Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary and College Joins IABCU

At its June, 2021, Annual Meeting, the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities approved the membership application of Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary and College. The institution passed the approval of both the Board of Directors as well as the general membership, both of which are necessary according to IABCU bylaws.

The institution, located in Cochrane, Alberta, Canada, was established in 1986 by the Canadian National Baptist Convention and is affiliated with the Baptist World Alliance. Dr. Rob Blackaby serves as President of CBTSC.

CBTSC offers both graduate theological programs and undergraduate programs. Graduate programs include an 85-hour Master of Divinity, Master of Christian Ministry, Master of Biblical Studies, and Master of Christian Studies. The seminary also offers certificate programs in Christian Care/Chaplaincy. Undergraduate programs include Bachelor of Christian Studies, Bachelor of Christian Ministry, Diploma of Christian Studies, Diploma of Christian Ministry, Certificate in Christian Studies, and a Samuel Certificate program designed for high school graduates who want to spend a year taking college-level courses in a Christian environment and receive the tools they need to prepare for their future.

The small group of churches that began the school has grown to well over 400 churches today with a persistent vision to grow to 1,000 churches spread throughout every region of Canada. CBTSC is playing a pivotal role in the realization of that vision as they train God-called men and women for twenty-first century leadership in tough places.
When I became President of Dallas Baptist University in 1988 at the age of 37, I was overwhelmed with the number of decisions I was asked to make every day. Many of these were extremely important decisions, and others were not so much so, but it was one problem after another we faced all day long.

I am sure all of you who serve as presidents and vice presidents can identify with this feeling of being overwhelmed at times with all the decisions which need to be made on a daily basis.

After seeking the Lord and praying for guidance, I felt like the Lord told me to do the same thing that Solomon had done, and that was to ask for wisdom. I wondered how Solomon had the wisdom to ask for wisdom when he, as a young man, became the king of Israel.

I found the answer in Proverbs 4:3-8. Solomon tells us how when he was a young boy, his dad, David, taught him to seek wisdom:

3. For I too was a son to my father,  
     still tender, and cherished by my mother.
4. Then he taught me, and he said to me,  
   “Take hold of my words with all your heart;  
   keep my commands, and you will live.
5. Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them.

6. Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you;  
   love her, and she will watch over you.
7. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom.  
   Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
8. Cherish her, and she will exalt you;  
   embrace her, and she will honor you.

(Proverbs 4:3-8 NIV)

(Continued on next page.)
So, in my daily Bible reading, I decided to read the passages in the Bible about wisdom. I quickly found James 1:5 and discovered this: “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind” (James 1:5-6 NIV). As I continued to read in James chapter 3, I found that there was heavenly wisdom and earthly wisdom and that our mission was to seek the heavenly wisdom rather than earthly wisdom.

Day after day, I would ask the Lord for wisdom, expecting that He would provide this for me. I asked for heavenly wisdom and not earthly wisdom.

I would like to give you an example of the earthly wisdom which I attempted and then the heavenly wisdom which the Lord provided for me as I tried to seek Him with all my heart.

We were in a very difficult financial situation, and the trustees suggested that I go to some of the extremely wealthy individuals in Dallas to see if they would help us in a significant way. Mary Crowley had been the key donor to the University in days past. She often had written checks to make payroll. It was that desperate. However, before I arrived as president, Mary Crowley had passed away, so the trustees suggested that I needed to find someone else like Mary Crowley. That was the earthly wisdom.

I could not get through for an appointment with Ross Perot. Mary Kay Ash did meet with me but told me that she was not able to help, and she basically said she had no interest in DBU and that she had other charities that she was already supporting. Trammell Crow allowed me to come to his office, and he told me that our campus looked desolate and that we needed to plant trees in order to make it more welcoming to students. He made a very good point, but I needed money. (By the way, over a five-year period, Mr. Crow did give us 500 trees, and they certainly have helped significantly in beautifying the campus.)

Attempting to find funds from very wealthy individuals was perhaps earthly wisdom. But these wealthy individuals had never been a part of the DBU family in the past. The heavenly wisdom came from the Lord to me as I read in Genesis during my daily Bible reading the story of Isaac and how when he needed water, he went back to the old wells that had been dug by his father, Abraham, rather than digging new wells. That was the answer that I had been looking for. I felt like the Lord said to me that He wanted me to re-dig the old wells that had been dug before and that I should go back and try to find those people who had given to DBU when we were established in Dallas in 1965 to see if they would once again help us. This was the answer to our prayers. We received millions of dollars from these individuals through the years following.

One of the most helpful books I read as a university president was The Contrarian’s Guide to Leadership by Dr. Steven Sample, former president of the University of Southern California. By reading this book, I realized that the contrarian perspective that Dr. Sample espoused was helpful to me in making decisions at DBU. It was often not the conventional wisdom that man espoused but a different type of wisdom that comes through prayer and divine guidance.

Through the years, I have been given many books as gifts. People will always give me books about success and leadership. I read through these books but have to always recognize that the worldly wisdom is much different from the heavenly wisdom which comes from the Lord. There’s not a lot in the Bible about success. It’s mostly about being faithful.

One of my favorite passages is Jeremiah 29:11-13. Most people emphasize verse 11, but to me, the most significant part of the passage is verse 13. “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart.” Let us all continue to seek the Lord with all of our heart as we ask for wisdom each and every day.
The following lecture is the first of three Hester Lectures delivered by Dr. Elijah Brown, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

Is the Kingdom of God enough?

Several years ago, I was in Somalia and met an underground church leader named Iman. Filled with joy, his story was like a chapter out of the New Testament. His testimony involved persecution, miraculous escapes from prison where the doors were suddenly opened with no one present, fleeing as a refugee, and eventually pastoring two small churches. After an extensive conversation, I ended with this question, “What is the one message you would like to share with the broader church?” Iman responded, “We need to accept and receive the crucifixion, and what Jesus passed through, we also need to pass through. They kill your flesh, but they are not able to kill your soul. Do not be afraid of those who try to kill you. Your life does not belong to you. It belongs to the Lord. He said in his word – which always gives us hope – that I am with you to the uttermost ends of the world. Yes, we are persecuted. Yes, we do not have freedom. But we have the Kingdom of God and that is enough for us.”

We have the Kingdom of God.

In the midst of global pandemics, decisions that will shape our organizations and institutions for years to come, in the midst of economic challenges and

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— Iman, Underground church leader in Somalia —
political divisions, we are invited by Jesus to participate in the Kingdom of God.

