

# theCommuniQue

communication, arts and media alumni magazine  
2011-2012

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ORU





Multiplying effort  
Matt Steele enjoys reaching beyond himself by sharing his skill set. He worked with students in the USC film school master's program. "I was available to guide students through the process of preparing their 3-D models for animation," Steele said. photo/matt steele; cover photo/mark moore

# mark

matt steele, one

Because most think inside the box, their creativity becomes limited, lacking in color and reflecting the doldrums of daily life. For Matt Steele, however, his resourceful mind is definitely out of the box. It is this imaginative thought life and endless inspiration – the ingredients for a fertile breeding ground of ideas - that visual enhancements to thrilling characters from some of the world's most popular animated movies begin to spring forth. As a 1997 graduate, Steele learned how to approach creative obstacles in innovative ways. Observing the opportunities in life he had been given and relying on God for guidance, Steele felt led to pursue his career in Hollywood.

Armed with a bachelor of science degree in Commercial Art from Oral Roberts University, a knack for adapting to new technologies in computer graphics and a passion for film, Steele moved to Los Angeles, where he found his niche: character rigging. His first big studio job was at DreamWorks Animation, where he rigged

# n of steele

animated guy

characters for six feature films, the most recent is “Kung Fu Panda 2.” In 2010 he transitioned into a new role at Sony Pictures Imageworks, as a senior technical animator for two feature films: “Green Lantern” and “Arthur Christmas.” His job at both studios involved taking characters that started as static 3-D models and configuring them to move realistically.

Steele studied musculo-skeletal anatomy in order to learn how these digital puppets should move. This knowledge came in especially handy when he was assigned to perform sculpt fixes for the character of Hal Jordan, played by Ryan Reynolds, and many of the characters in “Green Lantern.” From muscles to facial movements, Steele was in charge of creating the expressions for the character of Astrid for the DreamWorks movie “How to Train Your Dragon.” After creating over four hundred sculpted shapes, he was able to give her character vivid personality by adding his unique touch for the quirks and smirks in between.

More of Steele’s work can be seen in favorites such as “Kung Fu Panda,” “Bee Movie,” “Flushed Away” and “Shark Tale.” Steele is creatively and passionately involved in every film he works on. He finds that the most rewarding aspect of his work is the ability to make an impact.

“I think everybody hopes their work will be on a large stage and people will see it,” Steele said. “I hope in some small way I’m impacting a lot of people.”

His work reflects his heart for people and his talent for animation and technology. Character Technical Director at Dreamworks Bart Coughlin is impressed with Steele’s creativity and skills.

“He is a true artist,” Coughlin said. “Matt has the rare ability to play both sides of the coin; aesthetically he’s extremely strong, but he also has the technical chops to get what he wants.”

Steele admits he felt the pressure and pessimism of Hollywood. Although he was able to express his passion and showcase his work on an international stage, he was sometimes discouraged by the chaos and cynicism around him. The experience had an impact on his emotions. Initially he felt out of place and defensive in his faith. It was then that Steele learned how to express his faith in a more practical way.



Matt Steele's Work

- The Human Stain, 2003
- Shark Tale, 2004
- Flushed Away, 2006
- Bee Movie, 2007
- Kung Fu Panda, 2008
- How to Train Your Dragon, 2010
- Kung Fu Panda 2, 2011
- Green Lantern, 2011
- The Way the World Ends, 2011
- Arthur Christmas, 2011

“In some small way I feel like I’m impacting a lot of people.”

- matt steele



He began showing love by demonstrating compassion to everyone around him.

His love for his work and his relationship with Christ inspires others around him. Bill Diaz, a lead character animator at DreamWorks, appreciates Steele’s positive outlook.

“He has a really strong work ethic and is an encouraging person,” Diaz said. “He’s a great go-to guy and very helpful to have around.”

Diaz was especially thankful for Steele’s friendship after a motorcycle accident left him wheelchair bound with two broken legs. Steele helped Diaz with everyday tasks, such as driving him to work.

With years of professional and personal growth tucked away, Steele decided in 2011 it was time to move back home to Tulsa. After driving cross-country with his wife, two children, a boxer and two birds, Steele settled into working as the CG supervisor for Steelehouse Productions for a season. Immersing himself in a world of animation and computer graphics infrastructure as well as building a render farm and data center, he approached his role at Steelehouse as an exciting new challenge.

