

# MID-AMERICAN

THE MAGAZINE OF MID-AMERICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

IN THIS ISSUE:

## Church Leadership Certificates

See the Full Story on pg. 11

Pastoral Care Practicum pg. 5

Student Chaplain Spotlight pg. 17

Spiritual Emphasis Week pg. 18

*Dream Bigger.*  
*Do Greater.*  
Winter 2021

**Pictured:** Church Leadership Certificate Student, Pastor Bob Ingels, New Beginnings Church of God, Kenova, WV

# President's Letter

As many of you know, I have announced my retirement as the President of Mid-America Christian University. On May 31, 2022, I will complete 23 years of service.

It's ironic that I came to this position having served 22 years as a pastor. Someone once asked me if I had difficulty transitioning from being a pastor to being a president. My response surprised him. I said, "Being a university President is being a pastor!" While each leadership position required unique gifts and talents, I have always felt that God's call to leadership is a calling to stewardship and to being a "shepherd" of others.

Fred Rogers once said, "Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else." That is how I look at my retirement. As convinced as I was at the call to come here, I am equally convinced it is time for another to lead the university forward!

These are exciting times for a new leader. The university is in its strongest financial position. Our student enrollment keeps growing as do the number of our degree programs. The university has a very committed and engaged Board of Trustees. The MACU campus is led by highly credentialed and loyal faculty and staff.

If it has been a while since you came to campus, I want to invite you to come and see what the Lord has done! There are new classrooms, offices, residence halls and athletic facilities. Spend some time here and you will sense the moving of God's Spirit in our chapel services and discipleship program. If you ever grow discouraged by the direction of our culture or wonder whether there will be godly leaders for our congregations or communities, come and visit. Your heart will be encouraged and your hope will be renewed as you meet these students who are drawing nearer and deeper in their walk with Jesus.

At the Board's invitation, I have accepted the position of Chancellor of the University. A Chancellor assists in the presidential transition and is available to the new President in providing information, representation, or fundraising duties as requested.

The next President will have my prayerful intercession, cooperation and encouragement. Be assured that I will be



fully and actively engaged during my last year as President. My goal is to do all I can to continue the University's forward movement by accelerating and expanding upon what we have already begun together.

I know across the years many have told me they have daily prayed for my leadership. I am forever indebted to your love and encouragement. We rejoice together in how God answered those prayers and gave wisdom and strength. God has proven to be faithful in all things! He has miraculously provided for the university's mission as miraculously as He did when He delivered Israel from Egypt or when Jesus fed the 5,000. It has been wonderful that our students have witnessed these divine interventions! They must confess, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever!"

I hope it is clear to all that my respect and affection for this University will be sustained forever and that Brenda and I fully intend to be as supportive and helpful to MACU for the remainder of our lives!



*John Fozard*  
Dr. John Fozard, President



## President

Dr. John Fozard

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## Do You Have an Alumni Update or Story Idea?

Please send it to:  
**COMMUNICATIONS@MACU.EDU**

Watch MACU Chapel Live every  
Wednesday and Friday at 10:15 a.m.  
**macu.edu/watch**



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# Winter 2021

- 2 President's Letter
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Presidential Search
- 5 Pastoral Care Practicum
- 6 Dream Gala
- 8 Campus Updates
- 9 Student Spotlight
- 10 Scholarship Contest
- 11 Church Leadership Certificates
- 12 STEM Club
- 13 Iron Men & Women of Valor
- 14 Soccer Field Dedication
- 15 Game Plan 4 LIFE Award
- 16 Year-End Giving
- 17 International Student Chaplain
- 18 Spiritual Emphasis Week
- 19 Eternal Investment

**Dream Bigger.  
Do Greater.**

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# Practicum Students Pour Into Patients at Children's Center

By Whitney Knight

For the first time, students in MACU's Practicum in Pastoral Care class are serving at The Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital in Bethany, Okla. as part of an eight-week training program.

Every Wednesday and Thursday, students are at the hospital for two-hour sessions with young boys and girls at the pediatric hospital, which offers 24-hour medical care, rehabilitation and special education for children in need.

Sessions include 45 minutes of training on topics ranging from confidentiality, spiritual wellbeing and distress, listening, cultural competency, spirituality and religion, communication and grief care. The rest of the time, students assist in chapels in the units and are assigned patients to visit.

Ministry Professor Rev. Justin Key, who oversees Practicum, said that ministering at a children's hospital provides students with a unique experience.

"It's definitely a different kind of dynamic than what our students are accustomed to experiencing with adult patients," Key said. "The children are in some kind of long-term recovery process or are dealing with a long-term condition that is fairly intense. It is a challenging situation for our students that goes above and beyond anything most of them have ever experienced."

The experience has already shaped the lives and hearts of MACU's student chaplains. Business Administration major Kaitlynn

Bloomfield described her time at The Children's Center so far as a "very special experience."