Shortly after starting at the BWA, I joined in meetings at the Taizé Community in France. Taizé is a community of 100 brothers from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds that values silence and youth. Annually, over 100,000 young people, many of them college aged, pilgrimage to Taizé to serve and pray in silence. When the community gathers three times a day in the Church of Reconciliation to worship and pray, one of the worship songs is entitled, “The Kingdom of God.” It is a simple refrain, “The Kingdom of God is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Come, Lord, and open in us the gates of your kingdom.”

This song is based on Romans 14:17: “For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,” (NIV).

Is the Kingdom of God enough? Can I suggest that Baptist higher education is called to embrace a vision of the Kingdom of God in an age of globalization?

As Baptists, we believe the Word of God is powerful and alive. With your permission, can we use this verse to frame our time? This first lecture will consider the Kingdom of God and righteousness. The second lecture will consider peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. In the final presentation, we will focus on Q&A and ways IABCU and BWA could potentially partner to pursue a vision of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is essential to the New Testament and to the teachings of Jesus. With eighty unique instances, Jesus teaches more on the Kingdom of God than any other topic in the four Gospels. As followers of Christ, we are to have a Kingdom vision. This embrace contains three implications.

The Kingdom of God is a call to a holistic vision commissioning the people of God to live for the purposes of God.

First, the Kingdom of God is a call to a holistic vision commissioning the people of God to live for the purposes of God. The Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6 begins, “This then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Jesus teaches us to pray for a Kingdom vision infused with Kingdom values and Kingdom actions. To have a Kingdom vision is to picture the good that is in heaven and seek to live according to that reality now.

What then do we know about heaven?

In heaven people have a direct relationship with God. Helping people connect with a personal relationship with Jesus is to work with a Kingdom vision. There is forgiveness in heaven. When we work to enhance forgiveness and build reconciliation, we are working with a Kingdom vision.

— Romans 14:17 —
There are no tears in heaven. Working to bring healing and to eradicate sickness in all its many physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual forms is to work with a Kingdom vision. There is no hunger or thirst in heaven. When we are working to help end famine; provide access to clean, drinking water; and when we are working to create businesses where individuals can earn a basic living wage so that these needs are met, we are working with a Kingdom vision.

There are homes in heaven because Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us. Using architectural skills to help individuals live in affordable housing is working with a Kingdom vision. There is only truth in heaven. Working to tell the truth in our personal lives, news streams and publications, and national politics is embracing a Kingdom vision. There is peace in heaven.

Building communities of peace and structures that enable diverse communities to pursue peace and justice is to labor with a Kingdom vision.

Institutions of Baptist higher education are critically positioned to help foster a vision that every follower of Christ is to live with a holistic, integrated vision of the Kingdom of God. Journalists, nurses, police officers, psychologists, architects, engineers, educators, social workers, business leaders, and pastors are to be commissioned as the people of God living out of the passions and skills given by God for the purposes of God.

The Kingdom of God is a holistic vision of truth. In the midst of disintegration and pressure to focus on utilitarian understandings of education as a pathway to financial prosperity, Baptist higher education can call us to a holistic and flourishing vision to live according to the Kingdom of God.

When all of God’s people are released to live the purposes of God, creative witness flourishes.

Earlier this year, the military in Myanmar led a coup against the democratically elected leadership. There are 1.7 million Baptists in Myanmar and last year the Myanmar Baptist Convention was the second fastest growing Baptist convention in the world. The last twenty weeks have been devastating for the country. I was on a call with the Myanmar ambassador to the United Nations who shared that the average age of those killed protesting for democracy is seventeen. What if we released that same age category at our Baptist universities and seminaries to stand in solidarity with those dying in Myanmar?

In March, a convoy of fifteen military vehicles with sixty soldiers arrived at the Kachin Theological College and Seminary at 10:45 pm. They went door by door into every dormitory looking for a professor who had denounced the military coup and instances where the military had occupied church compounds. Fortunately, she was able to escape though she is now living as an internally displaced person. We visited with her and with tears she said, “Every day our children are sacrificing their lives.” She asked, “Will the international faith community raise their voices for the victims?”

With a Kingdom of God vision, will we stand in solidarity with the many around the world who are called to education in dangerous contexts?

The Kingdom of God is a call to engage the world, especially in the midst of suffering.
Second, the Kingdom of God is a call to engage the world, especially in the midst of suffering. Paul utilizes Romans 14:17 as a summative statement indicating that the Kingdom of God involves righteousness, that is a right relationship with God; peace, that is a right relationship between people; and joy, an internal transformation of right character. Or in more modern parlance, the Kingdom of God is not a matter of consumption but of salvation, justice, and character transformed in the Holy Spirit.

This vision of the Kingdom of God provides an anchor to help individuals and institutions avoid retreating into fundamentalism while also avoiding surrendering to the spirit of the age.

To over-simplify, those who over-emphasize salvation and personal righteousness often pursue an under-realization of God’s Kingdom values with the price of injustice and toleration of structures shaped by sin. This can lead to churches and institutions divorced from the communities they are called to serve, apathy to injustice, and Christian leaders across all sectors of society who separate their “faith” from the way in which they pursue their business, politics, and pleasure.

Conversely, those who over-emphasize peace and social justice often pursue an over-realization of God’s Kingdom with the price of failing to address personal sin and the biblical admonition that powers and principalities can only be transformed by Jesus Christ. This can lead to churches and institutions divorced from the exclusivism of the Gospel, apathy to personal discipleship, and Christian leaders across all sectors of society whose worldview seems to mirror society at large.

Holding to a flourishing vision of God’s Kingdom helps navigate between the competing pressures of fundamentalism and secularism. Baptist institutions of higher education, with their charter to honor the convictions of conscience for all people within a spirit of cooperation and commitment to the universality of God’s truth, are uniquely called to live as prophetic champions for a Kingdom vision that holds the tension of righteousness, peace, and joy.

Especially in the midst of suffering, the call of the Kingdom of God is to engage the world in the Holy Spirit with the truth of salvation and justice in Jesus. The call is not only to engage the world as it is today but as leaders to navigate towards the streams of tomorrow. What does it mean to engage the world? Four trends can be highlighted that will likely shape the contours of the next twenty years.

