

MID-AMERICAN

THE MAGAZINE OF MID-AMERICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



Dream Gala CELEBRATING 5 YEARS

SPRING 2020

Dream Bigger. Do Greater.

MACU.EDU



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT


Dr. John Fozard, President



One of our recent chapel speakers emphasized the Greek tense of the word “go” in Jesus’ Great Commission, found in Matthew 28. He reminded the campus that Jesus’ command “Go ye into all the world and make disciples...” is literally translated, “As you are going...”

What does that “going” look like for you? I know what it looks like on our campus.

Simon and Joseph are two senior soccer players who were a part of the team that nabbed MACU’s first-ever NCCAA National Championship win. Both men will receive their diplomas in May. They have not just sat around celebrating a great season. They are taking their skills and faith into a local Christian school where they influence and disciple younger soccer teams.

Dr. Cliff Sanders is traveling to Israel. His “as you are going” will look quite different from his usual standing in the classroom to teach. Working with our technology staff, Dr. Sanders will livestream his teaching from the actual biblical locations where Jesus taught.

Our faculty and staff worked hard to “go make disciples” when applying for a federal distance learning grant. Drs. Kihega and Fowlkes envisioned the possibility of teaching math and science to rural public schools in Oklahoma. They believe that following Jesus means reaching the “underserved.” These faculty and staff members are sharing their faith, technology and academic support to public school teachers and young students. They are inspiring these children to “Dream Bigger” and “Do Greater.” Our science, teacher education and math students will also join these professors in living out the love of Jesus and teaching children through a Judeo-Christian perspective.

In this issue, you will read how God opened doors for service that Larry Speelman, a Gulf Coast Bible College alum, experienced “as he was going.” Larry’s story reminds us that God often creates new ministries and discipleship opportunities that to us seem as unexpected, even though Jesus has been preparing men like Larry for “such a time as this.”

As MACU looks to the future, we will continue to prepare called and courageous people who will leave their homelands to go and become career missionaries. However, we find a fresh and compelling wind of the Spirit that is inspiring our students and faculty to “go” in new ways and into countries where MACU has never been before.

We are rejoicing that through our distance learning, we are coming alongside local church leaders and business professionals to support and train these disciples right where they live and work, in their culture and many times with courses in their native language.

Whether it is delivering online courses into nations known for their atheism or seeing graduates enter the marketplace with a hunger to know true life and purpose, MACU envisions a new decade of “as you are going.”

We are committed to using all divine opportunities to employ honorable methods and technology to innovatively impact this world for Jesus Christ! We are grateful for your continued prayers and financial partnerships.

TOGETHER WE ARE GOING.... to make disciples!

Dream Bigger. Do Greater.

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COVER PHOTO

Every year, the Dream Scholarship Gala raises vital funds for student scholarships. The fifth annual Dream Gala will be held April 2, 2020, at the Petroleum Club in downtown Oklahoma City. Visit www.macu.edu/dreamgala for more information.



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WATCH MACU CHAPEL LIVE EVERY
WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY AT 10 A.M.

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MACU business professor Dr. Jesus Sampedro, his wife Gaby and their daughters show their school spirit on the court of Chesapeake Energy Arena. During Thunder Day, MACU faculty, staff and students played basketball and dodgeball on the Thunder court.



COMMENCEMENT 2020



MACU is excited to announce that Brian Alarid, President and Founder of America Prays and World Prays, will address the graduating class of 2020 as the commencement speaker.

America Prays unites believers, churches and pastors in 24/7 prayer around the world. Alarid has 26 years of experience in pastoral ministry and executive leadership and is the founding pastor of Passion Church in Albuquerque, N.M.

He previously served as a Regional Manager for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Alarid has preached the Gospel and trained thousands of leaders in 17 nations through conferences, churches, crusades, prayer rallies, television and radio.

Recently, America Prays launched its Oklahoma chapter, which sees hundreds of local churches, businesses and individuals unite in prayer every day for the greater good of the state.

For more information about Alarid's work with America Prays, visit www.americaprays.org.

Honoring DR. JAMES BURCHETT



Dr. James C. Burchett's service to Mid-America Christian University goes back to the early years of the university's history when the school was in Houston. Then President Dr. John Conley often had Burchett as a guest speaker during the annual Ministers' Refresher Institutes.

In 2001, Burchett accepted a Trustee position at a time when the university was in a great financial crisis. At the time, he was serving as the Vice President of Share Financial Services, Inc., as well as being an interim pastor and evangelist.