Currently Steele works for Walt Disney Animation Studios as a technical animator on the film “Wreck-it Ralph,” which releases November 2nd. As with each step in the journey, he embraces his God-given opportunities. ● story/karis marks

Matt Steele, a connoisseur of animation, has a passion for film and a history of success. Now he appreciates the chance to be a part of production at Steelehouse. photo/matt steele



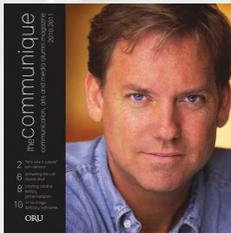
mBox logo  
courtesy/KORU

#### radio revival

KORU radio is alive again. Since its 1970s hiatus, students and faculty adviser Mark Labash have worked to revive the station. KORU sprung

back to life as KORU mBox. Christian music from rock to rap can be heard as well as programming featuring athletics, current events, talk shows, radio drama and seasonal music. The station is student run and streams Christian music and programming 24/7 in both English and Spanish. KORU broadcasts from the ORU website as well as through a mobile app available on smart phones.

● story/karis marks



2010-2011 issue

#### a prized publication

The Communicative has done it again. After previously placing third in the nation at the PRSSA Zenith Awards the 2010-2011 edition has gained yet another recognition. The competition was tough, battling against 14 universities; yet The Communicative took home the

honor of placing second nationwide. The publication has also won Best in State in the Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association's statewide competition. The magazine is student produced and alumni driven. ● story/karis marks



ralph winter  
photo/mark moore

#### taking the stage

The excitement of Hollywood filled the air in the Mabee Center at ORU's commencement. Renowned producer Ralph Winter gave a touching address to new graduates. He has produced 39 films including X-Men, Fantastic Four and Star Trek III-VI. He has also directed a television series and acted himself.

Winter has used his gifts from God to step into the world of stardom and make a lasting impression on everyone he meets. Inspired to make a difference for the Kingdom, new grads are sure to see success while sharing God's love with every step. ● story/karis marks



Junior Whitney Owings, KJRH's Russ McCaskey, First Lady Alison Rutland and President Mark Rutland celebrate the launch of ORU's new high-definition TV studio. Over 100 guests attended an open house event held to commemorate the occasion. photo/mark moore

## thanks a million

It only seems natural that highly creative students need a extremely sophisticated atmosphere to express their talents and learn new skills.

ORU's MultiMedia Institute revealed a \$1 million state-of-the-art TV studio where students can create high-definition productions. The university received the

funds through a gift for renovations. The HDTV studio is fully equipped with cutting-edge video, audio, camera, switchboards and control boards.

The studio also received a donated TV news desk from Tulsa's KJRH Channel 2 valued at \$250,000 to complete the revamp.

● story/karis marks

# and she doe

## lynette troyer climbs the ladder of success

When taking the leap from college to career, the desire for guidance is always prevalent. Psalm 119:106 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” For 1984 Telecommunications major Lynette Troyer Lewis, God’s Word poured light into her life and illuminated the exciting journey that would be her future. With determination, unflinching faith and humble confidence, Troyer explored the path the Lord had revealed. She faced head on the challenge to do big things for Him.

Those big things consisted of impressive accomplishments: becoming the senior marketing leader for a national women’s initiative, to authoring a nationally recognized book, to becoming a worldwide inspirational and motivational keynote speaker.

“At first, I wanted to be a home economics major and go into cooking and fashion,” Troyer said. “But after I took a visit to Oral Roberts University, I decided that I needed to go where I loved and figure out what I’m going to do when I get there.”

After graduation and upon her departure from the harbor that is ORU, Troyer began working for Key Temporary Personnel, a temporary personnel agency.

Equipped with experience and guidance from wise mentors, Troyer’s career took off. After three years at Key, she returned to ORU as the assistant director for Alumni and Public Relations. In 1997, having been promoted to director, she left Tulsa for New York City with Deloitte and Touche, a global accounting and consulting firm. Troyer held various senior marketing roles, working with heavyweight clients that ranged from General Electric to Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer.

