

SUMMER 2003

Excellence

FOR ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

It's A Small World

Jean Caceres-Gonzalez (83) focuses on ministry in her own backyard.

(See story on page 12.)



ORU: Affecting the Entire Nation

As alumni, we appreciate the uniqueness of this university. It is an institution of academic and spiritual excellence. It instills in students a preparation for their professional vocation as well as a sense of destiny in that profession — of hearing God's voice and then impacting their corner of the world.

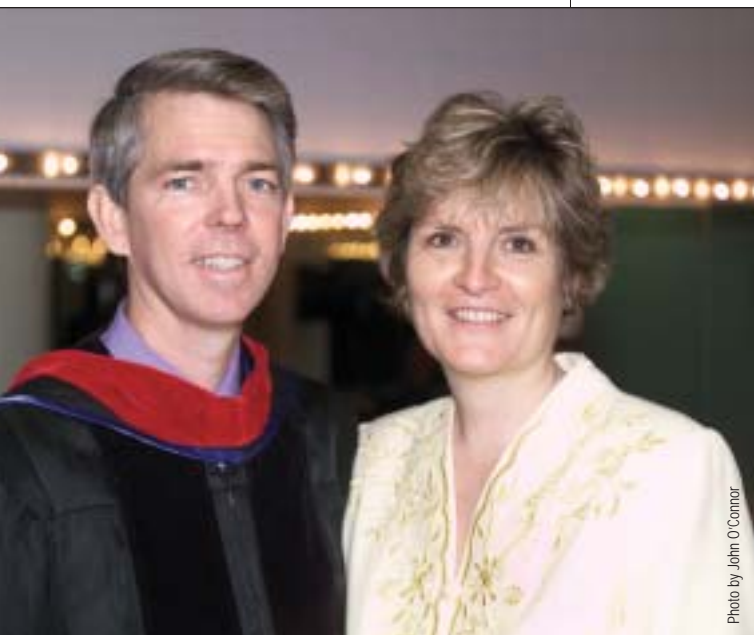


Photo by John O'Connor

David and Cheryl Barton prepare for the big moment: David's receipt of a Distinguished Service Award at Commencement.

In our communications we often point out examples of distinguished members of the ORU family (faculty, staff, alumni, or students) who have had a significant impact in their field. Often overlooked are the examples of those not yet established enough to attract attention and thus less known but who still have had a substantial effect. To use a historical analogy, while nearly all recognize the picture

of George Washington standing in the boat crossing the Delaware, few can name any of the soldiers in the boat around him. Yet Washington could not have accomplished what he did without them; they were indispensable to his successful efforts, and today we are all blessed because of the contributions of these nameless individuals.

There are numerous examples of those from the ORU family who row the boat of a famous individual but rarely receive recognition. In fact, during last year's elections several ORU undergraduates helped change the course of the nation. As you recall, the Senate changed hands: ten new freshman U.S. senators were elected (eight of whom were pro-life, pro-family, and pro-faith) and thus barely shifted the balance of power in the

Senate (a mere one-vote majority). The resulting positive effect upon our lives and families is already being felt and is substantial. For example, the Senate just banned partial-birth abortions, and the president will sign this law, thus ending a barbaric procedure that had been fought unsuccessfully for over a decade. Many other measures equally important to our families and culture are now moving through the Senate, yet this progress might not have occurred had it not been for 120 ORU students.

Last election, a godly U.S. senator was up for re-election; polls showed that he was behind and would likely lose. Had he lost, that one-vote difference could have kept the Senate in different hands and pro-family measures would still be bottled up, as they were in recent years. So what enabled that senator to achieve a surprise victory?

According to the governor of that state, the 120 ORU students who drove from Tulsa and spent the final week of the campaign working on his behalf — getting his message out to voters of faith — “made the difference.” Much of the nation applauds what the U.S. Senate has done; however, few know or appreciate the fact that it was ORU students who were such a key part of blessing the entire nation.

While this account highlights an ORU contribution in the political arena, it could have come from any other field — military, business, media, medicine, education, ministry, athletics, law, etc. While we often don't hear accounts of our unheralded heroes, rest assured that the distinct message impressed upon the mind of every student at ORU is having an impact on the nation — and even the world!

David Barton (76)
Chairman, Alumni Board of Directors

P. S. — If you have reports about members of the ORU family impacting their culture, communities, or professions, please let us know so that we can share those encouraging reports with others.



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Excellence Magazine Mission Statement

The purpose of *Excellence* magazine is threefold: to make alumni aware of what their former classmates are doing, to tell alumni what is happening today on the Oral Roberts University campus, and to share the good news about alumni accomplishments with faculty, staff, and friends of the University. *Excellence* magazine is proof positive that the mission of ORU is being carried out on a daily basis all over the globe — "in every person's world."

On the cover: Jean Caceres-Gonzalez with two His House children.
Photo by Giovanni Laudicina.

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We're About to Soar

What a year it's been! A year of trusting in the Lord, and pursuing holiness. In fact, this entire school year has been a call to wholeness and holiness. And what a great year it has been.

We recently commissioned 760 graduates. That's 760 new alumni to add to the ranks of the Alumni Association.

In this past graduation, we have also seen the victory of people like Deborah Singleton, who received this year's "Overcomer" award. Deborah was bounced through a number of abusive foster homes, a single mother at the age of 16, never finished high school, married and divorced, but there was a Savior at the end of her rope.

Deborah was following the dream of becoming a nurse. Thanks to her faith found in her teens, she persevered through her GED, community college, and, in a leap of faith, rented a U-haul and headed to ORU. It has not been easy. She has been homeless twice since coming to Tulsa. But with the support of the faculty and fellow students and the power of God, Deborah graduated and will make a mighty impact on the nursing profession.

This summer, I am looking forward to ORU being freed from the bondage of debt. I have a holy hatred of debt and, before July is over, the Lord willing, we should be rid of all of it with the sale of CityPlex Towers.

I believe that this opportunity to sell CityPlex is the right one. In Isaiah 40:31 it says, "They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they

shall walk and not faint." We have been patient with this process and I believe God is ready for ORU to mount up with wings like GOLDEN Eagles.

When this sale is done, we will be like the Jews coming out of the wilderness. We will be primed with the anointing of the Holy Spirit and ready to enter the Promised Land! Getting out of debt will allow us to start the new fiscal year, which begins Aug. 1, with a clean slate and focus 100 percent on our mission and calling.

dropping their standards, we are raising ours.

I want to urge all alumni to find a way to get involved with the university. Your help is needed now more than ever. Your prayers, gifts, service, and your financial partnership with us are invaluable. Financially speaking, even without the debt, we need to raise at least \$1 million per month (above what comes in from tuition) to meet the needs of our students.

God is moving on many fronts, and



At the spring regents meeting, President Roberts spoke with Bishop Michael Reid of Peniel College of Higher Education, an ORU affiliate site in Essex, England.

I also know this is a dangerous time. We must be very cautious and make sure not to stray from God and His purposes. We must stay true to our founding principles.

I have been entrusted with the great responsibility of presiding over ORU. I want nothing but the best and holiest opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff. While other universities are

I want ORU to be right in the middle of His kingdom-building through the next year and for many years to come. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Richard Roberts

Richard L. Roberts
President and CEO



Last Step, First Step

New grads end one journey, begin another

Photos by Shari Bjelke, Dorothea Heit, John O'Connor, and Don Wilson (77)

If a thousand-mile journey begins with the first step, it also ends with a last step. This year, on May 3, 760 men and women marched their last steps as ORU students across the Mabee Center stage . . . and took their first steps as proud 2003 graduates.

Like the 35 Commencement ceremonies before it, the 2003 version had tears, laughter, songs, praise and worship, friends, family, and the unmistakable presence of the Holy Spirit.

"This is a miracle day," President Richard Roberts told the 760 graduates receiving bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. "But I promise you, the best is yet to come. You are to be witnesses of the power and love of Jesus Christ in every arena of life . . . Be faithful to God, and He will be faithful to you."

Keynote speaker Marilyn Hickey, chairman of the ORU Board of Regents, based her address on I Kings 20 and the story of Joseph, recounting

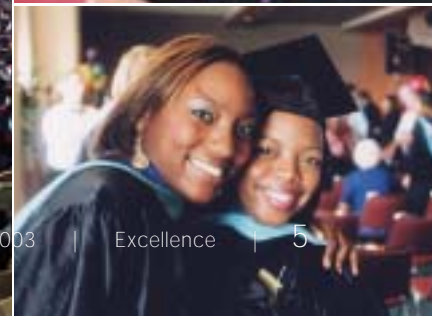
how he stayed faithful to God through many "ups and downs" of life. "God is the God of the hills and the valleys," she told graduates. "Believe me, you're going to make mistakes, you're going to have valleys — and God will be with you when you do it right and help you when you do it wrong. Isn't Jesus good? When you blow it, He's still there."

David Barton, a 1976 graduate of ORU, received the Distinguished Service Award for his work as founder and president of WallBuilders, a national pro-family organization. Honorary doctorates were given to Memphis pastor James Netters, Peniel College founder Dr. Michael Reid, and Patricia Salem White, a devoted "prayer warrior" (and First Lady Lindsay Roberts' mother) who was cured of cancer after reading a book by Oral Roberts in the 1950s. "If you don't think you are significant when you go on your knees in front of the Father, you're wrong," she said, holding back tears.

Proud parents, grandparents, and other family members filled the stadium to cheer on the graduates as they stepped forward to receive diploma covers — a promise of degrees to come — and Bibles that were personally signed by President Roberts and handed out by ORU Alumni Association members.

"We're exuberant!" Willie McCoy, grandmother of graduate William Maurice Coleman (Media Communications), said. "It's just wonderful to be here today . . . He's loved being here at ORU. When he first came to visit, he just knew that this was where he wanted to go."

Below, left to right: Marilyn Hickey was the keynote speaker; Graduation ceremony in Mabee Center; Jamie Ausdemore with parents Jan (79-MBA) and Barbara; Rochelle Ferguson and Patrina Lewis were two happy School of Education grads-to-be at their hooding ceremony.





Pete Soden joined his wife, mother, and two younger children to see daughter Valerie Soden (Spanish and Liberal Arts) walk across the stage. "We just thank God that she came here," he said. "The Holy Spirit led her to Oral Roberts University."

Nine members of graduate Roahn Kirk Hylton's family filled the stands to see him receive his degree in Psychology. "When I was growing up, I wish there was ORU!" mother Shirley Hylton said. "I've seen Roahn mature so much. Because of Oral Roberts University, he's become a better person." ■

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Clockwise from bottom left: Terry Law (69) with son Jason; The graduation wave; Yoo Min Kin (center) completed his D.Min. this year; All in the family: The Brumits now have three ORU alumni in the family: Tim (73), Esther (A), and Heather (03). Heidi begins her sophomore year at ORU this fall. Also pictured is son Matthew; Aishia Danos and family celebrated at her hooding ceremony; Dr. Marilyn Carver has retired after teaching voice at ORU for 22 years.

2003 Graduates Speak Out!

What will you miss about Oral Roberts University?

"Probably my friends and the camaraderie we shared, just hanging out. There are lots of other things, too, of course. ORU just fit me as a student and a person of faith. I wasn't a good student in high school, but today I'm graduating cum laude. That's a testimony to God."

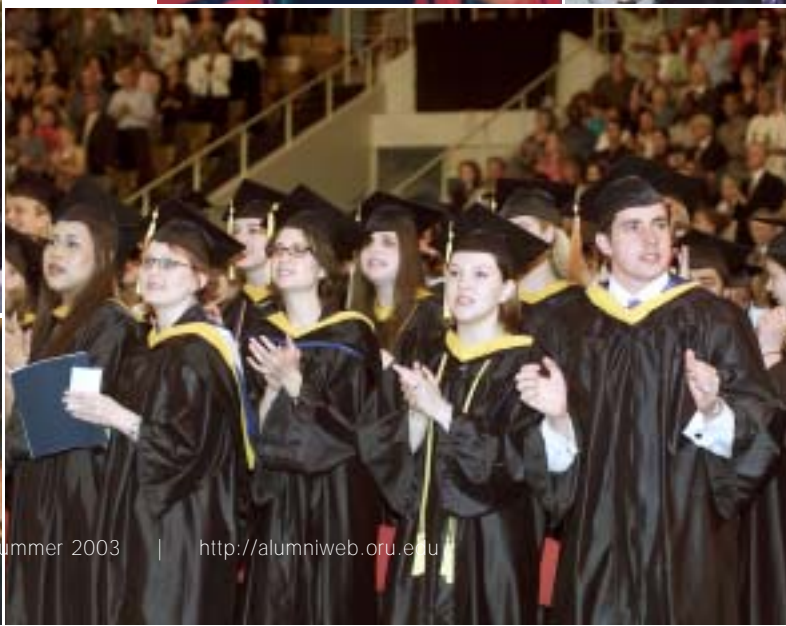
James Casey, B.S., Business Management

"I was a pioneer member of the Rock the House dance team, so I'm going to miss the fun and fellowship at the games."

