

the **CO**mmuniqué

communication arts alumni magazine
spring/summer 2008

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Laura Holland
Department chair

The only word that I can think of that describes this spring semester is historical. With the leadership changes comes a feeling of freedom and excitement that is almost tangible. I am finishing my 32nd year teaching at ORU, and I have never felt more hopeful and inspired about the university's and the communication arts department's future.

We launched two new majors this year, a bachelor of arts in Dance Performance and a bachelor of arts in Musical Theatre. We have a freshman class of 30 dance majors, and we started with eight musical theatre majors; so this year was a strong start.

Our Organizational/Interpersonal Communication has developed an Alumni Advisory Board that encourages professionalism in our students and curriculum. The O/I Com majors enjoyed a career event planned by Susan McMurray, assistant professor of communication arts.

The multimedia area is bursting at its seams. There is growth in the new technology area, and Dr. Wendy Shirk has created a "cross-disciplinary" course titled Future

Media, which combines music, visual art and media in one class.

In our publications area, journalism instructor Chris Putman entered this alumni magazine into competition with Oklahoma Interscholastic Press Association for the first time in its 12-year history and has won "Best in State," "All Oklahoman" and "Highest Honors" in the Judges' Critique in addition to 12 individual student-writing awards.

The Public Relations Student Society of America chapter at ORU celebrates its 10-year charter in 2008. Our PRSSA chapter was recently featured in the PRSSA's Best Practices Showcase, receiving accolades for its use of new media, including Facebook and YouTube videos, to drive membership.

I continue to hear from many of you who ask how the campus is doing after the storms we have faced this year. The excitement on this campus now reminds me of the early years when I was a student. It holds the feeling that everything was a grand experiment.

Then, as now, everyone wondered if it was possible for a first-class, charismatic, Christian university to impact and change the world primarily through lifestyle evangelism. That original vision of "going into every man's world" is alive and thriving on this campus, and the future of ORU looks bright and exciting. This magazine highlights all of our communication arts alumni who are carrying out that vision and declaring as they live their lives that the grand experiment is a success.

The Communique is a product of the Oral Roberts University communication arts department for its alumni.

To be informed of university updates, concerning address changes contact alumni relations at 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.

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

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Cover/Hailey Tims
Tims' story on page 8
Cover photo/Tony Li

“Having a front row seat on the news of the day is always exciting.”

- Joe Brettell,
communications director,
Congresswoman
Marilyn Musgrave

A dream of being in politics was realized when a lifelong love for politics landed 2003 PR/Advertising major Joe Brettell on Capitol Hill.

A native San Diegan, he worked his way up, running several local campaigns in Southern California, including his first job as campaign manager for a county supervisor campaign in Riverside County.

“It was a great experience, something I had always wanted to do,” Brettell said. “Particularly fun because we were such underdogs and ended up winning a tough election.”

Taking a step of faith, Brettell moved to Washington, D.C. Rewarding his faith, God opened doors, and he landed a job at Dutko Worldwide, a top five public policy management firm. Here he learned the basics of working in Washington.

God continued to open doors for him when one of Dutko’s most prominent clients, Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendoff, a national transportation and infrastructure design firm, offered him a job as director of government affairs.

After two years, Brettell began praying about ways to become more involved in the day-to-day rough and tumble activities of politics. He left HNTB in December of 2007 to take a job on Capitol Hill as communications director for Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave from Colorado.



Pausing momentarily to view the Washington, D.C. landscape, Joe Brettell reflects on his busy schedule. As communication director for Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave, each day is a new adventure. photo/tom williams

politically correct

joe brettel moving through open doors

His job has specific challenges when it comes to maintaining integrity.

“The main challenge is maintaining a solid walk with God amidst a lot of stress and worldly temptations,” Brettell said. “Particularly working in press, relationships are the coin of the realm. It’s often intimidating to not go along with the crowd and risk not fitting in.”

One of the aspects he loves most about his job is every day is different with its own victories and challenges.

Brettell believes Congresswoman Musgrave is a great woman of God. By helping to present her message to the media, he hopes to make a positive difference.