Meanwhile, Troyer was quickly becoming a nationally renowned speaker. Speaking to corporate executives on topics such as finding purpose and building a personal brand, Troyer has been recognized as one of leadership guru John Maxwell’s maximum impact speakers. Her first published book titled “Climbing the Ladder in Stilettos: 10 Strategies for Stepping Up to Success and Satisfaction at Work” has received national

recognition from notable sources including The Wall Street Journal, New York Post, Dallas Morning News and others.

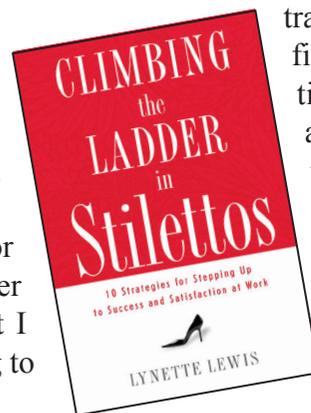
Recently Troyer has implemented a program to help address a worldwide problem, child trafficking. Stop Child Trafficking Now is an organization that addresses the crime at the source. Child predators are targeted by retired elite military operatives that work to gather evidence against child traffickers.

As a member of the ORU Board of Trustees,

Troyer has helped to make significant improvements throughout the campus, a process that is sure to continue to make a priceless impact on the future of the university.

Associate professor of psychology and longtime friend Dr. Connie Sjoberg always knew Troyer would be successful. The two encouraged each other to passionately God’s path.

“She’s a go-getter,” Sjoberg said. “We’ve always had one of those friendships where we encourage the vision of our lives.



# s it in heels



I was able to support her dream while she was here [ORU]. It has been great seeing Lynette be so successful in accomplishing her dreams.”

Troyer attributes her success to the “Be-a-World-Changer” atmosphere at ORU.

“I’ve got this big vision in my spirit that said, ‘Go. Do big things for God,’” Troyer said. “That’s what we talk about at ORU: Raise up your students to hear My voice. I think that when I was at ORU, I really cultivated that personal intimacy with Jesus.”

Developing and maintaining a relationship with Christ helped direct Troyer throughout her career. Her faith guides her adventures. Troyer takes a proactive approach while working with clients and coworkers.

“I make it a point to really engage in their [her clients] lives, get to know them, become friends, really invest myself relationally to them,” Troyer said compassionately. “After that relationship is built, you have many opportunities to show who you are, and in turn show who Jesus is.” ● story/jared

schlehuber



World changers

ORU students are encouraged to strive to be world changers. Lynette Troyer knew that God has called her to make an impact. “You really become convinced that you can change the world,” Troyer said. photo/Velvet Photography

# this just in...

## Ji Young Choe feeds the multitude

When Ji Young Choe Chehade graduated from Oral Roberts University in 2007 with a degree in Broadcast Journalism, she thought she would be sharing breaking news messages with the world. Little did she know she would one day share the most important message of all, God's Word.

In the wake of her father's passing, Choe left Belize and made the daunting journey to ORU by herself. Though she was uncertain about her new surroundings, she found stability and comfort in her faith, and the university soon became a healing refuge for her. After graduation Choe received a call from a well-known television station in Belize and took a job as a news anchor. Her journalism training at ORU prepared her for the technical aspects of her new career; however, she quickly encountered an ethical dilemma. Choe realized the station wasn't bringing honest news to the public, and she decided to step away from the job.

