptist can move out of the rankings' fourth tier, despite improvements to the school. That's because he doesn't think the rankings value what he finds important.

For example, his school's mission is to serve students in the metropolitan area. If he increased the ACT scores required for admission, he would not be able to serve and educate as many students, he said. Lacey is hopeful about several alternatives to the rankings that are in the works.

One such initiative to be launched is the University and College Accountability Network (U-CAN), a Web-based project by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. It will have profiles of hundreds of institutions with comparable data, such as the price most students actually pay, average student debt upon graduation, enrollment and admissions statistics.

"What is really driving our efforts ... is growing concerns among students and families that they need better information to make the best college choice," said Tony Pals, the association's spokesman. "And it needs to be provided in a consumer-friendly format."

Because so many students and faculty refer to the U.S. News rankings, schools have to pay attention to them, said University of Missouri curator David Wasinger, who has expressed concern about the Columbia campus' standing in the rankings. ■

Learning House Helps Establish Online Higher Education Courses at Mississippi College

Debbie Norris stays in touch with her students via chat rooms and emails, and turns to old-school technology like the telephone.

"With on-line chat sessions, when I ask a question, everyone must answer," said Norris, a Mississippi College professor teaching on-line higher education classes to her MC students in Mississippi, Virginia and Illinois. "Nobody is off the hook."

In this high-tech global village, Mississippi College joins a growing number of institutions connecting with students by computer and making long-distance commutes a thing of the past. MC is offering the master's in higher education administration. It's made possible through an MC partnership with Kentucky-based Learning House, Inc., a national leader in providing distance learning solutions for small colleges and universities, many with strong ties to the faith community.

Mississippi College's graduate dean and vice president of planning and assessment, Norris sits in the comfort of her office in Nelson Hall on the Clinton campus as she reaches out to students down the road or 1,000 miles away.

An instructor for two decades, this is her first experience with teaching about school finances, management and leadership on-line. There have been few glitches since it all began in late August. "Having taught for 20 years face to face, I was a little bit skeptical," Norris said. "But now I'm convinced people learn as well this way if not better....I give them feedback electronically."

At the 4,600-student Christian university, Mississippi's largest private institution and the nation's second-oldest Baptist college, MC's on-line education venture is part of a growing trend sweeping higher education. Growth in on-line classes is estimated at 20 percent to 25 percent annually, says Laura Dorman of Learning House at headquarters in Louisville, Ky. From 2000 to 2007, the number of adult distance learners has nearly doubled, reports show.

With a baby on the way, a four-year-old at home and a busy job as an assistant financial aid director at a nearby community college, Carrie Cooper turned to Mississippi College's newest learning avenue to help her move up the career ladder.

The assistant director of financial aid at Hinds Community College in Raymond, Miss., Cooper, 28, is signed up for on-line classes at MC, her alma mater, to pursue a master's in higher education administration. It's a 31-hour degree program that's attractive to people like her with busy lives on the

home front and at the office.

On-line classes like the ones Learning House works with in tandem with schools like MC, Blue Mountain College, Anderson University, and Charleston Southern University, are a great fit for Cooper.

"I'm not a computer geek, but on-line courses are very accessible for students," Cooper said. "Without going on-line "there's no doubt this semester would be impossible. I can't leave a baby for four hours a night. It's given me an opportunity to take classes at a time in my life I didn't think I would be able to."

It wasn't hard for her to narrow the many choices and settle on Mississippi College for her master's. "I chose MC because of its excellence. People see MC on the resume, and they are a little more impressed," said the Jackson, Miss. native. She earned her undergraduate degree in marketing at MC in 2001.

Another on-line degree believer at MC is Sharon White, 46, an admissions specialist at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Perkinston. Taking on-line courses at Mississippi College, she says, "is kind of overwhelming and exciting at the same time. It's been 23 years since I've been back in college. It's very convenient."

White has company on the nearly 10,000-student South Mississippi community college. She and another Mississippi Gulf Coast recruiter, Shelly Caro, work in the same campus office and both are pursuing MC's higher education on-line degree. Both are satisfied customers.

"Dr. Norris has been fabulous," said White, a Wiggins resident. With a 22-year-old son attending Mississippi State University, and an 18-year-old high school senior, the University of Southern Mississippi graduate has much going on outside the office to make an on-line education enticing.

Cooper and White are hoping to graduate with their MC degrees in 2008.

