

# the **COMMUNIQUE**

communication arts alumni magazine  
fall/winter 2007-2008

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Chris Putman  
The Communique adviser

God has truly blessed The Communique in this new season. After restructuring the magazine as a class project, I'd like to report we entered our product in Oklahoma Interscholastic Press Association's statewide competition and won "Best in State," "All-Oklahoman" and "Highest Honors" in the Judges' Critique. Twelve student writers also received individual awards for their contribution. In addition, I received "Honorable Mention" in ORU's Writing Across the Curriculum for the student publication project.

Taking on The Communique last fall has resulted in an incredibly rewarding experience for me. The reason is twofold.

First is because of my interaction with you, the alumni. I have had an opportunity to preinterview each featured source, and I have been pleasantly surprised to see that no matter how high the heights each one has climbed, they still have a humble, contrite heart before God, truly the ORU spirit.

Specifically, I recall one phone call with a man who is amazingly successful in his field. I was so touched to hear him say, "I don't know why God chose me to

be put in this position. I'm just a boy from nowhere, yet look what He has done with me. I'm not worthy." What true humility. It is no wonder God can exalt this man. His ego is in check, and he intends to use his position of influence for His glory. Now, God can promote a heart like that.

Second is the reward I receive when I watch my students, nervous and intimidated, contact their assigned alumni, interview them and write their stories. When I read through their final draft, I am blown away by the skill and creativity they have acquired. They walk away from the magazine experience with more confidence in their ability. Through the process, they become published writers and their stories reach many nations during distribution.

As we keep you informed of the department's developments, please keep us up to date with what you are doing in your area of expertise. We are actively seeking stories of interest. We'd love to honor you with a timely feature.

Also, please be aware of a new aspect on the ORU alumni Web site, Face Place. It is a great place to keep abreast of university news, announcements, events, group news, to access photos and videos or take part in discussions. To stay connected with other ORU alumni, get established on Face Place at [www.alumni.oru.edu](http://www.alumni.oru.edu).

We pray God's richest blessings on you and all that you set your hand to do as you launch into the New Year.

- Chris Putman

The Communique is a product of the Oral Roberts University Communication Arts Department for its alumni.

To be informed of university updates, contact Alumni Relations concerning address changes at [alumni@oru.edu](mailto:alumni@oru.edu).

To receive job listings or post an open position to recruit alumni applicants, e-mail Dr. Even Culp at [eculp@oru.edu](mailto:eculp@oru.edu).

To provide feedback on the magazine or submit story ideas on successful alums, contact [cputman@oru.edu](mailto:cputman@oru.edu). The adviser would like to hear from others in the field.

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Cover: Lindsey Miller  
story on page 4

**“Persistence does not matter if you’re not going in the right direction.”**

- Chris Lobser,  
cofounder, BlastMyMusic

A fourteen-year-old boy, after tracking concert schedules for six months, finally walks with album in hand to ask for an autograph from his favorite band. As he hands his album over to the lead female singer of Bathtub of Mary, he recounts how his search for them had been fruitless until this moment. As she hands the album back to him, he reads what she wrote. In bold letters is the adage, “Persistence pays off.”

That boy, Chris Lobser, class of 2003 and co-founder of BlastMyMusic, credits that moment for truly defining him.

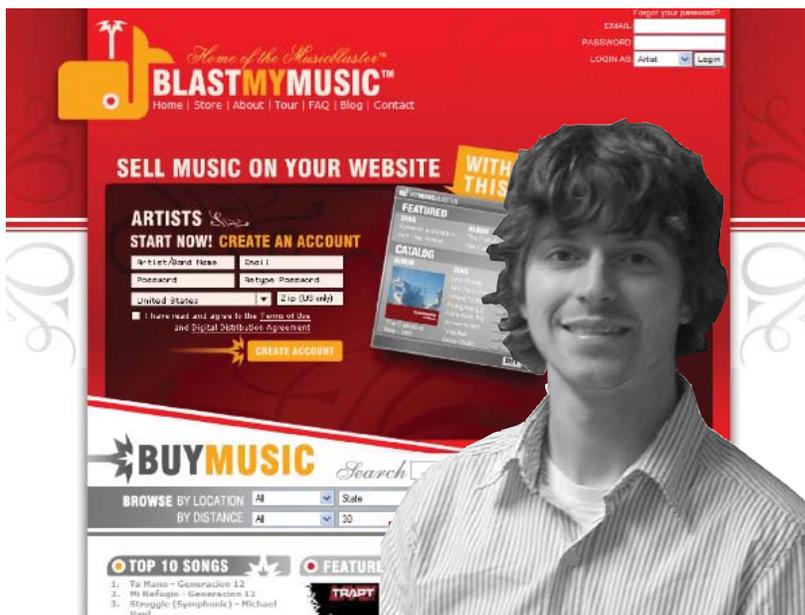
“That’s when it hit me,” Lobser said. “No just means find another way.”

This lesson helped him to become successful as a concert promoter. He soon began realizing his persistence made up for limited funds. As he attended concerts through his youth, he often noted how poorly Christian artists and concerts were advertised.

“I realized that I could do it better than they could,” Lobser said.