"The first week I was at the hospital, the Lord set up my heart to be softened. Every week after, I have seen Jesus through the smiles and laughter that comes from my silly dance moves, or even through the way little babies hold on to my fingers and refuse to let go," she said. "God is present in every visit and sees every child. He loves them so well, and I hope my presence can be a little part to help show that love."

Many patients at The Children's Center are nonverbal. Despite that, Ministry Leadership major Preston Burroughs said that the connections formed between the Practicum class and the student patients transcends the need to speak aloud.

"I think the connection with the kids at The Children's Center is deeper than it was when I was working at hospitals clinics back home in Missouri," Burroughs said. "I think a lot of that has to do with the spirit of Jesus Christ being there to connect us, because we are part of one body and the outpouring of love really bridges the communication gap."

The opportunity for students to learn at and minister to patients at The Children's Center was made possible thanks to a grant from the Butterfield Memorial Foundation, which helped fund Clinical Pastoral Supervision Training for chaplains at The Children's Center.

Next spring, MACU will send interns to the hospital for another newly developed program by Butterfield Foundation, called the Eric Baird Spiritual Care Internship, which will be more concentrated in focus.



MACU has a special Pastoral Care Scholarship set aside for students. If you would like more information on how you can support this effort, please contact University Advancement at 405-692-3191 or visit [give.macu.edu](https://give.macu.edu) to give online. *Every dollar helps train a student in Pastoral Care!*

Above: Austin Kyle

# Presidential Search Begins

On October 13, 2021, Dr. John Fozard announced his retirement from Mid-America Christian University after 22 years. The MACU Board of Trustees have begun an immediate search for the University's fifth president to succeed Dr. Fozard on June 1, 2022. To help the university in this effort, the executive search firm Hyatt-Fennell is assisting in the search.

The nationwide search is now open and we are asking those who are interested in applying or know of someone who would be a great candidate to please email [macu@hyatt-fennell.com](mailto:macu@hyatt-fennell.com). More details of the job can be found at [www.hyatt-fennell.com](https://www.hyatt-fennell.com). If you prefer to discuss this position with any of our consultants directly, feel free to call the Hyatt-Fennell office at 724-242-0476. A presidential search committee made up of trustees, employees and a student representative will be working with Hyatt-Fennell over the coming months to review and nominate candidates to go before the Board of Trustees for a vote.

Please pray with us for God's choice,

**Dr. Gary Kendall**  
Search Committee Chair



**Back row:** Kaitlynn Bloomfield, Carolina Rieszko, Cristian Hardin, Austin Kyle, Rev. Justin Key, Preston Burroughs, Peyton Kirkpatrick, Cailey Parsells. **Front row:** Sabrina Herrington, Christian Guess, Caitlin Shepard



2021

# Dream Scholarship Gala

On Sept. 16, we held the sixth annual Dream Scholarship Gala at the Petroleum Club in downtown Oklahoma City. It was an incredible evening spent with our students, staff, faculty, alumni, sponsors, donors and friends!

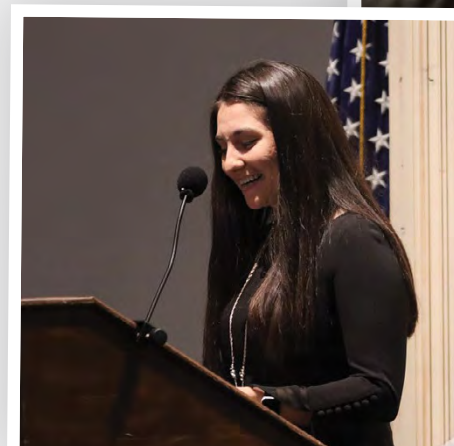
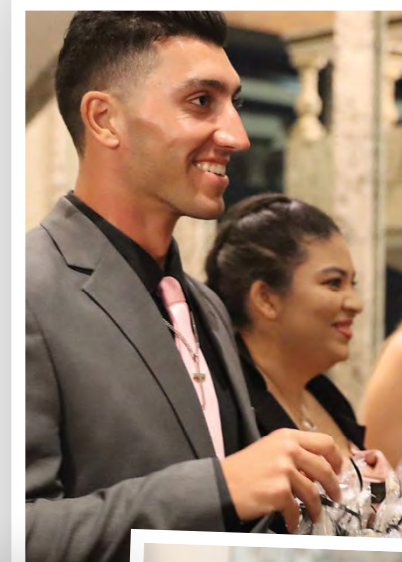


MACU President Dr. John Fozard (above) was presented the 2021 Dream Maker Award.



Event Keynote Speaker was Dr. Cliff Sanders (on left) and music was performed by Rev. Chuck Whetstone & Rev. Rachel Mosher (above, right).

