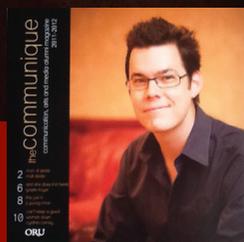


theCommunique

communication, arts and media alumni magazine
2012-2013

- 2 with a stroke of a pen
trecie williams
- 6 presidential flair
dr. billy wilson
- 8 dogged determination
sarah sullivan
- 10 sewing good seed
dafne basave

ORU



The Communique has won again: Best in State in the OCMA statewide competition and Best in Nation in PRSSA national competition.

Wordsmith and worshipper

In an average workday, Trecie Williams creates word imagery that transforms lives, an intricate part of her parents' ministry. She would have never known the impact her pen would have had on others. "When people say my parents' books helped them in their marriages, with their families, on the job, in their prayer lives or with a doctrinal issue, it makes my job worthwhile," Williams said. photo/allison williams. Cover photo/chris putman



with th trecie williams

The walls are filled with faces of globally-acknowledged personalities who have graced the church that her parents pastor: gospel singers Kirk Franklin, Donnie McClurkin, Fred Hammond, CeCe Winans, Yolanda Adams and Smokie Norful; and speakers John Bevere, Creflo & Taffi Dollar, Jesse Duplantis, Paula White, Buddy Bell, John Avanzini, Chief Pastor of The Potter's House Bishop T.D. Jakes and daughter of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Elder Bernice King. Trecie Williams feels humbled by the opportunity to stand in the presence of greatness. As passionate as she is about meeting and serving these luminaries, there is one work task that Williams executes with endless dedication – ministry through the written word.

Born in Memphis, Tenn., this 2007 Oral Roberts University broadcast journalism major grew up within the Christian faith at World Overcomers Outreach Ministries Church (WOOMC), the thriving ministry of her parents, senior pastor Apostle Alton R. Williams and first lady Elder Sherrilyn Williams. Over the years, she has served in several capacities at WOOMC, but

e stroke of a pen

changes lives with the written word

after graduation, her father Apostle Williams strongly encouraged her to spread her wings by pursuing a career outside the church. Holding fast to the spreading-your-wings theory, he insisted that she not return home permanently and instead experience personal growth and life development outside the family camp. Against her gut feeling, Trecie Williams obediently began to pursue other work; yet her heart yearned to serve in her home church. The Lord intervened and spoke clearly to Apostle Williams, “Why are you trying to force her out? I assigned her to you.” The redirected Apostle embraced God’s confirmation of Trecie Williams’ calling and quickly added her to the WOOCMC staff as a public relations writer and later his executive assistant.

“This is a divine assignment to take care of my parents, and I count it an honor and a privilege to uphold their arms in ministry,” Trecie Williams said.

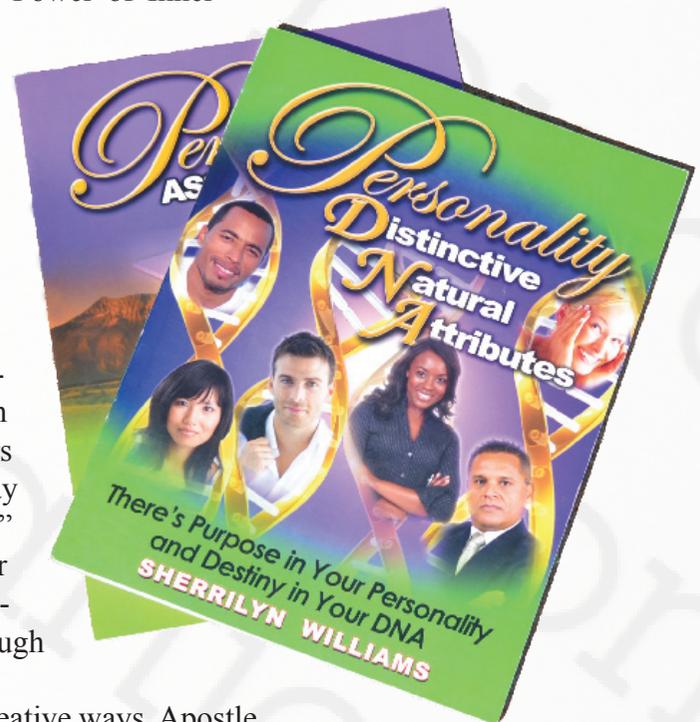
Trecie Williams, under her father’s direction, provides support and is responsible for analytical, secretarial, complex and confidential administrative duties. Due to the unique nature of Apostle Wil-