Wanda Williams, B.S., Biology

"I will still be here [at ORU] because I work in the Adult Learning Service Center, but I'll miss the time and freedom I had as a student to talk with professors. They were always there, willing to help and listen."

Melissa Naga, B.A., International Business and Spanish





Where Do You Think You're Going?

Join Excellence as we follow four newly minted ORU alumni — students who graduated in May of 2003 — during their first year after college. What will life be like for them in "the real world"? What challenges will they face?

What triumphs will they experience? And perhaps most importantly, will they end up where they think they will?

In this issue, meet Richard Dancer, Valerie Hawkins, Wesley Pebsworth, and Jessica Allen (who has written so many articles for *Excellence* this past year) and find out where they *think* they're going. (Keep your eyes out for future issues of *Excellence* to find out if they were right!)



Richard Dancer

Hometown: Midland/Odessa, TX

Major: Public Relations and Advertising

Post-graduation plans: "Go back to San Antonio and try to work with my church."



Valerie Hawkins

Hometown: Houston, TX

Major: Biology

Post-graduation plans: "I'm going to go back home and I'm going to grad school in the fall."



Jessica Allen

Hometown: Wheaton, IL

Major: Print Journalism

Post-graduation plans: "Take a breather for a few weeks, then look for a job! In a year, I want to go to grad school at the NYU School of Journalism and get a master's in critical cultural reporting."



Wesley Pebsworth

Hometown: Boswell, OK

Major: Organizational/Interpersonal Communications

Post-graduation plans: "Right now I just want to learn Spanish — possibly go to Mexico, then to grad school to study linguistics."

Counter clockwise from upper left: Kimberly Busch with parents Chris (73) and Linda (74); Dr. David Robbins attends his last Commencement before retiring; Alyson (Hall) Steiner (left) and friend; Onward, Christian graduates; Jill Melissa Wallace's family came from Scotland to see her graduate with a B.S. in art; David (78) and Becky (78) Grothe congratulate David King, who married their daughter, Christine (03), one week after graduation; Joya Korstad Horvath and her proud dad, biology professor Dr. John Korstad.





Great Expectations

By David Collins • Photos by Jared Buswell

A second-year Fellow chronicles the ups and downs of the two-year-old honors program's first year.

I set foot on campus in August 2001, sure of what my name was, that I was a Christian, that I was a part of the new Oral Roberts University honors program, and that I was to live on the honors wing in room 206, but I was completely unsure of what God had in store for me here and for the rest of my life. I knew that I had come from an academically rigorous high school, but I was unsure of what the honors experience would be on the collegiate level. I was one of eighteen students called a "Fellow" in the honors program, and while it was unclear what that meant, it felt good to have that certainty in the midst of so much uncertainty.

As with anything new in our lives, both faculty and students had expectations that were not immediately realized, but we all have come a long way working together making positive changes. In the fall, the anticipation of each honors class being the inaugural run was tangible in many cases. Some classes were executed without problems and others started out rough before smoothing out. My honors section of Oral Communication proved to be more fulfilling than I had hoped. Mrs. Carole Lewandowski's expectations, engagement, and enthusiasm elicited greater quality of work from her students. Jamie Curtis recalls, "The individual attention Mrs.



Honors student as action figure: Jared Buswell (left) and Tim Yarbrough determined the depth of field, wind speed, and angle of . . . oh, never mind.

Lewandowski was able to give us really motivated us to improve."

The Fellows had a special seminar together, titled "Artistic Expression," that studied the change in worldview throughout history as shown through art and literature. Each semester up through our junior year, we will have a different dual disciplinary seminar to replace a specific general education course. The appeal of the seminars was a large part of why many of the fellows joined the honors program. Interacting with the professors quickly revealed, however, that we were not what they expected. According to Sarah Seitz, "I think that the professors were expecting an intellectual group, all wearing glasses and plaid skirts, and they got a gifted, artistic group, wearing everything from arms full of bracelets to designer fashions." Adam Willard recounts, "I don't think they were prepared for the fact that our diversity and creativity isn't always funneled purely towards academics." The shared disappointment of both faculty and students having failed to meet the other's expectations made the start of



Joshua Atkinson, Kayla Cargile, Joy Thrall, and David Collins put their heads together for a game of Cranium.

the semester rocky . . . until both groups adapted their mindsets and worked together in the class.

Despite a turbulent beginning for some, the year was filled with wonderful memories. Each Fellow received a Compaq Presario laptop to use and keep upon graduating from the program. Everyone in the honors program attended a luncheon with President Richard Roberts where he exhorted us in our studies and lives to continue to be excellent. Social activities like the Christmas party and spring picnic helped foster a real sense of family among the members of the program.

Nowhere was the sense of family created more than on the honors wings. These wings became a haven where being smart did not define who we were as individuals. The uniqueness of individuals and close bonds between them characterized the wings. The men's floor was a place where the Holy Spirit moved and sounds of keyboards, saxophones, guitars, and voices in worship were common.

Weekly hall meetings were times of unity as brothers worshipping and



Jami Harris helps clean a house at a Community Outreach event.

seeking the Lord. Living on the honors wing also meant nights of swing dancing, intramural sports, trips to IHOP, and lots of late-night pizza orders, studying, and talking. Elisabeth Pederson says the difference for the girls on the honors wing was “the focus on why God has brought us to ORU, ultimately for an education which we can use as practical worship to God in our day-to-day lives.”

With a new and growing program, Dr. John Korstad, the program director, asked me to head a student committee to provide a communications channel between the faculty and students. In April 2002, some members of the committee attended the Great Plains Honors Convention in Ft. Worth, Tex. At this regional convention we saw possibilities and specific things we could do to develop a great honors program. By the end of the second semester, having officially created the Honors Student Council, with me



Joshua Atkinson is packed for the retreat.

as the president, we had begun to formulate a vision of what the honors program could be and began to plan how to turn its potential into reality as we develop and mature.

I am now about to begin my junior year. My name hasn't changed, my room number has, and I still have no idea what lies ahead for me in my future. I know that my involvement in the honors program now will leave a mark on this university, on me, and on every student involved for years to come. I know that God is in control and this program will continue to become better than it is. It feels good to have that certainty in the midst of so much uncertainty. ■



Roommates Todd Asper (chaplain) and Steve Beresh bond with the bunny at a water park.



A Lasting Image of Hope

On April 26, an unusually still night, a small group of art lovers gathered outside an Oklahoma City warehouse to celebrate the dedication of a unique creation, known as "Allegories of Redemption," and to mark the end of a long journey.

"Many hours, many prayers, and a whole lot of work went into the mural that you see behind me," said Dr. JD McKean, the man who commissioned the 18-panel, 150-foot-long mural in the wake of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. "How this came to be is a long, long story."

In short, Dr. McKean, a friend of ORU, was discussing some projects in the mid-1990s with President Richard Roberts. "I told him I had a building in downtown Oklahoma City, across from the City-County Jail, and I won-

dered if the art department would be interested in developing something for these panels. That was like saying 'Sic 'em' to a dog."

"The original plan," said Roberts, picking up the story, "was to have the students paint the mural directly on the building." When that was deemed unworkable, "We hastily remodeled an ORU carpentry shop. Under the supervision of art professor Lee Shortridge, the ORU team began to plan its work."

The classically trained Shortridge designed the mural. Beginning in 1996 and assisted by Seth Jensen (98), Jason Graham (01), Chad Shelton (01), Rachel Loeffler (1996-97), and many other art students and volunteers, he began a process that included sketching the figures and recruiting models. The mural includes 27 human figures, representing all races. It tells the story of hope, struggle, rebirth, and the nobility of man.

Special easels had to be built to hold the 11' x 8.5' concrete panels, each of which weighs about 850 pounds. The

panels were painted at ORU and taken to Oklahoma City for mounting. Industrial paint coating was selected for its durability, since the mural is exposed to the elements.

Many of the models were ORU students, including Carl Winowiecki (98), who couldn't attend the dedication because he was serving in Iraq with the Chemical Corp. of the 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. Interviewed for the book that was produced to mark the completion of the mural, and reflecting on the "Allegories of Redemption" theme, Winowiecki said, "It is my prayer that all men may know freedom from bondage through the redemption that God gives us through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ."

Other ORU models included Daniel Olorunda (99), Jeremy Deemy (99), Kathryn Mauromoustakos (85), Theresa Soefje (00), Forrest Lee Horn (97), Stuart Bents (91), and Angela Fairfield (1997-99).

Photo by Ted West/Digital West Photography



Shortridge maintained a full-time teaching schedule while working “nights, weekends, summers, and all my breaks from 1996 to 2001,” he said. He donated more than 2,500 hours of labor to a project that involved using “experimental industrial materials that have never been used together before.” By the time the mural was completed in 2001, Shortridge could confirm that “this mural truly blazes a new trail into uncharted artistic waters.

“This work,” he said, “expresses a monumental spirit of hope that will continue to inspire and uplift the public of Oklahoma City and beyond.”

The mural is located one block east of Classen Boulevard at 853 Robert S. Kerr Avenue. ■



Shortridge (on ladder) and his assistants spent countless hours on the mural.

How the **RED WING** Got Its Name

(You only think you know)

Wing names, as recently reported in *Excellence* (“Name That Floor,” spring 2003), can run the gamut from serious to silly, meaningful to just plain weird. After reading the article, Renee Gotcher (94), a freshman on Susie 2 in 1990, wanted to give her fellow ORU alumni and students the full story on how Red became . . . well, Red . . . 13 years ago.

“We wanted something with a designer flair like Gucci, which is the wing [our RA] Michelle [Baumruk] came from, and at the time, Red was the name of a trendy new perfume made by Giorgio. But we also wanted a spiritual significance, so ‘bought by the blood,’ which was our motto, matched a then-trendy name.”

Gotcher, today an editor at *InfoWorld*, a technology industry newsweekly, was surprised to discover that Red is still around. “Funny how something you were involved with so long ago, without really thinking too much about it at the time, can have a lasting impact,” she said.



Above: The Red wing's intramural football team poses before a game, sometime in the fall of 1990. Top row (L to R): RAA Kristi (Plewinski-93) Scarborough, Chaplain Jamie (last name unknown), Dorm Director Michelle Coates (92), Kendra (Bebb-94) Polefka, Renee (Beltran-94) Gotcher. Bottom row (L to R): RA Michelle (Baumruk-92) Franzen, Kia (Hundley-94) Hunt, and an unidentified student.

Mi casa es Su casa. My house is 'His House.'

By Jessica Hill and Laura B. Raphael



By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established;
and through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful
treasures. — Proverbs 24:3,4

Describing the mission of her Miami-based ministry, His House, as “snatching children from the enemy,” Jean Caceres-Gonzalez (83) understands the enemies too many innocent children must face: empty houses, drug-addicted parents, hungry bellies, and scared hearts.

His House, which Caceres-Gonzalez started in 1988, is a Christian shelter and home that cares for and heals the hearts of children through the power of God’s love. Since 1988, His House has served hundreds of Florida children, while Jean and her husband, Mario, have raised their own three: Jordan, 9, Julianne, 8, and James, 3.

A backyard mission

After studying Spanish, commercial art, and business at ORU and spending several years at a Miami-based Christian foreign language publishing company, Caceres-Gonzalez sensed God telling her, “It is time to develop your calling.”

“In my heart, I just knew that meant running a home for children — most likely in a foreign country,” Caceres-Gonzales says. A natural conclusion for the trilingual (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) Cuban-American with a love for other cultures.

But God had slightly different plans. He told her that her mission field would not be overseas, but in her own backyard. She was surprised at first but held strong to the calling. "Miami is a place where, sadly, God's voice is heard very small," she says. "I knew it was His will that I develop my mission here."

'Not just a good thing, a God thing'

Despite this knowledge, Caceres-Gonzalez still wanted confirmation from the Lord. "I wanted a black-and-white answer, no gray, no doubts whatsoever," she says. "I didn't want to do just a good thing; I wanted to do a *God* thing."

Earlier, when telling friends of her vision, they had suggested she call it "His House," a name that stuck in her mind. But it wasn't until a visit to South Carolina that Caceres-Gonzalez got the irrefutable answer — a literal black-and-white sign — from the Lord. While driving around, hopelessly lost, she spotted a billboard that said, "His House, a Christian Ministry."

"That was it!" she says. "That was the writing on the wall that I needed. We even took pictures!"