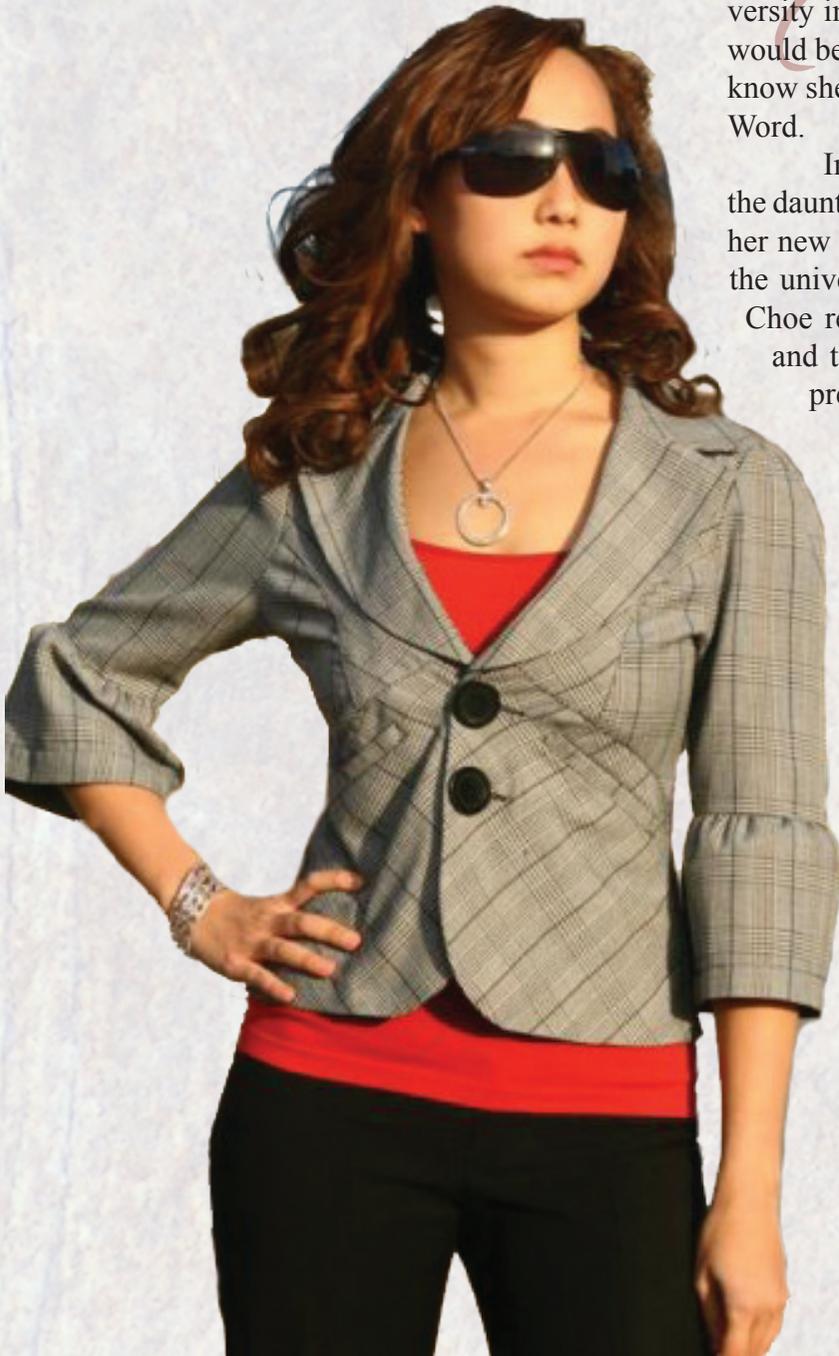
While looking for another way to channel her talents, Choe and her mother felt called to begin a ministry. They began hosting cell groups. Later it grew to include intercession classes and then a school of worship for children. With a vibrant and successful ministry, they decided to add a feeding program to better serve those in need.

Stacey Rogers, a close friend of Choe's, has seen firsthand the priceless impact Choe's ministry has had.

"Ji Young's ministry is one of selflessness," Rogers said. "She meets with poor, at-risk children, but she doesn't just give handouts. Ji Young truly loves these children and gives

Broadcasting His love

Anchored in God's love and moved by His grace, Ji Young Choe brings change to the lives of many in Belize. Moved by the Lord's compassion, she began a ministry that has become a refuge for the lost, hungry and broken. "I have learned little by little to see not through my own eyes, but through Jesus' eyes," Choe said. photo/daniel folkers



all that she is to see them grow spiritually and become better people for tomorrow's Belize."

Choe's home sits in an area she refers to as the "Jungle." Dangers lie literally in her own backyard where many children from broken families, drug addicts, prostitutes and gangs wander. While working with the children there, Choe began to see their lack of respect and education. Over time she realized their behavior resulted from sexual, verbal and emotional abuse. Their rebellion was a cry for help.