101  
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Alumna Rev. Catherine Shaffer (above) shared her testimony.



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RAISED FOR STUDENT  
SCHOLARSHIPS

**\$740k**  
SINCE 2016,  
THE DREAM  
GALA HAS  
RAISED  
MORE THAN  
\$740,000!





In Fall 2021, the Public Services Facility was opened for all to enjoy while attending outdoor sporting events. The facility contains a concession stand, public restrooms and a changing place for officials for our outdoor sports.

The Patio at MACU is completed and already being put to good use! With direct access to Café 14:12, our students, faculty and staff enjoy being able to study and eat lunch at our new pergola while getting some Vitamin D. Classes are also able to be meet in this area. Enjoy, Evangels!

## Campus Updates



# Student Spotlight

## Glenn Cerny

By Anna-Kate Weichel

Corporal Glenn Cerny made the brave decision to serve our country at the age of 19.

This was something that had been weighing on his heart since he graduated high school one short year earlier. Cerny had been working as a manager at an OnCue gas station and praying about what God had in store for his future. Repeatedly, recruiters for the armed services came in and struck up conversation with him.

All it took was prayer and one special conversation with one of the recruiters that made him know that God was nudging him.

"I felt called without a shadow in mind that that was what I was supposed to do," recalled Cerny.

And so he went.

After two consecutive deployments with the U.S. Marine Corps, COVID-19 trapped Cerny overseas for several months. During that time, he had an excess of time to think about what was next for him. He prayed to God and pondered how He would use him in his next steps of life.

Upon returning home to Oklahoma, Cerny reflected a lot on his new perspective. He said that being in the military gave him a deeper perspective of God and His nature.

"This is a man who laid down His life for me, for you and for whoever else is called down to believe," he said. "In the military, you have people who will bleed for you. That's what God has done for all of us."



"This is a man who laid down His life for me, for you and for whoever else is called down to believe," he said. "In the military, you have people who will bleed for you. That's what God has done for all of us."

Cerny was still figuring out what his next move would be when he was working as a concession stand clerk at the College Softball World Series. A MACU softball player, Adrienne Phillips, struck up a conversation with him and suggested that he attend MACU.

The rest, Cerny said, is history. He enrolled in MACU's College of Arts and Graduate Studies (CAGS) and now only has three semesters left until he will graduate with a Bachelor's in Business Administration and Ethics. Then, he plans to continue his education at MACU with a graduate degree.

"I love the students, faculty and staff. I've never met a stranger here," he said. "People genuinely care for you and your success at MACU."

Although Cerny's career hasn't been linear, he said that he has been trying to follow God's will for his life as best as possible.

"We are sheep and He is a shepherd," he said. "So, I look at it as sheep can still be in the pasture but wander off. He will always bring us back."





# Win a \$12,000 Scholarship

Mid-America Christian University presents the \$12,000 MACU Scholarship Contest! As a new MACU student beginning classes November 1st or after, you could be eligible to win up to \$12,000 in tuition scholarship funds!\*

Complete your entry form and review all the contest rules and qualification requirements today by visiting [www.MACU.edu/contest](http://www.MACU.edu/contest)

**405.691.3800**  
**WWW.MACU.EDU/CONTEST**

Learn more about our degree programs online at [your.macu.edu](http://your.macu.edu)

\*You must meet MACU's admission requirements to qualify. Entry forms must be received by January 28, 2022. A random drawing for up to a \$12,000 grand scholarship will be held on February 1, 2022. Mid-America Christian University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Shauntae Sourie, Director of Human Resources, 3500 SW 119th, OKC, OK 73110, 405-692-3196.



MID-AMERICA  
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

## MACU's Church Leadership Certificates Help CHOG Pastors Grow and Innovate

By Whitney Knight

Last fall, MACU set out to create a program that could assist pastors, church leaders, volunteers and others in developing a better knowledge of Wesleyan theology, new directions in ministry due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a host of other topics.

This led to the development of two unique partnerships with national congregations: the Bishop Timothy J. Clarke School for Professional Studies and the Mansfield School for Professional Studies. Through the two schools, as well as MACU's previously established J.E. Massey Center for Ministry and Leadership, students can take 5-week courses that meet one evening a week via Zoom to discuss that week's topic.

Courses are currently offered in Wesleyan Theology, The Phygital Church and Praying with Power. Each course is led by field experts and scholars, including Dr. Cliff Sanders, Rev. Gary Kendall and Rev. Richard Mansfield.

In the first year of offering the certificate programs, the schools have already seen considerable growth. Dozens of students have completed their first courses, including Pastor Bob Ingels of the recently-established New Beginnings Church of God in Kenova, W.V. Ingels said that what he's learned in his certificate courses have been instrumental in the success of his new church.