Soon after Caceres-Gonzalez started to build the ministry in earnest in 1988, unexpected blessings began to appear. In one instance, she needed an office desk. Spotting the perfect one outside of a house in a neighborhood known for its drug problems, she bravely knocked on the house's door and asked for the desk.

"Two big guys — most likely drug dealers — came out. Not only did they say yes, they carried the desk out to my truck!" she says, laughing.

Not long after the desk incident, Caceres-Gonzalez left her "day job" and devoted herself to His House full-time. Many people had already given her necessary supplies, but she still

needed a house. God provided, she says. A woman and her husband donated the use of a 2,300-square-foot building with five bathrooms — completely free for three years. After the building came more donations and volunteers.

One particular volunteer, a man named Mario who was inspired by His House's mission and intrigued by Jean's voice on the radio announcing an open house, came to help out . . . and ended up walking down the aisle, in 1993. "I call him my lifetime volunteer," Caceres-Gonzalez says of her husband. "Just as the Lord brought us a building, He also brought us together at exactly the right time."

From 12 to 72 children . . . and beyond

Even before His House opened, the need for a "safe place" for children in difficult situations — newborns born to drug-addicted women unable to care for them, abused children waiting for the courts to determine their futures, to name just two common situations — was apparent. "Before I even had the house, pastors were bringing babies whose mothers were in rehab," Caceres-Gonzalez says.

Licensed and contracted by Florida's Department of Children and Families as a children's home in 1993, His House moved into its new home — one of 60 buildings on a campus for developmentally disabled adults — three years later. Today, with 40 staff members and several more buildings, His House expects to soon have room for 76 children, up from 12 ten years ago. As the adult programs are phased out, they hope to eventually have all the buildings on the campus.

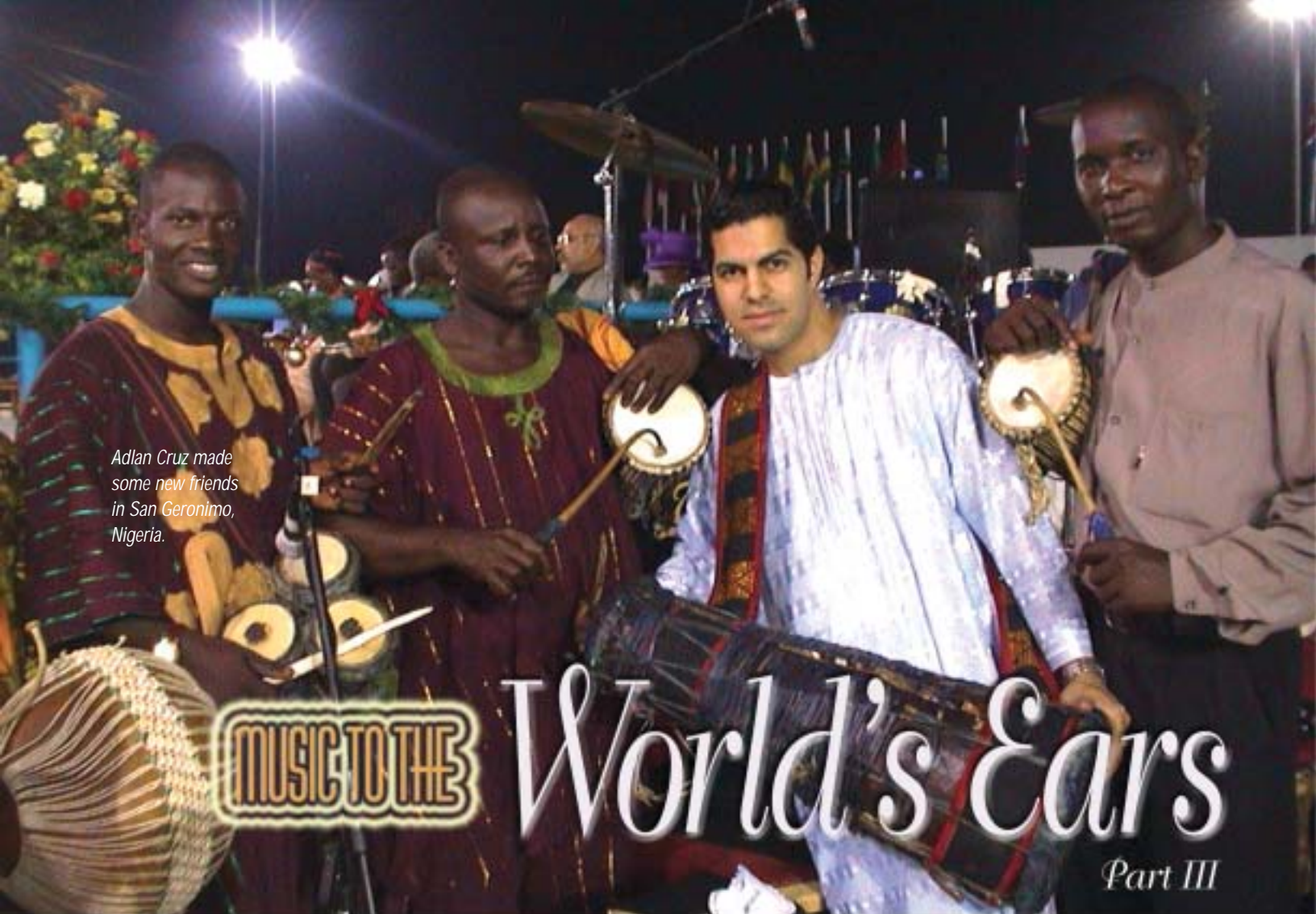
"It's so hard to turn children away," Caceres-Gonzalez says. "There is no waiting list for abandoned children; their needs are immediate. The more we grow, the more children we can snatch from the enemy in the name of the Lord. Then we help them find adoptive and foster homes. It's wonderful to see them (children and adoptive parents) fall in love with each other, and I still can't believe that I am a part of it all."

Although running His House is not an easy thing, Caceres-Gonzalez has a firm foundation in the Lord, one that was only strengthened 20-plus years ago at Oral Roberts University.

"You cannot be afraid in doing what we do," she says. "But I know that God brought me to ORU to establish me, to strengthen me so I could do His work through this ministry. I am so honored and blessed to be here, more so every day." ■

Did You Know?

- His House is the only agency of its kind in south Florida that accepts voluntary placement of babies and young children, and where parents in crisis choosing to accept these services do not relinquish legal rights to their children.
- His House is required to have one staff caregiver for every four children during waking hours. Seven workers and a house parent work to care for 12 children in one week.
- Donations of used clothing, furniture, and other items, as well as financial contributions, are always welcome at His House. For more information about how you can help, please call (305) 430-0085 or write to: His House, 20000 NW 47th Ave, Bldg. 6A, Opa Locka, FL 33055. Web site: www.hhch.org.



Adlan Cruz made some new friends in San Geronimo, Nigeria.

MUSIC TO THE World's Ears

Part III

"It's the last song we'll ever write for you . . ." Well, no, we expect we'll have lots more to say in the future about our music alumni. So much talent, and so few pages to give them their due. And so, without further ado . . . House lights down, curtain up . . . now taking center stage, Adlan Cruz, Mark Delavan, and Griff Moore . . .

Making the Ivories Coast

By Laura B. Raphael

When plain sunlight filters through a prism, its thousand rainbow colors are revealed — a beautiful transformation to behold.

When **Adlan Cruz** (92), internationally acclaimed classical pianist and Christian artist (see www.adlanlive.com), was a student at Oral Roberts University, he was that sunlight . . . and the university was the prism.

"In my case, coming to ORU was an experience I definitely went *through*," Cruz said in a recent phone interview from his native Puerto Rico during a rare rest between concert appearances. "I could not see what the Lord wanted from me at the time, but I knew that it would be revealed, and it was. The process [at ORU] was slow but firm, and once I graduated, I saw that I was meant to combine my music with ministry."

Not that Cruz didn't shine brightly in the secular world long before he came to Oral Roberts University. By the age of 21, he had enough musical accolades and experience to satisfy a musician three times his age.

Officially beginning his career as a concert pianist at the tender age of 12, Cruz quickly racked up prestigious prizes, guest appearances at numerous symphonies around the world, and albums — including his first, a compilation of religious music titled *Instrument of Praise*, at the age of 18.

"I really feel that God wanted me to have this secular experience so I could spread His word," he said. "My classical training opens a lot of doors . . . So many places aren't interested in Christian artists, but they will invite me because I am a concert pianist and have this classical background."

Today, Cruz has expanded his musical vita to include the writing and performing of a movie soundtrack as well as putting out several more

Cruz has also played around the world as a soloist and been part of larger crusades with Billy Graham, Ron Kenoly, and Nicky Cruz. Today he follows a whirlwind international touring schedule, traveling and performing in places like Johannesburg, South Africa and Budapest, Hungary, both as an individual performer and as part of crusades.

Career highlights include co-founding a bilingual school ("The School of Tomorrow") in Brazil, playing at the Royal Albert Hall in London (the British equivalent of Carnegie Hall), and meeting Oral and Evelyn Roberts at a Ron Kenoly crusade. During that event, which honored the Robertses for their worldwide ministry, Cruz told the audience about the impact ORU had made on his life, and then sang the ORU spirit song.

Above all, Cruz respects the gift of music that God has given him. So much so, in fact, that he is relentless in his dedication to musical excellence. "I

He often refers to Proverbs 18:16, in particular when talking with other students in music.

"I always tell students to work on their gifts, and it will help them in the future. Always give your best, no matter what. You never know when doors will open because of it."

A Life at the Opera

By Debbie (Titus-77) George

On the first day of rehearsals for his Metropolitan Opera debut, **Mark Delavan** (84) was on New York City's West 65th Street, heading for Lincoln Center. "Every step of the walk got heavier," he remembers of that January day two-and-a-half years ago. "The terror was palpable."

Who wouldn't be terrified at the thought of sharing a stage with Luciano Pavarotti? This man Delavan, however, is one who has been described as "a top-notch opera



At the New York City Opera, Delavan has played the title role in Verdi's *Falstaff*. He was Horace Tabor in Douglas Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe* and took the lead role in Verdi's *Rigoletto* and in Donizetti's *Roberto Devereux*. Photos by Carol Rosegg

acclaimed albums, including *Interludes* (recorded at the cutting-edge Kenneth Copeland studios), *Adlan Live*, *The Piano According to Adlan*, and an album for the Latin market produced with Ron Kenoly on the Integrity Music label.

know many people who are gifted but aren't talented. They have the gift, but they're not developing it. You must be organized, disciplined, and above all, pursue excellence — in doing so, you praise the Lord who has anointed you with the gift."

singer" by *Time* magazine, and as "quickly becoming one of the most important baritones on the American music scene" by the *Washington Post*.

Then again, this is also a man who seemed bent on self-destruction just 10 years ago.

It bothers the brutally honest Delavan that some Christians try to hide the temptations they've struggled to overcome. He freely owns up to having a sharp tongue, and admits his past problem with sexual immorality ended his first marriage.

"You open yourself to the world's punishment," he says about that time in his life. "I was making \$2,000 a year. I had debts, I wasn't eating right. I was living in the back room of an office building in Newark, in exchange for janitorial work. I didn't care about God or anything. I was ready to kill myself." Needless to say, his opera career — something he'd craved since 1984 — was also floundering, thanks to a well-earned reputation for being difficult to work with.

Fortunately, he had a lifeline: Mastermedia International of California, a nonprofit organization that offers, among other services, personal counseling on issues of faith. Delavan recalls one difficult phone call to his counselor to confess another indiscretion.

"I'm disappointed for you, not in you," the man said. "I believe God is faithful. I believe this can be a launching pad for the greatest victory of your life."

It was definitely a turning point. "I worked the spiritual program," Delavan says. "I had to get to know Jesus again. I had to get on my knees. I said, 'God, I've got to give everything up,' [and] I gave up opera. It was as though God said, 'I've been waiting a long time to hear you say that.'"

Newly humbled, Delavan determined to live up to the promise he'd shown in the 1980s, when he was selected for the San Francisco Opera's young artists training program, received an Adler Fellowship with the San Francisco Opera Center, and was a winner at the Luciano Pavarotti international voice competition.

In 1993, Delavan was invited to work with Jerome Hines at his Opera Music Theatre International in New Jersey. During a master class, he met director Frank Corsaro, who had seen a tape of Delavan's performance in the role of John the Baptist. He asked Delavan if he had ever sung at the New York City Opera. Putting aside his usual "smart aleck" persona, Delavan gave a simple "Yes" and thanked Corsaro for offering to speak to NYC Opera on his behalf. A few weeks later, Delavan's agent called to tell him that the company had offered him a year's worth of work. "They said, 'What happened to Mark? He's changed.' Not, 'Who's he studying with?'" Delavan said. "God orchestrated it."