*Engaging the World and Changing Demographics*

First, changing demographics. Within the Baptist movement, Baptists are experiencing the greatest global expansion in four hundred years. Today, the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) is a Christian worldwide communion with members in 126 countries and territories representing 49 million Baptists. In the previous ten years, the BWA family has grown worldwide by 29%. Praise the Lord! Baptists belong to a growing worldwide movement though there are significant differentiations within the regions. Regionally, in the previous ten years, Baptists have experienced:

- Europe and the Middle East: 3% decline
- North America: 6% decline
- Asia Pacific: 20% growth
- Caribbean: 48% growth
- Latin America: 41% growth
- Africa: 134% growth

As institutions of Baptist higher education, are we building towards a Baptist identity as a worldwide movement with worldwide concerns with our largest demographic base on the continent of Africa?

Building upon United Nations data, over the next thirty years the worldwide population will grow from approximately 7.5 billion to 9.5 billion. This will lead to increased strain on resources, and to increased opportunity. Often institutional vision seems to be defined as sustained, incremental change based on current contextual realities. There is value in that approach. But what if IABCU allowed a more disruptive question? How would it change our strategy to account for the worldwide
growth of two billion more people who will have significant educational needs? Will that growth influence our vision and our strategy?

While the topline number is significant, generational and geographic consideration gives additional insight. Worldwide, in the age bracket of 15-24, there are 1.2 billion people. In thirty years, it is projected to increase to 1.3 billion people. In the United States, in 2020 there were approximately 45 million people in the 15-24 age bracket with current projections that in 2050 that age bracket will remain a stable 45 million. Over the next thirty years the core age constituency for many traditional Baptist universities and colleges will remain flat or in decline, leading to increased competition.

Worldwide birth rates are falling while life expectancy is growing. The United Nations projects that the age bracket of 60 and older will grow worldwide over the next thirty years from approximately 1 billion people to 2 billion people. This reality helps explain why it is possible to simultaneously affirm declining birth rates and expanding worldwide population. Are Baptist institutions of higher education prepared for this significant demographic change?

Geographically, Africa will continue to experience the greatest numerical expansion. Over the next thirty years, the population of sub-Saharan Africa is expected to grow by 1 billion people. Approximately 50% of the world’s population growth will be in Africa; 25% will be in central and southern Asia, predominantly due to growth in India; and only 5% growth in the United States.

In this season of changing demographics, are Baptist education institutions building towards a Baptist identity as a worldwide movement with our largest demographic base in Africa? Are we preparing to help educate 2 billion additional people? Are we preparing our institutions with the reality that the vast majority of that growth will be with individuals over the age of 60 or in sub-Saharan Africa?

**Engaging the World and Increased Urbanization**

Second, increased urbanization. According to the United Nations, today 55% of the world’s population lives in urban areas. For the first time in the history of the world, the majority of people live in cities and are being shaped by urban environments. By 2050, this percentage is expected to increase to 68%. In the next thirty years, almost seven out of ten people will live in cities. Leading this trend are megacities, which are cities that have 10 million or more inhabitants. Today there are 33 megacities and over the next decade an additional six cities will reach this marker for a total of 39 megacities.

These 39 megacities will have an outside influence in culture, economics, and in the degree to which the world will live in peace. This includes cities such as Lagos, Nigeria; Bangalore, India; Bangkok, Thailand; Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam; Beijing, China; Bogota, Colombia; Mexico City, Mexico; London, United Kingdom; Moscow, Russia; and Tehran, Iran. In the United States, it will include Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. To embrace a Kingdom vision is to prepare the next generation to live out their Christian faith and witness in increasingly urbanized and urbanizing realities. To significantly shape the culture, commission your students to live in the megacities as missionaries in every sector of society.

To do so is to embrace a biblical model. The biblical witness begins in a garden and ends with a diverse, multicultural people singing praise to Jesus in a city. The Pauline model embraced targeting strategic cities as a way to reach the nation.

- 20 of the 39 megacities will be in Asia
- 20 of the 39 megacities are in a country where
10% or less claim any form of Christianity

- 16 of the 39 megacities have a Baptist population of less than 25,000 in the whole country

To restate, almost half of the most important and most influential cities in the world have a total Baptist population of less than 25,000 people in the whole country. A Kingdom of God vision asks institutions of Baptist Higher Education if they will help prepare and commission a next generation of leaders able to lead in an age of globalization with urban strategies, business trade route strategies, inner city strategies, and multiethnic leadership. BWA Baptists need a megacity mission movement.

Engaging the World and Globalization, Plural Worldviews and Expected Diversity

Third, to embrace the world with a vision of God’s flourishing Kingdom in salvation and justice with a character of joy, is to recognize a world of globalization, plural worldviews, and expected diversity. Globalization and global migration are drawing the world into closer proximity. Diversity is required. Diversity in our hires, diversity in our boards, and diversity in our own personal reading and reflection.

With exposure to a greater diversity of thought than ever before, many students struggle to understand Scripture as a unifying worldview. In echo chambers of hyper-segmentation when students are taught to view themselves as a brand to be marketed, Baptist universities and seminaries have a critical calling to emphasize truth, character, cross-cultural capability, and service on behalf of the common good.

Europe and North America are post-Christian and post-Christendom. It is not equally felt in all contexts, but it will arrive in all contexts. For Christianity to flourish, students and institutions must set their missional lifestyle alongside service in the midst of the suffering of the world rather than the vestiges of Christendom niches that diminish daily in their influence. There will be anger and mourning which can lead to demoralization. Friction and diversity can lead to conflict. As Miroslav Volf writes, “To shape globalization with a view toward the global common good, religions will have to learn how to advocate universalistic visions in a pluralistic world without fomenting violence.”

We must be honest. Christians, including Baptists, do not always have a positive legacy. As people of faith, can we ask an uncomfortable question? In the past thirty years, why has every major recognized genocide been led and encouraged by people of faith?

Some of these genocides have been led and encouraged by Christians killing other Christians and other religious minorities. Some have been led and encouraged by Muslims killing other Muslims and other religious minorities. In the case of the Rohingya in Myanmar, it was led or at least significantly encouraged by Buddhists. Why are people of faith often at the forefront of christening and championing violence? Why do so many people of faith bless the bullet, exalt the missile, extol nuclear arms, sanctify the invasion, and if need be, pick up the sword and the gun to participate in genocide themselves?