Lobser became a venue promoter at age 17 and eventually promoted bands like Five Iron Frenzy and Reliant K. Growing up, Lobser was attracted to the positive atmosphere of the Christian concert scene and wanted to create a safe environment for kids to hang out.

Lobser chose ORU because he enjoyed the spiritual atmosphere



BlastMyMusic, an online service that allows consumers to purchase music directly from the Web sites of their favorite bands, is the brainchild of Chris Lobser. Persistence, the fuel behind the vision, allows Lobser to realize his dream. photo courtesy/BlastMyMusic

## blasting through chris lobser, persistent in his dream

of the university, and he wanted to follow in the footsteps of his sister.

During his time as a student and a public relations/advertising major in the communication arts department, Lobser opened The Pinkeye, Tulsa’s first club for all ages. Smoke and alcohol free, the club showcased local bands.

After graduation, Lobser managed the band Edison Glass. Josh Silverberg, one of the lead singers of Edison Glass, credits Lobser with getting their band signed.

“He is definitely an idea guy,” Silverberg said. “He’s good with coming up with ideas and pursuing them.”

Lobser’s latest idea has landed him in Los Angeles as one of the four core founders of BlastMyMusic, a music download site where bands can put their

music online for no charge. The Web site is built around the needs of independent bands. Each band receives 65 cents on the dollar for every song purchased, and the site is equipped to allow bands to track where their songs are selling best. Lobser hopes BlastMyMusic will give bands leverage to sign to labels on their own terms.

“The music industry is a level playing field,” Lobser said. “The opportunities are out there.”

Lobser credits his success to his strong, positive upbringing and his relationship with God. Lobser insists first he must know what God wants him to do before he proceeds.

“Persistence does not matter if you’re not going in the right direction,” he said. ● story by/caleb brabham



**right on chord**

Exuding energy, Lindsey Miller performs at the Miss Oklahoma pageant. Miller's reign began unexpectedly six months after the competition. "Everything works in God's perfect timing," Miller said. photo illustration courtesy/steve miller

# crowning achievement

lindsey miller, in God's perfect timing

“When the Word is inside of you, it just comes out.”

- Lindsey Miller,  
miss oklahoma 2006

Most pageant contestants win the crown in the midst of a cheering audience and flashing cameras. Lindsey Miller, 2005 alumna, became Miss Oklahoma in her own living room.

After Miller won first runner-up to Lauren Nelson in the 2006 Miss Oklahoma contest, she put her pageant days behind her and focused on her receptionist work at Tulsa-based Guts Church. For the second year in a row, the reigning Miss Oklahoma won the national title of Miss America, and this time the state crown was passed to Miller.

“Everything works in God’s perfect timing,” Miller said. “When I didn’t win, I wasn’t upset; I was at peace. When I won, I felt rewarded for my efforts six months later.”

While she attended the university, Miller majored in broadcast journalism, sang for Richard Roberts’ show “The Hour of Healing” and produced Lindsay Roberts’ “Make Your Day Count” TV show. It was these experiences that prepared Miller for six unforgettable months as the pageant winner.

“My favorite memory as Miss Oklahoma was spending time with [then Miss America] Lauren Nelson during her Welcome Home Week, going to the state capital to celebrate and being honored as Miss Oklahoma,” Miller said. “We were treated like royalty.”

Part of Miller’s responsibilities as Miss Oklahoma was to conduct school assemblies across the state. She held 95 assemblies for students ranging from kindergarten through 12th grade. Her platform was on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters, a mentoring

program matching adults with students to mentor.

“She approached the school program like she had been doing it her whole life,” President of the Miss Oklahoma Organization Jill Janosky said. “She showed grace under fire in every situation.”

During the school assemblies, Miller shared more than her campaign platform.

“I could share my testimony at schools without actually preaching,” Miller said. “When the Word is inside of you, it just comes out.”

Even though reigning as Miss Oklahoma was a brief chapter in Miller’s life, it prepared her for her destiny and future doors.

Recently Miller married 2004 ORU alumnus Erik Hansen. Additionally, she is pursuing a real estate license and is involved with television commercials for local businesses. But her dream is to host a national television show discussing current issues.

“I’d like to have a Christian influence without having an exclusively Christian show,” Miller said. “If you’re relatable and influential in society, people listen

to you.”

Throughout the twists and turns of Miller’s life, she remains steadfast that God is the one who is in control.

“If you’re living in God’s will, He’ll reward you for that,” Miller said. “Things have been pretty easy because I’ve listened to God for each step.” ● story by/vanessa lyons



At a special ceremony, 2007 Miss America Lauren Nelson passes the Miss Oklahoma crown on to Lindsey Miller. As Oklahoma royalty, Miller promotes adult to child mentoring. photo courtesy/steve miller

**“What distance are you willing to go for the cause of Christ?”**

- Paul Petite,  
coanchor, KSN news



Focused and ready, Paul Petite pauses expectantly before cameras roll. As coanchor of KSN news, Petite keeps his audience up-to-date. photo courtesy/ryan newton

The clock is ticking. Each passing moment flies by as the second hand rushes through the final moments of chaos. The countdown has begun. In five, four, three, two, one, Paul Petite is on the air.

As the current coanchor for NBC affiliated KSN news in Wichita, Kan., Petite is comfortable in front of a camera. He is an award-winning reporter and has spent a lifetime sharing stories of those who have made an impact on the world.