liams’ call, Trecie Williams’ position is nontraditional and requires qualities such as adaptability, availability, dependability, accountability and organization. Trecie Williams’ biggest responsibilities are editing, proofing and copywriting her parents’ bounty of books such as, “How to Be Happy Under Any Circumstances: The Power of Inner Joy and Rejoicing,” “God’s Marriage Saver,” “Sweet Land of Liberty,” “Personality Distinctive Natural Attributes (DNA): There is Purpose in Your Personality and Destiny in Your DNA” and “One-on-One: A Handbook for Building Christ in Others.”

“Every word, every scripture reference, every punctuation mark and every statement matters because it contributes to the way our readers perceive the Lord,” Trecie Williams said. “My prayer is always that people see and understand Jesus as He really is through my parents’ work.”

Impacting his world in creative ways, Apostle Williams erected a unique 72-foot monument titled The Statue of Liberation Through Christ. The statue put a twist on the American national monument The Statue of Liberty. The statue caused national controversy, created a stir among the media and has since been featured in “The New York Times,” “Time Magazine,” “Rolling Stone,” “Charisma Magazine,” the MTV show “Adventures in Hollywood,” “Good Morning America” and several Fox Television Network shows, including “Fox & Friends” and “Hannity & Colmes.”

Since her graduation, ORU has adopted the slogan, “Make no little plans here.” Trecie Williams has also adopted a similar slogan for herself:



“While I’m
pecking
away, the
Word is
piercing
my heart.”

- trecie williams

“Make big plans and God makes the impossible, possible. If you can accomplish your dreams on your own, then you’re dreaming too small.”

Trecie Williams touches lives through her work as an editor. She and other church staff members assist Apostle and Elder Williams in their book publishing ministry, Understanding for Life Ministries.

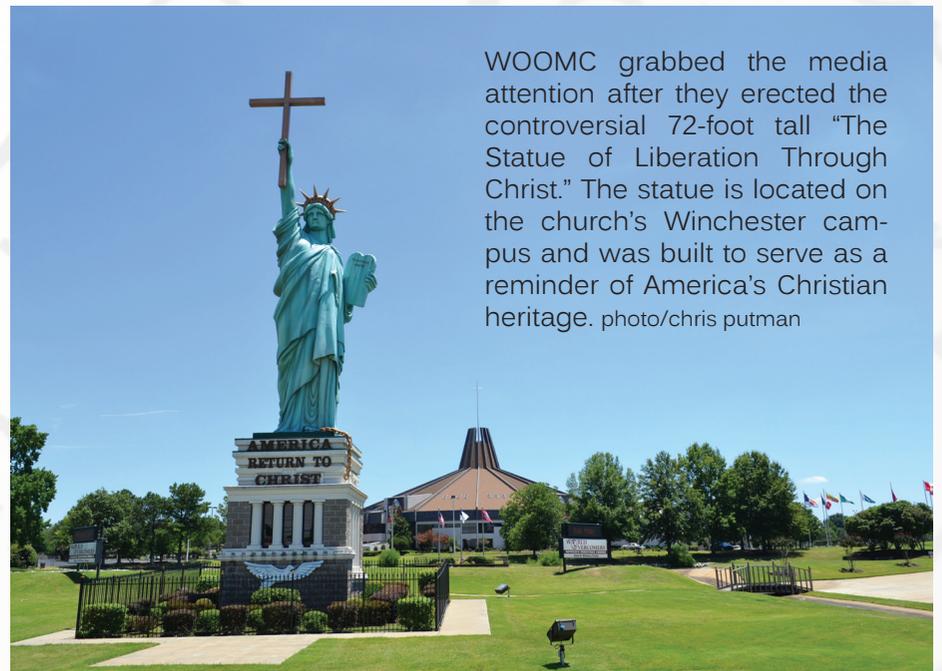
“The Holy Spirit often speaks to me about my own life as I work on my parents’ books,” Trecie Williams said. “While I’m typing, I’m taking in the Word. While I’m pecking away, the Word is piercing my heart. While I’m editing and cutting away words, the Word is cutting me to the core. The Word is indeed living, active and sharper than any two-edged sword.”