Mississippi College hopes to draw upon a diverse mix of students in the Jackson metropolitan area with its host of state agencies, colleges and businesses in



Debbie Norris, graduate dean and vice president of planning and assessment at Mississippi College.

Mississippi's capital city. But there are no borders for on-line.

"It wouldn't have been possible without Learning House getting involved to develop MC's program from the ground up more than a year ago," Norris said.

Learning House builds online campuses, creates custom eCourses and eLearning products, provides training to instructors and much more.

Said Norris, "Learning House provides training and a 24/7 help desk. They helped put up our web site. We wouldn't be there if not for them."

Such classes, she said, are designed for "very busy people with full-time jobs and lives."

For additional information on MC's courses, contact John Kelly in the graduate admissions office at <jkelly@mc.edu> or go to <<http://www.elearnportal.com/mc>>.

Learning House, Inc. was founded in 1985 by Dr. Denzil Edge. Learning House is a comprehensive eLearning services company that develops customized eContent, as well as audio and video products.

Learning House, a corporate sponsor of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools, also hosts and leases course management systems, leases and sells eContent, and provides 24/7 Help Desk services, project management services, consultation and research services, editing services, and staff training for its clientele.

Learning House, Inc. provides eLearning services to numerous institutions of higher education, professional organizations, government agencies, and businesses.

For more information about Learning House Inc., please visit: <www.learninghouse.com>. ■

The Student as ‘Consumer’



The law sometimes sees students as it sees consumers. This viewpoint began to gain prominence after World War II. Lawyers talked about “educational consumerism,” and “educational malpractice.” They began to use theories of negligence, fraud, and misrepresentation in the suits they brought on behalf of students against schools.

Just as there were “Johnny can’t read” suits brought against elementary and secondary schools, there were suits against colleges claiming the product which had been contracted for wasn’t delivered as promised. My favorite was the student’s suit against Columbia University. The student claimed Columbia had failed to instill “wisdom” in him, as Columbia, he said, had promised. He proved his lack of wisdom by filing an unsuccessful suit.

Most student suits against their colleges are based on contract theories. The students usually lose. They lose primarily because colleges have learned how to draft catalogs, handbooks and policy manuals, and they have learned to be cautiously respectful of possible student rights. And, fortunately for the schools, students don’t have nearly as many legal rights as some students and their lawyers think they do.

Robert Steinberg was an early exception. He sued the Chicago Medical School because the school did not judge his application for admission according to the criteria for admission published in the catalog. The Appellate Court of Illinois applied contract law to the relationship. It talked about offer and acceptance and consideration as it would in any business transaction. He won.

But, when Hayes Slaughter sued Brigham Young University, claiming the University had breached its contract with him when he was expelled from a graduate program because of alleged dishonesty, the Tenth Circuit said “The student-university relationship is unique, and it should not be and can not be stuffed into one doctrinal category,” that of two parties to a business contract.

Most courts see the relationship as the Tenth Circuit saw it, not as the Illinois court found it. They talk about the relationship being “in the nature of” a contract, or a “quasi contract.” Edwards and Nordin in discussing “The Contract Theory: the Student as Consumer,” cited Corbin on Contracts, where Corbin said “The term “quasi” is . . . a weasel word, that sucks all the meaning of the word that follows it.” Edwards and Nordin concluded: “This (quasi-contract) approach allows a court to pick and choose those

aspects of contract law which it feels can be applied with validity to the student-university relation.”

Some state and federal legislation smacks of student consumerism. Congress labeled its law requiring schools to be forthcoming with students about crime on campus as the “Student-Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act.” The federal government has used its aid to education money as a wedge with which to regulate colleges and universities in many ways which are akin to consumer protection.

But this past year there has been a spate of student-as-consumer protection efforts by state attorneys general. Led by New York, these state law enforcement officers have used state deceptive practices laws to come after colleges and universities. First it was over the schools’ policies and practices regarding student loans. More recently, these attorneys general have made a foray into the area of international study programs. In both instances, legal notions of the rights of students as consumers were involved.

The old English barristers had cubby-holes in their desks because the law dealt with rights and duties by categories. Each recognized cause of action had its place. Commerce was made possible by more or less clear understandings of the relationship of the participants.

But the legal principles which were derived in the business world often don’t fit the student’s relationship with his school. For example, there is something like the relationship of the inn-keeper to his guest in the college’s operation of student dormitories. But, if one were to pick up the rights and duties which have come to be recognized in the hotel and motel industry and apply them wholesale to a college campus, one would be overlooking many dissimilarities.