"As a pastor of a new church plant, I was challenged and encouraged to rethink how we were using social media," Ingels said. "As the weeks went on, it helped us form a plan to change how we use Facebook groups and turn that into an online campus that brings more engagement with our congregation."

During his course in the Phygital Church, Ingels said he saw five neighbors go from being prayed for to being actively disciplined in the church.

"Rev. Kendall is a great teacher and encourager," Ingels said. "This class will benefit any church leader dealing with today's changing world."

Kelisia Hudson of Vineyard Community Church in Reynoldsburg, Ohio is another pastor who said she has benefited greatly from MACU's certificate courses. She said she hadn't even finished her first course when she began using what she had learned in class at the pulpit.

"I was able to implement tools and techniques within the first couple of weeks," Hudson said. "Being able to share information and tools with church staff has helped to increase the presence of our church online. I have a foundation that will continue to help expand our church and reach our community for years to come."

If you or someone you know is interested in MACU's church leadership certificates, enrollment is open for February 2022. No prior education is required, and students even have the opportunity to get college credit at MACU for their coursework. Better yet, MACU charges just \$195 per course and there are \$100 scholarship opportunities available.

Please visit [www.macu.edu/church-leadership](http://www.macu.edu/church-leadership) to learn more and enroll today.



**Above:** Pastor Bob Ingels, New Beginnings Church of God, Kenova, WV



**Below:** Pastor Kelisia Hudson, Vineyard Community Church, Reynoldsburg, OH.



# STEM Club

By Anna-Kate Weichel

Aneli Thomsen is breaking down the barriers for women in STEM with a passion.

This school year, Thomsen is serving as President of MACU's own STEM Club. She said her passion for the sciences comes from a tragedy in her life.

"My brother passed away from a brain tumor," Thomsen explained. "Throughout his battle, my parents spent probably five years in the hospital and became close with the staff. The PA that helped my brother still comes over to my family's house every year."

It was those PAs, doctors, nurses and everyone in between that inspired Thomsen to do more and excel through the science industry. She went into her first college experience learning more about biology, but didn't really enjoy her time with it.

It was at the time when she had moved back to her hometown of Ada, Okla., that Women's Basketball Head Coach Hannah Moeller reached out to her. Moeller wanted to talk with Thomsen about the opportunity of playing basketball here at MACU.

As soon as Thomsen stepped foot on campus, she could tell that it was different than any of her other college experiences.

"At other schools, they would just show you the material. But here, the professors learn how you study. They know each student's learning style."

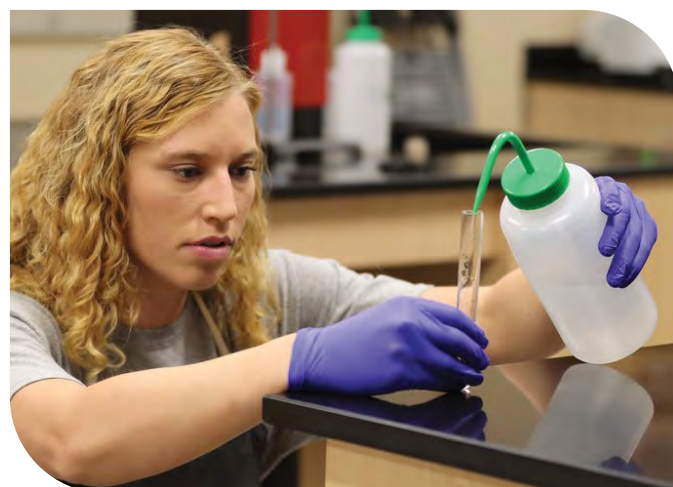
But she said it doesn't just stop there.

"The people genuinely care about you. I have faculty that invite me over for dinner. It is a different atmosphere here."

Thomsen came to MACU to play basketball, but her drive and passion have now allowed her to make a difference as well. She said she encourages everyone to join the STEM club.

"You might not be interested in science or a science major, but it offers so much more than just science," she said. "It shows you new occupations, different programs and helps you gain knowledge in an area that you aren't comfortable in."

Thomsen plans to graduate next year and go on to receive her Master's from MACU as well.



Above: Aneli Thomsen

# Iron Men & Women of Valor

By Anna-Kate Weichel

Joshua Fernandez hurries into the private dining rooms inside Fozard Hall for a chance to learn, grow and share. He is equipped with a pen, paper and one of his Jesus-loving graphic T-shirts. He talks with his small group about their weekends while waiting for the speaker to begin.

Every fall, a new class of about forty hand-picked students are chosen to be a part of Iron Men and Women of Valor. Throughout the school year, these students hear from faculty, staff, coaches and public mentors. These important guides teach these students about leadership, life, etiquette and much more.

Fernandez, who studies Biology and Ministry Leadership at MACU, is in his second year as an Iron Man. He is also involved with the chapel worship team, serves as a chaplain and Vice President for Student Ministerial Fellowship (SMF) and plays baseball.