As the career got back on track, so did his personal life. He met pianist Karen Linstedt in 1998. They were married in 1999 and have two sons, Matthew and David. Delavan's firstborn, Lucas, 13, inherited his father's love of sports and has also performed on stage with him.

The scrappy Delavan has compiled an impressive résumé, with leading roles in *Aida*, *Il Trovatore*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Carmen*, *Falstaff*, *La Traviata*, *Don Giovanni*, *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *Madama Butterfly*, and many more. He is becoming a fixture at NYC Opera and has graced stages in numerous cities, including Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Montreal — and, yes, even Tulsa (*Tosca*, 2000), where he made his professional debut in 1983. His European debut comes this year in Edinborough, Scotland.

When asked which stage he longs to play, Delavan surprises by saying, "the Grand Ole Opry." It turns out he's a big fan of jazz and country music. "I think there's some crossover stuff in my future," he muses.

At the moment, though, Delavan admits that "there's still a lot of ground to cover. There are a lot of companies that still don't know who I am." Is he top-rung? "Not yet," he allows. "Upper one-half percent. There are maybe two baritones ahead of me."

The man with two bachelor's degrees, an inquisitive mind, and a formidable stage presence continues to make peace with his past and to find more meaning in his faith, in part through his church, New York's Redeemer Presbyterian.

"I'm basically a sensitive guy," Delavan concludes. Of course, "no guy that's sensitive wants to admit it. But I'm coming to . . . accept that. It makes me an artist."

That sensitivity, combined with an undeniable talent, is also what's making this artist a star.

For a schedule of Delavan's upcoming performances, go to alumniweb.oru.edu.

In the King's Service

By Laura B. Raphael

Griff Moore (78) is not interested in becoming a superstar.

"I just want to be a servant to the Lord and to use my gift of music in a humble spirit," he explained recently from his home in Orlando, Fla. "In the eternal perspective, that's what really matters."

This fits his humble beginnings with music, and with God. Moore's musically-minded mother signed up her 8-year-old son for piano lessons; he quit only two weeks later. Then, at the age of 11, he found the Lord, who in turn ignited in him a new interest in the music he had earlier ignored.

Soon Moore was playing every Sunday at his church, which he continued until he came to Oral Roberts University. Once there, he used his musical talents at laymen's seminars, chapel services, and at University Village. He also worked as a tour guide at the Prayer Tower, an experience he calls "a lasting treasure."

After several years teaching in Brussels, Belgium, Moore returned to Florida to serve as an instrumentalist at the Carpenter's Home Church in Lakeland. He then added corporate events to his repertoire, opening for acts such as Celine Dion, Bill Cosby, and former president George Bush.

Today, Moore is a successful independent instrumentalist just as comfortable performing at a business convention (Microsoft, Hardee's, Ford, and the American Heart Association are just a few of his many famous clients) as in a church service. He sees his multifaceted career as an example of Chancellor Oral Roberts' charge to go into every person's world as a witness to the power and love of Jesus Christ.



Moore has his priorities in order. Photo by Michael Cairns

"It doesn't matter if the people I'm playing for are of different backgrounds, beliefs, or nationalities — or even know of my beliefs — because I know that my talents come from the Lord, and it glorifies Him when I use those talents," he said.

"The bottom line is that the spirit of God is with me when I play, and that flows into the audience and renews them as well as me, whether I'm playing hymns, light pop tunes, or patriotic songs."

He released his first solo album, *Remember Your Dreams*, in 1998, and is planning a second album with former PTL artist Shirley Balmer, with whom

he plays "4 Hands 1 Piano" arrangements — both playing on the same piano at the same time. (The first album can be ordered through e-mail at griffmoore@aol.com; the second is tentatively titled "4 Hands for Praise" and has not yet been recorded.)

Although it has been a quarter of a century since he was an ORU student, Moore still practices its lessons of whole-person education and discipline.

Spiritually, he uses his music to challenge and develop his faith. Physically, he works out at least five times a week and regularly follows a strict diet based on the books of Genesis and Leviticus. And mentally, he will soon finish a degree in computer network engineering.

"Someone asked me recently, 'When will you stop being a student?' and I answered, 'When will eternity begin?'" he laughed. "What I learned at ORU was the value of discipline and growth in all areas of my life — body, mind, and spirit. ORU taught me to always keep growing." ■

that's entertainment



How one alumnus helps consumers maneuver around the muck.



Photo by Mark Waters

It's Friday night. The long-awaited, certain-to-be-a-box-office-smash is playing every 30 minutes at the local Cineplex. Your oldest is begging to go 'cause "all" his friends will be there. Meanwhile, your daughter's been invited to a slumber party where some late-'90s romantic comedy is slated to be the big draw.

Waliszewski reviews everything but the popcorn.

then there's the fact that Junior's been raving about a hot new band his buddies like. And tonight you just want to kick back with your spouse and some popcorn and watch TV. But how can you be sure before you and your children take in that movie, program, or pop disc that your eyes, ears, and hearts won't be bombarded with messages that war against the values you've been teaching at home? Just where can you go for information you can trust before giving the green (or red) light?

Deciphering what's in bounds and what's out of bounds from a biblical perspective when it comes to entertainment is a daunting task. That's where Bob Waliszewski (78) steps in.

Waliszewski, who joined Focus on the Family nearly a dozen years ago, believes God has called him to help parents, youth pastors, ministers, and teens wade through the messages and muck of pop culture. He serves as the manager of Focus' Youth

Culture department, the team responsible for producing the monthly entertainment magazine, *Plugged In*. He also supervises the production of the very popular entertainment-review Web site, pluggedinmag.com. Perhaps you've heard his voice on your local Christian radio station as he chats about entertainment each week with Dr. Bill Maier on the ministry's Weekend broadcast. Or perhaps you've caught his 60-second movie minute on your local Christian music station.

but why a career analyzing entertainment?

"Because I know it affects teens and preteens *spiritually*," responds Waliszewski. He cites an example, quoting from a letter a father wrote: "My son is hooked on this degrading, offensive music. After 14 years of Christian schooling, church, and Sunday school, he is rejecting Jesus and Christianity — please get the word out before children fall for this God-insulting music."

However, not everyone thinks getting the word out is a good idea. Tom Morello, guitarist for the popular rock band Audioslave and the now-defunct liberal-activist group Rage Against the Machine, recently criticized Waliszewski, telling the *Chicago Tribune**, "But to shut off the world of art to [Focus constituents'] children because it even bumps up against these broadly drawn, forbidden topics seems to me a more dangerous way to raise kids than to allow them to see the world for what it is and to give them moral guidance." Still, even Morello manages praise: "I was expecting [the *Plugged In* magazine approach to music reviews] to be these kind of fire-and-brimstone condemnations of all things rock and rap. Instead, I found the

reviews much more thoughtful than the typical rock magazine review."

Despite the criticism, Waliszewski finds Morello's assessment encouraging. "I know there will always be people that misunderstand what we do and why we do it," Waliszewski says. "So when we're denounced, I want our critics to at least realize we're being fair and honest. If mainstream rock stars come to this conclusion, those within the church — our target audience — are equally likely to see our work as something that can help equip their families with well-balanced information to make wise media choices."

Mark Kemp, a former music editor of *Rolling Stone* and former VP of music editorial at MTV, e-mailed Waliszewski and said, "[I] was absolutely bowled over at the intelligent, open-minded yet very focused nature of your music reviews. You listen, hear, and ponder the records, which is something most reviewers — Christian or secular — fail to do on even the most basic levels." Waliszewski considers remarks like this, "from people who don't consider themselves religious," to be some of the most complimentary.

Media content was not always a concern for Waliszewski, however. "The

guys on my ORU wing playing *Dungeons & Dragons* will attest to this fact," he admits. "I was the guy with the worst of the worst playing on my turntable (yes, back in the days of vinyl!) — I didn't think Jesus even cared that much about this area of my life." He goes on to say it was a student in his youth group (he was a youth pastor for seven-plus years) that helped him see otherwise. "I know what it's like to love Jesus with all my heart and yet fail to understand the power of negative media," Waliszewski explains. "With my background, I realize how easy it is to miss the challenge of Proverbs 4:23 to above all things guard our hearts from the types of entertainment that glamorize things that Jesus came to save us from."

"When I was at ORU, all I knew was that I was supposed to take God's word to places where His word was heard dimly," explains Waliszewski. "Little did I know that place would be the church, challenging my brothers and sisters in Christ to honor God with their media choices." ■

**April 11, 2003 issue, by Steve Knopper.*

To request a membership to Plugged In, call Focus on the Family at 1-800-A-FAMILY. For online reviews, visit pluggedinmag.com. Bob's e-mail: waliszrs@fotf.org.



Bob and his wife, Leesa (McClure-79), have two children, Kelsey, 15, and Trevor, 12.

Photo by Beau Henderson

BUILDING BRIDGES IN A Fractured World

By Wayne Jacobsen (75) • Photos by Dr. Woody Norwood

This longtime pastor, writer, and Leadership Journal contributing editor explains how God is using him to mediate some of the most divisive issues of our day for public schools all over the United States.

My personal wake-up call came almost a decade ago during a particularly fractious meeting between Christian parents and local school officials. The parents were concerned about the possible use of a state test to identify Christian students who would then be denied access to state universities and to scholarships.

Their fears proved unfounded, but during the meeting, I was appalled as the parents interrupted, ridiculed, and mocked those who sought to help them. As the parent leaders stormed out of the meeting, they asked for my thoughts. "I guess we showed them!" one of them trumpeted.

"Showed them what?" I asked. I pulled out a pocket Bible and read them I Peter 3:15. "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. *But do this with gentleness and respect . . .*" I asked them if those public school officials felt they had been treated with gentleness and respect. To their credit, they realized how rude they had been and went back to apologize.

We all learned a valuable lesson that night. As followers of Jesus, our agenda can never be divorced from our

"The art of helping people
with divergent views
find ways to work together
without compromising their
deepest convictions."



Jacobsen was the featured speaker at this year's School of Education Homecoming seminar.

methods. If we alienate the audience God's asked us to touch, what good have we done? We can stand firm in our convictions without being obnoxious and rude.

That experience and others like it in my own district opened some incredible doors. Public school officials and educators who were weary of the angry

rhetoric of the so-called culture wars, and of wasting time and resources as advocacy groups fought for control of their districts, asked for my help. Through my organization, Bridge-Builders, I began helping people of faith and our public institutions find common ground.

Where's the Common Ground?

I realize the last 40 years have been difficult for those with conservative Christian values. The Judeo-Christian ethic used to be the common ground of basic morality in our society, until the Supreme Court ruled in a number of cases that using government institutions to force Christian values on others was a violation of the First Amendment. The ensuing transition launched a culture war as secular groups pushed for greater influence and conservative Christians tried to take back their culture for God.

Of course we'd all love to live in a society that mirrors our faith, requiring the same morality for all that we choose for ourselves. Historically, however, attempts by the state to enforce Christian beliefs have never proven fruitful — for the state *or* the church. Jesus' kingdom does not advance with a sword, but an invitation.

Roger Williams, the first governor of Rhode Island and a colonial leader, recognized this truth. Even though his worldview was in synch with 99 percent of the people in his community, he spoke against laws that required unbelievers to practice the dictates of his faith. He argued that using civil power to compel others to religious practice was “spiritual rape,” and it would never endear unbelievers to faith, but only alienate them from it.

He was the first to use the language of separating the power of the church and the state so that each person could act, in matters of faith and morality, in the liberty of his or her conscience. Our founders drew from his language as they wrote the Bill of Rights, and even though they couldn’t see applying those rights to anyone who was not a white, Anglo-Saxon, male, Protestant landowner, the power of their ideals has outlived their faulty application of them.

Bridging the Gap

Who wants government to choose their faith? By helping school districts and parents embrace this liberty of conscience, we will find enough common ground for us to work together for the common good, without compromising our deepest convictions. I speak from experience — as a Christian father whose children attended public schools, and as someone who has made numerous presentations on this subject at state and national education conferences.

The Supreme Court has ruled that public schools can no longer prefer Christianity over other religions, or over no religion. They have also ruled that schools cannot disparage or discriminate against the faith and values of students. In a genuine environment of religious neutrality there will be room enough for all. Unfortunately, many educators don’t understand how to apply these laws in a way that can disarm the controversy and provide a dis-

trict environment that is fair for all.

The training of BridgeBuilders helps educators identify five key components of a common ground environment:

1. School officials are responsible for protecting a common good larger than their own personal views.
2. Build an environment that seeks to be fair to all — respecting differences, not trumping them.
3. Educate students, not indoctrinate them into social, political, or religious views that undermine the values of parents.



Students and alumni crowded in to hear Jacobsen at Homecoming.

4. Cultivate an environment of mutual respect, which does not require us to agree with each other but to treat others as we want to be treated.
5. Resolve cultural conflicts by building broad-based consensus among all stakeholders in the issue.