While educators can make a case that the student-as-consumer of a higher education product is a mighty poor analogy of the student-institution relationship, the law continues to see the relationship, at least to some degree, in that way. Perhaps clear analysis of the issues and the equities would be served if we put the “weasel” word, “quasi” in front of “consumer,” so that we speak of the student as a “quasi consumer.” ■

Jim Guenther is a partner in the law firm of Guenther, Jordan and Price, P.C. in Nashville, Tennessee, 615-329-2100. ■

The federal government has used its aid to education money as a wedge with which to regulate colleges and universities in many ways which are akin to consumer protection.



Names & Faces

Mark Brister to Retire as OBU President November 10

Oklahoma Baptist University's board of trustees has accepted the retirement of OBU President Mark A. Brister.

Brister announced his plans to retire effective Nov. 10, 2007, at the conclusion of OBU's annual Homecoming. He made the announcement in a called meeting of the 33-member board. He has led the Christian liberal arts institution since Sept. 1, 1998. "The time has come for me and my wife, Rhonda, to move to the next phase of our careers and lives," said Brister. "The last nine years have been among the most satisfying and enjoyable, and so it is with mixed feelings that we make this announcement."

Brister was named OBU's 14th president in April 1998 and assumed the presidency the following fall semester. His nine-year tenure is the third-longest in the university's 97-year history.

"While we will miss the energy and excitement of campus life, we are looking forward to new opportunities and challenges," said Brister. "I plan to return to my first passion for writing, preaching, teaching and public speaking. Rhonda is looking forward to utilizing her expertise and interests in child development."

During the trustee meeting, board members also elected John W. Parrish to serve as the university's interim president, effective Nov. 11, 2007. Parrish, OBU's executive vice president emeritus, retired from the university's administration in November 2002, after serving more than 38 years at OBU. He was executive vice president and chief financial officer from 1995 until his retirement.

During Brister's tenure, OBU has experienced record annual support. The university's endowment, which was approximately \$60 million in the summer of 1998, is now more than 50 percent larger, at \$93.7 million. The university received a record \$7.15 million in gifts during the 2003-04 fiscal year. A total of \$6.74 million was received in the 2006-07 year, making it the second-highest total in OBU's history.

The university's headcount enrollment for the fall 2007 semester is 1,607, up one from the fall 2006 headcount of 1,606, but down from the total headcount of 2,171 in fall 1998. While OBU has demonstrated strong fiscal health, university leaders have sought greater success in an increasingly competitive student recruitment environment, said Howell. He cited aggressive steps OBU took this summer to begin recruiting from a broader pool of prospective students. ■

Dockery's Newly Released Book 'Renewing Minds' Calls for Excellence in Christian Higher Education

Christian colleges and universities must go beyond offering chapel services and Bible classes and teach students how to approach every sphere of life from a Christian perspective, according to Union University President David S. Dockery in his newest book.

Renewing Minds: Serving Church and Society through Christian Higher Education, published by B&H Academic, will be available beginning Oct. 1.

Renewing Minds is a call to reclaim the best of the Christian intellectual tradition," Dockery said. "In this context we need more than just novel ideas and enhanced programs; we need distinctively Christian thinking."

"That means," Dockery writes in *Renewing Minds*, "that Christian institutions of higher education must embrace the idea of a Christian worldview that is built not on two types of truth – religious

and philosophical or scientific."

"Instead, a Christian worldview is based on a universal principle and all-embracing system that shapes religion, natural and social sciences, law, history, health care, the arts, the humanities and every other discipline of study with application for all of life."

"Grounded in the best of the liberal arts, *Renewing Minds* calls for serious engagement of the great ideas of history and the perplexing issues of our day," Dockery said.

He said the book invites Christians to love God with their minds and to "think Christianly" about the world.

"In that sense it is an invitation to love God and to recognize the importance of the life of the mind," Dockery said. "It calls us both to devotion and to instruction, to genuine Christian commitment and to serious scholarship. ■



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\$3 Million Matching Gift to BUA Helps Fund New 80-Acre Campus

The philanthropic vision of the John Baugh family was realized recently as Baptist University of the Americas announced official fulfillment of a \$3 million dollar matching gift that served as the anchor to its new campus development campaign.

Prior to the 2005 pledge made by the recently deceased Baugh, the largest gift to Baptist University of the Americas on record had been a \$650,000 gift made by the Ed & Irene Rollins family in the 1960's.