This is often not about religion but about power and dominance, seeking an over-realization of the Kingdom of God, arrogance and neo-colonialism, and the rise of xenophobic nationalism wrapped in the name of religion. This is not about any one religion. But it is a plea. It is confession. It is a lament.
It is a request if you and I as leaders of religious communities could once again live into the ideal of people of faith working to build public peace for the common good.

The trends related to restricting the ability of religious minorities from living out the convictions of their conscience are also clear. According to Pew Research, over the last 10 years the number of countries where people of faith face discrimination, harassment, and social violence has increased:

- Hindus have faced a 9% increase (21 to 23 countries)
- Christians have faced a 34% increase (107 to 144 countries)
- Muslims have faced a 47% increase (96 to 142 countries)
- Buddhists have faced a 70% increase (10 to 17 countries)
- Indigenous Religious Adherents have increased 70% (24 to 41 countries)
- Jews have faced a 70% increase (51 to 87 countries)

In the last ten years, every major religion has seen an increase in the number of countries where it faces discrimination, harassment, and social violence. Here, another uncomfortable truth can be sensed. There are 25 countries with very high government restrictions. 72% have an official or preferred state religion. There are 9 countries with very high social hostilities due to religion. 77% have an official or preferred state religion.

In other words, the number one reason why people of faith are being killed is by other people of faith. At a global level, the number one reason why people of faith face harassment and discrimination, increasing government restrictions, and social violence is because of other people of faith.

Even among Christians, too many religious people continue to seek to dominate and to not allow for dissent. Too many of our restrictions on religion and social hostilities have their roots not in governments but in certain religious teachings and in religious pressures exerted on governments and local communities against practices different than their own. Perhaps this is because some within our faith traditions have embraced narratives of majoritarianism, triumphalism, and nationalism rather than embracing a spirituality of suffering.

All religions have the power to persecute. All religions have the power to live in peace. The question is when our religion is in the majority will we work to protect the rights, the freedom, and the dignity that allows others to also pursue their convictions?

As BWA Baptists, we still believe a person’s conscience is a sacred space. At a policy level, we must continue to articulate a robust vision of religious freedom for people of all faiths and no faith. As Baptists, we have four hundred years of positive witness to draw upon. There is an urgency to robustly articulating a Baptist understanding of religious freedom for all people as a pillar of flourishing societies built around the common good. Both around the world and in the United States, there is an urgency to recognizing religious freedom for all as a core biblical conviction taught and modeled.

At a personal level, we must embrace cross-cultural friendship and service even when it involves cost or suffering. I think about a woman named Adeline who lives in Lebanon. In 1990, Adeline was a young mom and pregnant with her second child. Lebanon was in a war with Syria which had been militarily occupying Lebanon for fourteen years. One fateful day, Adeline, her husband, and their son were captured. They were lined up in an execution line and a firing squad raised their guns and pointed them at this family of three who were present and one on the way.

Adeline closed her eyes and prayed not for deliverance, as death seemed certain. In her words, she prayed she would pass quickly without being forced to watch her husband and son suffer through their own execution. As that moment of death hung heavy in the air, guns raised, cocked, at the last possible moment, a Lebanese tank emerged as if from nowhere, fired a shell that decimated the Syrian soldiers and sent shrapnel flying in every direction. Miraculously, the family was left, with
death all around them, standing without a single scratch.

But Adeline described that this was when the real work began. Despite a physical liberation, Adeline was left with a hatred towards Syrians. She described how for six years she prayed and fasted asking for a removal of the hatred she felt towards those who almost murdered her family. As war over the last few years turned away from Lebanon and engulfed Syria and the now more than one million Syrian refugees poured into Lebanon, Adeline found that her hard work of introspection led to a transformation that not only set her free from the hatred that had pulled at her heart but also enabled her to work for a Baptist organization actively supporting Syrian refugees. She described how her heart moved from hatred to empathy to hesitant involvement to wholehearted engagement in the support of justice and peace.

**Engaging the World and Networked Based Power and Leadership**

Fourth, Networked Based Power and Leadership. Dee Hock, who founded Visa International and created the financial and governance infrastructure for credit cards today, writes the, “hierarchical, command-and-control institutions that, over the past four hundred years, have grown to dominate our commercial, political, and social lives are increasingly irrelevant in the face of the exploding diversity and complexity of society worldwide.” He continues, “The organization of the future will be the embodiment of community based on shared purpose calling to the higher aspirations of people.”

The most effective leaders in the twenty-first century will be those who create systems of collaboration within their organization, build networks of collaboration with their organization, and leverage those networks to address the most complex challenges. Mission must override institution, and institutions must adapt to open collaborative partnerships.

Much of nature is designed around the concept of networks. The human body is a complex series of overlapping networks. The Internet is built upon complex overlapping networks. The explosive growth of social media speaks to the human tendency to build and maintain contributive networks. Big data leverages the insights gained by analyzing large-scale networks. Social change movements, such as Black Lives Matters, are movement oriented rather than institutionally oriented and reliant upon interconnected networks. The well-documented growth of cell-based churches in South Korea is organized around principles of networks. One might even point to the relationality of the Trinity.

Yet so much of our leadership remains grounded in institutionalism, and many institutions are resistant to models of collaboration. Globalization adds to this necessity. If we are living in an age of globalization how are our institutions preparing individuals to lead as global leaders?

Especially in the company of so many strong leaders, I am in the early stages of learning but am convinced that building large-scale networks of
collaboration and then seeking to leverage those networks will result in significant impact in the world as well as significant value for those who participate. The BWA is actively building multiple worldwide networks. It is why I am grateful for this opportunity and the possibility for partnership between the BWA and IABCU.

These then are four megatrends. Others could have been highlighted such as the ongoing infusion and disruption of technology in artificial intelligence, the hyperlinking and connecting together of all data, the shift to the medium of the screen, how the creation of cultures of accessing instead of owning might change education cycles, decentralized and personalized experiences through constant tracking, immersive virtual reality, and collaborative sharing. A discussion of megatrends could have also included the idol of security, reemergent nationalism, and environmental care.

Romans 14:17 is Paul’s summative statement that builds upon Jesus’ most prolific teaching that followers of Christ are to embrace a vision of the Kingdom of God in areas of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. To adopt a Kingdom vision is to acknowledge three implications. First, the Kingdom of God is a call to holistic vision commissioning the people of God to live for the purposes of God. Second, the Kingdom of God is a call to engage the world especially in the midst of suffering.