"Dr. Burchett served for a decade during some of the most challenging years in the school's history," recalls MACU President Dr. John Fozard. "Jim came on the board when we needed Trustees of great faith and expertise for financial management. At the time, we had over \$10 million in promissory notes."

Over several years, Burchett built relationships with the university's noteholders and even convinced supporters to refinance those notes at lower interest rates to enable the school to emerge out of debt. Burchett also influenced Share Financial Services, Inc. to conduct a capital campaign that was critical to the university maintaining its accreditation.

"No President has had a greater friend, prayer partner and faithful Trustee than the example Dr. James Burchett expressed during his decade of board service," Fozard said. "In 2006, when the university became debt-free, Jim was celebrating what he describes to this day as a 'modern miracle!'"

Wishing to honor Burchett for a legacy of service to the Church of God and to MACU, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted at its fall meeting to bestow the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. The degree will be presented during the May 2020 Commencement.



EVANGELS WIN FIRST-EVER NCCAA

National Championship

TO END HISTORIC 2019 SEASON



RODRIGO ALBUQUERQUE

Sophomore forward Rodrigo Albuquerque was named the NCCAA Tournament's Most Outstanding Player.

The MACU men's soccer team jumped out to a fast start and never looked back as the Evangels topped Grace College (Ind.) 5-0 in the NCCAA Division I Championship match at the Austin-Tindall Sports Complex on Dec. 7, 2019.

Entering the NCCAA National Championships as the No. 1 seed, MACU proved they belonged with a dominant victory from start to finish, winning the first-ever NCCAA National Championship match in program history.

"It's an incredible feeling," said head coach Mitchell Sowerby. "The boys talked all year about wanting to compete at the highest level and wanting to put MACU on the map. We're proud to do it for MACU because we've got so much support back home. After getting into the national tournament, we wanted to prove that we were one of the top teams in the country, and I think we did that."

The Evangels put together an inspired effort in their NCCAA Championship run, playing with heavy hearts without senior forward Simon Van Rheeden following MACU's 3-2 win over Piedmont International in the first match of pool play. The senior forward from the Netherlands was hospitalized after the match, and doctors discovered he had tumors located behind his eye. Van Rheeden was immediately flown back to his home country for further testing and treatment.

"Even though he wasn't with us in person, we felt his presence," said Sowerby about the senior leader. "We wanted to win this one for Simon. It's what he wanted. He texted us over the last few days, telling us that we need to get the job done. He's a great guy and everyone on the team loves him. We love him and are proud of him and I'm just glad we got the job done for him."

The championship win ended a historic season for the MACU men's soccer program. With a record-breaking 20 wins, the team finished 20-3-1 while setting several new offensive and defensive records throughout the 2019 campaign.



ESPORTS AT MACU

- VARSITY SPORTS PROGRAM
- SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE
- ALIENWARE GAMING DESKTOPS
- DESIGNATED GAMING CENTER
- TEAM-BASED COMPETITION

MACU LEVELS UP WITH NEW ESPORTS PROGRAM

MACU has joined the growing world of collegiate gaming with a new esports program set to begin this year.

"We are excited to add varsity esports to our list of team sports available to MACU students," said Chief Operating Officer Jody Allen. "MACU has a long history of success in winning national championships in athletics, and we expect to develop one of the top esports programs in the country."

Esports will become the eighth athletics program offered at MACU, joining men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, baseball, softball and volleyball.

"We have students who love playing basketball or soccer. Some students have a passion for singing or theater," Allen said. "We also have students who have a passion for video games, and we want to tap into that talent and help them excel as students while doing an activity they enjoy."

As a part of the NACE (National Association of Collegiate Esports), MACU competes in four games: League of Legends, Overwatch, Super Smash Bros. and Rocket League.

For the inaugural 2020-21 season, the MACU esports team will be coached by Daniel Peaslee, who brings to the table a lifelong love of video games — as well as a passion for MACU. Peaslee is a 2010 graduate of the university and has worked in the campus Student Success Center for two years.

"I'm excited that the esports program is here," Peaslee said. "It's

an amazing opportunity to enhance the student experience and represent the values of our faith and MACU in a new arena."

Peaslee, who describes himself as a lifelong gamer, has a robust knowledge of gameplay on various systems. His specialization is the varsity esports game Super Smash Bros. Ultimate for the Nintendo Switch.