It is not just the readers who are blessed by Trecie Williams’ craft. She is loved and respected by those staff members who work alongside her to help the Word reach those who desperately need a healing touch in their lives.

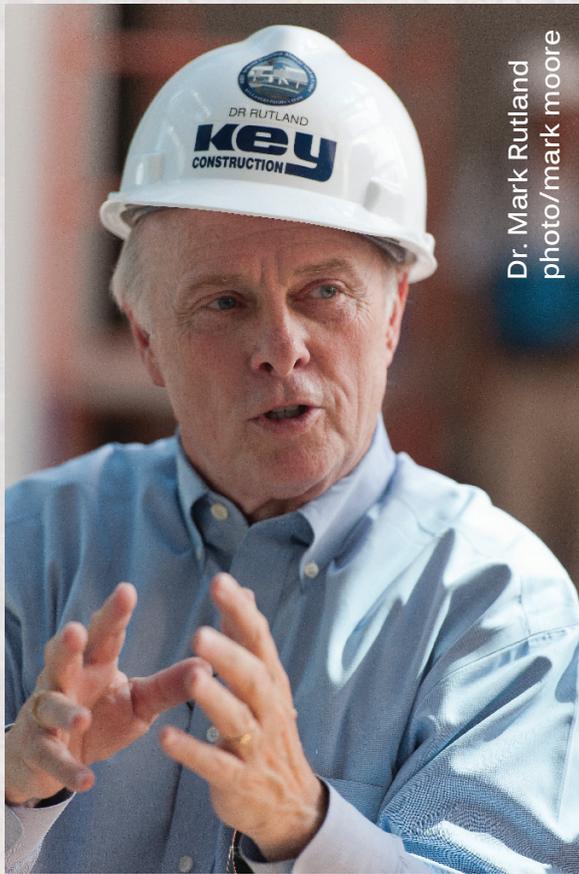
“I work closely with Trecie,” graphic designer Terrell Gatewood said. “We take our time to develop book covers to ensure that they are up to the standard of perfection. Her outstanding editing and diligence are unmatched. When a book is published, we at the church know that it is leaving our hands better because of Trecie’s eye for editing.”

Today, Trecie Williams aims to share the love of Christ with each keystroke and with each person she encounters. Her prayer is that she be used as a vessel to help empower others in fulfilling their destinies. ●

story/francesca lucido



WOOMC grabbed the media attention after they erected the controversial 72-foot tall “The Statue of Liberation Through Christ.” The statue is located on the church’s Winchester campus and was built to serve as a reminder of America’s Christian heritage. photo/chris putman



Dr. Mark Rutland
photo/mark moore

man of many hats

Just a mere four years after Dr. Mark Rutland began his memorable journey as ORU's third president, he will be transitioning into a new phase of life. The Texas native has increased enrollment, overseen the development of the debt-free Armand Hammer Alumni-Student Center, built life-changing relationships with students and reinstated retirement packages for employees.

Throughout his short time at ORU, Rutland has worn many hats of service. He has stabilized and created a fiscally sound university while overseeing on-campus renovations leaving the university a better place than he found it.



The new Armand Hammer Alumni-Student Center has opened its doors for the enjoyment of the ORU community. Students and alumni are welcome to spend time in the newest building on campus. photo/mark moore

alumni center now complete

Students and alumni alike are able to connect and fellowship in the latest addition to the campus community, the Armand Hammer Alumni-Student Center. With a grand opening during Homecoming weekend, this is the first building erected on the ORU campus in 30 years.

The project, completed one year after it was announced, was constructed debt free. Students are welcome to hang out, study and dine in the new 28,000-square-foot campus structure. In addition, the building includes a game-tech center, lounge, living room, workroom and Student Association of-

ices. Special features that provide a perfect environment for fellowship are the outdoor and indoor fireplaces. Moe's Southwest Grill and Jazzman's Café and Bakery are on-site to serve students and alumni alike. The second floor remains reserved for Alumni and Development offices.