The Kingdom of God is a call to celebrate God’s mission as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic mosaic. The Kingdom of God is an inherent call to humility recognizing that within the 2 billion Christians around the world today there are many voices passionately bringing glory to Jesus Christ. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

Antioch was a strategic and large city in the Roman Empire located in the modern-day country of Syria. In this strategic Syrian church, five leaders are listed: Barnabas, known for being an encourager; Paul, a murderer transformed by Jesus; and Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”

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Gathered in a room worshiping and praying, Paul and Barnabas perhaps kneel as the other three leaders place their hands on them. Two who commissioned these first missionaries were African. To the African church, thank you. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for commissioning these first missionaries. I am grateful for African leadership who commissioned missionaries to carry the Gospel to Europe. To the church in Syria and to the church in Africa we owe a debt of gratitude.

Churches in North Africa continued to play an important role. To give just one example would be to consider the development of the New Testament. There was debate within the early church about which books to include in the New Testament. Various leaders offered various suggestions until consensus began to develop around an order suggested by Athanasius. Athanasius’ nickname reveals his ethnic background as he was called Athanasius the Black Monk. An African leader suggested the order of the New Testament as it is found today. Several years later, the Council of Carthage gathered in the modern-day country of Tunisia and confirmed the order of the New Testament, closed the biblical canon, and established the Bible.

When we call ourselves Christian, we owe a debt of gratitude to the church in Syria led by African believers who sent the Gospel into Europe. When we open the New Testament, we owe a debt of gratitude to the church in Africa that gave the New Testament as we have it today.

God’s global mission calls for a global church. We need an intentionality of diversity. We need commitment to belong to global church networks. We need the perspective, the passions, the histories, the giftedness each one brings. We belong to one another because we belong to Jesus. The Kingdom of God is a vision of belonging to one another, celebrating, and building into our organizations God’s beautiful mosaic.

The Kingdom of God is a call to embrace truth as whole-life disciples, engage the world in God’s global mission especially in suffering, and to celebrate and emulate God’s Kingdom mosaic.

The Kingdom of God and the Pillar of Righteousness

Righteousness in the Greek is dikaiosune (δικαιοσύνη). Righteousness can refer to our vertical relationship with God rooted in the essential modifier “in the Holy Spirit.” Righteousness in the Holy Spirit is a gift of grace antithetical to a belief in self-righteousness or earned-righteousness. In light of the Kingdom of God, there are at least three implications to righteousness in the Holy Spirit.

First, righteousness in the Holy Spirit is an invitation to share salvation in Jesus Christ. All people in all places are invited to experience the forgiveness of their sin in Jesus Christ. Having found that Good News, we are to live as public witnesses. It is to affirm with Johann Gerhard Oncken, a German Baptist theologian of the nineteenth century, “every Baptist, a missionary.” Every Baptist is a missionary in a world where there are still 3 billion people who are unreached with a saving relationship in Jesus Christ.

Second, righteousness in the Holy Spirit is an invitation to ongoing personal discipleship and a growing relationship with God. Our first priority is to still our heart in the presence of a holy God who loves us and to be transformed as we respond to Jesus’ invitation to come and follow. Our lives are surrounded by the daily demands of leadership, but our first priority is to be led. Can I gently ask, in your daily discipleship are you being led? Henri
Nouwen writes:

*The spiritual life is a life in which we are set free by the Spirit of God to enjoy life in all its fullness. By this Spirit we can indeed “be in the world without being of it”; we can move freely without being bound by false attachments; we can speak freely without fear of human rejection; and we can live with peace and joy even when surrounded by conflict and sadness.*

Peace and joy are not possible without the inward and upward movement of pursuing daily righteousness in God. It is to ask the question again, “Is the Kingdom of God enough?” Each in our own way can I encourage us to find silent moments, meditate on God’s Word, commune in friendship and prayer, and to allow ourselves to live as those being led?

Third, righteousness in the Holy Spirit is an invitation to think critically and skeptically of power. Leaders in righteousness hold lightly to the reins of power they have been given to steward for only a season and resist the false claims of the ability of power to protect and secure.

The testimony of Stephen in Acts 6-7 remains an often-overlooked model for leaders who have been entrusted with positions of responsibility. Acts 6:8 reads, “Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people.” Luke brings together two descriptors that for many seem in opposition: “Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power.”

How often do we associate those words together? When I hear the word “power” my first thought is not that of “grace.” Power and strength. Power and control. Power and influence. But power and grace?

The story of Stephen is a contrast between his leadership and on the other hand of faith leaders and governmental leaders who release their hold on grace and utilize the power of force, the power of violence, the power of governmental restrictions, and the power of religious marginalization.

Even today it is uncommon to find leaders who bring together power and grace in their daily interactions, power and grace in their leadership, and power and grace in their public engagement. Even today the story of Stephen asks as the crowds form, the culture turns, public pressure mounts, and discipleship is difficult, “Will we respond with grace?”

In the buildup between the model that combines power and grace and power and force, Stephen does not withdraw from the city, disengage from his culture, or isolate his witness. He has not defined his discipleship by what is popular. He has not ceased to help the hungry. Stephen seeks the public good in a public way. Stephen belies the belief in enforced power. Stephen seeks to build a flourishing community where everyone can have their basic needs met. Stephen lives with a vision of the Kingdom of God grounded in a personal discipleship that combines power with grace to bless those in the world who are suffering. For the Christ-follower, this is the invitation.

We are invited to the Kingdom of God, an incredible, flourishing vision that calls us to engage the world, especially in areas of suffering, as the whole people of God in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic diversity. To live out this vision is to embrace a call to righteousness in the Holy Spirit that in our leadership combines power with grace, and in our personal lives prioritizes daily discipleship.

For in the end, we are asked, “Is the Kingdom of God enough?”