Winning the Peace

When I build the common ground in a secular setting, I use current court interpretations of the First Amendment. When I do it for Christian audiences, I can build the same environment on the teachings and example of Jesus, who never compelled anyone to follow Him. By extending that same liberty to our fellow citizens we’ll be able to work with them in ways that preserve our convictions without alienating our audience.

Though secular educators are often

put off by the deceitful tactics, anger, and arrogance of some religious advocates, I find they are not indifferent to our concerns. One question posed by a teacher at one of my common ground trainings expresses it well: “I am an atheist and I teach science. Is there a way that I can be true to science’s answer for the origin of life and not undermine the faith of my students who believe in creation?” The answer is yes, but the question itself expresses the kind of respect that will allow us to find the common ground.

I regularly walk into deeply divided rooms of angry people ready to fight for their worldview and announce that we’ll be done when 90 percent of us agree on a policy. Once people realize that’s not my opening joke, they begin to discover how to respect their differences, not force their own way. I’ve never walked out of a room without overwhelming agreement and renewed respect for others.

Every day I’m amazed at how God makes himself known in fractured communities. I couldn’t begin to tell you the number of times I’ve walked out of common ground negotiations and been asked by attorneys, educators, parents, and even AIDS-infected, gay rights advocates about my personal faith and how God might touch them.

Building bridges of mutual respect in a conflicted world is a powerful way to go into every man’s world. As followers of the One who came not to be served, but to serve, how can we do anything else but look for ways to serve the culture rather than demanding it serve us? ■

Wayne Jacobsen, president of BridgeBuilders (<http://www.bridge-builders.org>) and director of Lifestream Ministries (<http://www.lifestream.org>), is a nationally recognized specialist in dealing with religious and cultural conflicts. His articles and books on spiritual intimacy and relational community include *The Naked Church*, *In My Father’s Vineyard*, and *He Loves Me*. His newest book, *Authentic Relationships: Discovering the Lost Art of One Anothering*, due out this summer, was co-written with his brother Clay (78). Wayne lives in Oxnard, Calif., with his wife of 28 years, Sara (Fought-75).



Lessons in Leadership

First, seize the moment . . .

By Jessica Allen (03)

They may not be superheroes — faster than a speeding bullet, stronger than a dozen mortal men, and able to leap tall buildings in a single bound — but Sara Grace Turner and Selah Davis are wonder women in their own right.

Like many ORU students Turner and Davis were heavily involved, balancing school, extracurricular activities, work, relationships, and a host of other obligations while still maintaining more than an ounce of sanity (and hopefully, more than an hour of sleep). But unlike many of their peers, these two young ladies have realized that life for them does not begin tomorrow, or next

week, or after graduation — it begins right now. Over the past four years both have applied this truth by utilizing every opportunity to take in, and by maximizing every opportunity to give back.

“A lot of my heart was, ‘Lord, let me be faithful with what you’ve given me and use it for your glory,’” Turner said of her senior-year resolution. “I felt like I’ve been given so much . . . how can I now give that back?”

Davis approached her final year with the same mentality. Last summer both she and Turner had the opportunity to intern with Drs. John Maxwell

and Tim Elmore (83) at EQUIP, an Atlanta-based organization founded by Maxwell that specializes in leadership training and development.

“As I poured myself into ORU, I found that it poured itself back into me,” Davis shared. “My desire was to take some of my own heart and passions and what I learned last summer, and bring it back to ORU.”

According to Turner, working for EQUIP “was more of a mentorship than an internship,” and while she and Davis entered their positions with a desire to be mentored, they concluded the experience with the desire to mentor others. Last fall each led women’s mentorship groups with the goal of helping other students, especially young women, understand who they are in Christ.

“I love spending time with people and talking to them,” Davis said. “I love above all to listen to people’s passions, and help them discover what they are.”

Passionate is one word that both Turner and Davis use to describe themselves. In fact, it was their passion to exhort others that inspired them to organize the Ignite Leadership Conference at the end of January. More than 550 students registered for the two-day event — the first student-organized, student-promoted leadership initiative of its kind.

“God just gave us this idea and it snowballed from there,” Davis said. “This whole thing was supernatural favor.”

Turner and Davis were overwhelmed by the positive response among students and administration.



"The outcome completely superseded our vision," Turner said. "Students kept coming up to me and sharing the dreams that were sparked and the passions that were stirred . . . When Selah and I were planning [Ignite], we said that if one person's life is touched and changed, it is worth all of this."

Shortly after Ignite ended, Turner and Davis began mentoring a group of students to carry the torch for next year's Ignite conference. They hope that it will be an even greater success. After graduating with a degree in business, Turner is spending the summer traveling, before returning to EQUIP in the fall as their project coordinator. Davis, who received her degree in public relations and advertising, intended to return home, and ultimately find a woman of God to mentor her for one year.

Turner and Davis agree that their time at ORU was invaluable in building their character. "I have been polished, sharpened, and clarified," Davis said. Her advice to other students is to see their time at ORU as time to grow. "Things in you will surface when you



Photo by Chris Dingess

Turner (left) and Davis on stage at Ignite.

invest in others. It's not that complicated. It's just a matter of plugging yourself in, and you'd be amazed to see what happens . . . When we live a life that is fully surrendered and yielded to God, it is a life where it doesn't make sense in our own words," she explained. "Step out now even if you don't understand and it doesn't make sense, and God will lead and guide you."

Turner also advises her peers to remember

Psalm 37:4, which she says has been the key to her success: *Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

"Maximize and seize every moment to pursue God with everything, and trust Him," Turner emphasized. "He will guide your steps."

She and Davis illustrate that following God and serving others is at the heart of true leadership. ■



Left: Davis and Turner are ready to take on the world. Photo by Ron London

Right: It's more than a conference; it's a candy bar! Photo by Chris Dingess

Hall of Fame Continues to Grow

On Feb. 22, ORU welcomed back many of its Athletics Hall of Fame members — the men and women who really had the “body” part of that spirit-mind-body philosophy all figured out during their days on campus in the 1960s, ‘70s, ‘80s, and ‘90s. It was a night when “Titans” and “Golden Eagles” became one. Most of all, it was a night to recognize and thank Mark Acres, Sheera Sirola, and Haywoode Workman for giving us all those other days and nights to remember. Oh, how they played . . .

‘An Incredible Journey’

By Debbie (Titus-77) George

“We’ve got Acres and Acres and Acres of talent...”

That was the catch phrase used to promote Titan basketball in the early 1980s, and it was certainly true. There was Dick, the head coach, who compiled a 47-34 career record after replacing Ken Hayes early in the 1982-83 season. There was Dick’s son Jeff, a forward who ranks seventh all-time among 1,000-point scorers.

And then, of course, there was Dick’s middle son, Mark (01), the 6’10” center and undisputed team leader (1981-85) who was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame on Feb. 22.

When Acres left ORU he was drafted by Dallas, but he played in Europe for two years before launching his NBA career . . . not with Dallas, but with the Boston Celtics, and with some legends named Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, and Dennis Johnson.

“I enjoyed Boston the most,” says Acres of his two seasons in Beantown. (He also spent three years with Orlando and a short time with Houston, Chicago, and Washington.) “That was really special; it was basketball at its finest. We just moved the ball and passed and beat people with execution.”

As a pro, however, Acres was hard pressed to repeat the success he’d achieved at the NCAA Division I level, when he led the Titans in scoring, rebounding, and blocked shots during his four years. (His blocked-shot record finally fell this spring, to

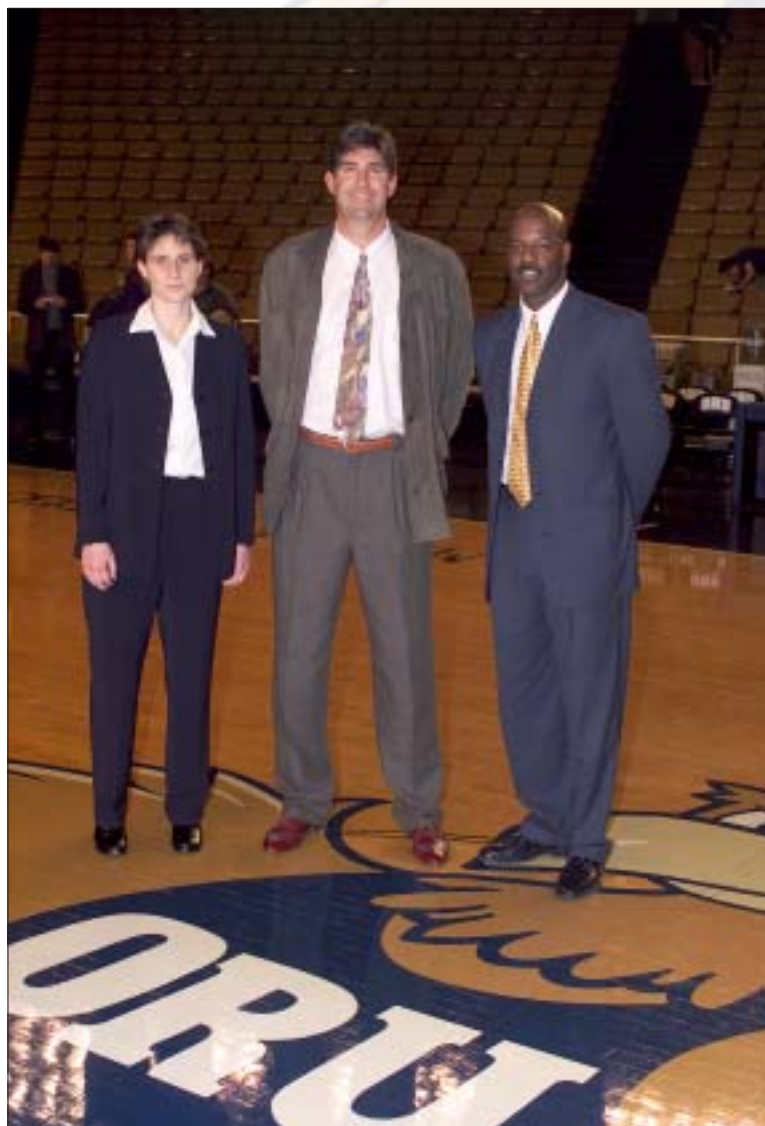


Photo by John O'Connor

The Hall of Fame’s Class of 2003: Sirola, Acres, and Workman.



Photo by John O'Connor

The entire Acres family — Matt, Mark, Sandi, Dick, and Jeff — returned for Mark's big night.

Kendrick Moore.) He is number four on the career list for points scored. The four-time All-American led ORU to its only Midwestern Collegiate Conference regular-season and tournament championships in 1984, and has the distinction of being one of a handful of ORU basketball players who can list a trip to the NCAA Tournament on their résumé; ORU's only other trip came in 1974.

Acres was named the MCC Player of the Year in 1984 and scored 28 points in what turned out to be a first-round 92-83 loss to Memphis State at the NCAA Tournament. He is the only member of ORU's 2,000 points/1,000 rebounds club, with 2,038/1,051.

Acres says he was surprised when he got the call about his Hall of Fame selection. "Any time you get honored for a job you did for four years, you

know that you weren't wasting your time completely," he says. "It's a tremendous honor." Coming back to Tulsa, he was also pleasantly surprised at the condition of the campus. "I have to say they've done a really nice job of keeping everything up, especially the gym."

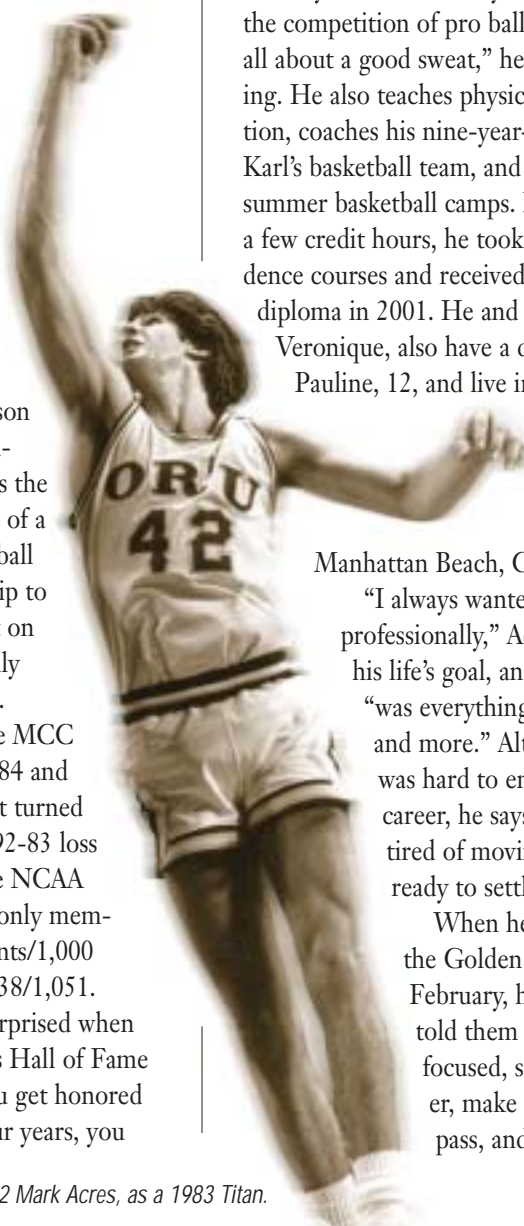
The years have been kind to Acres, too. He's just a few pounds over his playing weight and still plays once a week on a recreational team — with his younger brother Matt, who was a ball boy at ORU. He says he misses the competition of pro ball. "Now it's all about a good sweat," he says, smiling. He also teaches physical education, coaches his nine-year-old son Karl's basketball team, and conducts summer basketball camps. Lacking just a few credit hours, he took correspondence courses and received his ORU diploma in 2001. He and his wife, Veronique, also have a daughter, Pauline, 12, and live in

Manhattan Beach, Calif.