Boasting the largest television screen in the state of Oklahoma and a glowing movie screen wrapping the building's exterior, the administration hopes to provide students with the most up-to-date amenities for a socially adept collegiate experience. ● stories/francesca lucido

presidential flair

billy wilson brings empowerment to campus



filling big shoes

Answering God's call for this season of his life, Dr. Billy Wilson is coming on board as the fourth president of the university. Well prepared for the job, he had developed his leadership ability through service as Executive Director of the International Center for Spiritual Renewal, the executive officer for the Azusa Street Centennial and in leadership positions with the Mission America Coalition, the Pentecostal World Fellowship and the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. "I am honored and humbled to have been elected to lead ORU at this exciting time in its history," Wilson said. photo/mark moore

After a nine-month search and screening of 170 prospects, the Board of Trustees is confident it has found God's man to take the university to the next level. Dr. William "Billy" Wilson currently serves as Executive Director of the International Center for Spiritual Renewal. His passion for developing Spirit-empowered leaders makes him a perfect fit for the university when he comes on board July 1st.

While the third president, Dr. Mark Rutland, was charged with stabilizing the university, the fourth president will focus on growth.

Known for his commitment to excellence, Wilson served on the ORU Board of Trustees as vice-chair until his election as president. He had a recent presence on campus through the Empowered21 Conference, an initiative launched at ORU that brought together ministry leaders and touched nations through 12 regional cabinets. Wilson is known for his biblical teachings and for 15 years of broadcasting; he touched countless lives with his weekly television program "World Impact with Billy Wilson." The show aired in 170 nations and in five languages.

Wilson's presence on campus was warmly received. An excitement stirred at the announcement of his upcoming presidency.

"We definitely will miss Dr. Mark Rutland, but I am also excited to see what changes will come about having Dr. Wilson in his new elected position," senior Yelena Radchuk said. "I pray wisdom and understanding upon him through this new journey in his life and ORU's timeline."

Students appreciate that Wilson seeks to hear the heartbeat of ORU before making major decisions.

"He is focused on listening before acting, a crucial trait a university president needs," senior Chandler Elmore said. "I am confident good things will come out of Dr. Wilson."

Not only students but faculty, staff and administration alike hold high expectations at what the new president may accomplish during his time at the university.

"Dr. William M. Wilson is a fine man of God," College of Arts and Cultural Studies Dean Wendy Shirk said. "His degrees are accredited at the highest levels, and he has a heart for global education. He is a scholar of the Spirit-empowered movement of which Founder Oral Roberts was a pioneer. ORU is blessed to have a leader who has the background of Dr. Wilson."

It is clear that Wilson shares the founder's vision for its mission.

"ORU is poised to globally engage students to hear God's voice, excel in academics and go impact their world," Wilson said. "We will continue to 'make no little plans here.'"

"I love to dream big, and I believe ORU gives us that possibility and capability to dream big for the future."
- dr. billy wilson

dogged determi

ORU sophomore sarah sullivan carries out

Making a stunning first impression with her gleaming smile, curly locks and bangles, rings and necklace clanging merrily with her movements, Sarah Sullivan dons a red ribbon in her hair that perfectly completes her style with a touch of flair. Without the ability to see, Sullivan was not able to design her own look.

Sophomore convergence journalism major Sullivan came to Oral Roberts University with the desire to become a radio host but had to grapple with the challenges of attending college with a vision impairment. She knew college life would be tough with her challenge but was determined to rise to the occasion.

Sullivan feels called to talk radio so she can help people understand they have value no matter their obstacles.

“Maybe I’m just supposed to teach people that being different is okay,” Sullivan said.

Born prematurely at 25 weeks, Sullivan weighed a mere one pound and ten ounces and had to stay in the hospital for three months. Two weeks before coming home, her retinas detached. The doctors did nine surgeries but could not restore her eyesight. Sullivan can only see light through her left eye, but rather than let her inability cloud her lifestyle, Sullivan adopted a confidence to move forward in life.

“Everybody’s so insecure about everything,” Sullivan said. “I can’t really afford to be that way because of my thing I have to deal with all the time.”

As a child, Sullivan attended a preschool for the blind for awhile, but her parents reconsidered that choice and enrolled her in a public school. She said that was the best decision they could have made.

Rather than consider her impairment a handicap, Sullivan views it as a gift from God to observe people as they truly are without focusing on the outward appearance.

Sometimes Sullivan struggles with feeling disconnected from people if they have remorse for her, because she is happy with the way God made her.

“It’s hard to make people feel comfortable around me,” Sullivan said. “I don’t feel bad ‘cause it’s not my fault.... I don’t want people

to feel sorry for me.... You have to see past my being unable to see.”