Each Wednesday Choe opens her home to provide lessons about God to as many as 80 children. She has seen dramatic changes in the children who participate. Choe is sowing seeds into the lives of children who could otherwise easily fall into the darkness, becoming murderers, abusers or thieves. Choe believes by instilling the Word and fear of God into the lives of the children she ministers to, an entire generation can be transformed.

The feeding program provides for their physical needs, and the love that Choe and her ministry offers provides for their emotional needs.

One precious child in particular has entangled himself in Choe's heartstrings. Kiefer is a five-year-old boy, who is the 11th of 12 children. His mother spends her time working outside the home, neglecting Kiefer. The little guy,

draped in torn, dirty clothes, walks the streets alone and without shoes. His bare feet tell a horrific tale of years of physical and emotional abuse. When Choe first met Kiefer, he was rebellious and skittish. All that he knew of life had been pain, instability and fear. While most five-year-olds enjoy playing games with friends, Kiefer was serious for his years. His uncertain life had forced him into adulthood. Choe noticed he would walk the streets into the early hours of the morning, skipping school. Choe reached out with compassion to help Kiefer. She provided him with clothing and shoes, fed him and shared with him how much he was loved by her and the Lord. Resistant at first, Kiefer began to trust Choe and slowly opened up.

"We have taken him under our wings for two years now, and he is a totally different person than when we first met him," Choe said. "He is always laughing, playing. . .like a little boy should be doing. He even calls us mom and dad and my mother-in-law granny. He has excelled in school and now helps us serve the little kids for the feeding program."

Choe also has big dreams for the future. She is currently working on plans to use her broadcast skills to launch her own Spanish Christian radio station. Choe hopes to build a sports ministry, as the children in Belize love basketball. She and her husband would love to open an orphanage as well.

Choe has grown in the Lord and learned to hear and answer the call on her life. With an insatiable drive to make an impact in God's Kingdom, Choe hopes to continue to broadcast Christ's love into the world.

"I hope others see Jesus in me," Choe said. "If you could see Jesus, I mean truly see Him, it would change your life forever. You'd have no desire to go back and be that person you were before you met Him." ● story/karis marks

Tyler Williams is just one example of the many children impacted by Choe's ministry. Choe's kindness feeds both his appetite and his heart. photo/ji young choe



# can't keep a good

ORU senior Cynthia Carney faces each obstacle head-on

A battle is a hostile encounter between opposing forces. What if those opposing forces were personal attacks, and what if that battle was for one's own life? The warrior of this story isn't a soldier in shining armor, but Oral Roberts University senior Cynthia Carney, who after many difficult trials, continues to persevere.

Carney is no ordinary student. As one of the older students at ORU, she struggles with the life-threatening disease Type 1 Diabetes. Carney has learned to endure a routine of taking extreme measures to keep her body functioning. Carney must test her blood sugar up to eight times a day to ensure balance while monitoring her insulin pump to prevent losing consciousness caused by a fluctuation of blood sugar.

Less dedicated students skip classes because of a lack of sleep, but for Carney it is a trip to the hospital to treat her illness that prevents her from achieving perfect attendance. Once released, she's back in the classroom.

"Since I know it is a door that the Lord has opened, I try to be faithful with what He has given me each day to do," Carney said. "I focus on His promises and faithfulness instead of my ability or lack of ability."

Carney is also on the Women's Council on Abortion with Trinity Legal Center where her role is to mobilize other women hurt by abortion to come forward and speak the truth. In order to secure that position, she too has a story to tell.

After marrying and giving birth to a son at age 16, Carney battled through an abusive marriage, which led to an abortion. As a teen wife and mother, she did not understand the magnitude of her decision to abort and suffered the consequences of her decision. She felt ashamed and as if she was "sitting in chains and suffering in silence." It wasn't until God called her to tell her story that her healing process began.

"God used my shame when He called me to speak publicly. As He says in Isaiah 61, He took my 'beauty for ashes,' Carney said. "I wasn't completely healed, but I did know who I was in Christ."

The Lord gave Carney a public platform to reach out to women affected by abortion. Despite her fear of public speaking, she was obedient to God's call and is a support to women throughout the country.