A 1985 graduate, Petite had a passion for writing. It was Petite's love of writing that sparked his initial interest in television. While working in the newsroom as an intern at Tulsa's NBC affiliated news station KJRH, Petite observed the reporters writing nonstop. The demand appealed to him, and he began to assist them.

Petite recalls he fell in love with television because it was “fun, fast-paced, challenging, creative and I had the opportunity to write.”

Moving to Virginia Beach, Petite worked for the Christian Broadcasting Network as producer and reporter for the “700 Club.” There he produced the award-winning documentary he deems as the crowning achievement of his career, “Seeds of the Martyrs,” which tells the story of missionary Elizabeth Elliot as written in the book “Through Gates of Splendor.” The same story was recently adapted into the film “End of the Spear.”

## breaking news

### on location with paul petite

“Everybody [involved] from the sister to the tribesman was still living there,” Petite said. “It was almost like God wanted the story to be told.”

Standing on the beach where the missionaries were killed, Petite was particularly affected.

“It makes you think about your faith and your relationship,” Petite said. “What distance are you willing to go for the cause of Christ?”

At KSN, Petite coanchors both the 5 and 10 p.m. news and is well-known for his storytelling abilities.

“Whether it's a tragic story in breaking news or a fun story at the state fair, he knows how to capture the emotion and relay that to the viewer,” KSN News Director Todd Spessard said.

Petite spends much of his time reporting in the community, broadcasting on location each day.

“It is like what Richard and Oral say, ‘Go where My light is seen dim and My voice is heard small,’” Petite said. “My light has always been my voice. I want to allow God to use me wherever I am.”

Petite believes he is living out God's purpose for his life.

“Romans 8:28, God works all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose,” Petite said. “I love Him and am called to His purpose. In my business there is a lot of change and volatility. I just hang on for the ride, do my utmost and know everything will work out according to God's plan.” ● story by/ carissa hon



Displaying the fruits of his labor in the form of awards, Tom Newman realizes the impact of holding fast to his dream. Newman's recent contract with The Weinstein Company includes providing faith-based movies. photo/chris putman

**"All my focus is to glorify God."**

- Tom Newman,  
Impact Productions

shortly after graduation. However, he sees his real journey beginning after returning home, settling in as director of missions at Victory Christian School and developing a rapport with Pastor Billy Joe Daugherty.

While at VCS Newman heard reports about a moving Gospel drama called "Toymaker and Son" showing in Cambridge, Ontario, and included a stop to see the production while on a mission trip. Preparing to watch the drama, Newman was, at that moment, unaware of the events soon to impact his destiny.

"Seeing the 'Toymaker and Son' for the first time changed the course of my life forever," Newman said. "It was the most moving demonstration of the Gospel I had ever seen. My whole world came together at this moment. All my love for drama, Jesus and evangelism came together."

After the show, Colin Harbinson, creator of "Toymaker and Son," released the production to Newman. With the resounding support of Daugherty, "The Masterpiece: A Toymaker's Dream" was presented at Victory Christian Center, launching Newman's ministry, Impact Productions, and opening doors for him to reach areas closed to the Gospel.

"All I see myself as is a minister," said Newman. "My passion and my heart is evangelism. All my focus is to glorify God and to let people know God loves them."

Recent projects include "The Christmas Child" and "End of the Spear," and Newman's vision for the future includes telling more stories. His agreement with TWC to provide six concepts per year for development realizes this goal. Two productions currently on the table are "The Penny" and "The Christmas Candle."

Daugherty sees the impact of Newman's dream just beginning.

"There are no limits for Tom as he hears God's voice and obeys," Daugherty said. "Many people will know of Jesus and experience His love through the productions in which Tom is involved. He is focused on bringing the truth of the Gospel to a sight and sound generation. The time for this emphasis has come, and Tom is leading the way." ● story by/becky duncan

## world impact

### tom newman making movies

Reaching a "sight and sound generation" with the Gospel of Jesus was a dream firmly planted in Tom Newman as he graduated in 1980. Holding tight to his dream has led him into the entertainment industry, contributing greatly to the communication arts field and recently yielded an opportunity to reach the world through film.

The multi-year deal negotiated between Newman and The Weinstein Company, the multimedia venture of Bob and Harvey Weinstein, cofounders of Disney-owned Miramax films, encompasses producing and acquiring theatrical and direct-to-video titles for the faith-based community. The agreement is a dream come true.

As a new grad with degrees in psychology and theology, Newman journeyed to the mission field

# to be or not to be

chris crawford answers casting call

**“I have always loved making people laugh.”**

- Chris Crawford,  
actor

The stage was empty, and the hushed audience was eagerly waiting. It was his first play, a comedy called “Man of La Mancha,” and little did he know it would be the first of many in his career. He walked out under the spotlight, spoke his first line and got his first laugh. In that moment, Chris Crawford knew he had discovered God’s calling on his life.

Crawford, a 2004 graduate, never planned to be a drama major or spend his days and nights on stage practicing lines. Until two weeks before classes began his freshman year, Crawford was planning to go to the University of Oklahoma on a scholarship to pursue instrumental music, but God had something else in mind.