Despite his many responsibilities, Fernandez said he makes it a priority to make time to grow as a leader and a Christian through the Iron Men. He is well-known in the MACU community for spreading the Word on Instagram by posting

mini sermons or helping others break down and understand Bible verses.

"The mentorship from Iron Men has impacted my walk with Christ in a positive way," Fernandez said, noting how much he has learned about himself and his personal strengths and weaknesses. "Now I can use my strengths and be aware of my weaknesses to lead others the best that I can. Iron Men has shown me how to better love compassionately, like Jesus."

Another student, Sarah Goins, is also in her second year of Women of Valor. One of her favorite parts of the leadership group is learning how to conduct herself in professional settings. For example, one of the group's yearly events is an etiquette dinner. They are joined by a professional guide on etiquette and are able to learn the ins and outs of how to speak eloquently and behave in professional settings.

"The biggest lesson I have learned is that even though I am quiet, I ask a lot of questions, sometimes hard questions," Goins said. "I've come to understand that those qualities don't hold me back at all — they are what make me a leader."



To inquire about how to join Iron Men or Women of Valor as a student, email [admissions@macu.edu](mailto:admissions@macu.edu).

"Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens the face of his neighbor."

PROVERBS 27:17

"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

PROVERBS 31





# A Sweet Meeting: How an Ice Cream Cone Brought Mike and Helen Dill Together with the Mid-America Christian Soccer Programs

By Adam Stanek

When you come to a MACU soccer game, you can always find Mike and Helen Dill sitting front and center, cheering for the Evangels. For the last five years, the Dills have been overwhelming supporters of MACU soccer -- so much so that they paid for brand new lights and a scoreboard that were installed at the soccer field last year.

The couple are so often seen around MACU that they are frequently asked how they came to be a part of the campus family. Many presume them to be alumni, employees or the proud parents or grandparents of an Evangel. The truth is, the Dills had never even been on the campus of Mid-America Christian University before one chance meeting five years ago.

It was a Monday afternoon in the fall of 2016 when the Dills went to a local Braum's to get ice cream. They were sitting at a table when Mike Dill spotted two young women come to the counter to order food. He said to his wife, "You see those two young ladies over there? They play soccer."

Helen Dill replied, "How can you tell? They're not wearing any uniforms." Her husband told her that they had the look of soccer players -- and he should know. He had spent a substantial amount of time playing soccer in his youth and both nationally and internationally as an adult.

The two young women took a seat near the Dills, so the couple decided to introduce themselves and find out where the girls played soccer. Those student-athletes were none other than one of MACU's

all-time leading scorers and MACU Team of the Decade honoree Brittney Stephens and two-year standout defender Taylor Moore.

Stephens and Moore told them they played at MACU and had just finished practice. They extended an invitation to the Dills to come watch their game against Baker the following day. Mike Dill said the game was great, but it was the actions of the coaches and players that resulted in the couple falling in love with MACU that day.

"At the start of the game, the players and coaches bowed their heads and prayed. They all stood for the National Anthem and then met again on the field and prayed together," Mike Dill recalled. "After the game, the players and coaches of both teams met and prayed together and after the prayer, every MACU player and coach came to us, shook our hands and thanked us for coming and asked us to come to the next game."

He said that he and his wife were so overwhelmed by the gesture that they came to the next game, and the game after that. Since that day in 2016, the Dills have watched every MACU men's and women's soccer game either in-person or online.

As the Dills and the team started to feel like family, six weeks later Stephens and Moore approached the couple to ask for their help. Brothers Andy and Oscar Ochoa, who played for the MACU men's soccer team, were struggling financially and in danger of dropping out of school due to the financial burden.

After discussing it, the Dills decided to provide room and board for the Ochoa brothers for the next six weeks so they could make it to the end of the semester. Those six weeks ended up turning into a year and a half as the Ochoas stayed with the Dills until they graduated in May of 2018.

Over the next few years, the Dills built a strong relationship with then-soccer coaches Zach Bice and Evan Dresel. They had worked closely with the coaches in planning and funding for items that would greatly enhance the collegiate playing experience for the student-athletes and the fans. Those projects included the lights, which have allowed for more parents and fans to attend games, as well as the scoreboard, concession stand and ticket office that were recently constructed at the northwest end of the field. The Dills,

along with MACU athletic administration and coaching staff, are continuing to look at other future projects, such as bricked dugouts with individual seating for teams, cantilever shading for fans and making improvements to the game and practice fields.

"Mike and Helen have generously served our student-athletes, teams and athletic department for the better part of a decade," said MACU Athletic Director Marcus Moeller. "It is not just the financial implications of their support, but far more the selfless acts of service and kindness that have forever knit us together with this incredible couple. I am forever indebted for their steadfast and loyal support of the MACU Athletics family."