"Combining the experiences of my high school athletic competitions with my passions for gaming and developing students makes me feel like I have the best job on campus," Peaslee said.

Scholarship opportunities will be available for esports athletes, and Allen said they will be held to the same standards of excellence expected of other MACU student-athletes.

To facilitate the new esports program, MACU has built a state-of-the-art esports lab fully equipped with Alienware gaming desktops and Nintendo Switch consoles. As the sport grows, Allen says MACU and its facilities intend to grow with it.

"Esports has quickly become a worldwide sport and will soon surpass viewership of all professional sports combined," he said. "We intend to offer the premier varsity program not just in Oklahoma, but in the country."

For more information about competitive gaming at MACU, please contact Daniel Peaslee at 405-691-3127 or visit www.macu.edu/esports.





Hop on the **FastTrack** to Your Master's Degree

Responding to the increased number of employment opportunities requiring a master's degree, MACU now offers a program which allows students to begin work on a master's degree while completing their bachelor's degree.

MACU College of Adult and Graduate Studies Dean Dr. J Hall explained, "Our new FastTrack program is a 4+1 opportunity that creates a path through which students can complete both an undergraduate and master's degree in 5 years."

Hall said undergraduate students may take up to four graduate courses which can then be applied toward their master's degree. With these courses, the student would then be within a year — or less — away from completing a master's degree.

The program allows undergraduate students in any discipline to pursue a Master of Business Administration or Master of Arts in Leadership. Undergraduate students studying teacher education may also use the program to pursue a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction.

"We recognize that a graduate degree is becoming the entry-level expectation for many types of employment," Hall said. "We created this program to help students get this degree quickly, increasing their opportunity and viability in the workforce. Additionally, providing this accelerated path to a graduate degree saves students time and money."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, an increasing number of Americans are pursuing master's degrees — perhaps because more employers are looking for candidates with advanced degrees. The Bureau reported 13.1 percent of adults over age 25 have an advanced degree, compared with 8.6 percent in 2000.

Hall said he thinks the FastTrack program could be particularly beneficial to students who plan to be teachers. "Having a master's in education opens a lot of doors," Hall said. "And it means a pay increase right out of the gate for a new teacher."

As an example, in the Oklahoma City school district, the annual salary for a regular first-year teacher with a master's degree is \$1,290 more than the salary of a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree. Those numbers vary by district.

The new FastTrack program also allows for students to complete their graduate degrees at a reduced cost as students take graduate courses to meet undergraduate requirements.

Available to both traditional and adult students, courses are offered 100 percent online for all programs or one night a week on-ground for the MBA and Master of Arts in Leadership programs.

Enrollment is now open for the upcoming semester. To learn more about MACU's exciting new FastTrack program, visit www.macu.edu/fasttrack or call 888-888-2341.



Using MACU's new FastTrack program, undergraduate students may take up to four graduate courses, which can then be applied toward their master's degree.



Dr. Jason James is the superintendent of Alex Public Schools, one of three rural Oklahoma districts that will benefit from a new partnership with MACU.

ATOMS PROJECT BRINGS STEM DISTANCE LEARNING TO THREE OKLAHOMA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

There are plenty of resources in place for high schoolers and college students who are interested in STEM fields — but unless children begin their study of science, technology, engineering and math topics sooner, that education may come too late to foster a career.

MACU is helping fill that vital gap in several rural Oklahoma school districts through its Access to Online Math and Science (ATOMS) rural development project. Through ATOMS, MACU seeks to improve teaching, learning and the self-efficacy of students and teachers in STEM fields.

Last winter, MACU received a \$211,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help fund the ATOMS project. With that money, MACU will provide STEM distance education to three Oklahoma school districts: Alex Public Schools, Peggs Public Schools and Stilwell Public Schools.

“Our role in this is, we have video streaming technology using the MACU campus as a hub for extending ourselves through teaching lessons synchronously with elementary school students and teachers,” said School of Teacher Education Director Dr. Vickie Hinkle.

Through use of Zoom conferencing services, MACU teacher education students will create and teach lessons to third through sixth graders in the three districts. Hinkle said that by bringing

STEM education to rural schools, more Oklahoma children will see themselves as being successful in STEM fields.

“So many people don’t feel comfortable with math and science as much as they do English and literature,” she said. “If you reach them younger, they can build that self-efficacy and confidence in learning math and science.”