“Having a front seat on news of the day is always exciting; it’s always a bit surreal not only to meet people you’ve grown up watching

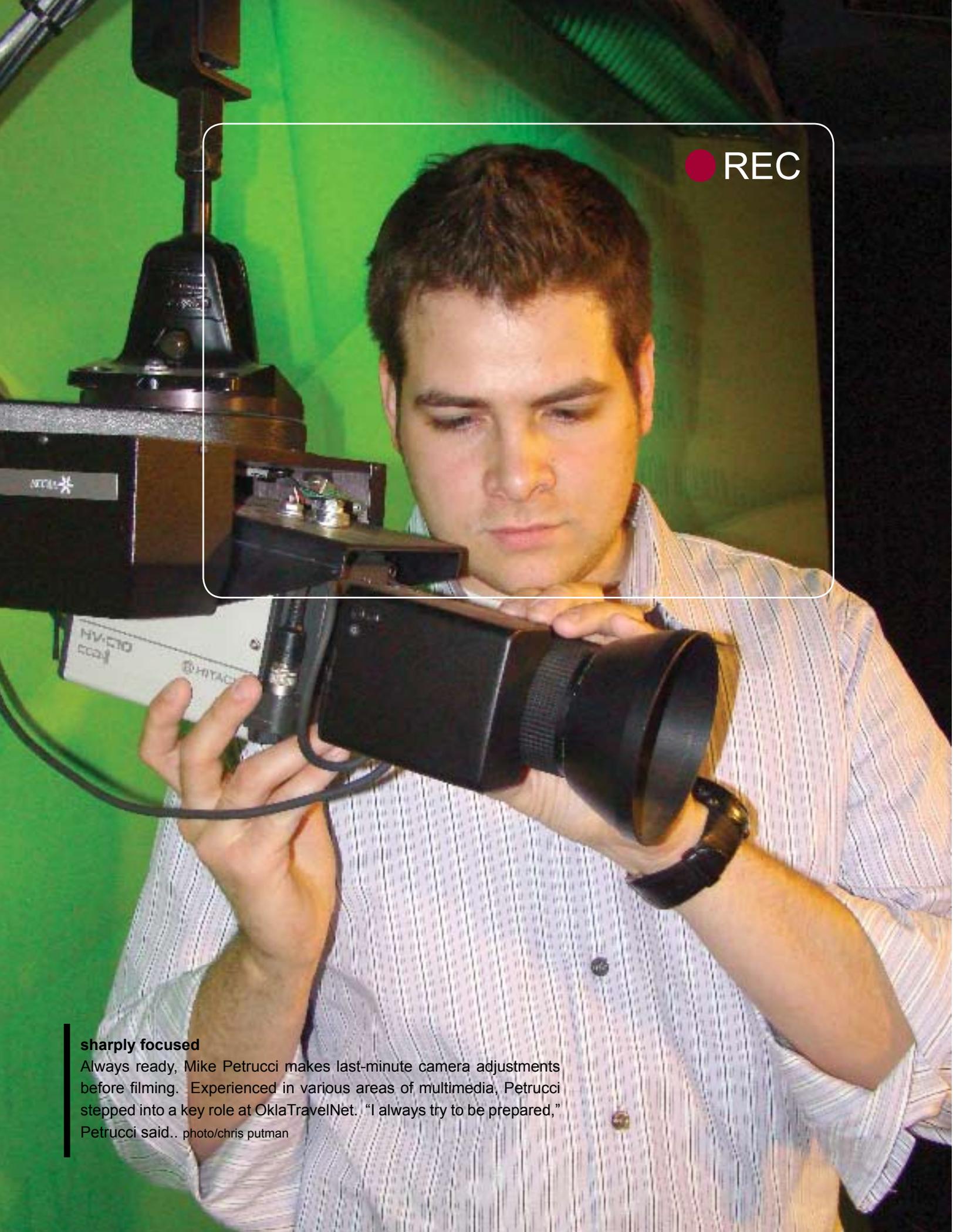
on TV, but work with them,” Brettell said. “From a personal standpoint, hearing something you wrote in the media never ceases to be a bit exciting.”