The historic Baugh gift became the catalyst for the largest fundraising campaign in the school's history as it set its sites on developing a new 80 acre campus across the highway from its existing campus. The Baugh gift subsequently opened the way for fellow Baptist friends and philanthropists Paul & Katie Piper to provide a million dollar gift to help fund the first phase of construction, Piper Student Village, slated for completion in December 2007.

Baptist Memorial Health Care donates \$1 million to Union

Baptist Memorial Health Care of Memphis has made a \$1 million donation to the health care programs at Union University. The gift will be used to establish the Baptist Memorial Health Care Center for Excellence in Health Care and the Baptist Memorial Health Care Professor of Pharmacy in honor of Grover Bowles. Bowles was the longtime director of pharmacy at Baptist Memorial Hospital Medical Center.

"Our mission of healing, teaching and preaching extends beyond the hospital and into our community and our schools," Reynolds said. "We want to make sure the Mid-South's health care students receive a quality education no matter where they work after graduation."

The gift from Baptist follows \$5 million in donations to Union's pharmacy program from West Tennessee Healthcare and leaders of Union's board of trustees.

Mississippi College Receives \$500,000 Gift

Communication students at Mississippi College will soon benefit from scholarships thanks to a \$500,000 donation from the estate of the late Hollis and Julia Todd.

The Todds devoted a combined 60 years to the Christian university as communication

professors before retiring in the early 1980s.

The 30-year-old campus radio station WJHT, Star 93.5, is named in their honor. The Todds were instrumental in creating the communication department.

Their gift going to student scholarships is the largest in the history of the MC department. The first four scholarships will be awarded in fall 2008.

Alabama Power Gives Samford \$225,000 for Research

The Alabama Power Foundation has given Samford University \$225,000 to support a growing undergraduate research program. The gift was announced at a luncheon honoring summer research students, who worked with faculty on advanced research projects ranging from ancient literature to genetics.

The gift creates the Alabama Power Foundation Research Fellows Fund at Samford.

The fund also will support the Samford Scholars Initiative, to be launched in 2008. That program will combine traditional liberal arts courses with innovative classroom instruction, international travel and discipline-based undergraduate research.

Houston Baptist to Receive \$1.499 Million in 5-Year Grant

Houston Baptist University has received a five year grant of Title III NCLB scholarship funds to train undergraduate and graduate students to become bilingual or ESL teachers. The U.S. Department of Education has approved a total of \$1,499,000 to be awarded over a five year period.

Federal funding for the first year of the grant will total \$299,800. The U.S. Department of Education is recommending that the amount for each of the four ensuing years also be \$299,800.

The University will contribute all normal program costs—an estimated \$159,190 the first year and up to \$180,692 per year in subsequent years.

Howard Payne Receives \$100,000 Meadows Grant

Howard Payne University has received a \$100,000 grant from The Meadows Foundation of Dallas to support the renovation of the historic Coca-Cola complex, located on the HPU campus, into the new Art Program Facility. The lecture hall in the ren-

ovated facility will be named for the late Dr. J. Waddy Bullion, a 1936 graduate of HPU.

MC Receives \$100,000 for Christian Communicators Series

A gift of \$100,000 to Mississippi College establishes the Carl Bates Christian Communicators Series.

The gift will give students at MC another opportunity to worship Christ and grow in their faith through the influence of excellent communicators of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The series will continue the legacy of Carl Bates as a preacher of the Gospel and a Christian leader.

The gift came from the estate of Myra Gray Bates of Hendersonville, N.C. She is the daughter of Carl Bates.

Ministry Guidance Program at Baylor Benefits From Estate Gift

Baylor University has announced an approximately \$4 million gift from the estate of Allene Hubler that will establish an endowed chair, an endowed professorship and an endowed scholarship in the Ministry Guidance program within Baylor's department of religion.

"Endowed faculty positions and student scholarships enable Baylor to attract the best faculty and students," said Baylor University President John M. Lilley. "I thank Allene and Raymond Hubler for adopting Baylor and providing so generously for Ministry Guidance's continued excellence."

\$100,000 Bank Grant to Fund Wireless Network at Chowan

The Southern Bank Foundation has continued its financial support of Chowan University with a \$100,000 grant to assist in funding of the Wireless Network Computer Project.

Chowan has begun work on the project which will soon allow students, faculty, and staff to access the Internet and all academic resources any place on campus.