Mike Dill said that he and his wife have seen the soccer programs grow by leaps and bounds since that day they shared ice cream with two student-athletes.

"We have seen the men's soccer team win four Sooner Athletic Conference championships as well as an NCCAA National Championship and have seen the women's team win multiple NCCAA Regional Championships," he said. "We have also rejoiced in the success of the student-athletes with the numerous SAC Player of the Week, Scholar-Athlete and All-American awards that they have won."

To honor the Dills for their steadfast commitment to MACU Athletics, the soccer field was officially renamed the Mike and Helen Dill Soccer field between games on Aug. 31. The Dills were presented with an autographed jersey and ball signed by all of the current soccer players on both teams.



Above: Mike and Helen Dill, Women's Soccer Team

# Faith Hollingsworth Earns NCCAA Game Plan 4 LIFE Award

By Adam Stanek

Before MACU's softball team won its first-ever NCCAA National Championship this spring, one student-athlete was already crowned a champion of character. Senior outfielder Faith Hollingsworth was selected as the recipient for the NCCAA Game Plan 4 LIFE award, becoming the second Evangels softball player to ever win the award.

"I was extremely grateful to even be nominated for it, but to receive it out of all the nominees was such a surreal moment for me," said Hollingsworth. "I wasn't expecting to be chosen, so for Coach (Robert) Wakefield to nominate me and the NCCAA to select me as the recipient was such an immense honor."

The NCCAA Game Plan 4 LIFE award is an honor that is presented to a student-athlete who embodies the Christian qualities of love, integrity, faith and excellence. Hollingsworth was presented the award at the NCCAA Awards Ceremony on May 17 at Alive Wesleyan Church in Central, S.C.

"It was an exciting experience to share with my team and my family," said Hollingsworth. "I am so grateful for not just receiving this award, but to have my team there to encourage me as well."

*"I am so grateful for not just receiving this award, but to have my team there to encourage me as well."*

When Hollingsworth won the award, she served as an English tutor for MACU students and was a member of the English Club, where she contributed articles to the MACU Anglicus Chronicles. Currently, Hollingsworth serves as a Bible study leader for grade school children at Central Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. In her two seasons with MACU, Hollingsworth was a two-time All-Sooner Athletic Conference honoree with an impressive record. On top of her feats on the field, Hollingsworth was named a two-time NCCAA and NAIA Scholar-Athlete while majoring in Secondary English Education at MACU.

"Faith was an incredible leader on our team," said MACU Head Coach Robert Wakefield. "She was the sort of leader any coach would want on their team and we were very blessed to have her the last two years."

For all that Hollingsworth accomplished on the field, what she has accomplished off the field has made her all the more special. Currently enrolled in the final semester of her bachelor's program at MACU, Hollingsworth is currently serving as a student teacher in the Oklahoma City metro. She taught for the Moore Public Schools system this fall and is currently completing a seven-week curriculum at Newcastle High School in Newcastle, Okla. Faith will graduate with honors in December and plans to pursue a full-time English teaching career at the middle or high school level after graduation.

"MACU was always such a welcoming campus and I love the Christ-centered atmosphere," said Hollingsworth. "It is an extremely supportive environment. Being on that MACU team was such a fantastic experience because not only did I love my teammates, but it gave me purpose every single day. Being a leader on the squad was extremely rewarding. For me to share winning the National Championship with my teammates in my final game will be a moment I will never forget."



# Year-End Giving *Makes a Difference*

Did you know that nearly one-third of all nonprofit donations occur in December alone? If you are considering a year-end gift to MACU, now is the time to begin planning. We hope you will consider making a life-changing donation to student scholarships. By giving to MACU, you are helping young men and women earn an education that will help them impact the world for Christ in the ministry, the marketplace and beyond!



"The professors here push you to succeed in a way you don't get at any other school. I love that faith is woven into every aspect of campus. I have never learned more about myself and my faith and I've only been here since August. I know I wouldn't get this experience or be as involved in my faith anywhere else.

Being able to have my studies and my faith together is pushing me in the right direction and making me make decisions that are good for me and my future.

I have to pay for most of college by myself. Receiving scholarships has made a phenomenal difference for me. I have been blessed to receive scholarships for my academic standing and for knowing a MACU alum, as well as from the church match scholarship. Without that, I don't know if I would have been able to come to MACU at all. Because of scholarships, I don't have to stress about going into debt when I am trying to work towards my future."

*Lily Grover*

FRESHMAN, CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PSYCHOLOGY

"You're never on your own at MACU. Everybody tries to help each other all of the time. As an international student, it's especially meaningful to me because I'm far from my family. My teammates, my classmates and my professors have become my family. At other schools, you're just another student, but at MACU I know that I matter. I know that wherever I go, I am never going to be alone; there is always someone looking out for me. I'm a part of the discipleship program and I have grown so much spiritually. My time at MACU helps me be the person God asks me to be every single day.