Artist Beverly Peddleford has been a good friend of Carney's

since their introduction at a pro-life event. Peddleford is inspired by Carney's determination and daily selflessness.

"The way she pulls herself up inspires me," Peddleford said. "Sometimes when she is absolutely not feeling well, she makes herself give to other people even when she doesn't have the strength to do it. She sacrificially gives even when she doesn't even have the strength to do it."

Carney has spoken at press conferences; her name is on two Supreme Court cases, and her story has been released publicly on the radio, on television, in newspapers and in the book "Motherhood Interrupted." She is currently writing a book called "When Leaves Clap" about how God took her out of shame and hopelessness and raised her up with purpose and calling.

Though Carney juggles her studies, speaking engagements and health issues, she still manages to press through each day. She is making a difference, and the enemy does not like it. When Carney senses the attack, she is certain she is in God's will.

"My struggles have really taught me dependency upon Him in ways I never would have known otherwise," Carney said.

# eat woman down

“I’ve come to know Him in those really down times in my life, but it’s in those times that I realize that I cannot do anything without His strength.”

Reluctant to return to college at a later age, Carney now embraces the journey. Beginning ORU, she struggled with not fitting in, but God spoke to her saying, “I haven’t called you to fit in. I’ve called you to reach out to those who are hurting.”

When Carney graduates with a degree in Public Relations, she hopes to use her education to skillfully tell her story in the media.

Carney’s testimony is an inspirational reminder the Lord equips those He has called no matter what their obstacles. Armed not with a sword but instead with a story, Carney proves to be one **courageous warrior**. ● story/chelsea bridges

From struggle to song  
Senior Cynthia Carney hopes to use her public relations degree as a platform to inspire. Her faith formed her struggles into a story and her story into a song. “I see education in this season of my life as a door of opportunity that the Lord has opened,” Carney said.  
photo/chris putman





apple iPad 2  
photo/chris pulman

#### apples for teachers

The arrival of 200 shiny new apples stirred excitement on campus. However, rather than welcoming glossy red fruit, faculty received Apple iPads to incorporate into teaching curriculum. The technology project was part of the \$10 million donation received for campus improvements and deferred maintenance projects.

The initial concept of integrating iPads was sparked from Chief Information Officer Mark Bender, his I.T. team and Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Debbie Sowell. ● story/karis marks



armand hammer center  
courtesy/KSQ architects, pc

#### hammer time

With the ground breaking of the Armand Hammer Alumni-Student Center, students welcome an exciting new spot to relax, have fun and grab a bite to eat. The 28,000 square-foot

building will house Career Services and an alumni lounge on the top level with a food/lounge/gaming area and living room below for students. Gifts totaling \$10.5 million were donated for completion of the structure. The building is the first structure to be erected on campus in over 27 years. For updates and images visit [hammercenter.org](http://hammercenter.org). ● story/karis marks



prayer tower  
photo/chris pulman

#### view from above

ORU's central compass, the Prayer Tower, was restored to its original purpose, prayer. For over an eight-month period, the 200-foot tower underwent a complete renovation of the observation level. The remodeled area received new walls, flooring, furniture, and decor and is home to a small chapel, prayer rooms and a 360-degree view.

The Prayer Tower's revamp is part of the restoration and beautification project. A video tour can be viewed on the ORU website at [oru.edu/prayer\\_tower/](http://oru.edu/prayer_tower/). ● story/karis marks

# new kid in town

## jiwon kim shares artistic touch

The stroke of an artist's brush isn't always found upon a crisp white canvas. A broad black marker has decorated the lids of well-traveled cardboard boxes scattered across the floor of Jiwon Kim's office. Kim is still in the process of moving in and getting settled into his new position as Assistant Professor of Art. Kim is well-qualified with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and Drawing, a Master of Arts in Illustration Design and a Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design.

When Kim was growing up in South Korea, his mother was a sculptor by hobby, but it wasn't until one of Kim's high school art teachers noticed his natural artistic talent that the idea of art as a career was introduced. Kim's original plan was to attend college in the United States and then move back to South Korea. However, God moved Kim in a different way. While studying in the States, Kim met his wife who inspired him to become involved in the church. Kim then became the creative director for an advertising company in Georgia. He later stepped into his current position at ORU when God opened a door of opportunity for him to share his love of art through teaching.