“God has really been the God of the last minute for me,” Crawford said humbly.

Crawford’s four years at the university proved to be a time of self-discovery as he began to connect God’s purpose with his talent through drama and acting.

“I had always loved making people laugh and having the opportunity to bring a story to life; to touch people and move people was an amazing thing,” Crawford said.

After Crawford graduated, he attended the University of Arkansas, earning a master’s degree in

acting. It was there Crawford made the most memorable impact of his career. He performed in a comedy called “I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change.” After his performance, Crawford received a letter from a woman who said he had helped her laugh for the first time in two years.

“Chris has lots of energy and a magnetism on

stage that as his audience, you want to watch him,” ORU communication arts department chair Dr. Ray Lawandowski said. “He has a gift, no question, and at the U of A, his gift really got polished.”

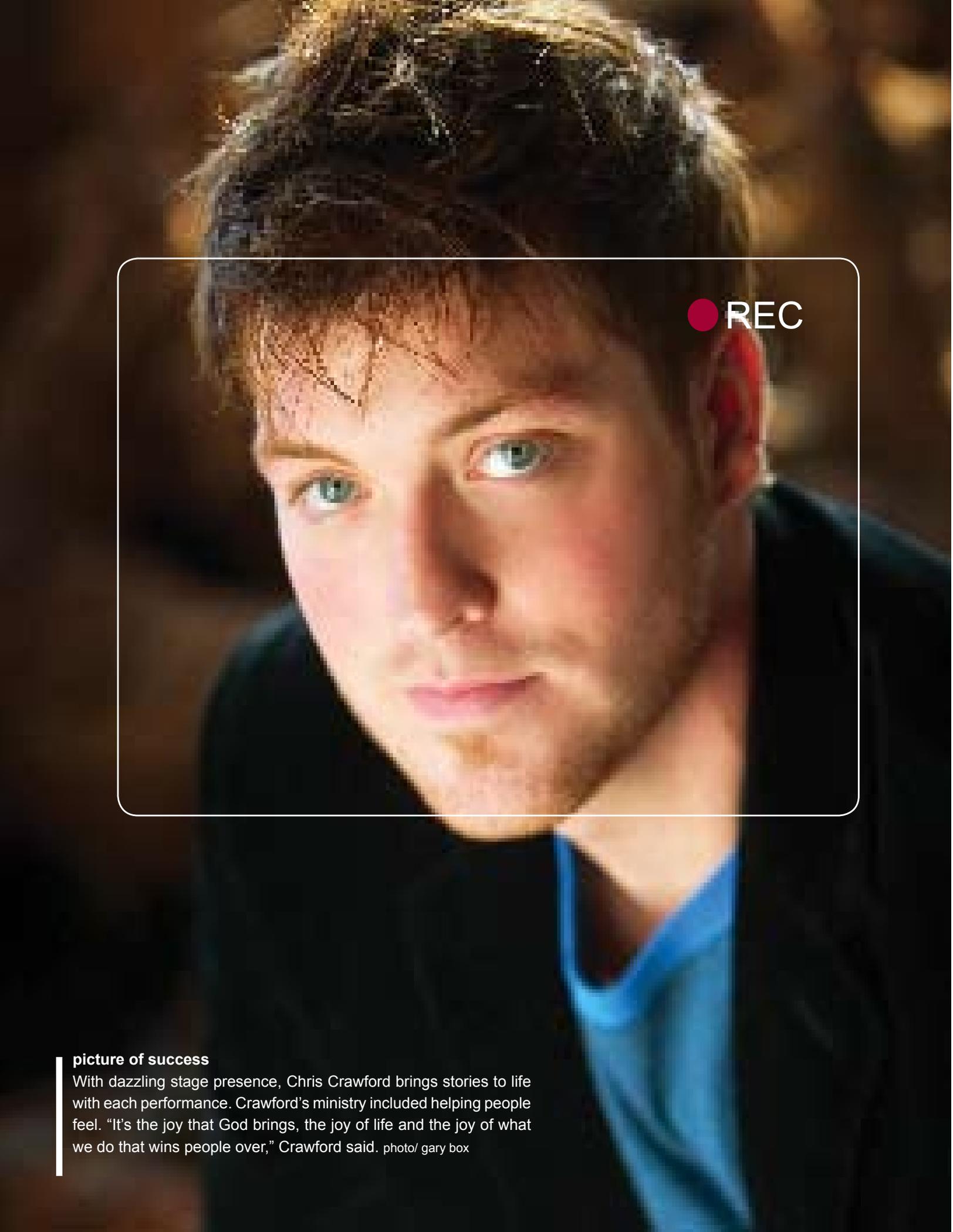
This year was particularly rewarding for Crawford as he entered the Irene Ryan Audition, a national competition set up by Granny from the television show “Beverly Hillbillies.” For this competition, contestants are nominated by

their school, and then competing schools are divided into eight regions. In Crawford’s region alone, there were over 400 nominees.