Funding from the grant has enabled MACU to purchase video conferencing software, iPads and SMART Boards for the classrooms — technology that the schools would not normally receive through state funds.

Many school districts receive funding based on tax pay. In rural areas of the state, that could mean that hundreds of students don’t have access to the same technology as those who live in more urban areas.

The ATOMS project will be fully implemented this fall. As the program takes off, the university intends to reapply for the grant so that more Oklahoma school districts can be benefited.

“I’m just excited about it,” said Hinkle. “When the Lord starts something, you never know how it’s going to unfold, but it’s usually better than anything you could have imagined. He chose us to receive this opportunity for a reason, and we want to do Him proud.”

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DREAM SCHOLARSHIP GALA

MACU is proud to announce the fifth annual Dream Scholarship Gala to be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 2, at the Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City.

MACU Board of Trustees member Marsha Reeder will serve as the guest speaker for an evening of dining, music and inspiration that raises dollars for vital student scholarships.

Reeder currently serves as co-pastor at Church of God Sarasota in Sarasota, Florida.

More than 90 percent of MACU students receive some sort of financial assistance. Because of the support of donors at the Dream Scholarship Gala and throughout the year, the university is able to help many of those students achieve their educational dreams through financial scholarships.

Tickets for the gala are available for purchase online at dreamgala.macu.edu. One hundred percent of funds raised will go toward MACU's annual fund for student scholarships. All gifts are tax deductible.

In addition to individual tickets for sale, a limited number of sponsorships and corporate tables are available. For more information about the Dream Scholarship Gala or to purchase tickets, please visit dreamgala.macu.edu or contact the Office of University Advancement at 405-692-3191.

SAVE
THE
DATE

6 P.M.

THURSDAY

APRIL 2

THE
PETROLEUM
CLUB

OKLAHOMA
CITY

DREAMGALA.
MACU.EDU

FEATURED
SPEAKER:



MARSHA
REEDER



BURKO BROTHERS

For the Burko brothers, MACU is more than just a university — it's a family tradition.

"I enjoy being in school with my brother," said Daniel Burko. "We grew up close. Everything we did, we did together."

Now, they're doing life together — not just as brothers and roommates, but as young men who are growing in their walks with God some 1,300 miles away from their home in Sarasota, Fla.

Daniel Burko, a senior majoring in ministry leadership, said that he has matured in his walk with Christ as well as in his professional goals since enrolling at MACU four years ago. He credits the university for preparing him to be an impactful leader in his future career.

"The way MACU models Christian leadership is outstanding," Daniel Burko said. "President [John] Fozard has an incredible impact on the business community in Oklahoma City, and his impact in the Church of God is probably second to none."

He said, "The leadership of President Fozard and other faculty and staff members on campus is fueled by a desire to not only grow others but also grow themselves."

"It overflows into the lives of students," he said. "I think the reason I was able to grow and be fed here is because of how seriously the staff and faculty take those aspects of growth for themselves."

Although he's only been at MACU for six months, business major Dallas Burko said the university has already had the selfsame effect on his growth.

"I already feel more comfortable in living out my faith on my own more than I ever have," he said. "I can worship freely at MACU. People don't judge you here."

The Burko brothers aren't the first members of their family with MACU ties. Their grandparents, Larry and Che-Che Mobley, graduated from Gulf Coast Bible College; their mother, Marsha Reeder, serves as a member of the MACU Board of Trustees and is a campus-favorite chapel speaker.

This year, Reeder will also serve as the keynote speaker for MACU's fifth annual Dream Scholarship Gala. It's an opportunity that her sons hope supporters of the university won't miss.

"Who I am today is because of my mom," Dallas Burko said. "She could sit with me at McDonald's and, out of the blue, she'd pull out a napkin and a pen and write something down that totally changed my life — that's just the kind of person she is. She hears everything from God and the Holy Spirit uses her to minister to others."

Daniel Burko agreed.

"She is always trying to make sure she's doing the next right thing," he said. "I have no doubt that my mom can go out there and deliver a message that will move the hearts of the men and women in their seats. She's a huge fan of MACU, but even more than that, she's a huge fan of God."

Seats and sponsorship opportunities are still available for the Dream Scholarship Gala. For more information, visit dreamgala.macu.edu or call 405-692-3191.

MACU Partners with Barnes
and Noble College to Offer

New Textbook Services



AROUND
CAMPUS

Expanded textbook services, an easy-to-use voucher system and price matching are some of the biggest perks coming to the MACU bookstore thanks to a new partnership with Barnes and Noble College.