Steve Rice, one of Brettell’s former bosses, now senior vice president at a D.C. PR firm, Crosslink Communications, noticed Brettell’s work ethic.

“Joe worked for me on a political campaign a few years ago in Southern California, and we pulled off a stunning upset of a long-term incumbent,” Rice said. “He was extremely dedicated, hard working and driven to succeed—a vital part of the team.”

Brettell is somewhat uncertain about God’s next step in the journey, but wherever God may take Brettell, it is sure his gifts, talents and integrity will shine through.

● story by/rebecca gonzalez



REC

sharply focused

Always ready, Mike Petrucci makes last-minute camera adjustments before filming. Experienced in various areas of multimedia, Petrucci stepped into a key role at OklaTravelNet. "I always try to be prepared," Petrucci said.. photo/chris putman

alive on air

mike petrucci ready on the set

“It is what you do when no one is watching that is important.”

- Mike Petrucci,
content manager, OklaTravelNet

For the college student who was ready for any situation, not having a clue on the right major choice was out of character for Mike Petrucci.

Petrucci daily carries tools with him he quite possibly will never use, just in case some unexpected crisis unveils a need for a gadget.

“I try to always be prepared,” Petrucci, the poster boy for readiness, said. “My knife I carry all the time has a window punch, seat belt cutter and an oxygen tank key. My watch has an altimeter, a barometer and a thermometer.”

So when it came time to choose the area of his study, Petrucci was thrown for a loop having no idea which direction to go. After narrowing down his options, he selected an area he found interesting.

He liked computers and photography, so he chose MultiMedia Production.

“That was literally how it went,” Petrucci said. “It’s amazing I found my calling that way.”

The MultiMedia Institute prepared Petrucci for absolutely every side of production. By the time he graduated in 2007, he had already landed a position in the media production field at OklaTravelNet, the world’s first broadband channel devoted to travel and tourism specifically promoting Oklahoma. This channel provides information on attractions to visit and events to attend. Petrucci was hired in the midst of Oklahoma’s Centennial celebration; so, he jumped in and began a new job in a busy new industry.

On the job, Petrucci wears many hats, utilizing his

experience in various areas of the field. As content manager, he also does a fair share of troubleshooting. Since OklaTravelNet directs one live show a day, Petrucci’s problem-solving ability is a valued commodity.



By doing his part technically, Mike Petrucci advocates tourism in Oklahoma. Using his media skills, he enhances the quality of the show. photo/chris putman

OklaTravelNet’s vice president of production, Jennifer McLaughlin, believes Petrucci’s gift has truly made a place for him.

“I have never seen anyone with such a strong work ethic,” McLaughlin said. “Mike takes his job seriously. He has quite literally made himself indispensable in the workplace.”

Petrucci’s readiness for any crisis is unique, making it only appropriate to work for a company whose main focus is to help tourists be as prepared as possible for vacation. Petrucci’s other

rare quality he brings to his workplace is integrity.

“Many people do good work when the right people are watching, but ORU and my parents taught me that it is what you do when no one is watching that is important,” Petrucci said.

Petrucci envisions owning his own production company on the horizon. But for now, he is happy where he is, knowing God has directed his steps for this season.

“Just one word to describe Mike,” McLaughlin said. “I guess the first word that comes to mind is ‘happy.’ Because he is; happy with his career, his personal life, just life in general. And the best thing is ...he makes those of us around him happy, too.” ● story by/ caitlin houston

“I love adding light to darkness and making sets look beautiful.”