Two nominees were selected from each region to perform at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Theater in Washington, D.C., and out of those 16 performers, two were chosen as the final winners and received a \$3,000 scholarship and a year-long contract with the Shakespeare Company Theater. ● crawford jump page 16



Looking cool and collected, Chris Crawford and ORU assistant professor and director of dance theater Courtney Sanders perform at the University of Arkansas. Currently, Crawford pursues his passion at the Shakespeare Company Theater after winning a contract during a recent nationwide competition. photo by/shawn irish



● REC

**picture of success**

With dazzling stage presence, Chris Crawford brings stories to life with each performance. Crawford's ministry included helping people feel. "It's the joy that God brings, the joy of life and the joy of what we do that wins people over," Crawford said. photo/ gary box

**“I think sometimes we’re afraid of what we don’t know.”**

**-Sarah Perio  
Frontiers Ministries**

**A**t age 17, Sarah Perio asked God not to call her to be a missionary. She told Him she would do anything or go anywhere as long as He didn’t send her to Africa. Since that prayer, she has made several trips to the continent and has a passion to return.

Although Perio didn’t always desire the life she has now, this 2005 graduate realizes she wouldn’t be happy doing anything else. She has found her calling in the place she least expected.

“Now, my heart yearns for Africa, and I’ve seen how God’s heart just breaks over these people that don’t know His name and don’t know His glory,” Perio said.

Perio has worked at Frontiers Ministries since 2006. The organization focuses on reaching out to Muslims in the Middle East, North Africa, Central and Southern Asia and Indonesia. Perio aids people planning short-term trips into these areas.

“I get to be around people who share my heart,” she said. “I get to see people experience what it’s like to go over[seas] nervous and unsure and come back wishing they never had to come home.”

Although Perio loves the work she does now, she looks forward to serving as a missionary.

“Part of me wants to be on the mission field again,” she said. “It’s really hard for me to be sitting in the office, even though I know I’m



Poised to help, Sarah Perio aids with planning short-term missions trips. As part of Frontiers Ministries, Perio reaches out with the Gospel to Muslim countries. photo courtesy/bethany bailey

## out of africa

### sarah perio, heart for missions

doing more as one person working in the office than I ever could as one person working overseas.”

Until Perio feels God releasing her to the mission field, she fulfills her purpose is supporting short-term missionaries.

“When I hear cool stories, other people who are excited about going overseas, it encourages me and helps me through some of the tasks [stateside],” Perio said. “It encourages me knowing that short-termers’ lives have been changed forever.”

The people who have yet to hear about God motivates Perio. Frontiers Regional Director Scott Sullivan, Perio’s boss, took notice of her dedication.

“She is always working so hard,” Sullivan said. “She is the hardest worker in the office, I’m convinced. She is devoted

to the Lord. God has raised her up for such a time as this, and God is using her right now.”

Since graduation, Perio realizes the practicality of skills learned in college.

“It’s funny, because when I was going through a lot of the classes I thought, ‘I’m never going to use this,’ but it’s amazing how much of that you actually end up using,” Perio said. “I’ve had the chance to create brochures and flyers and design advertising and publications using what I learned in my communication classes.”

Perio is living in obedience to God, and it has given her a purpose greater than herself. With her willingness to follow God, she is learning firsthand what a meaningful life looks like. ● story by/ lindee fruh



Eager to help, Jonathan Garcia motivates students daily. Reaching outside the classroom, Garcia coaches junior varsity basketball. photo courtesy/ michael hucks

## teacher's pet

### jonathan garcia plants classroom seeds

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance every morning usually ends with high school graduation. For head communications teacher Jonathan Garcia at La Marque High School, reciting the pledge is a daily routine to start off his morning.

Garcia, a 1999 graduate, is impacting teenagers' lives one classroom at a time.

"I do more than just teach speech," Garcia said. "I prepare these kids for college and impact them in a deeper way as they step into the real world."

Teaching students Speech, Debate, Persuasive Speech and Interviews, Garcia is always trying to open their eyes to apply his life lessons to the world around them.

As a communication arts graduate, Garcia did not intend to spend time in the classroom again. While working with youth at

Prevailing Faith Church in Pasadena, Texas, he felt God directing him to teach, and it wasn't long before a position opened.

"When I worked with youth after graduating, I saw how the kids really grasped what I taught them," Garcia said. "It was then when I decided to take the leap of faith and entered the teaching profession."

At Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas, where he taught communications, coworkers viewed Garcia as a compassionate teacher eager to make a positive mark on the lives of his students.

"Jonathan is very aware of his students' needs and very caring," fellow teacher David Balderrama said. "He is always courteous, professional and gets along with everyone."

With a heart to also reach outside the classroom, Garcia took

"God has given me an abundance of grace to relate to the kids I am teaching."

-Jonathan Garcia  
communications teacher

another leap of faith coaching the girls' junior varsity basketball team.