Near the end of high school, Sullivan began applying to a variety of universities, but when she came to an ORU College Weekend, she just kept thinking, “I could see myself here. I could handle it.”

After arriving at the university, Sullivan was excited to live out her dream of becoming a radio host, but more independence came with challenges.

Once her professors knew about her needs and she got organized, Sullivan settled into her routine and began to excel with the assistance of good friends and supportive teachers.

Instructor and Director of Student Publications Kevin Armstrong said having Sullivan in his class was challenging but inspirational.

“Sarah’s smile and laugh are infectious and really brightened the classroom,” Armstrong said. “I had never taught a student who was sight impaired, at least not to the extent that Sarah is . . . but Sarah made it so easy for me.”

Armstrong forgot at times to describe things in detail for Sullivan to understand. When that

nation

her vision

Peering on the inside

Sarah Sullivan's sweet disposition and beaming smile light up the page. Sullivan's drive was developed through a lifetime of believing she has a unique purpose. "Being around sighted people helped me be able to not feel bad about myself or think of myself as any different," Sullivan said.
photo/chris putman

happened, she would speak up and interrupt his teaching to remind him she could not see what he was talking about.

"We'd both laugh in front of the class, and I would quickly offer a more detailed description," Armstrong said. "I really think it made me a better teacher."

While Sullivan's jubilation and humor make her a quick comrade, she does admit her weakness is tardiness.

"I'm late a lot," Sullivan said with a smile belying the irritation in her voice. "Walking with my cane, I'm so much slower because there's so much more to pay attention to. With a guide, they take care of me."

Sullivan continues to inspire with her Christ-like words and actions.

"Sarah is a daily reminder to me and everyone else that attitude is everything in life," Armstrong said. "Happiness is a temporary thing defined by present circumstances; joy is so much deeper and comes from knowing Christ and allowing His presence to pervade our lives. Sarah is a living testament to that truth." ● story/elisabeth knier





dr. ralph fagin
photo/mark moore

fagins' flight

An integral part of the ORU administration retired. After 40 years, Provost Dr. Ralph Fagin stepped down to pursue his travel plans with wife Darlene. He has served as a sociology professor, chief academic officer, College of Arts & Sciences dean and interim president. He has stood by the university through a financially unstable time and then left with the organization debt free and in

good academic shape. Fagin hopes to remain active on the campus in a voluntary capacity.



wall of sacrifice
photo/mark moore

honor, respect and merit

The Wall of Sacrifice was introduced to the ORU community in honor of those who passed away in the act of ministry service. The commemoration is located behind the Praying Hands. The wall was established after the death of four ORU alumni in May 2012. Names of alumni and students can be submitted to the alumni association for review for placement. The recommendation form can be found at

http://www.oru.edu/alumni_and_friends/alumni/wallofsacrifice/nominate.php.



client pitch
photo/chris putman

national accolades

Working with nonprofit clients under the guiding hand of a professor not only allows students to try their skill in an agency setting, but it also provides an opportunity for students to test their work against their peers nationwide. Junior Yelena Radchuck served as

the agency's art director, entered her creative work in the PRSSA competition and placed number one in the nation. That national placement earned her an award as well as a networking session with a prestigious Fleishman-Hillard advertising executive.

sewing good seed

Dafne Basave keeps students in stitches

Surrounded by reams of colorful fabrics is where ORU alumnus Dafne Basave is most at home. Her dark curls and explosive enthusiasm for life make her as captivating as the brilliant costumes she creates. Basave's sewing shop in Howard Auditorium is a little hole in the wall consumed by vintage costumes and hundreds of spools of thread. Here, Basave brings storybook characters to life.

Born in the cultural center of Guadalajara, Mexico, Basave began her journey in the arts, first as a graphics design major in Mexico. Soon thereafter her family moved to Houston.

Because there wasn't much theater in Mexico, she jumped at the chance to take acting classes stateside. Her vision expanded as she began studying the industry and the culture that encompassed it. That is what brought her to Oral Roberts University to graduate in 2007 as a drama, television and film major. With an initial passion for costumes, a door flew open to work at the Houston Opera. It was after working for the Opera that God enlarged her vision. After a season there, Basave felt compelled to drive to her alma mater. She presented her resume knowing a position was not open but thought she'd simply plant a seed. Months later she received a phone call inquiring if she was interested in a newly-created position. Shortly after, Basave was hired as an assistant professor of theater and started teaching the craft she loves.