The Wireless Network Computer Project will assist Chowan University in accomplishing its goal of providing current technology that will enable students, faculty, and staff to meet academic demands in and out of the lecture hall and expectations of the campus community. The entire student population of nearly 1,000 students will be impacted by the implementation of the Wireless Network Computer System. ■

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Campus Report

William Carey Offers Field Biology Course in Guatemala

William Carey University will offer a unique, hands-on field lab course during the new J-Term which will begin January 2, 2008. Tropical Field Biology is a four credit hour class that will be taught in Guatemala's Rio Dulce and Lake Izabel watershed January 2-9.

Students will explore the tropical ecology of Guatemala while visiting lush rain forests, rolling rivers, mysterious caves and beautiful wildlife.

Students will fly to the ancient Mayan city of Guatemala City and be bused to field camp, Nutria Marina, located on the shore of the Rio Dulce River. Daily excursions by canoes and small motor launches will transport students to strategic stations where they will study the biota of the area and make physical-chemical tests and observations.

The information will be collected and recorded for publication. Students will be expected to make copious field notes on the topography, plants and animals at each station. The most obvious organisms seen at the stations will be the vociferous howler monkeys, often heard roaring before sighted; the Jesus Christ lizard or basilisk, that runs on the water surface; fish, turtles, bats, abundant species of hawks and birds, leaf cutter ants, the reclusive manatee; rubber trees, Mahogany, wild orchids, and the Strangler or Assassin tree.

These regions are described and noted in biology textbooks for their enormous biological diversity and unique ecology. Students will have an opportunity to visit local markets where turtle eggs, fish, fruit and vegetables are sold, and to buy authentic Mayan clothes and handicrafts.

Trustees Authorize Honors College at Houston Baptist

Houston Baptist University, trustees have given approval for the establishment of an Honors College.

"An Honors College will expand our abili-

ty to attract highly motivated and gifted students to the University," said HBU President Robert B. Sloan, Jr. "I believe it will enhance the reputation and visibility of the University and meet the needs of academically gifted students who are seeking a distinctively Christian university. I especially appreciate the work and diligence of the faculty committee, chaired by Dr. David Capes, which developed this new program.

The Honors College at HBU will provide qualified undergraduate students a unique general education core curriculum in the liberal arts, social sciences, and natural sciences. Students will matriculate in the Honors College as freshmen and follow a special curriculum throughout their four years at the University.

They will examine the great texts of human experience and hone their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills through spirited discussion with their peers and distinguished faculty. Some courses will be taught by an interdisciplinary team of faculty so that students can examine the same subject from various scholarly perspectives and recognize that knowledge in all fields is interconnected.

Learning will not be confined to the classroom. Honors College students will engage the wider learning community through study abroad programs, participation in national undergraduate research conferences, exposure to diverse cultural opportunities in Houston, and other activities that integrate faith and learning.

Carnegie Designates Samford A Doctoral/Research University

Samford University has become Birmingham's second national research university and the only private national research university in Alabama, based on new classifications by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.

Samford is now a doctoral/research university. Universities in this category are further classified based on the amount of research activity and number of degrees granted.

"This represents an important milestone for Samford University," said President Andrew Westmoreland.

"To be officially classified among the nation's great universities further recognizes the quality of teaching, learning and scholarship that have been Samford hallmarks for decades.

"At the same time, we remain committed to providing a strong undergraduate liberal arts-based education."

Last year, Samford awarded more than 450 doctoral and professional degrees in divinity, education, law and pharmacy. Samford also is recognized for its active and growing undergraduate research program.

Four Samford Professors Named Fulbright Scholars for 2007-08

Four Samford University professors have been awarded Fulbright Scholar grants to lecture and conduct research at universities in Tunisia, Ecuador, Ukraine and China during the 2007-08 academic year.

Mary McCullough, associate professor of French, received a 10-month award to teach and do research in Tunisia. She will teach English classes in literature, research methods, advanced writing and film at the University of Tunis-II at Al Manar. She will research reverse migration of Tunisians and stereotypes that colonists had when Tunisia was a French protectorate (1881-1954).

Tompkins, professor of physics, will teach in Ecuador during the fall term. He will teach workshops and courses on computer instrumentation and data acquisition at the University of Cuenca College of Engineering.

Robert Greene, professor in Samford's Cumberland School of Law, will teach at the Odessa National Academy of Law in Ukraine during the spring of 2008. He will teach a course in comparative environmental law.

Deborah Young, also a professor of law, will serve as a lecturer in law at Xiamen University in Xiamen, China. She will teach evidence and criminal procedure to graduate law students. Her 10-year old daughter, Kate, will accompany her. ■