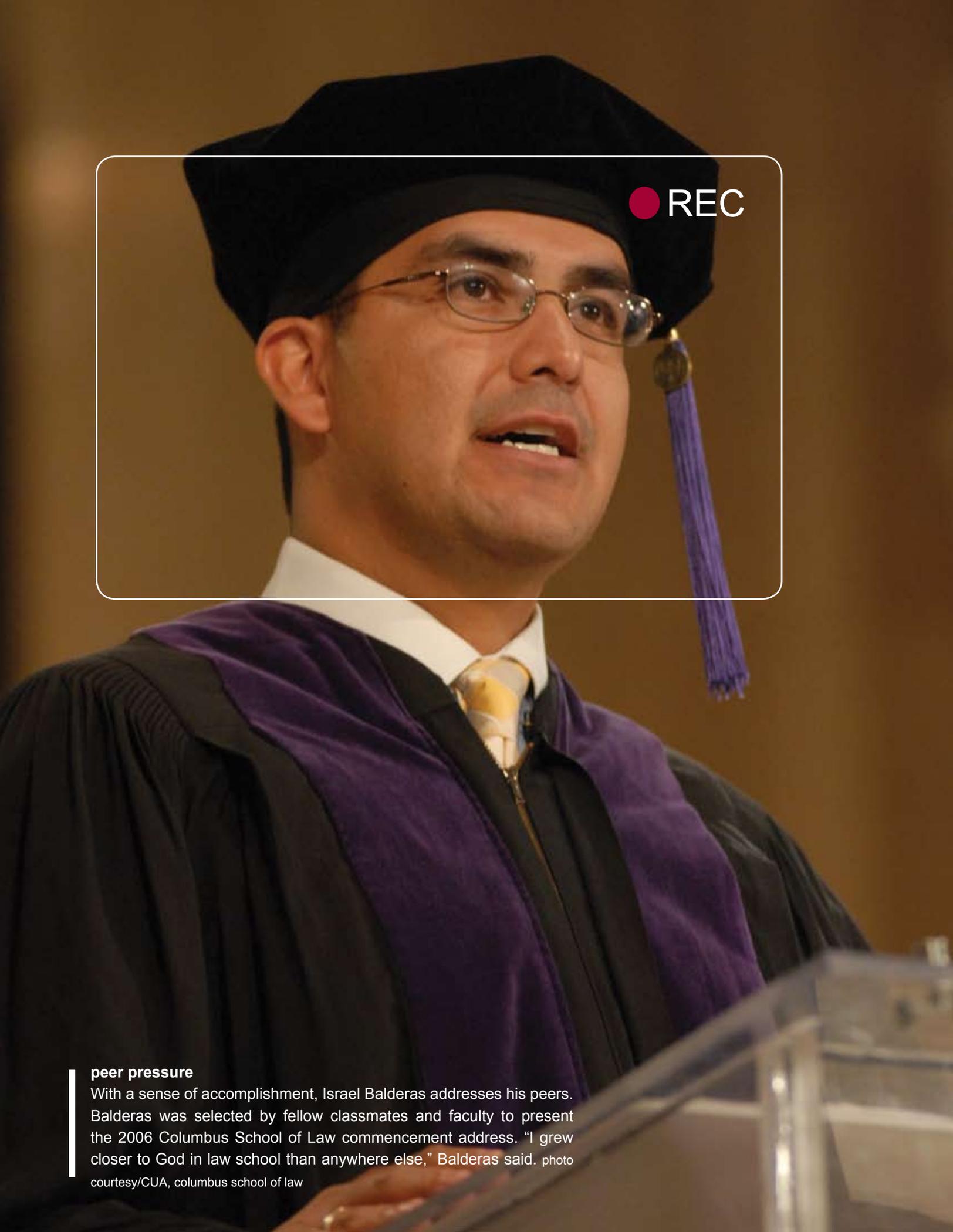
ORU had an influence on how Garcia relates to his students, looking for an opportunity to plant a seed where he can. Beginning class each day with an inspirational quote displayed on the board opens the door for Garcia to discuss life challenges with his students, a practice passed to him from former ORU professor Dr. Johnny Mac Allen.

"I will always hold ORU very close to my heart, and I wouldn't trade the professors or the experience for anything," Garcia said. "I will never forget the kindness the professors at ORU showed me."

It is the impact of his former teachers Garcia keeps in the forefront of his mind as he strives to ensure his students have the same experience. The biggest reward for Garcia is knowing because he takes the time to listen and to be there for his students, their lives are changed.

For Garcia, teaching is impacting young lives.

"I have found that I can always lean on God," Garcia said. "He has shown me how to teach and understand my students who come from different social and economic backgrounds. God has also given me an abundance of grace to relate to the kids I am teaching." ● story by/ jessica mize

A man wearing a black graduation cap with a purple tassel and a purple and black graduation gown is speaking at a podium. He is wearing glasses and a white shirt with a yellow and white striped tie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the top part of the image, containing a red circle and the text 'REC'.

REC

**peer pressure**

With a sense of accomplishment, Israel Balderas addresses his peers. Balderas was selected by fellow classmates and faculty to present the 2006 Columbus School of Law commencement address. "I grew closer to God in law school than anywhere else," Balderas said. photo courtesy/CUA, columbus school of law

# Raising the bar

Israel Balderas, legal eagle

**“I was fascinated with the theory behind law and how people discussed it.”**

**-Israel Balderas  
coanchor KFOX TV**

The secret of success was revealed to a young Hispanic boy when he was told education was the key for his life. After coming to the university, Israel Balderas heeded this advice, earning two degrees in five years as an undergraduate.

For Balderas, the adventure began three years after graduating with the class of 1994, when he responded to a pivotal phone call while working for a CBS affiliate in Tennessee.