Barnes and Noble College, a subsidiary of the popular bookstore chain, is a leading operator of college bookstores in the U.S. MACU students have a lot to look forward to with Barnes and Noble College as the new campus textbook provider, including:

- Significant savings with competitive pricing and guaranteed price matches to Amazon
- Free shipping on orders over \$49

- A personalized website and book buying experience that gives students control over purchase options that fit their needs and preferences
- 100% online textbook purchases

MACU's on-campus store will no longer sell physical books, but will house the university's Spirit Store, featuring official MACU clothing, accessories and general merchandise as well as snacks and refreshments.

Through Barnes and Noble College, students will utilize a new voucher system that will allow the integration of financial aid for easy textbook purchases. Barnes and Noble College will offer the purchase of physical and digital editions of textbooks as well as used books and rental options.

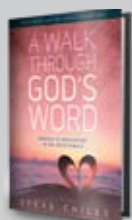
GOOD FRIENDS AND GOOD BOOKS

BOOKS BY MACU ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



**Women's
Ministry:
A Place
to Begin**
by Crystal
Colp

Last year, MACU alum Crystal Colp inspired hundreds with her testimony at the Dream Scholarship Gala. In her book *Women's Ministry: A Place to Begin*, Mrs. Colp invites women to pray, journal, dream and listen together to grow their ministry. Her book provides an excellent resource to those who are looking to start or grow a women's ministry.



**A Walk
Through
God's Word**
by Rev.
Steve Chiles

Shartel Church of God pastor and proud MACU alum Rev. Steve Chiles recently published *A Walk Through God's Word*, a heartfelt devotional that promises to take readers through the Bible by use of a hundred devotionals that highlight some of the greatest stories and most inspiring words. If you've ever found yourself lost as you try to read through the entire Bible or you're looking for a new and refreshing way to wade in Scripture, take *A Walk Through God's Word* with Rev. Chiles.



**The
Optimism
of Grace**
by Dr. Cliff
Sanders

MACU School of Ministry Chair and Professor Dr. Cliff Sanders titled his second book *The Optimism of Grace* because of the nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sanders exposes the reader to Wesley's vibrant optimism as to what grace can accomplish in one's life and how one may be transformed and live optimistically as a recipient of God's manifold grace.



YOU'RE GOING SOMEWHERE

Let MACU Help Get You There!

If you are looking for an accelerated education option that will help you stay current in your job or help you stand out among other candidates as you pursue a new career, a certificate from MACU might be the perfect choice for you.

MACU's 100% online certificate programs vary from 12-24 hours in length. Students who pursue a certificate are eligible for financial aid.

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- Criminal Investigation
- Financial Core Accounting

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

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- International Business
- Educational Leadership and Administration
- Management Accounting
- Health Care Management
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Human Resources



WORLD EQUESTRIAN CENTER

Speelman also serves as chaplain at the World Equestrian Center in Wilmington, where his relationship with CEO and owner Roby Roberts began.



LARRY SPEELMAN

When Rev. Larry Speelman enrolled at Gulf Coast Bible College in 1984, he didn't fit the typical profile of a college student — but then again, Speelman's life and ministry has been anything but ordinary.

Then a 20-something husband and father of two little girls, Speelman said he never planned on furthering his education after high school. But after touring the campus with Rev. Claude Robold, former MACU Board of Trustees Chairman, he felt God calling him to the school.

In a leap of faith, Speelman packed up his young family and everything they owned in a small U-Haul trailer and made the move from Wilmington, Ohio, to Houston to attend the school. He said it was a great time in his life, albeit a difficult one. "I didn't have enough money when we got there to even take care of the gas and the first month's rent, but God always found a way to provide for us," he said. "It was a huge transition to go to Houston and leave everything behind, but when God puts a call on your life, you know it's what you're supposed to do."

Speelman said the family never missed a meal and eventually found stability. They even made the move to Oklahoma City with the university in 1985, and Speelman graduated from the newly-renamed Mid-America Bible College three years later with his degree in pastoral ministry.

He pastored a church in Colorado for five years after graduation, then held management positions in distribution maintenance for two companies before returning to full-time ministry in 2008.

Back home in Wilmington, he had been pastoring a local congregation for ten years when he answered an urgent call to prayer made by Roby Roberts, the CEO of freight shipping company R+L Carriers and owner of the World Equestrian Center, both headquartered in the small city.