"I always wanted to play professionally," Acres says of his life's goal, and the NBA "was everything I expected and more." Although it was hard to end his career, he says he was tired of moving and ready to settle down.

When he met with the Golden Eagles in February, he says he told them to "stay focused, stay together, make the extra pass, and play hard.

#42 Mark Acres, as a 1983 Titan.



I told them, every time I walked in the gym, I thought I was going to win the game."

Reviewing the past twenty years, Acres allows that there are some things he would have done differently, "but nothing really drastic. I can't complain. Life's been pretty good. It's been an incredible journey, and it's good to come back here to kind of where it all started."

Basketball was Mark Acres' past. It's also his present, and appears to be his future as he teaches his son the trade. Destiny is destiny, and No. 42 is happy to accept that this is his. ■

Finding Middle Ground

By Elissa K. Harvill

One can see it in her eyes: Sheera Sirola (99) is decisive and determined. For the record-setting player and now head volleyball coach at ORU, volleyball is not just her game, it's her life's calling. In February, she joined two other ORU superstars as an inductee in the ORU Athletics Hall of Fame.



Sirola (left) shares the spotlight with Rhonda Penquite, ORU's first female All-American.

Photo by John O'Connor



A native Croatian, Sirola arrived at ORU in 1994 in the midst of Croatia's struggle for independence from Serbia. God, she says, brought her to Tulsa with the help of Tamara Lesic (99) and Ksenija Kulger (99), two Croatian friends and volleyball teammates. Wowing everyone with her 60-miles-per-hour jump serve, no one had ever seen anything like her. To this day, she is ORU's all-time leader in service aces. As a player, she led the Golden Eagles to the Elite Eight in the 1995 NCAA tournament.

So why volleyball? Sirola had a great coach in the sixth grade. He encouraged her and helped convince her that volleyball was her way to go. Encouragement was scarce in communist Croatia. Sirola says, "Where I come from you're on your own unless you have special connections. And at school, they don't care, you either pass or fail, and if you fail, you just keep trying by yourself until you pass. At ORU, the teachers work with you and want to see you succeed — they actually want to help if you are struggling and are interested in you and will offer tutors and all sorts of help. Academically, ORU is the greatest school ever."

Sirola says she "didn't speak a lick of English" when she came to ORU: "The first three months were very difficult; I wanted so badly to communicate, but I couldn't . . . and then after a few months it just started to flow out." Sirola's family is still in Croatia; her mother manages an accounting firm, and her father has a restaurant there. She has no family here in the United States but has made many lifelong friends. As for returning to Croatia, other than to visit family, she admits, "I've never wanted to go back!"

"I've grown spiritually since I've been here," Sirola shares. "I came to ORU as . . . nothing — as a *communist*. Going to classes [at ORU] and chapel changed me. I first decided that I wanted to be a Christian after my sophomore year." Sirola was only eligible to play volleyball for two years at ORU; after her playing career in 1995, she was offered an opportunity to play in California. "This guy called me to confirm my flights there, and I just hung up on him. My friends said, *'Why did you hang up on him?!'* and I said that God had me here for a purpose — to help the volleyball team and maybe become a coach. The guy called me back and I said 'No.'"

ORU has provided Sirola a place to realize her dream. As the new head coach, she says, "I want to bring the team where I've been, and even further than that." Her proudest moment as an assistant coach was "winning our first Mid-Continent Conference championship (in 1998) — we've won it every year since!"

Sirola has found God at ORU and is now living the dream she had as a sixth-grader. She says: "I know I'm in the right place; I'm right in the middle of God's will for me." ■

'Best Sport in America'

By Jessica Allen (03)

Everyone knows the statistics. Out of thousands of little boys who pick up a basketball with dreams of superstardom, only handfuls will actually make it to the draft. Fewer still will enjoy lengthy careers in the NBA.

Haywoode Workman was one of the fortunate few. In recognition of his achievements as a professional and on the Mabee Center court, he was inducted into ORU's Athletics Hall of Fame on Feb. 22.

Like most success stories, Workman's has a humble beginning. Perhaps that's why he's so well acquainted with a little thing called perseverance. As an only child raised in Charlotte, N.C., he likely spent countless hours on makeshift courts and in high school gymnasiums, wearing holes into his shoes and etching palm prints into his basketball. A self-



described “sports fanatic,” Workman achieved All-State status in high school for basketball, football, and track before zeroing in on basketball his first year of college at Winston-Salem State.

He transferred to ORU in 1986, played three seasons, and was drafted by the Atlanta Hawks in 1989. While at ORU Workman was sixth in scoring with 1,506 points, averaging 17.7 per game. He still holds the ORU record for steals with 250.

Some might say Workman was lucky . . . and if luck is nothing more than preparation meeting opportunity, they are right. Others, including Workman himself, recognize that he owes much of his success to divine favor.

“I grew up around the church, so I had a whole lot of church in me [when I came to ORU]. I believed in God. I think He had a lot to do with me being here,” Workman said. The son of

then-assistant coach Dave Prichard went to high school with Workman. Prichard told Workman about ORU and recruited the guard.

“I came to Oral Roberts with the intention of playing basketball and finishing school. My opportunities to be seen as a player were great. I appreciate this school for making me have responsibility. It ended up being the best thing for me,” Workman said. Although Workman left ORU nearly 35 hours shy of completing his telecommunications degree, he still plans to obtain his diploma.

After he was drafted, Workman played in the Continental Basketball Association for the Topeka Sizzlers before joining Atlanta. He went on to play for the Washington Bullets (1990-91), the Indiana Pacers (1993-98), the Milwaukee Bucks, and the Toronto Raptors (1998-2000). Workman also spent some time overseas playing for an Italian basketball league (1991-93).

“I’m an overachiever. I came from nothing, got to college, and ended up making it . . . not until senior year did I think I’d have a chance to make it to the NBA,” he said.

In addition to overcoming staggering odds, he overcame even more staggering injuries in the eight seasons he played in

the NBA, including a torn ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) in his knee during the 1996-97 season that almost sidelined him permanently. Workman was in his prime, having led the Indiana Pacers to the Eastern Conference Finals in 1994. According to Workman, his four years in Indiana were the highlight of his NBA career.

“[Indiana] is where everyone remembers me, and I succeeded as a player the most,” Workman said.

Although he played for several years after the injury, surgery could never restore Workman’s knee to its original condition.

Now 37, Workman has returned to the CBA as a referee, which has allowed him to remain involved with what he describes as “the best sport in America.” He is married with two sons (ages 2 and 3), and resides in Tampa, Fla.

“I appreciate the game a lot more,” Workman says of his officiating experience. He eventually hopes to be a referee for the NBA, though he would not turn down an opportunity to coach.

For Workman, his induction into the Hall of Fame was an unexpected surprise. “You think you’re overlooked and unappreciated,” he admitted. “Coming to Oral Roberts allowed me to get where I am. It was a stepping stone.

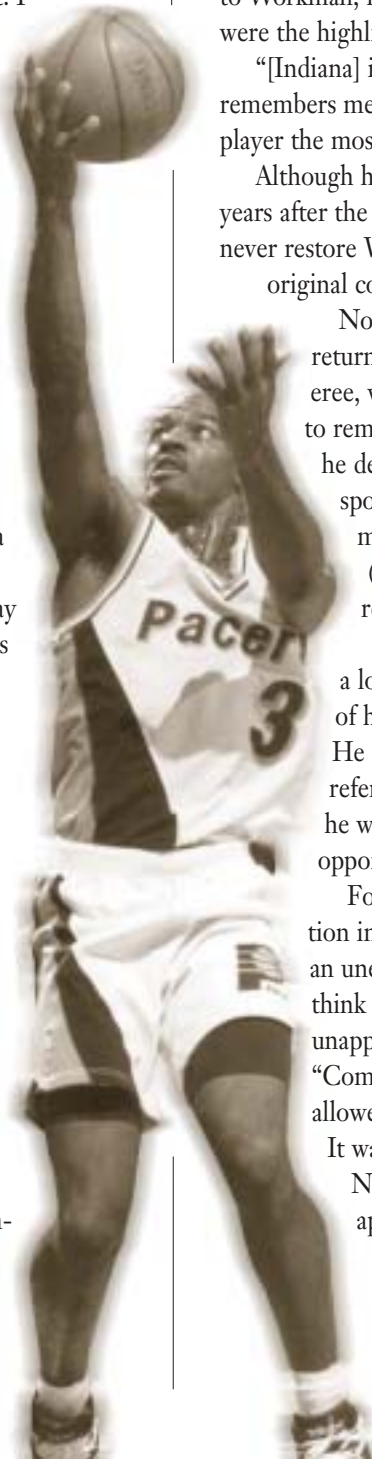
Now it’s like, ‘they *did* appreciate me.’” ■

Workman was happiest with the Indiana Pacers.

Photo by Frank McGrath/Pacers Sports & Entertainment



Workman laughs with a young fan.





NotesFromAlumni

1970s



Debra Krapf (73) and **George** (77) **Pattee** have two sons, Joshua and George, who are in their early 20s. Debra integrates literature, writing, and theology into the 10th-grade humanities class that she teaches, History of Middle Ages 500-1600 A.D. She received a master's of theology from St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute in Baltimore in 1995. Write to her at 10 Campton Ct, Baltimore, MD 21236 or gdgpatee@hotmail.com.

Bruce Watrous (77;81-MBS) missed Homecoming for the first time in several years. He writes, "I had a good excuse as my wife [Colleen] was due at that time. Our prayers were answered on Feb. 12." Nathaniel Phillip joined his four brothers, Matthew, Jon, Andrew, and Patrick. Bruce has worked in the North Shore of Boston for 13 years. He would be thrilled to hear from New Birth or the Flock or other 1977 grads. Write to Bruce at 18 Piper's Glen, Andover, MA 01880 or Hrtjcky3Wtrs@aol.com.

Debbie Bromwell (78) **Norwood** has relocated with her family: Mike, husband of 18

years, Sarah, 17, and Ben, 13. She would love to hear from old ORU friends. Write to her at 1525 Old Stage Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80906 or djnorwood@aol.com.

1980s



Neal Bratschun (81) and wife Donna, married since 1979, have three children: Rebecca (ORU student), Michael, and Sarah. Neal is working in Kabul, Afghanistan, as the diplomatic assistant to Dr. Yusuf Nuristani, Minister of the Afghanistan Environment, Irrigation and Water Resources. He handles English communications with foreign governments and donor agencies who are helping to rebuild the Afghanistan government ministry through creating administrative systems and training staff. Friends, write to 8302 S 85th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133 or Neal@faithwalk.com.

Brenda Kruse (81) works at the church she attends, Capital Christian Center, as the assistant to one of the elders. She would love to hear from gals from 4 Green and 3 Blue who remember her. Drop Brenda a line at 702

McGlinchey Ave, Meridian, ID 83642 or brenda@capitalchristian.com.

Jayne Wiseman (81) **Perry** writes, "I stayed in the Tulsa area and married a wonderful man. We love to travel and have enjoyed seeing much of this beautiful world God created. We recently moved out to 20 acres of raw, wooded land about 30 miles south of Tulsa. I am now a novice gardener and full-time snake and scorpion hunter. The Lord has blessed me beyond what I had hoped (although I could do without the snakes and scorpions). I have had some success in reconnecting with many friends from ORU days (1978-81). Still looking for some of you. So, if you remember me, give me a holler thru email!!" jpokla@hotmail.com

Nancy Ayres (81) **Reynolds** continues to work part-time in pediatrics at the local hospital, attends Mom's in Touch prayer group, and volunteers at church, school, and the homeschool coop. She and husband Steve have three children: Jessica, Stephanie, and Timothy. In June 2002, they took their first "mega-road trip." Traveling nearly 5,000 miles, their stops included the Redwood Forest, San Francisco, Disneyland, Phoenix, Abilene, Tex., Tulsa, Okla., and Yellowstone National Park. The entire Reynolds family also participated in The Great Northwest Passion Play, Jesus of Nazareth.