Scholarships are the best gift in my life. I thank God that I have been able to give my best in soccer and because of that, I was given the opportunity to come to MACU with good scholarships and live the American Dream. Scholarships help a lot of students like me make their dreams come true."



*Endri Copa*

SENIOR, DATA ANALYTICS

## Ways TO Give

### Gifts of Appreciated Stocks, Bonds or Other Securities

- This may mean significant tax savings! Contact us at **405-692-3191** to discuss electronic transfer or email us at [advancement@macu.edu](mailto:advancement@macu.edu)
- You might consider giving part of the Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA account. When you give directly to the university, you avoid paying taxes on the amount given. Contact our office to find out how!

### Gifts of Cash

- Checks can be mailed to University Advancement at **3500 S.W. 119th St. OKC, OK 73170**
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## International Student Shines as Student Chaplain

By Anna-Kate Weichel



Soccer is what brought Thiago Viana to MACU, but his love of Christ is what has defined his journey as a student.

Viana was born and raised in Brazil, growing up in a home that loved soccer and followed Christ. But although his childhood was rooted in traditional values, they failed to resonate with him.

"I grew up in a religious Catholic family, but we didn't actually have a real relationship with Jesus," Viana said. "I used to go to church and thought it was boring. I didn't like it too much because I didn't know about The Bible."

In early 2020, he was approached by one of MACU's soccer coaches to come play for the university. He accepted the offer to follow his passion of soccer, but also acquired a new passion. The more Viana got involved, the more his love for Christ grew. He was baptized on campus and now the business and ministry major serves as a Resident Chaplain.

He said Campus Pastor Matt Cossey was crucial in helping him break out of his shell and grow in his love for Jesus and his passion for helping others.

"My favorite thing about Pastor Matt is he believes in me," Viana said. "When he called on me to become a chaplain, I told him it was going to be hard because I am going out of my comfort zone. But he trusted me and gave me this opportunity."



Left to Right: Caleb Schirmer, Thiago Viana, Nathan Kem

One of the duties Viana has as a Resident Chaplain is to run a weekly Bible study. The men of MACU gather every Monday night to spend time with each other and grow closer with God. Viana spends time with Cossey and the other resident chaplains organizing and creating lesson plans for the Bible studies.

Viana and Cossey both cherish their relationship. Cossey said that Viana's quiet but passionate love for others caught his attention when he came to campus.

"As long as I have known Thiago, and even before meeting him personally, he had a reputation as having a sincere love for God and for others," Cossey said. "In his own quiet way he was willing to show up and serve. As a chaplain, I have seen him grow to not just be ready to serve others but to lead as well."

*"In his own quiet way he was willing to show up and serve. As a chaplain, I have seen him grow to not just be ready to serve others but to lead as well."*

Although Viana attended other universities prior to MACU, he said there is something different about the campus.

"You can see the people here, staff, professors and everybody, they are Christ-like. They follow Biblical principles. They really care about the students and they want us to grow and achieve our goals. It's like a big family," Viana said.

At MACU, Viana said he has been able to form personal relationships with his peers and mentors that are unlike anything he has experienced in his life.

"I am just really thankful to be here. It is one of the best things that has ever happened to me. It will definitely be a part of the story of my life."



# Campus Welcomes Rev. Cervantes for Spiritual Emphasis Week

By Whitney Knight

Every semester, MACU holds a four-day chapel series known as Spiritual Emphasis Week, a period in which the campus community specifically focuses on spiritual health and growth with a four-part series by a special guest speaker.

This fall, the campus welcomed Rev. Jaime Cervantes. Cervantes pastors the Benton Heights campus of First Church of God in Benton Harbor, Mich., and spoke at this year's commencement exercises.

"When MACU asked me to do this, my answer was an emphatic 'yes,'" Cervantes recalled. "I didn't even look at my calendar. I wasn't going to pass up an opportunity to be here."

Cervantes, who was born and raised in Los Angeles, was brought up in the church after his parents came to faith in Christ when he was eight years old. But somewhere along the way, he began to lose his way a little bit. He struggled with his self esteem and feelings of worthlessness — feelings he knows are familiar to many college students.

"College is a very important and crucial time in life," he said. "As young adults, you are in a very exciting but very critical and even fragile time in your lives when the trajectory of your life will be decided by the decisions you make now."

That pressure, Cervantes said, can lead many to doubt their worth or to find themselves led astray, just as he once experienced.

Across his four-day sermon, Cervantes challenged these crippling feelings by exploring topics of loving yourself and loving one another, as well as God's unconditional love for all of His children.