- Lowry Perry,
gaffer, designer,
lighting director

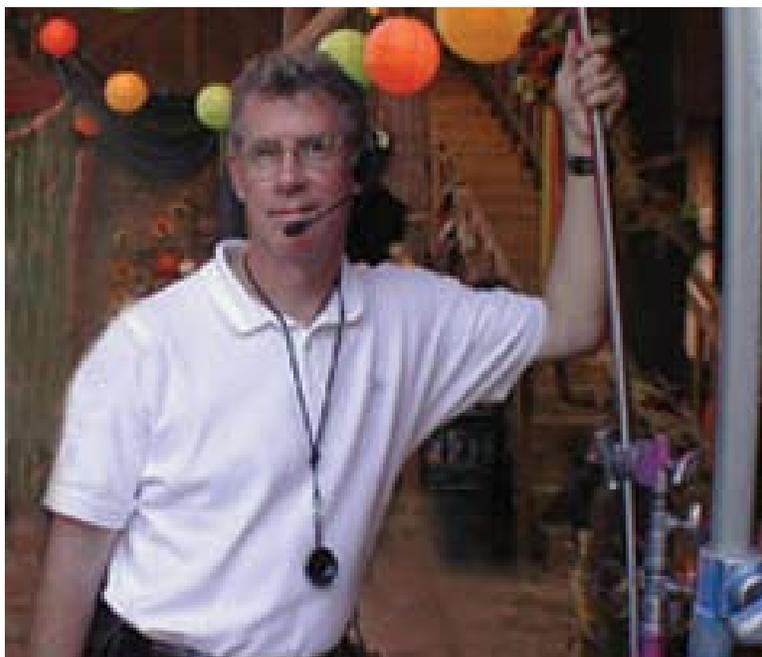
Restless to leave on a trip to Florida, Lowry Perry waited impatiently for a friend to return from class. Once he said his good-byes, he would be on his way. Shuffling around the dorm room, he picked up a book and began to thumb through. Perry was captivated and decided on the spot to change his major to Telecommunications. At this moment, he began to chase after a dream to light his work world.

“I wanted to enjoy my work,” Perry said. “I knew at that point that I wanted to find a way to somehow get into that field.”

After graduation in 1972, Perry worked on the maintenance crew and technical staff at the Mabee Center. Eventually, he was ready to step into the newly opened position of technical director in 1976.

“Being at ORU taught me that I could take on anything the world challenged me with, even when things crashed—bad crews or hard jobs,” Perry said. “There’s times when I would be on the job and stuff would go wrong, and I would just step outside, pray and regain complete confidence and peace. I’ve realized early on that I am an example because people know that I went to ORU. People are always watching to see how you will react to situations and how you relate to people.”

Perry’s solid work ethic has made him a highly sought after gaffer, lighting director and



In the midst of a busy scene, Lowry Perry pauses to critique the set. Creating a mood with light is part of the expertise Perry shines on each project.

photo illustration/john knight

Let there be light

lowry perry illuminates darkness

designer. He has worked in different capacities on many notable projects such as Francis Ford Coppola’s “Rumblefish,” “Sometimes They Come Back,” by Stephen King and the filmed PBS children’s series “Wishbone.” One of his most notable projects has been the PBS show “Barney and Friends.”

Fellow director and colleague Fred Holmes has worked with Perry on several projects.

“Lowry knows how to pull off some miracles,” Holmes said. “You can always hire a guy who knows how to light, not always well, but they can throw light on something. Lowry on the other hand always does his best to make the scene fit the mood set by the script and/or director. A lot of lighting directors

can do what you tell them, but Lowry always brings something to the table. He’s a great collaborator. He always comes in with ideas to make it better. And I think that sets him apart from other LDs—he respects the work.”

Bringing the light of Christ into a dark world remains Perry’s top priority.

“I love adding light to darkness and making sets look beautiful,” Perry said. “I want people to remember me as someone who strove for excellence. I’m always trying to get all I can out of experiences and be a good witness for Christ. I want to work hard and never settle for less than the best.” ● story by/marissa ranberger



Finding a rare uninterrupted moment, Gina Conroy reviews her book. Through her blog, Conroy pursues her writing passion while connecting with others who share her zeal.
photo/jodi westfall

interrupted...

gina conroy finding write time

More than a hobby, writing is a lifestyle and passion. Through the years, the process and delivery has evolved. Some seek it for profession, others seek it for entertainment, fame or therapy. Then there are those who seek it for the pure enjoyment of painting a picture with words. They are writers who are interrupted in their pursuit of fulfillment.