Speelman was one of several local pastors invited by Roberts to rally around a young girl fighting a losing battle to brain cancer. Although the little girl lost her life, the impact she left behind prompted Roberts to surrender his own life to Jesus Christ.

He began to organize weekly services at the World Equestrian Center, with local pastors — including Speelman — rotating every Sunday.

The services started as something small, normally with groups of ten or less in attendance. But there was an apparent need for something on a larger scale, so R+L Carriers created the company's first corporate chaplain position, a role that Speelman currently serves in.

"Roby called me up and he said, 'It's you. I know it's supposed to be you. I don't want to take you from your church, but I sensed that you're not really happy where you are and you don't feel like you're doing what you need to be doing,'" he said. "He told me, 'We're going to take a lot of people to heaven and we're going to have a good time doing it.'"





On the third floor of the company's headquarters, Speelman holds weekly Bible studies and frequently invites employees and customers into his office for prayer.

This fall marked Speelman's first anniversary as full-time chaplain with R+L Carriers, which he described as a dream job.

"I've always enjoyed doing ministry that isn't necessarily packaged inside a church building," he said. "I am living a dream of ministry. I am doing exactly what I know God wants me to do; I am in the center of His Will. I am so blessed and so content."

R+L Carriers has over 13,000 employees across the U.S. and ships across all fifty states, as well as in Canada, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Dominican Republic.

"It's an amazing thing. People are blown away when they come into the building and they get introduced to the chaplain," he said, adding that he believes it's something that every company could benefit from.

"I have a lot of people in my office on a regular basis who are struggling. Life is tough. Some folks don't have a spiritual background. They don't have a church family or a support system. So when they go through hard times, there is no place for them to turn. I have become a pastor to a lot of these people who don't have a church home."

Speelman said it makes a real difference to be able to counsel with and pray for people.

"I don't think I've had anybody turn me down to pray with them," he said. "It's a different kind of ministry."

Every Wednesday morning, Speelman holds Bible studies for R+L Carriers employees before they begin the work day.

A hospital-style chapel is currently being built next to his office, complete with a custom cross, stained glass window and an altar that will allow employees and customers to pray.

The company makes Bibles and wooden crosses available to

people who would like to have them. The wooden crosses are made out of olive wood from Bethlehem and small enough to fit in the palm of someone's hand when they need comfort or a reminder of God's love for them.

"People don't turn down a cross," Speelman said. "They'll turn down a tract, but they won't turn down a cross."

He recalled giving one of the tiny crosses to a waitress, who began to cry and confessed to him that she was ready to give up.

"It's just amazing what God will do with some very simple tools, through sharing His love with his people," he said. It's part of a company culture that sets R+L Carriers apart from most big corporations — and Speelman loves being a part of it.

"I am in awe that I get to be a part of this. This is not anything I planned. I am so blessed to have this position and to be here and meet all the different kinds of people I get to meet," he said.

"This is a trucking company. We have some of the most diverse people you're ever going to meet, and we have a great time getting to know one another and understand everyone's different walks of life. God is doing some really neat things in peoples' lives through us, and it's an honor and a blessing to be a piece of it all."

On Sundays, you will find Speelman at the World Equestrian Center, where he holds two services for the exhibitors and the general public to attend. He shares a message from God's Word and prays with those who have needs. This has become the highlight of his week.

You can find Speelman's messages at www.worldquestriancenter.com under the Online Worship Service button.



Speelman, who graduated from Mid-America Bible College in 1988, was hired as the corporate chaplain of R+L Carriers, a freight shipping company based in Wilmington, Ohio.



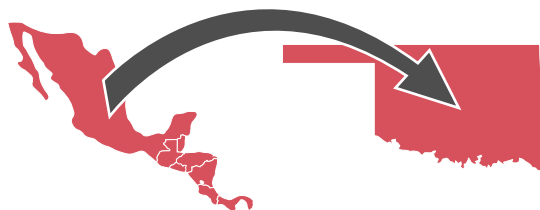
Speelman has worked at R+L Carriers for a year. The company is currently building a chapel next to his office, which will be complete with a custom cross, stained glass window and altar.

CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSE CAMPUS

On Feb. 19, MACU held the first-ever Celebration of Cultures. During the chapel hour, students, faculty and staff members representing different cultures and countries spoke on their homes and what brought them to MACU. After services, a cultural festival was held in the Student Center where students ran booths to share their culture through food, music, dance, art, language and other means.