Above: Rev. Jaime Cervantes Below: Worship Service

"Be encouraged," he said. "God values you. He is the one who minted you. He is the only one who can assign to you your value. He is the one who declares you worthy of an all-out search and rescue mission — and He will never give up on you."

If you would like to experience Cervantes' powerful sermon series, please visit [www.macu.edu/watch](http://www.macu.edu/watch) to access our chapel archives. We hope you will join us March 1-4, 2022, for our spring Spiritual Emphasis Week. You can watch live at 10:15 a.m. by visiting [www.macu.edu](http://www.macu.edu) or [www.facebook.com/MidAmericaChristianUniversity](https://www.facebook.com/MidAmericaChristianUniversity).

# Eternal Investment

By Anna-Kate Weichel

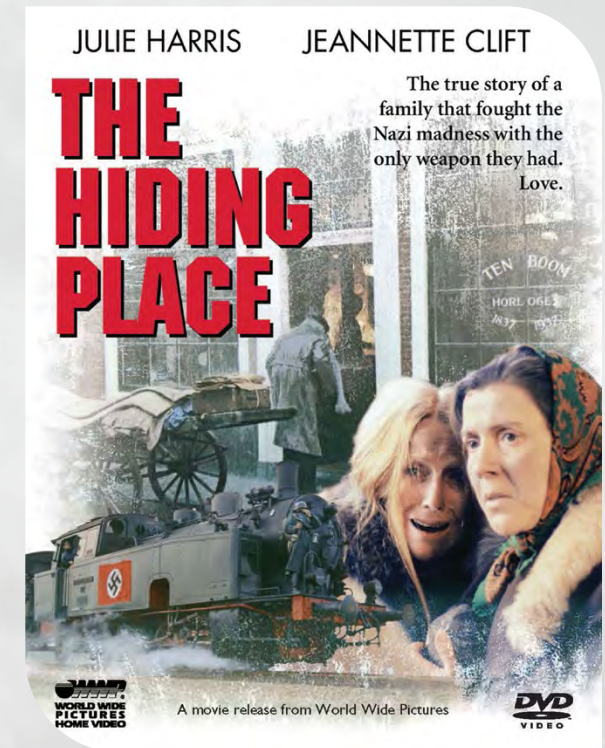
From author to playwright to Golden Globe-nominated actress to business woman, Jeannette Clift George believed that the world was her stage. Yet, at the end of the day, her most important act in life was to honor God.

Clift George was born ready for the stage. She grew up waiting for her chance to be on Broadway. Throughout her college years, she embraced her love for the arts through her commitment to the University of Texas at Austin's theater program.

Upon graduation, she began working hard to become an author, radio host and even toured with the New York Shakespeare Company. She is best known for playing Corrie ten Boom in the film "The Hiding Place", for which she was nominated for an Academy Award as Best Actress. Clift George broke down barriers for women in arts during her career, blazing a trail for a myriad of actresses to follow.

"She was busy. She was always on the go," recalled her cousin, Bob Clift. "There are no words to describe her spark and personality. She was a very warm, engaging, sharing kind of person."

But no matter how busy and talented she was, she never forgot about who got her there, our God. In the short hours she had left over from all of her work, she took time to teach a Bible study four times a week. In 1967, she founded The A.D. Players, a Christian-based theater company out of Houston. She invested many hours to get the theater going, but also gave private lessons to many of the students who were young performers as she once was. In that way, she was able to give back to her community and honor God for fifty years.



Above: Jeannette Clift George's "The Hiding Place" Movie Cover

Today, her legacy is able to live on through the gifts she left behind. After Clift George passed away Bob and Janet Clift contacted Steve Seaton to discuss how Jeannette's dedication to God could best be continued. Knowing that her faith and support of young people were the most important things in her life, they chose to honor her by establishing a unique type of scholarship in her name, to provide emergency financial support for MACU students

"The fact that the funds would be used to help students find themselves, enrich their lives and put them in a position where they can witness Christ, I think she would be very pleased," said Bob Clift.

The Jeannette Clift George Scholarship benefits students as a "gap" scholarship. These funds are designated for students who may be short on the amount of money needed to pay off their bills and enroll for the next semester. Because of the eternal investment Bob Clift made in his dear cousin's name, many students are able to continue their education at MACU when they may otherwise be unable.

MACU is forever grateful to donors like Jeannette Clift George and Bob Clift who invest in our students through financial means. If you are interested in making your own eternal investment in MACU, please call University Advancement at 405-692-3191 or visit [give.macu.edu](http://give.macu.edu).



What's  
Next?

- JAN 11-15** Welcome Week
- JAN 12** Traditional Classes Begin
- FEB 16** Celebration of Cultures
- FEB 24-25** Evangel Experience
- MAR 1-4** Spiritual Emphasis Week
- MAR 14-18** Spring Break
- MAR 24-25** MACU MASH
- APR 27** Academic Awards
- MAY 7** Commencement