For more details on their adventures or just to catch up, e-mail Nancy at stevreyn@peoplepc.com.



Ann Shurts (81) **Tatlock** and husband Bob Blank traveled to China in February 1998 and brought home their daughter, Laura Jane. Ann went on from ORU to earn an MA in communications from Wheaton College and spent half a dozen years as a writer and editor for Billy Graham's magazine, *Decision*. In the past 10 years, she has written three novels, published by Bethany House. The most recent one is *All the Way Home*. Her fourth novel was scheduled to come out in June. Reach Ann at 2551 N Wheeler, Roseville, MN 55113 or at anntatlock@yahoo.com.

Attention, Ernst & Young alumni!

Ernst & Young has openings nationwide in the audit, tax, and technology practices. If you refer a candidate who is subsequently hired by E&Y, E&Y will donate \$1,000 in your name to ORU. To find out more, go to www.alumni.ey.com. If you aren't an E&Y alumnus, but want to see if you would be right for an open position, go to www.ey.com.



John Taylor (81) is as busy as ever with Literacy & Evangelism International (LEI). In November, he attended a major missions conference in Atlanta. Wife Kathy received her professional childbirth support certification in January 2002 and attended a training workshop in Dallas to become a childbirth educator, but family continues to be her main job as she homeschools their three younger children: Lydia, 12, Emily, 10, and Grace, 9. Son Jason has been transferred to Washington, D.C., to work at the Pentagon. Older daughters Stacy and Laurel and sons Johnny and Neeraj are in various stages of college. Reconnect with John by writing to him at Literacy & Evangelism International, 1800 S Jackson Ave, Tulsa, OK 74107.

Terry Breunig (82) launched a new ministry Web site. He writes, "I'm not sure where it's going, how big it will get, or anything like that. I'm just trying to be obedient as I discern the Lord's leading. The Lord is faithful. We'll see what happens." Check out his new site, www.wildbranchonline.org, or catch up with Terry by writing to tbreunig@valuecreators.com.

Bob (83) and **Gioia** (86) **Widly Mihuc** have been missionaries in Ireland since January of 1988. They have three children: Ryan, born in Tulsa, and Ashley and Austin, both born in Ireland. In 2005, they plan to be back in Tulsa for one year. You can reach them at 93 Rathdown Park, Greystones, Co Wicklow Ireland or bgmihuc@indigo.ie.

Bob (85;90-MA) and **Cheryl Swanson Bryant** (86;90-MA) live in Fort Worth, Tex. Bob is the children's pastor at University Park Church, and Cheryl is a reading recovery teacher for Fort Worth Public Schools. She is also working on a reading recovery certification with Texas Woman's University. They have two children, Charles and Sarah Joy. Charles "is very smart, takes piano (like his dad), and is involved in Junior Bible Quiz." Drop them a note at 3309 Creekwood Lane, Fort Worth, TX 76123.

Dan (86) and **Cindy Martin** (83) **Lallo** have been married for 20 years. They have two young children, Katie and Joshua. Dan is in banking, and Cindy is the accountant for a three-doctor office, Cary Skin Center in Cary, N.C. Cindy writes, "I'd love to hear from anyone who lived in Claudius Roberts on 2 Green from 1979 to 1983. We miss Tulsa!" Friends, write 5236 Linwick Dr, Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526 or cmlallo@yahoo.com.

Merle Bland Pendleton (86) and husband Deryl still live in Fuquay-Varina, N.C., in the Raleigh and Fayetteville area. She wrote, "We are making a move for full-time ministry. Deryl has been licensed through his home church . . . and is currently working on his first CD. (Can you remember when he couldn't sing at all?) Well, God is good." Their new e-mail address is dpmi2003@yahoo.com.



Jim Simmons (86) is living in San Diego, Calif., and serving as the director of community relations and special events for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). This is the very first such position for FCA — a campus and sports camps ministry utilizing the influence of junior high, high school, and college athletes and coaches to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jim would enjoy hearing from ORU alumni living in the Southern California area, as well as his fellow marketing majors and Granville College wingmates. Contact Jim at 3951 Albatross St #8, San

Diego, CA 92103 or via e-mail at jimmons@aol.com.

Linda Hess (87) **Kracht** and husband Scott are still home-schooling their two children in beautiful Colorado Springs. Linda loves planning field trips for a homeschool support group. She still helps direct the children's ministry for fast-growing Rocky Mountain Calvary Chapel. She loves reading about all ORU alumni. Write to her at your.friends@juno.com.

Kevin Cooney (88) continues to teach as a faculty associate at Arizona State University half-time. His book, *Japan's Foreign Policy Maturation: A Quest for Normalcy*, came out in July 2002 and is selling well. Interested parties can find it online or wait until later this year for a paperback edition. He is also a regular half-time faculty member at Grand Canyon University. Wife Atsuko is still a tech writer for Inter-tel. They have a son, Kian, and a daughter, Aiyana. Write to Kevin at kjc@asu.edu.

Nona Ballard (88;90-MA) **Faber** writes, "We move so much that it's nearly impossible to keep up. My husband, Mark, is a Middle East specialist in the army, so he's kept at a frantic pace. We recently returned to Monterey, Calif., from a tour in Istanbul, Turkey. Now we are preparing a return overseas to Morocco via schooling in D.C.



NotesFromAlumni

Our three children think their life is normal, and we don't tell them any different!" She and her family will be in California until October 2003. Contact her at nonafaber@hotmail.com.



Ross McCordic (88) moved with wife Dawn to a limited access country in the Middle East in order to study the Arabic language. He writes, "Life can get pretty tedious when one's whole day is spent staring at odd-shaped alphabetic characters and memorizing long lists of vocabulary words. Knowing this, God has provided us with a few outside distractions to keep up the variety in our lives. A couple examples of these are the mobile dental clinic for me and a Sri Lankan women's Bible study for Dawn." They are planning a three-month furlough in the U.S. this summer: a June 7 arrival and a mid-September departure. Attention: Nurses interested in a great missionary opportunity should contact Dawn. To catch up with Ross or Dawn, write rmccordic@compuserve.com.

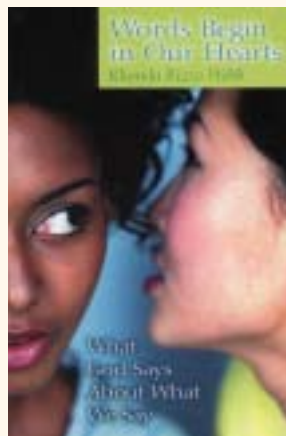
Roselyn Epp (88) **Parks** is attending the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in



Springfield, Mo. She is pursuing a master's in counseling. She and her two children, Andrew and Graceanne, attend Nixa Assembly of God in Nixa, Mo. Roselyn welcomes all correspondence. Write her at 2037 N Fox Trot Ln, Nixa, MO 65714 or RouteJ99@aol.com.



Veronica Stork (89) **Kennedy** has returned to Germany, where she met her husband. They have three young children: Katie, Laila, and Max. She wrote, "I spend my spare time (what spare time?) leading praise and worship for the Sunday Protestant service. I am also going to be the spiritual life advisor for the women's Bible study group here. I have often wondered where my music major buddies have ended up. I'd love to hear from any of my old chums. And please feel free to visit, too. I'm living in the land where we can all experience music history at its finest." Write to her at HHC Engr Bde, Unit 27562 Box 1, APO, AE 09139 USA or veronica.kennedy@us.army.mil.



Rhonda Rizzo (89) **Webb**

recently wrote a book, *Words Begin in Our Hearts: What God Says about What We Say*, which was published by Moody Publishers in Chicago. She spent the first phase of her professional career in the computer and technology industry, from which she retired at age 35 to pursue ministry. Since then, she has been active in leading Bible studies, public speaking, and writing. She realized that God had given her a heart to communicate His Word to women in all walks of life — single women, married women, divorced women, working women, mothers. She is married to Jim Webb, and they have two young children, Jimmy and Scout. Reconnect with Rhonda by writing to rjjwebb@aol.com.

1990s

Jeff Fears (90) and wife Jill had a baby on July 21, 2002. His name is Zachary Edward. He has two big sisters and one big brother: Genevieve, Victoria, and



Jeremiah. Contact them at 411-E Woodview Square, Salisbury, MD 21804.



We apologize to **Carole Sawitsky McCormick** (90) and husband Jimmy for neglecting to include this photo of their new baby, Ethan James, with their writeup in the spring 2003 issue!



hamptoncreative

Hampton Creative, a Tulsa-based design agency started by **Johnie Hampton** (91), was honored in February by the Tulsa Advertising Federation with 10 Addy Awards

for outstanding design work. Check out the Web site at www.hampton-creative.com.



Peter Snyder (92) has been involved with international missions for more than 20 years. He and his family are living in China where he teaches. Drop him a note at petesnyder1@yahoo.com.



Kevin (93;02-MEd) and **Nicole Holt** (95) **Bish** were married in July 1995 and have two little girls, Sadie Nicole, 3, and Sophie Roxanne, 1. Kevin is the director of Development at ORU and is responsible for managing the development and estate planning programs. Nicole is a nurse at Saint Francis Hospital. Friends, write kbish@oru.edu.

Krista Portman (93) **Ferguson** is "having fun with our four little ones, ranging from



seven months to four years old. We listen to our Veggie Tales music and think of the 1992-93 Braxton RAs every time we hear Junior Asparagus talk about Nova Scotia." Husband **Mark** (94) is running Able Restoration Systems, a leather repair business he started in Cincinnati four-and-a-half years ago. When he's not wrestling with his three boys and one princess, he enjoys hanging out at the Great American Ballpark watching the Cincinnati Reds play. Friends, write mferguson6@cinci.rr.com.

A paper by **Andy Herr** (93) will be printed in the journal *Nature* as a full journal article. To see a summary of his primary research and the text of his other publications, visit his Web site, www.its.caltech.edu/~herr/research.html.



Shawn Weebe (93) married Karen Goldman on May 27, 2001. They were married in the

beautiful wine country of Paso Robles, Calif., with many ORU alumni present. Shawn has since started his own computer network consulting company called ITworkz at www.itworkz.net. Shawn and Karen also celebrated the birth of their first child, Savannah Renee, on May 26, 2002. E-mail Shawn at shawn@weebe.com or write to 844 Bluebell Ct, Carlsbad, CA 92009.



Renee Beltran (94) **Gotcher** and husband Kenny are still living in Colorado and have added two members to their family since 2000, Audrey Grace and Claire Isabel. Kenny still works for Toray's outdoor fabrics group, selling technical sports fabrics to companies like Nike, Adidas, Eddie Bauer, REI, etc. Renee is finishing up her second stint as an editor at *InfoWorld* magazine, based in San Francisco. Drop her a note at renee_gotcher@gotcher.net.

Heather Lobser (94) is teaching kindergarten through 8th-grade vocal music at Immanuel Christian Academy in Broken Arrow, Okla. She writes, "I love

teaching! I've had many adventures since my time at ORU. Friends, if you come into town be sure to contact me, and we'll get together!" lobsterh@hotmail.com.



Glenn (94) and **Darlene Sester** (94) **Mehlretter** have two little girls, Elizabeth, 5, and Ashley, 3. They have moved all over Cincinnati (five houses in seven years). Glenn still works for his father-in-law, selling commercial printing. He writes, "I have fond memories of my days at ORU, placing banners on buildings, sammies, pillow fights, and general fun. I would love to hear from friends." Write to them at 3045 Serena Way, Middletown, OH 45044 or glenn@ket-moy.com.



Chris (94) and **Traci Ciganek** (94) **Powers** have procreated. Chris writes, "Look out, ORU, in 18 years! Myrrh Curie Powers



NotesFromAlumni

was born Jan. 11, 2003, and our lives have been brighter ever since." They are in their ninth year of teaching at Christian Fellowship School in Lakewood, Colo. Chris coaches volleyball and still plays quite a bit himself. They would love to hear from their "ORU family, especially Asylum alumni and volleyball friends." Contact them at 3351 S Field St #124, Lakewood, CO 80227 or xrosein3@yahoo.com.



Chris (95) and Jennifer Edwards (95:02-MA) Miller added to their family. Jackson Joseph arrived in February. Jennifer graduated with honors with a master's in public school administration and is a 2nd-grade teacher at Victory Christian School. After this year, she plans to be a full-time mom. Chris is a regional director for ORU, dealing with fundraising and estate planning for the ministry and the university. Drop them a line at cmiller@oru.edu.