MACU alum Javier Hernandez, who was born in Mexico City, spoke during chapel services as a part of the Celebration of Cultures. Hernandez recently became the first undocumented attorney in the state of Oklahoma.



Students, faculty and staff members visited cultural booths in the MACU Student Center, sampling traditional cuisine and learning about other cultures from their peers.





NATIVE AMERICAN

Native American student Meredith Davis, a member of the Cherokee tribe, showcased traditional artwork and shared corn and beef stew with frybread.



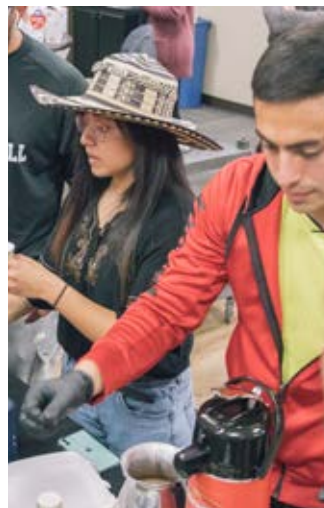
CHINA

Chinese student Jie Gao was joined by her family members to represent their culture with dumplings, tea sets and other traditional items.



MEXICO

Students representing Mexico served traditional rice pudding with cinnamon and brought sweet breads from a panaderia, or Mexican bakery.



COLOMBIA

Two MACU students representing Colombia served traditional food donated by El Fogón De Edgar, a Colombian restaurant in south Oklahoma City.



GERMANY

German students Simon Wieschemann and Fabian Forisch represented their home country with sausage and pretzels served with spicy mustard dip provided by the Royal Bavaria in Moore, Okla.



BALKANS

MACU database specialist Slađan Kavedžić spoke during chapel hour on his walk with God. Slađan, who came to the U.S. from Bosnia & recently completed his naturalization to become a citizen, serves as a part of MACU's 1:1 discipleship program.



School of Music Co-Chairs

Announced

This spring semester marked the beginning of a new era for MACU's storied School of Music as professors Kim Arnold and Dillan Francis stepped into co-chair positions.

A cornerstone of the university since 1953, the MACU School of Music has produced worship leaders and musicians for generations. Now, Arnold and Francis are excited for what the future holds for the program as they settle into their new roles.

"When we were presented with this opportunity, we were ecstatic," Arnold said. "We work very well together."

Because they come from two different sides of music — Arnold is an accomplished pianist while Francis is a practiced clarinetist — the pair says their co-chair status allows them to build upon one another's strengths and balance out individual weaknesses to create a strong foundation for students.

"We're seeing everything that needs to be seen, leading in directions that lead to our strengths and developing programs where those strengths lie," said Arnold.

She and Francis have been a part of MACU's music department for a combined nine years. During that time, they have seen the program through exponential growth — something they hope to foster as they lead the School of Music into a new era under their combined leadership.

"As you look into church history, music has always been a foundational part of the church," said Francis. "A lot of times, we tend to separate it out as the music portion and the Word portion. Part of our vision — and we believe this fits into what MACU does with music — is that it's all one service."

He said he envisions a church service where worship flows into the pastor's sermon and serves to lift up God's Word — and that is the type of music ministry he and Arnold want to prepare MACU music students for.

"We want music and the rest of the service to work together for the glory of God," he said.

Arnold said she and Francis have a unique opportunity to not only work towards a cohesive worship experience, but also to touch young adults at a pivotal point in their development as musicians and Christians.

"They come to us already with a knowledge of music and often they have a church background too," Arnold said. "When they get to us, we are able to help form them and continue to shape their future goals through a Christian worldview."

She said that as they go through their collegiate careers, there will inevitably be hardships, but that MACU faculty have the privilege of coming alongside students and showing them how to navigate life's choppy waters from a spiritual perspective.

"We can walk with them and help them see that God is with them every step of the way," Arnold said. "Because of the bumps in the road we face together, they'll know that when they graduate and establish themselves in their adulthood, they'll have a foundation of knowing where to turn when trials come."

It's an opportunity that Francis said is one of his favorite parts of his career.

"We get to break and mold and expand upon that worldview and say, 'you aren't limited to just this,'" he said. "Too often, especially in music, we believe that you have to work in a full-time church capacity to be a Christian musician, and that's simply not the case."

Francis said there are many other ways to serve God as a musician, from creating and editing music to teaching music or sound design in schools.