"God gave me a way to stay in a Christian environment," Kim said. "It is a wonderful opportunity for me."

Teaching Fundamentals of Art and 3-D Art and Illustration, his favorite part of being a professor is the creative freedom and the discovery opportunities working in art allows.

"There are no rules in art," Kim said. "Art is about exploring and having fun. It's not like a textbook."

Kim is especially passionate about fine art. His love for design has become a dynamic movement among his students. Kim's students have learned the creation of art is a process that cannot be accomplished without patience and dedication. One of Kim's students, Michelle Karjadi, knows art must be approached with a tenacious mindset.

"He assigns the projects that are somewhat challenging, but the outcome of it is amazing," Karjadi said. "In class when you ask him for help, he actually demonstrates what he thinks you should do rather than just tell you what to do."

When he is not teaching, Kim finds joy in sketching. Instead of rushing into a complex computer-generated world of design, every thought, every idea and every project begins with the meticulous movement of a pencil upon a simple piece of paper. Though Kim is thankful for computer graphic programs when doing design work, he still prefers to start every idea and project with a hand-drawn sketch.

“The traditional medium of sketching on paper is much brighter and richer than a computer, but the computer makes me fly,” Kim said with joyful certainty.

While many artists specialize in a particular area of art, Kim is a multi-talented personality who enjoys all aspects of the field. He often finds himself torn between his two passions: being an artist and being a designer. However, he has come to discover that he doesn't have to choose sides.

With Kim's gifting in one box filled with art and the other overflowing with design, his creativity proves to be uncontainable. In art there are no borders, no walls and no limitations, and that is why Kim still has unpacking to do. ● story/karis marks



New professor Jiwon Kim travels to South Korea each summer to teach at an art camp. In the States, he introduces a new movement of creative expression as he guides students at ORU in exploring art. photo/mark moore



mandel chenoweth  
photo/mark moore

#### art fever

As an artistic pioneer, Mandel Chenoweth has joined the ORU faculty family. Previously, while teaching at Kellyville, Okla. High School, Chenoweth began his art program with 12 students. Ultimately the program grew to host over 200 students as a result of the excitement he stirred. Art fever had spread throughout the school, and another teacher had to be added to meet the demand for students thirsty to express themselves creatively. Now Chenoweth is energizing the university's art department. He is sure to foster imaginative creations from students on campus. ● story/karis marks



ORU debate team  
photo/mark moore

#### for argument's sake

Government majors aren't the only students at ORU with passionate opinions. The new debate squad is a competitive team of students who participate in both parliamentary and policy debate, attending numerous tournaments throughout the year. The squad was created to motivate students to go into the world and share their opinions and provide support for what they believe. In its first year as a team, they were able to boast of a national championship. ● story/karis marks

The Communique is a product of the Oral Roberts University Communication, Arts and Media Department for its alumni. All stories are written by student writers under the direction of assistant professor Chris Putman. To receive the free magazine or to update an address, contact alumni relations 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).

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a midsummer night's dream  
photo/gloria o'neale

performing with purpose  
ORU drama, music and theater students burst lively onto center stage with fresh new productions. Theater students presented "A Midsummer Night's Dream" as well as "Eleemosynary." The performance majors danced, acted and sang their hearts out in a toe-tapping performance of "Oklahoma!" For the annual Spring Showcase, theater students produced a first-time production of "Shakespeare Showcase," as inspired by a Shakespeare class. ● story/karis marks



ORU dancers  
photo/oru.edu

care to dance?  
The talent, grace and beauty seen in Howard Auditorium from ORU dance students was more than breathtaking. Dancers were able to share their passion for performing in "Regeneration." In "Immersion," student and faculty choreography showcased various styles ranging from classical to contemporary to tango. Determined and gifted, dancers put their whole hearts into each motion. They view their performances as a time to serve others and the Lord. Students worked with one another to inspire and uplift as they created choreography and practiced each step. ● story/karis marks

This is a wonderful season for ORU. The university is in great academic, financial and spiritual condition.

- Laura Holland,  
Department Chair