“I received a call while working in Nashville in 1997 from the executive producer of a Washington, D.C. cable network who said they’re interested in me and wanted an interview,” Balderas said. “So I went to D.C. and was hired by ‘America’s Voice’ to cover politics, but they wanted me to put more of an entertainment spin on it. They were trying to be like the ESPN of politics covering events in the nation’s capital from all angles.”

While covering the controversial 2000 presidential election, Balderas realized most of the questions revolved around the United States Constitution, piquing his interest in law.

“I was fascinated with the theory behind law and how people discussed it,” Balderas said. “I put my faith in God and applied to the Catholic University of America, American University and George Mason University.”

While attending CUA, Columbus School of Law, as a night student, Balderas was involved in consulting and production projects for various communication and law services and was selected to give the graduation speech for the 2006 commencement ceremony.

“When you graduate from law school, it’s important where you graduate from,” Balderas said. “I

grew closer to God in law school than anywhere else, because I was so scared. I kept asking God, ‘Do I have what it takes?’ He opened the doors to allow me to follow my passion.”

After passing the bar exam, Balderas used his skills to launch a news Web site covering wireless and telecommunications sectors.

“I’m going to put out products where people are the media producer, innovator and consumer of their own products,” Balderas said. “I’ll do all the legal work it takes to launch a company and prepare everyone for an amazing world. Wireless will open up the Kingdom of God in ways we couldn’t imagine.”

Former employers and coworkers view Balderas positively.

“I have known him for 20 years and worked with him for 2 1/2,” Global Outreach Ministries president Dr. Mickey Dean Patterson said. “He’s fun and charismatic with a positive attitude and personality. He’s someone you can count and depend on. I’ll always remember his excitement in Christ.”

Balderas’ most recent adventure is anchoring the Fox Morning

News at KFOX TV in El Paso, Texas.

“I’m going to have the spotlight, and people are going to look at me, and that’s where God is taking me,” Balderas said. “I’m scared, excited and enthusiastic. I’m going to make it my calling on people to follow their hearts and passion. Education is key to fulfilling anyone’s desires. I know God is with me. God has made this country for a great reason. I feel like the party is just starting for me, and the adventure is about to begin.” ● story by/patrick tormey



A dynamic duo, Noreen Jaramill and Israel Balderas greet the day. As coanchors for the KFOX TV morning program, the team delivers news at the beginning of each day. photo courtesy/lonnie valencia



### CAMPUS UPGRADES

When visitors step onto the ORU campus, taking a self-guided tour is easier than ever. Signs identifying the names of each building now mark each location on campus. An extensive construction project lowered the hill of the intersection at 81st and Delaware. Other im-

provements include the opening of a Pizza Hut in CityPlex as well as a remodeled lobby for the main building and resurfaced parking lots. Plasma screen TVs displaying announcements and messages have been placed in each dorm lobby and on the third floor of the Graduate Center. Over \$200,000 has been raised in the campaign for campus-wide wireless Internet, and improvements are currently being made on the already established hot spots.



### COMMENCEMENT OF A JOURNEY

The 2007 graduation ceremony marked the beginning of a new chapter for 671 seniors. The commencement speaker, Joel Osteen, attended ORU as a telecommunications major and is a pastor and New York Times best-selling

author. His most recent book is titled "Become a Better You." At the graduation ceremony, four outstanding individuals were given honorary degrees. Osteen and Bishop Keith Butler of Word of Faith International Christian Center each received a doctor of divinity degree. Maj-Kristin Svedlund of Sweden received a doctor of laws degree, and entertainer Tony Orlando received a doctor of humane letters degree.



**A WHEELIN' DEAL** Instead of eating a TV dinner while watching Pat Sajak and Vanna White on a weekday night, Professor Angie Graves was picked to meet the TV stars in person while trying her hand at her own wheel of fortune. Last January, Graves participated in a six-show taping of "Wheel of Fortune" at Sony Studios in Culver City, Calif., where she won \$15,300. She was randomly picked to audition at a contestant search in Tulsa and then selected by producers to go on the show after a second audition. She enjoyed shaking hands with Sajak and White and reveled in being pampered by the professional hair and make-up stylists. She used the winnings to pay taxes, tithes and the remainder of her Ph.D. debt.

● info box stories/rhema muncy



Cheering with enthusiasm, Chris Martin encourages student performers. In addition to his new teaching role, Martin pursues his dream to publish a play. photo/kristen threadgill

## back again

chris martin returns to class

He's young, he's entertaining and, yes, he's back for more. Chris Martin has returned to the university to teach students majoring in the communications field.

Martin, a 2004 alumnus, currently teaches Theatre History I and II, Fundamentals of Scriptwriting and Sketch Writing for the Church.

The excitement and enthusiasm of the students is the most rewarding experience of his day.

"It's more than enjoyable having the opportunity to teach ORU students," Martin said. "After having taught in a state school environment, there is a noticeable difference between the students in both environments. It's much more rewarding for the professor when the student's level of concentration, excellence and dedication to the material is heightened."

As much as Martin enjoys teaching, the students enjoy his classes as well.

"He's very outgoing and livens up the material in the way that he speaks," junior Jeremy Nigh said.

In addition to teaching at the university, Martin wants to make an impact in the theatre culture and to do it with excellence.