**Stephen lives with a vision of the Kingdom of God grounded in a personal discipleship that combines power with grace to bless those in the world who are suffering. For the Christ-follower, this is the invitation.**
The Baptist Scholars International Roundtable (BSIR) invites proposals for its 16th annual meeting, to be convened at Christ Church, University of Oxford, August 7-10, 2022. This year’s conference theme is “Baptists and Higher Education.” We encourage scholars from a broad array of disciplines to consider how Baptists around the world have engaged in higher education practices—from institutional, denominational, and personal contexts and perspectives. The institutions in view might be Baptist theological colleges or seminaries, Baptist higher education colleges or universities, or Baptist colleges affiliated to (or part of) public universities. We are particularly interested in approaches concerned with the present and future shape of Baptist higher education in light of global dynamics and current demographic shifts. Topics may range widely, and might consider themes such as the following:

- Historical role of Western influences on Baptist higher education in the Global South;
- The distinctive contribution of Baptists to higher education in the Global South and Asia;
- Theological education for ministry and/or the academy;
- The approach of Baptists to education in the Arts or the Sciences;
- Theological reflections on Baptist higher education;
- Baptist institutions as part of public or state universities;
- Qualitative or quantitative explorations from the social sciences related to Baptist higher education;
- Historical role of Baptist missionaries establishing educational institutions globally;
- Resistance by some Baptists in history to higher education;
- Baptist higher education as it relates to minoritized groups;
- Gender and Baptist higher education;
- Race and ethnicity in Baptist higher education;
- Charismatic Baptists and higher education;

We encourage participation by scholars from all career stages, especially junior scholars and doctoral candidates. While papers should pertain to the Baptist expression of Christianity, scholars from all faiths are welcome.

Format: Seven BSIR Scholars are selected to present their original papers of 15-25 pages. BSIR Fellows offer responses, followed by group discussion. To promote a vibrant conversation, all participants agree to prepare in advance for engagement with each paper. BSIR offers publication opportunities in journals or edited volumes.

Proposals should be submitted at https://baylor.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_87Ve7Ytq9glni 5 The submission deadline is December 1, 2021. For accepted submissions, the full paper to be shared with the Roundtable participants will be due on June 1, 2022.

Submissions should include:

- Name, Affiliation, and Contact Information
- Paper Title and Abstract (500–750 words)
- Bio (150 words, including degrees and selected publications)

Proposals will be selected based on quality and clarity of proposal content, relationship of paper to conference theme, and publication potential. Financial assistance to attend the conference in Oxford will be considered.
on a case-by-case basis. Additional financial assistance information will be distributed to accepted submissions.

About BSIR

The Baptist Scholars International Roundtable (BSIR) promotes scholarship from Baptist perspectives across the ages and around the globe by facilitating a scholarly forum for exchange of ideas. From its administrative home at Baylor University, Waco, TX, this community is international, intergenerational, interdisciplinary, and invites a diversity of Baptist affiliations. At the heart of the Roundtable is formation for academic stewardship in which a newer generation is welcomed into an international Baptist Academy and formed to preserve and sustain both academic and faith communities. At annual meetings, hosted at Christ Church, University of Oxford, senior scholars (BSIR Fellows) and a Visiting Distinguished Fellow engage with the developing ideas of doctoral students, early-career, and mid-career faculty (BSIR Scholars) presenting papers selected through a competitive process.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS:
BAPTISTS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Baylor University Graduate School Attn: Dr. Laine Scales
Morrison Hall, Suite 200
One Bear Place # 97264
Waco, TX 76798-7264

Co-Directors:
T. Laine Scales, Ph.D.
Laine_Scales@Baylor.edu
254-498-1893
João B. Chaves, Ph.D.
joao.chaves@ptsem.edu
505-818-8861
**Educational Equity: Building a Future Together as Equals**

By Carolyn Bishop

*Reflections from the 2021 CGE Annual Meeting, hosted by Campbell University.*

At the opening Plenary, Vice Chancellor Gerald Pillay of Liverpool Hope University shared two precepts that apply to CGE, the first being the problem with fences is that they fence out more than they fence in. CGE founders eliminated fences by taking their expertise and skills to challenged nations around the globe. In the second, he referenced Einstein saying, “Not everything that matters can be counted. Not everything that can be counted matters.” CGE counts both the visible outcomes and invisible outcomes that can impact lives as well as improve educational skills. Dr. Pillay mentioned that an integrated worldview has become rampant with individualism during the recent months, and we need to count that which helps us be “better together.”

CGE has gone far in these 35 years by going together. An African proverb says, “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.” Leaders, faculties, and students use their educational skills to go beyond international walls and fences to open opportunities for educational partnerships globally in more than 90 nations. Lasting friendships are built, trust is established, study and research become collaboration, and many educational programs started years ago continue today.

Our mission is to provide quality academic education internationally, with a commitment to service and sharing skills and life experiences. In the next decade CGE can use the equity built into relationships and successful projects to meet current needs that will make an impactful difference.

Cooperating overseas allows us to experience the struggles of others and see through different lenses. Dr. Pillay quoted Lincoln: “It takes a storm to test a structure.” He shared that during this COVID period he learned that even faculty and staff responded in surprisingly different ways. Some who were normally quiet have shown real strength and resilience.

Can CGE members use our recent crises to provide that same level of strength to open doors for stressed educational systems to succeed again? As we look in the rearview mirror to see a decline in educational opportunity for many global students, can we reach out to even provide better academic help, service, and sharing?

Paul Haidostian, President of CGE member Haigazian University in Beirut, spoke of their campus facing multiple storms. In December 2019 they faced riots due to an economic crisis, COVID and a failed national leadership in the first half of 2020, and a massive explosion on August 4 that affected every building on campus and wounded thousands nearby. Now they face a storm of scarcity in fuel, food, and medicines.

In the mid 1960’s, Lebanon was ranked 4th in global higher education. In 2021, Lebanon is considered the worst case of a country downfall by the World Bank in the last century. Poverty today exceeds 50% in Lebanon. Leaders like Paul are dealing with shame after once feeling pride in being a leader among countries in the Middle East. UNICEF says more than 71% will lose access to fresh water soon. Currency has lost 90% of its value. Lebanon has $29.00 a month as minimum wage, and on some scales, it is the lowest minimum wage globally.

He asked, “How can a Christian private university survive?” Rather than being on top they are on the bottom. At Haigazian their mission guides...
them toward a high ranking as they consider it a responsibility to represent Christ’s values within higher education. They find their equity, both programmatic and in financial terms, has been attacked. Yet they are determined to keep their concept of Christian higher education as being the “highest” standard and that all are created equal.

Dr. Nabil Costa, also from Beirut, leads LSESD ministries that run schools and meet human needs daily. His teams service refugee camps and those hurting peoples in Syria, Iraq, and other nations. He asks CGE to look with him at what it means to be strategic. Lebanon meets none of the elements of being strategic except Christians are there as a minority people that glorify God. He says Lebanon is a “graveyard of dreams.” Out of 1.3 million Christians in Syria, only 300,000 remain. Of 10 million Christians in Egypt, most are silent, and 2% of Jordanians are Christians in a similar situation. Until now, Lebanon has been the Middle Eastern nation with the highest population of evangelical Christians. If Christians leave Lebanon, they will leave behind a “graveyard of dreams,” and there will be no more Middle East as we know it. He asks CGE to continue sending skillful trainers with a passion and heart of service.