"I already had a big plan when I was [a student] at ORU," she said, watching her dream unfold in unexpected ways. "Your plan might be big, but God's plan is always bigger. It's beyond your imagination."

Basave is given the opportunity to work with aspiring actors and actresses, perhaps the next Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn. On a daily basis, she instills passion coupled with trained technique.

"The most rewarding part of my job is literally seeing the faces of students," she said. "As a teacher you know that they are learning, that they are getting what you're trying to convey."

Each stitch is a unique and intricate part of each costume. Although late nights and long hours are an unavoidable aspect of theater, Basave relies on God for the guidance and strength needed to guide her students.

"Dafne has a huge heart and is a hard worker," longtime friend and costume coordinator for the Houston Grand Opera Esmeralda DeLeón

said. “She always puts first her relationship with God. I have known her for several years and never seen her lose her faith in God and people.”

Basave’s dynamic personality and larger than life animated humor contrasts with her petite stature. Her dark darting eyes are able to look at a piece of cloth and see the potential of a gown worthy of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.

“I know that God is using me to break those walls, and that to me is the most successful and rewarding part,” she said. “I know that I, as a teacher, am not just challenging their mind but also their spirit. I would love for students to say that I enlarged their vision.”

Basave instructs theater students, but more importantly, her electric spirit strives to pour into the lives of future actresses, actors, singers and dancers. Her commitment to integrating God and theater is evident. Basave hopes to have a far-reaching effect on the lives of her students.

“Dafne is one of the most caring and friendly professors that I have ever had,” sophomore Theater Arts major Darlene Drozdowski said. “When I was thinking of changing my major, she gave me great advice, prayed with me and reassured me that God had a plan.”

Basave looks forward to increasing her knowledge of set scenery and directing. Coupled with her love for the arts, passion for the stage and entrancing personality, Basave is sure to receive a standing ovation for her future successes. ● story/francesca lucido

Assistant Professor Dafne Basave is nothing short of a true star. Her gleaming dark eyes and brightly colored clothing are worthy of nothing short of a Hollywood stage. photo/mark moore



dr. wendy shirk
photo/mark moore

shirk receives a promotion

Answering a higher call, College of Arts and Cultural Studies Dean Wendy Shirk will leave the university in June to shift her priorities. With a heart for missions work, she must let go of ORU to open her arms wide to embrace the call to serve the people of Tanzania. As an ORU graduate, communication arts and graduate business departments faculty member and founder of a consulting business, Shirk is moving forward to her most prestigious position yet, serving God in a greater way.



debate team
photo/julianne gonzelez

more than just banter

ORU’s Debate Squad won 16 awards in the IPDA tournament competing against Missouri, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Arkansas colleges. Only two years in, the squad was able to boast of placing first in overall sweepstakes and second in debate sweepstakes. Angela Dance was named Silver Medalist in Novice IDPA Individual Parliamentary Debate and Rosina Albanese placed first as Top Novice Speaker in NPDA as well as the National NPDA Champion in Novice IDPA. ● info boxes/francesca lucido

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picnic
photo/mark moore

ticket time

The College of Arts and Cultural Studies allows students to showcase their acting and performing skills. ORU Theater produced several plays including “Picnic” by William Inge, “Seagull” by Anton Chekhov, “Hello, Dolly!” by Jerry Herman and “The Great Cross-Country Race” adapted by Alan Broadhurst. The colorful and entertaining dramas captivated the audience’s attention and whisked them away to another time and place. Performances ranged from lighthearted and upbeat to intense allegorical pieces.



enter in
photo/rachel bruce johnson

grace and lace

Student dancers produced three showcase ensembles: “Enter-In,” “Along the Path” and “Spring Concert.” The performances showcased contemporary dance with influences derived from ballet, modern dance and hip-hop. Dancers sought to

blend both faith and art. The audience was moved emotionally by the performances when they saw the artists’ light on a darkened stage. A dance minor is now offered to incoming students and offers a \$500-\$2000 Dance Talent Award Scholarship for students who complete the dance audition and are accepted.

This year has held stability and growth for our department. We are so healthy, we now have space and staffing needs. What wonderful problems to face.

- Laura Holland,
Department Chair



photo/courtesy ORU photo services