"ORU produces Christian, God-fearing students who truly put everything into their work," Martin said. "There's something about ORU that raises the bar. It's about experiencing God." ● story by/christina ritt



Displaying agility, Amy McIntosh demonstrates her skill. As Director of Dance, McIntosh prepares students for the world of dance performance. photo/kristen threadgill

# dancing fever

## amy mcintosh, tripping the light

She was born to dance. Amy Roark-McIntosh, a native Tulsan, was three years old when she started dancing, and she hasn't stopped.

Today she is the new director of dance at the university and currently teaches Dance History, Modern Dance, Dance Seminar and Dance Ensemble.

Her hope is to impact students to show the love of Jesus through performance.

"Rob Bell says in his book, 'Velvet Elvis' that 'if you follow Jesus and you are doing what you do in His name, then it is no longer secular work; it's sacred' (Bell, 85). I desire for our students to experience this as they learn in a safe harbor at ORU and then go out into every person's world bringing authentic faith to a world longing to know their Maker," McIntosh said.

McIntosh is making outstanding impressions.

"I find Amy to be a disciplined, dedicated artist with a heart of God," Performing Arts Executive Director Laura Holland said. "She loves scholarship as much as she loves dancing, and that's a rare find."

McIntosh envisions a program of virtue where dance students' dreams can become a reality.

"I believe that all of life is an act of worship. Whether I am here at ORU or when I was living and dancing in New York City, my purpose is the same, that I may be found in Christ doing whatever it is I do," McIntosh said. ● story by/christina ritt

### CHAIR GIVES THANKS

Carole and I wish to thank you for your generous financial gifts for a retirement trip, which we took in August. It was better than we ever expected. We spent two full weeks in Denali National Park and Kensi Fjords Peninsula National Park, Alaska as part of an Elder Hostel experience. This trip was a highlight of our lives, and thanks to you for making it possible.

- Ray Lewandowski



### BUSINESS TIME FOR NEW PROVOST

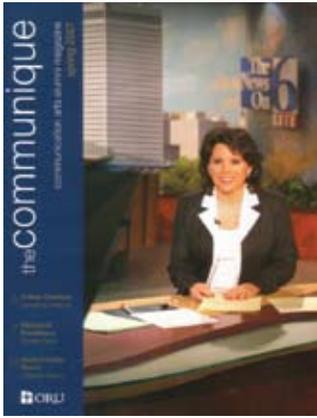
Dr. Mark Lewandowski was appointed executive vice president for academic affairs and provost in May. He is an ORU alumnus with a bachelor's in business administration and communication and an MBA from ORU and a Ph.D. in management from Walden University. He has worked with several Fortune 500 companies in many areas, from service to manufacturing. His passion for developing young people orchestrated the growth of the ORU business program and full, specialized accreditation from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs. As provost, he is advancing the business integrity of the university and training up students to be the best the business world has to offer.



### BRIDGING POSSIBILITIES AND POTENTIAL

Communication arts alumna Dr. Wendy Shirk has come full circle. She received her B.A. in organizational/interpersonal communication in 1988 from ORU, her M.A. in speech communication consultancy in 1991 from Oklahoma State University and an Ed.D. in educational leadership from ORU in 2002. She has recently stepped into the role of the dean of the School of Arts and Cultural Studies, a career advancement that will draw on her business consulting experience and her abilities to lead through training, developing and managing people. She has taught at Tulsa Community College and ORU and consulted for numerous businesses. As the dean of the largest school in the university, Shirk plans to build bridges between the diverse departments and students.





**BEST OF THE BEST** The Communicate recently won several awards from the Oklahoma Interscholastic Press Association, including “Best in State” and “All Oklahoman.” Judges awarded the publication with “Highest Honors” along with 12 awards to the student writers. Content is produced by a Publications Workshop taught by journalism instructor Chris Putman. Layout elements are placed by a student editing team.

● Crawford - page 9

Crawford not only won the Irene Ryan Award, but also the Mark Twain Award for Best Comedic Performance, a \$2,000 prize.

He recalled the best moment of the competition.

“It was right when I finished my package, and I stood up and said, ‘Thank you,’ because at that moment I realized that I am in the ministry of helping people feel,” Crawford said.

Now, a typical day for Crawford begins with rehearsal at the theater at 9 a.m. which stretches until 10 p.m. He is currently working on two shows, “Edward the II” and “Tamburlaine” and will perform them in Shakespeare Company’s new multimillion dollar theater.

“It’s intense, a whole new ball game really,” Crawford said of his newfound career. “You think ‘Something like this is never going to happen to me,’ and then it does, and it’s the joy that God brings, the joy of life and the joy of what we do that wins people over.”

Crawford looks to his future career with expectancy.

“Every day it changes,” Crawford said. “I love acting, and I would love to have my own professional company in Tulsa, Okla. [Tulsa] is home to me, and I really want something with the arts to just explode. If we could get Christians involved, there would be no stopping us.” ● story by/katie vogel



**ALUMNI WIN TELLY AWARD** A promotional piece for the ORU communication arts department created by Candace Jackson and Anna Fulbright won a bronze Telly Award. The piece, titled “What is Comm Arts,” highlighted all of the majors within the department and provided information about the diverse job opportunities a communication arts degree has to offer. The Telly Awards honor the best in local, regional and cable television commercials, programs, videos and films.

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