For as long as she can recall, 1990 Telecommunications and Journalism graduate Gina Conroy, published author and founder of “Writer... Interrupted”—a blog for writers who have been interrupted by life—has enjoyed writing. It began with a daily journal, continued to the ORU student newspaper The Oracle and on to magazine publications such as Tulsa Cityscape Magazine and Community Spirit. These experiences gave her the courage she needed to conduct interviews, which she now does weekly for her blog at <http://www.writerinterrupted.com>.

“I am no longer driven to publish, only to grow and learn and produce the best work I can.”

**- Gina Conroy,
founder, “Writer...Interrupted”**

Married and the mother of four children, Conroy incorporates her love for writing into her busy life.

“I started ‘Writer...Interrupted’ to connect with other moms like me,” Conroy said. “Initially it was geared toward writing moms, many of them who home schooled [their children], but soon I realized there were other writers, fathers, employees and caregivers who were also interrupted in their writing.”

“Writer...Interrupted” is about connecting interrupted writers to learn, grow and unite in their faith in God and their love for writing. Conroy recently took the blog a step further by adding it to a ning, an online platform for users to create social networks, connecting others who share her passion and interruptions.

In spite of the interruptions, Conroy continues to give priority to writing.

“She just keeps going,” senior editor for “The High Calling” and “Faith in the Workplace” as well as “Writer...Interrupted” member Mark Goodyear said. “There was a time last year when the blog end of ‘Writer...Interrupted’ was not experiencing the growth that she had hoped. She had poured countless hours into this thing. Too many people let interruptions become failures. Gina doesn’t. She accepts interruptions as a fact of life, something to be acknowledged and planned around.”

Interruptions in life are not enough to keep Conroy from interacting with others.

“I started out blogging myself, and then asked others to join me,” Conroy said. “Right now I manage about 12 writers who post on everything from the craft of writing to faith and family.”

Also a creative writer, Conroy has coauthored two published books: “Reach for Your Dreams, Graduate” and “Anytime Prayers for Everyday Moms.” Currently, she’s working on a novel that has already been requested by two literary agents.

“I am no longer driven to publish, only to grow and learn and produce the best work I can,” Conroy said. “Everything else I leave up to the One who has called me on this journey.” ● story by/sarah bratschun

modeling after Him

hailey tims following God's heart

"I feel like ORU grounded me in the Word."

- Hailey Tims,
fashion model

Having a passion for people and desire to shine the light of the Lord wherever she goes, 2003 Public Relations/Advertising graduate Hailey Tims is in an unlikely industry to impact others for God. Modeling became Tims' niche at the age of 15 when she started taking classes at Tulsa-based Linda Layman Agency. A natural from the start, Tims' modeling career began to skyrocket.

As most girls seek modeling to edify themselves, Tims was attracted to the arena for a more honorable reason.

"I got into it because I really had a heart for the girls," Tims said. "I really wanted to make an impact in their lives."

For a selfless girl in such a selfish industry, with an impressive career portfolio, Tims has come far. Locally, she has posed for Oklahoma Magazine, Urban Tulsa, and Tulsa World and has been featured in ads for SAKS Fifth Avenue and Drysdales, among others. Nationally, she completed ad campaigns for Theory and Cut & Dry. Also appearing in her modeling repertoire is a collection of notable companies including SAKS, Miss Jacksons, Sue Wong, Teri Jon and Ralph Lauren.

Tims' passion, however, is for runway events. One favorite is the Pink Ribbon runway show hosted by Tulsa-based SAKS.

"Oh, I love runway, hands down, my favorite," Tims said. "The clothes are amazing, the crowd is great. It's for breast cancer, so it's for a great reason."

Tims also helped modeling agency owner Linda

Layman put together shows and teach classes. It is in this capacity Tims has a platform to touch the lives of those young girls for which she has a heart.