What is our CGE reaction? On campuses, leaders have initiated changes in all areas of institutional life. Many leaders reduced expenses without losing staff and faculty, many faculties and staff took on new roles and responsibilities without expecting reward while some of the quieter ones emerged as the strongest. Like at Haigazian, the storms have made many stronger and campus equity has increased.

David Beasley, the Executive Director of the United Nations’ World Food Programme and 2020 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize (on behalf of the WFP), also spoke during the Thursday evening banquet hosted by Dr. Creed and Campbell University. Governor Beasley echoed what Dr. Haidostian reported that many nations are in crisis as leadership has failed their people. After visiting 72 nations he sees hunger as a man-made conflict where extremist groups use hunger as a weapon for recruitment.

The UN WFP estimates that 41 million people are at famine’s door in 43 countries, most being in Africa. The UN’s new resiliency program now allows nationals to participate in programs that become sustainable by not just giving food but by also building systems that move toward equality for supporting their own needs.

He emphasized that the number of deaths from COVID has been about 4.7 million, while 16.7 million during that same period died from starvation. Due to COVID, 50% of Ethiopia’s tourism revenue is now gone. In Nigeria, the nation lost 90% of their revenues when oil collapsed. Other nations like Chad, Mali, and Burkina Faso are also suffering. Couple that with the average age in Africa being 17 and their need for education is rising rapidly as other nations are seeing a decline in enrollment.

Some CGE members are using their “equity in experience” to send energetic and entrepreneurial faculty and students to provide rural health clinics in disaster and needy areas or to invest time and consultation for a newly founded university or school in an emerging nation or to teach in summer camps, refugee camps or in ESL classrooms around the world. Some are recruiting faculty on exchange visitor programs and students for enrollment from overseas to help increase their campus worldview. CGE members and partners will use educational cooperation as a weapon for a better future together.

CGE leaders and friends like Dr. Pillay, President Haidostian, Dr. Costa, and Governor Beasley speak boldly from their corners of the earth. Our challenge is to use educational equity built over many years to seize this day and timing to lift others toward equality that can be sustainable.

David Beasley closed his presentation by addressing our audience of educational experts, saying that by going out and sharing, “you have earned the right to be heard – the right to be heard is a powerful thing.”

As we love God’s people one at a time, let us be heard and join our power of equity together to increase the opportunities for educational equality one nation at a time.

Please pray for and encourage CGE delegations leaving for Lebanon on November 9-16 and for Ethiopia on November 16-21. If you feel led to go, support, give or commit your prayers for these efforts, please contact CGE at cbishop@cgedu.org or call 770-321-4897.
"The most important investment you can make is in yourself." – Warren Buffett

My family is a good example of this.

Both my dad and mom were first-generation college students. Dad finished college in the 1960s while Mom finished her degree later in life. While my dad took personal loans to pay for college, my mom was blessed that her employer made this a benefit of her employment.

Because of the education they received, my parents were able to advance in their careers and benefit from higher salaries. They were never without a job because their education acted as "unemployment insurance."

My parents didn’t stop there.

They “pushed” and strongly encouraged higher education for my brother and me. There would be no exception; we would get a college degree.

Today, my brother is a medical doctor teaching at Incarnate Word Medical School following a successful career as an Air Force Flight Surgeon. I’m fortunate to be the President of Hardin-Simmons University.

In one generation, my family’s future was transformed by the investment of education, and I am so grateful!

But the story of my family is no different than so many others across the nation.

Education changes a person’s perspective and future!

When our leaders form a partnership with students and wisely invest taxpayer funds in their education, we all become a part of that transformation!

I don’t know how to say it more succinctly...investing in education is the most important investment Texans and Americans can make!

And the investment with the “biggest bang for the buck” is the Pell Grant program. Since it was established in 1972, this program has been incredibly effective.

Why is the Pell Grant so successful?

First, the funds are directed only to those in need.

Statistically speaking, 95% of Pell Grant recipients have a family income level less than $60k, and 48% of all recipients are first-generation college students. The program is the key to move so many from one income level to the next because these funds target those who could never afford a college degree on their own, not those who can.

Secondly, it’s a hand up, not a hand-out.

A college graduate will earn $1 million more in lifetime earnings than a high school graduate. Additionally, a recent study shows that an increase in grant aid directly relates to an increase in a student’s post-graduation earnings.

Because of this correlation, the Pell Grant Program has been useful in breaking the cycle of poverty and in growing the middle class.

Thirdly, it has a great payback period.

College graduates pay an estimated $7,100 more in taxes each year than high school graduates.

According to the American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, the Pell Grant creates enough new income and taxes “to fully recoup government expenditures within 10 years, suggesting that financial aid likely pays for itself several times over.”
The Pell Grant Program returns taxpayer funds to federal and state coffers through increased earnings and taxes, which is why the Pell Grant has enjoyed the support of Republicans and Democrats throughout its existence.

So, the Pell Grant is win-win for everyone.

**However, now is the time to Double Pell.**

Presently, the maximum Pell Grant is $6,495. Though this amount “builds a bridge to the future” for those in need, for many recipients, this amount does not “bridge the chasm.”

For too many, the financial “chasm” is just too great. These students fall short of reaching their potential and thus enjoying the benefits of this program.

By doubling the maximum Pell Grant from $6,495 to $13,000, Congress can make college possible for all students who are truly in need.

The time has come to double our investment in the Pell Program.
Louisiana College has made great strides in recent years in academics and athletics and has earned accolades as a Top 30 Christian college, as well as high marks for safety and diversity.

Next move: becoming Louisiana’s newest university.

President Rick Brewer has made a proposal to both the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, who fully supported and took before the full Board of Trustees of LC, to update the name of the institution to Louisiana Christian University.

“It was wholeheartedly and unanimously supported,” Brewer said. “This is in keeping with our mission of being Christ-centered. It’s a logical move. We are not throwing away our past. We are recognizing this school has always been Christian.”

“When I became president in 2015,” Brewer said, “I told the Board I came to lead a great Christian college to become an even greater Christian university.”