Ashley Workman (95) writes, "[I] have been 'down under' for nearly two years now...absolutely loving it. [I] just got engaged

to my 'good Aussie bloke,' Darren. We'll be getting married in September! God's doing incredible things in us both, and we love Hillsong Church. I'm still an ICU nurse and came here after working a couple years in Cyprus. Drop me a line." awworkman@yahoo.com.

Tim Ashley (96) works for The Papers Incorporated, a publishing company. He's the sports editor for one publication, covering mainly high school athletics for one school, and a writer for two weeklies that cover entire counties and one monthly paper for senior citizens. He would love to hear from the mass media majors from the Class of '96. To contact him, write 2400 W Clinton St, Apt 15, Goshen, IN 46526 or timashley@kconline.com.

Reggie Goodin (96) finished his MBA at the University of Texas and passed the CPA exam. In October 2002, he accepted the controller position at Injoy, Inc., John Maxwell's organization. He is also on the eight-member executive leadership team that leads the entire organization. Reconnect with him by writing to 1615 Paces Commons Dr, Duluth, GA 30096 or reggie_goodin@yahoo.com.

Toben (97) and Victoria Calderon (98) Blalock are still in the D.C. area. Toben spent the last few years running network operations for the Federal Communications Commission,

and Victoria is teaching 2nd grade. They've also participated in various missions trips. He writes, "We have a new addition to our family — Rico, the talking dog. He doesn't look like either of us, though." Drop them a line at theblalocks@hotmail.com.



Matt Rearden (97) married **Amanda Ballard (A)** on Dec. 14, 2002. She is a 3rd-grade teacher and Matt is an attorney with International Speedway Corporation. They are both involved in youth ministry at Calvary Christian Center (Ormond Beach) and serve in various church leadership roles. They'd love to hear from old friends, especially the "guys from DP (1993), Sonics (1994-97), or any business school and SA friends." Write them at 164 Gray Dove, Daytona Beach, FL 32119 or mrearden@iscmotorsports.com.

Dan Wathen (97) is back in Tulsa. ("I thought I would never say that...") He's the Oral Roberts Television department manager. Get in touch with him by writing to 2448 E 81st St, Suite 5801, Tulsa, OK 74137 or danielwathen@aol.com.

Bridget Necaize (98) Burritt is still the director of Development for In His Image. She is also a Creative Memories consultant on the side. Her husband, **Jeff (98)**, is in his second year of law school and will graduate next May. Jeff also serves on the Alumni Board of Directors. Write to them at jeffandbridget@yahoo.com.

Bridgett Sanders (98) Clark has moved from Vancouver to Marietta, Okla., just an hour north of Dallas. She and her husband both work for her parents' ministry, WhiteDove Ministries. She writes, "We love it! I am also excited to be back in the U.S. and especially close to our friends from Dallas. I still love being married to my irresistible best friend, Shanee. He is absolutely everything I could ever dream of in a man. I would love to hear from friends from ORU...especially RED-mates (1995-98)." BridgtClark@aol.com

Elisa Gentry (98) is working in ICU and loves being a nurse. In August, she plans to start on a master's degree. She writes, "I am still doing a lot of short-term missions trips and still have a heart for full-time missions after school. Would love to hear from some of you!!" Write to her at 25 Hampton Heights #2, Canton, NC 28716 or egentryrn@hotmail.com.



Jenni Spenner (99) O'Connor and husband Wade have been married since May 2002. After getting laid off, Jenni started her own company doing video editing. She writes, "Thanks to God, it's doing well...I'm loving working from home. I am a part-time nanny for our friends' baby, which is great practice. I'm also doing the interior decorating for the owner of a furniture company out here. So, I've been really busy! [I] would love to hear from any of my friends, classmates, brother wingers, etc.!" Drop her a line at jennioconnor77@yahoo.com.



Lauren Westgate (99) married Dr. Robert Cruikshank on Jan. 9, 2003, "and life has been wonderful ever since. Once Rob has finished his residency training, we have paid off our medical [school] debt and raised enough support, we plan to head to the medical mission field."

Reconnect with Lauren by writing to cruikshank@pol.net.

Joe Peck (99) works for the Fox affiliate in Colorado Springs, editing commercials, and snowboards on the weekends. He would like to hear from old friends. Drop him a line at peckjoe@netzero.net.

2000s

Michael Shead (00) finished his master's degree in Kansas and now works for Resurrection Life Church near Grand Rapids, Mich., as a writer and photographer. He wrote to announce the second annual Men of God and Moriah wings alumni and friends reunion retreat, which was scheduled to be held at the Shead Farm in Kansas where traditional wing retreats have been held since 1995. Like the first retreat, the event was set for the Fourth of July weekend. For a review, send an e-mail to michaelshead@yahoo.com.

Marsha Stephen (00) moved to Massachusetts in October 2002. She is a research technician at Stryker Biotech in Hopkinton, Mass. She also tutors in math and mentors teenage girls. She writes, "Honestly, I didn't expect to be in this role, but God saw otherwise. I just decided to be myself and let the girls see that they don't need a guy to be included in the 'gang' and that they can achieve that special relationship with God." She contin-

ues to go on missions trips. Last year, she and her family headed up a trip to Trinidad, West Indies. In August, she plans to take the MCAT and apply to medical school later in the fall. She writes, "I still sing and play the keyboard, and I see God use my talents to edify and uplift His church. I am very happy and available to be God's vessel wherever I go." Reconnect with her by writing to stephen.marsha@strybio.com.

Georgianne Abdo (01) was Miss Rodeo USA in 2002. She writes, "I not only represented our nation's classic heritage of rodeo in both the United States and Canada, but I was also able to be a living word of encouragement, hope, and love to children in schools, the elderly in nursing homes, and the families that so graciously hosted me in their homes. I believe I made a difference in their lives. God bless and let freedom 'rein'!"



Spice Barker (01) lives in Chandler, Ariz. She is a first-year student at the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine. She plans to graduate in three years as a naturopathic physician and

practice medicine in northern California. She writes, "I cannot begin to tell you how excited I am. I am learning so much already." Drop her a line at spicebarker@hotmail.com.



Marsha (02) and Matthew (02) Feske had a baby at the end of 2002. Skyy-Lyn is six weeks old in this photo. Matthew is working with CTX Mortgage and is in a position that "is a gift from God." They are attending a "little church (with big dreams)."

Travis Loven (02) is a member of the Class of 2006 at the University of Houston College of Optometry.

Associates

Randy (R.J.) Lock and wife Melissa were married in 1999, and were expecting their first child in May 2003. He writes, "It has taken a while, but I just needed to find the right woman to tame me (for those of you SURFers out there who knew me, you know that wasn't an easy task). I left on bad terms (kicked out in '86), and things just seemed to spin out of control for a while. But thank Jesus, I found

NotesFromAlumni

Melissa. If it weren't for her, I might not be here today. She changed my life and brought me back to earth. And now I'm pro-creating! Go figure." Write R.J. at randywlock@msn.com.

Jack Lombardo and his family moved to Massachusetts in January. He is the children's/youth pastor at Wesley United Methodist Church in Salem. He would love to get in touch with any alumni in his area. Write him at 86 Elm St, Danvers, MA 01923 or gjacklombardo@yahoo.com.

Lee Ann Hessman Powers is the wife of an engineer. They have two boys in their early teens. She is active in Walk to Emmaus and works part-time.

Nancy Egelston (81)

Bandfield paid her a visit in April. "[We] hadn't seen each other in 26 years!! It was SO GREAT!! Even though we're so different now than when we were teenagers, we just seemed to pick up where we left off. [I] hope sometime to see more of you." Catch up with her by writing to leeannpowers@cableone.net.



Rachel Epp Winters and husband David would like to

announce the birth of their son, David Brent, Jr., on Sept. 13, 2002. Rachel can be reached at rachel09876@yahoo.com or 2648 E Admiral Blvd, Tulsa, OK 74110. ■

Obituaries

Alumni

Goodwin Scott died Aug. 7, 2002, in Tulsa. He graduated from ORU just three months earlier with a master of divinity degree. He was 79 years old.



Brad Corey (86) died April 15, 2003, in a motorcycle accident. He was born Jan. 21, 1964. As an ORU student, Brad served as a chaplain and was involved in the skateboard ministry. He earned his MBA at ORU and met his wife, **Elizabeth (Tucker-86)**, here. At the time of his death, he was the chief financial officer at Man Financial Group in Chicago. He was also active in the Willow Creek Community Church, where he served in the children's ministry. Brad is survived by his wife and their three children: Rachael, 9, Meghan, 6, and Douglas, 2. Because Brad lost many friends

in the 9/11 tragedy, a Brad Corey Memorial Fund has been set up for 9/11 families.

Marie E. Gillett (1974-76), 46, died on Jan. 10, 2003, in Albuquerque, N.M., after a lengthy illness. Marie was working as an insurance agent for Classic Insurance. She was buried in Midland, Tex., next to her father, John F. Gillett, M.D. She is survived by her brothers, David, Steven, and Sam, her sister, Lisa, and her mother and stepfather, Hazel Louise and Jim Smith. Correspondence regarding Marie should be sent to her brother David at bigdog_md@yahoo.com or her sister-in-law Tracy at tbsharp@yahoo.com. ■

Faculty

Gene Eland, the man who, in the words of ORU president Richard Roberts, "developed the ORU music department from nothing," died on April 21. He was 81. "He was one of that elite group," Roberts said, "that cast their lots with ORU [in the 1960s]." "The bottom line," said longtime friend and prayer partner Dr. William Jernigan, is that "Gene was God's man. He was committed to the success of this university. He hated to retire. Even after he did so, he would still show up at faculty meetings and events." Eland, said **Larry Dalton** (69), "is one of two people I considered a musical father, the other being Ralph



Gene Eland in 1994.

Carmichael. He talked to me and **Terry Law** (69) before we graduated about forming a ministry team. That became Living Sound. There's no way anyone can measure the influence he had on so many lives. Those of us who knew him for 35 years are indeed a privileged class." Eland earned his bachelor's and master's degrees after serving in the U.S. Army during World War II as a member of the 99th Infantry Band. He received an honorary doctorate from ORU in 1989. Eland is survived by his wife, Peggy; four children — Dave, Linda, Don, Nancy — and their spouses; fourteen grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren. The family has set up the Gene Eland Music Memorial

Scholarship; ORU made the first \$10,000 gift. Contact the music department for details.

Dr. Byron McKissack died of a heart attack at the ORU School of Education offices on April 29, 2003, at the age of 66. He was a professor of education, coordinator of Christian school education, and director of the ORU School of Education Summer Institute. Dr. McKissack earned his bachelor of science from the University of Florida, his master of science from Florida State University, his master of divinity and doctor of ministry from Luther Rice Seminary, and his doctor of education from Oklahoma State University. An active member of



Dr. Byron McKissack

Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, McKissack was also a member of Phi Beta Kappa and served as church organist for more than 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Jan; their adult children, Scott, Todd, Jeff, and Rosemerry; and four grandchildren. Contributions

are being accepted for the creation of the Dr. Byron McKissack Christian Education Research and Conference Room. The McKissack family has donated his books and educational materials to establish this memorial project. Contributions may be sent to the ORU School of Education, and directed to the Dr. Byron McKissack Memorial Fund. ■

If you have news to share concerning the death of a fellow alumnus, please be sure to send us the person's full name, year(s) of graduation/attendance at ORU, date of death, his/her activities at ORU, and any other information you would like us to include in an obituary. E-mail to us at alumni@oru.edu.

They're On Their Way!

Our Oral Roberts University Alumni Directory project is nearing completion . . . meaning that the directories will be shipped soon.

This comprehensive new volume is a compilation of the most current data available on nearly 20,000 ORU alumni. Information was obtained from questionnaire mailings, telephone verification, and/or from alumni records. Now the distribution of this impressive edition will begin.

The directories are scheduled to be released during the third week of July. All alumni who reserved a copy of the directory during the verification phase of the project should receive their copies by mid-August. If you have a question on your order, or if you wish to place an order, please contact our publisher directly at the following address:

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Bernard C. Harris Publishing Co., Inc.
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Norfolk, VA 23502
Phone: 1-800-877-6554



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July 1, 2004 — Deadline for 2005 Alumnus of the Year Awards

It's sad, but true — if you wanted to nominate someone for the 2004 ORU Alumnus of the Year awards, you're too late!

But don't fret, pet . . . the 2005 AOY awards are wide open, and you have oodles of hours to nominate ORU alumni for their service to God, the community, and our alma mater. To submit your nominations or to read more about the awards, just go to alumniweb.oru.edu.

Questions? Call Alumni Relations at 918/495-6610.

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