Layman enjoyed having Tims on board.

"Her disposition is always lovely," Layman said. "You name it, she does it well: phones, PR, and fashion shows; organized, committed, faithful, hard-worker and joyful."

Tims desires to impact this industry.

"Every day is different; every day is exciting," Tims said. "You are always meeting new people, always getting a chance to shine His light in a very dark industry."

Tims established a solid foundation while at the university.

"I started to develop my compassion for the fashion/modeling industry when I was around 16, but it didn't really all start making sense and falling into step until college," Tims said. "I feel like ORU grounded me in the Word and taught me what my mission statement in life was—to make an impact on an industry that is dark and

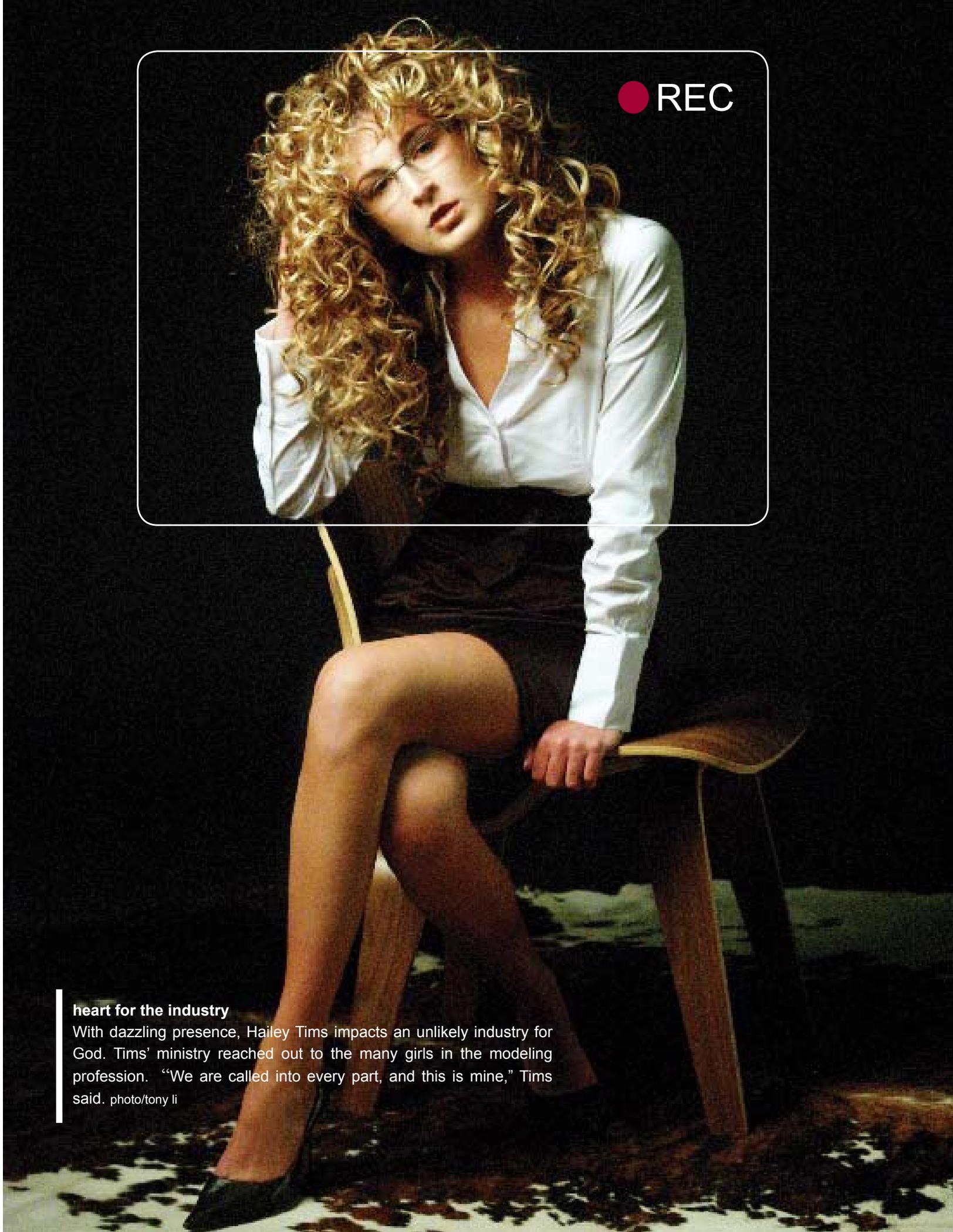
in desperate need of Jesus' love. We are called into every part, and this is mine."