That is coming to fruition.

Executive Director of Louisiana Baptists Steve Horn said Dr. Brewer and his team have done a great job in expanding the academic landscape of Louisiana College. The rebranding to a university will allow prospective students to discover the college is more than simply an undergraduate school.

“To put it another way, LCU is a Louisiana school, which is unapologetically Christian, whose expanded academic offerings raise it to a university level,” Horn said.

The official announcement was made to the Louisiana Baptist Convention on Nov. 16. The name ‘Louisiana Christian University’ has been filed and reserved with the Louisiana Secretary of State.

LC is classified as a Level III institution by SAC-SCOC. Current student enrollment is about 1,250.

Louisiana College includes dozens of bachelor’s degrees and announced the proposal for its fifth graduate program last week. Currently, LC offers a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), Master of Education (MEd), Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Master of Social Work (MSW).

A proposal has been made for a Master of Business Administration offered in the Ray and Dorothy Young School of Business, with a projected start date of fall of 2022.

Brewer also said the Vision 2025 Strategic Plan includes the launching of the institution’s first doctoral program, a Doctorate in Education (EdD).

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Cheryl Clark said the move from a college to a university more accurately reflects what the institution is today.

“It reflects who we are, affirms our strategic plan, and positions us for long-term success,” Clark said. “Being a university speaks of the breadth and depth of learning already happening for both our undergraduate and graduate students, aligns our name with our comprehensive academic offerings in both liberal arts and applied sciences, including our expansion to master’s programs, and enables us to attract and recruit more students.”
Campbellsville University Board of Trustees Selects Samford University Dean as 12th President of Campbellsville University

By Joan C. McKinney, director, Office of University Communications, Campbellsville University

CAMPBELLSVILLE, Ky. – Dr. Joseph “Joe” Hopkins, Dean of the School of Arts at Samford University, has been elected 12th president in the 115 years of Campbellsville University effective Feb. 1, 2022.

“Dr. Hopkins is a vibrant educator who brings a wealth of experience and energy to the presidency,” Dr. Larry Noe, Chairman of the Presidential Search Committee, said. “He understands the mission of Christian higher education and will lead Campbellsville University to a new level of service.”

Henry Lee, chair of the Campbellsville University Board of Trustees, said, “The Board of Trustees sees in Dr. Joe Hopkins a person of vision and action. We look forward to his leadership.

“Likewise, our faculty, staff and students will discover a president who reflects a sense of excitement as we grow this institution.”

Hopkins is in his 16th year as the Dean of the School of the Arts at Samford University. Prior to this appointment, he served as Dean of the Petrie School of Music at Converse College and Chair of the Department of Music at the University of Evansville.

He has enjoyed a distinguished career as a scholar-performer and leader in arts administration, including appointments by international festivals, higher education councils and the Fulbright Program.

“I am honored to join the great people and traditions of Campbellsville University,” Hopkins said.

“Suzanne and I are attracted to the strong Christian mission and have fallen in love with the heart of CU. This is an extraordinary community that is shaping a courageous and needed model for higher education that serves the Body of Christ with excellence.”

As Dean, Hopkins has guided extensive growth in enrollment, fundraising and community engagement. Academic reputation was enhanced with the recruiting of nationally engaged faculty, innovative curriculum and applications, and vibrant international programs.

Hopkins holds degrees from Shorter University, Baylor University, and Indiana University. He completed the Management and Leadership in Education Diploma from Harvard University. He chairs the Global Connections Committee of the International Council of Fine Arts Deans; his contributions to art administration have been published and presented in national and international forums; and he was a Fulbright Senior Specialist to Indonesia.

Hopkins is an ordained minister and has served in churches in Indiana, Texas, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama and Kentucky. Presently, he is worship pastor at First Baptist Church of Birmingham. He and his wife perform together and have shared in ministry, teaching, and community. She is a music educator who has taught at the university and primary levels, as well as her own private studio.

Their son Joseph, 18, is a freshman in business finance at Samford University. Vance, 16, is a junior and athlete at Briarwood High School. The family dog, Winston, is the most beloved and well-known member of the family.
Campbellsville University Partnering with Charles Winnsboro Corporation to Provide Career Development Courses to African Professionals

By Alexandria D. Dalton, Communications and Projects Manager, Office of University Communications

CAMPBELLSVILLE, Ky. – Campbellsville University is partnering with Charles Winnsboro Corporation to provide career development courses to African professionals.

The fully online offerings will begin in January 2022. The first two courses available to students will be graduate courses from Campbellsville University’s School of Business, Economics and Technology titled Project Management and Information Systems Infrastructure. Students will receive a certificate upon completion of the courses.

Dr. Donna Hedgepath, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, said, “The courses are designed to provide students foundational concepts and understanding that will prepare them to continue their education or move into the workforce.”

“These courses are for-credit courses, which means that they are graduate-level courses that can be transferred into a graduate degree program. This is a great partnership and provides Campbellsville University the opportunity to continue expanding its global reach.”

Jude Chidi Ogene, founder and CEO of Charles Winnsboro said, “We are excited to partner with Campbellsville University to bring these programs to sub-Saharan Africa. Nigerians and other Africans are keenly interested in upskilling and reskilling to join the global workforce and to exploit opportunities for remote work and/or relocation. Campbellsville’s programs will give them the opportunity to do just that.”

Campbellsville University is a widely acclaimed, Kentucky-based, Christian institution that offers over 100 programs of study, including Ph.D., master’s, baccalaureate, associate, pre-professional and certification programs. The university is dedicated to academic excellence solidly grounded in the liberal arts that fosters personal growth, integrity and professional preparation within a caring environment. The university prepares students as Christian servant leaders for life-long learning, continued scholarship by linking discovery research to knowledge at the doctoral level, and active participation in a diverse, global society.

Charles Winnsboro is a strategic advisory firm focused on infrastructure development in sub-Saharan Africa. Charles Winnsboro believes that improving education, health, and financial outcomes for Africa’s citizens are necessary predicates to building modern, vibrant economies throughout the continent. Accordingly, it is working with leading universities in the United States to provide online and hybrid certificate and degree programs to African working professionals.

Charles Winnsboro is advising healthcare and telemedicine startups focused on Africa and is developing a blockchain-based remittance solution for Nigerians in the diaspora. The remittance solution also establishes a pooled investment vehicle, where one cent of every dollar remitted is reinvested in Nigerian businesses at home or in the diaspora.