Recently, beginning a new phase in her life, Tims moved to Los Angeles. She feels God moving her focus to the administrative side of modeling, where her opportunities are greatest to impact the lives of the girls she has at heart.

With a rock-solid grasp on life, Tims will do just what the Lord has called her to do: go into every person's world. ● story by/haven hoffman



In fields of wonder, Hailey Tims poses for a photo shoot. Relocating to Los Angeles, Tims plans to pursue the administrative side of modeling. photo/tony li



● REC

heart for the industry

With dazzling presence, Hailey Tims impacts an unlikely industry for God. Tims' ministry reached out to the many girls in the modeling profession. "We are called into every part, and this is mine," Tims said. photo/tony li

“Part of my job is to help tell a story with video.”

- Bernadette Shinault
chief editor, WMC-TV

Some have said the newsroom is one of the most stressful workplaces, especially when there is breaking news. No one knows this to be true more than chief editor of WMC-TV Action News 5, Bernadette “Sparkle” Shinault, a nickname she received because of her inner glow.

Shinault excels in getting the message out to her audience in a timely and professional manner.

“In the newsroom everybody’s job includes painting a story with words, pictures or videos.” Shinault said. “Part of my job is to help tell the story with video.”

Shinault received a Broadcast Journalism degree in 2005. She was involved in the university’s media as the contributor/staff writer for the ORU student newspaper, *The Oracle*, and performed voice work for various university projects. In her junior summer, Shinault had the opportunity to intern at CNN in Atlanta.

When it was time to search for a permanent position, Shinault fully relied on God’s promise in Isaiah 40:31, to renew the strength of those who hope in Him.

“The process in which I obtained this position was very interesting and further demonstrated the importance of prayer,” Shinault said. “Through the favor of God, I watched Him use my high school connections to point me in the right direction.”

Shinault attended and spoke at a few speaking engagements with the Memphis city school system’s



Exuding energy, Bernadette Shinault is ready for action. With her signature smile and upbeat attitude, Shinault adds sparkle to the news stories she tells each day on WMC-TV Action News 5. photo/isaac singleton

living life out loud

“sparkle” shinault radiating inner glow

Telecommunications Center, and it was there where she met the then news director who would hire her at Action News 5. Shinault believes it was God’s favor opening the doors of opportunity for her.

Shinault demonstrates her ORU teaching by letting God’s light shine. News Director of Action News 5 Tracey Rogers recognizes the example she sets.

“I know Bernadette is a Christian, and true follower of Jesus Christ,” Rogers said. “That comes through in Bernadette’s work ethic and presence without her having to say anything. Shinault cares deeply for the team members at WMC and is the first person to check on a team member to make sure they are going to be okay or [see if they] need a little boost to make it through the stress of the daily grind in the newsroom. Her caring attitude is so

refreshing in the midst of covering terrible stories.”

As her supervisor, Rogers soon realized that Shinault completed tasks with a cheerful heart.

“She keeps her department running very smoothly, and is excellent at dealing with intrapersonal issues,” Rogers said. “She is a servant leader. She never hesitates to get her hands dirty when the need arises. She also demands excellence in the product that goes on the air.”

Shinault plans on staying at Action News 5 as long as God needs her there.

“When you have days when everything in the news is negative, I just pull out Romans 12:1-2” [be transformed by renewing your mind], Shinault said with that signature sparkle in her eye. ● story by/james pigman



tripping the light

The new Dance Performance major gave communication arts students another degree option. The major offers a variety of dance technique and choreography classes including ballet, jazz, modern, tap and theater dance. Their second performance, “An Evening of Dance,” was produced this spring. story by/becky duncan



Following a church dedication in Tanzania, Stacey Rogers is entertained by the children. Seizing the moment, Rogers picks up some basic Swahili words from her eager little teachers. photo courtesy/sarah reed



musical theater

The Musical Theatre major, launched in the fall of 2007, aims to develop a triple threat: the

performer proficient in singing, dancing and acting. Two Musical Theatre majors were featured in the department’s production of the Broadway version of the family musical “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown,” which was performed in the spring of 2008. story by/becky duncan

promises to keep

stacey rogers committed to missions

It was the end of the trip, and the youth pastor was handing out commitment cards. Each teenager could stay committed by praying for ministers, missionaries or by becoming a missionary. Placing a check by the third choice, one fourteen-year-old girl made a promise to God. Who could have predicted a short-term missions trip to Mexico would be the life-changing event for 2006 Public Relations/Advertising graduate Stacey Rogers?

Years later after her education and a PR job, Rogers stumbled upon the Mexico commitment card and remembered the promise.

“Seeing the promise card opened my eyes to something I had always loved doing,” Rogers said. “I have always had a heart for doing missions work, but there had been so much

doubt when I thought of becoming a full-time missionary.”

A short-term missions trip with Open Door Enterprises erased Rogers’ uncertainty. Since her initial trip, Rogers has worked in Mexico, Brazil, Tanzania, Belgium and Spain.

Cofounder of Open Door Enterprises, Sarah Reed, watched Rogers grow in her calling.

“Stacey is gifted in a way where she can accept a person no matter how old they are or where they are in life,” Reed said. “She is such a hard worker, and you constantly see her giving her talents to the Lord.”

In April, before heading to Brazil, Rogers traveled to London for training in ministering to Muslims. All this from a simple check on a blank commitment card.

● story by/taylor hankins

To support Rogers’ missions efforts or for more information, contact staceyrogers83@gmail.com



new construction

Two phases of construction are underway on campus. To prevent flooding, the Fred Creek project will increase the creek’s capacity to handle storm water. Other projects include development of an access road/running track with lights and benches and the installation of a new bridge from the Mabee Center parking lot to the campus. The completion date for both phases is summer 2009. story by/becky duncan



oru alumni online community

The ORU alumni online community is a user-friendly Web site created to connect alumni. Features include classmate searches, e-mailing, messaging, networking, journaling and an online sign-up for alumni events. To become part of ORU's online alumni community, log onto <http://oru.edu/alumni/online>. story by/leandre' purley



On Detroit radio 1400 AM, Brad Smith and on-air guest Dennis Miller promote conservative views. Smith brings people of the Christian faith together through Salem Communications' various radio formats. photo/chris maccourtney



ORU alumnus and second lieutenant Ryan Iannelli

e-blast off

Want to keep up with Second Lieutenant Ryan Iannelli and other alumni? School news, current events and alumni features are periodically e-blasted to the e-mail

of participating alumni. Alumni may sign up to receive e-blasts by sending their e-mail address to Dr. Even Culp at eculp@oru.edu. story by/leandre' purley

music to their ears

brad smith making joyful noise

Once pushed by a professor to excel, 1993 Radio Communications graduate Brad Smith has now exceeded those demands as sales manager for a thriving Christian talk radio station.

Smith's faith helped him secure a job at Salem Communica-

tions, a radio station in Detroit promoting conservative views and family values through different teaching, talk, news and music formats.

"I believe that our formats can change people's lives," Smith said. "I also believe local Christian radio stations can help unite the Church and bring together people from various denominations that would not normally mingle."

General manager Chris MacCourtney recognizes Smith's contributions.

"I am very blessed to have Brad as part of the leadership team," MacCourtney said. "I am very confident that we could not have achieved what we have achieved in these two to three years without Brad's leadership, attitude, faith and experience." ● story by/bailie kennedy

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