"We always challenge our students to go farther than they think they should," he said. "We also teach them to open themselves up to all sorts of possibilities. I thought I was going to be a high school band director, and here I am in a college setting. You have to be willing to go wherever God leads you."

Arnold and Francis both hold master's degrees in music. Both are currently pursuing their Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in music from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Oklahoma, respectively.



MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE



THREE YEARS AGO, Crossings Community Church in Oklahoma City first paid the way for a group of MACU ministry students to visit the Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C.

Thanks to generous donors who wished to continue what Crossings started, the trip has become a tradition in the university's School of Ministry. Chair and Professor Dr. Cliff Sanders said it serves as a highlight of the semester for his students.

"It's an unforgettable experience for our students," Sanders said. "Every student has told me that it's the trip of a lifetime."

Over the course of three days, students and chaperones explore Washington D.C. and its rich history. The group visits important landmarks such as Arlington National Cemetery as well as numerous monuments and museums, but the bulk of the trip is focused on the Museum of the Bible, which opened in 2017.

The museum's permanent collection contains more than 1,150 biblical artifacts and texts, with an additional 2,000 items on loan from other institutions and collections. Combined, the museum has amassed one of the largest assemblies of biblical artifacts and texts in the world.

It is so massive that Sanders said a day in the museum barely begins to cover the many exhibits contained within. Some of his favorite highlights include archives of printed Bibles throughout history, rare documents of the Old and New Testaments and a visual display that illustrates how many languages the Bible has been translated into — a sobering illustration of how many civilizations have never known the Word of God.

"They bring our students into that room to show what we have ahead of us to have God's Word in every person's primary language," Sanders said. "It's staggering to think of all of the people who have no access to Scripture in their primary language. It emphasizes our own global mission of equipping our students to go out into the world and make an impact for Christ."

This year, about ten students will make the trip to Washington D.C. in April. It's an experience that Sanders said they won't soon forget.



EVANGELS BASEBALL SET TO OPEN 2020 SEASON ON STRONG NOTE

The MACU baseball team will be looking to turn some heads during the course of the 2020 season.

After being picked to finish sixth in the Sooner Athletic Conference preseason poll, the Evangels opened the season with an inspiring pitching performance against Bethany College in a four-game series.

"We're really excited about this upcoming season," said MACU Head Coach Adrian Savedra. "We feel like we have a really good team and have our sights set high. We believe we can compete to win a Sooner Athletic Conference championship."

Savedra said he feels good about the team's pitching and defense.

"That's the strength of our team, but we think our bats will produce well enough to carry us through the season," he said. "I believe that we will be getting some great leadership from our core returners. But I also believe many of our newcomers are going to come in and make a big impact on the team this season."

MACU opened Sooner Athletic Conference play at home on Thursday, Feb. 27, against the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.



EVANGELS SOFTBALL ENTERS 2020 SEASON WITH HIGH EXPECTATIONS

MACU's softball team will look to make a push for its first-ever NCAA National Championship in the 2020 season.

Coming off a 32-19 record a year ago, the Evangels were picked to finish third in the Sooner Athletic Conference Preseason Poll.

"We are hoping to improve on last year's season," said Head Coach Robert Wakefield. "We have a wealth of experience on this team with eight seniors and four juniors."

Headlining the Evangels pitching will be two-time NCAA All-American Regan Martin and senior McKenzie Smith.

MACU is also bringing back a pair of stellar batters in Hannah Salmon

and Ribbin Anderson-Dorado. An NCAA All-American in 2018, Salmon was the team's top hitter last season.

"We have a wellspring of talent returning at the plate and in the field," Wakefield added. "We will have seniors Jessica Holt, Hannah Salmon, Ribbin Anderson-Dorado and a junior transfer patrolling the outfield. We expect Caitlin Butler, Amber O'Bryant and Brook Hendrickson, along with Kylie Stubbs and Olivia Roberts, to see significant time in the infield."

The Evangels opened the season Feb. 15 with a doubleheader against Crowley's Ridge. Sooner Athletic Conference play at home began Feb. 28 against Central Christian.



EVANGEL MEN'S BASKETBALL MAKE HISTORY WITH RECORD-BREAKING SEASON

With a historic 29-1 record to end the 2019-20 campaign, the No.1-ranked MACU men's basketball program reached new heights this season.

The Evangels closed the regular season with a 75-69 win over Langston University, setting a new NAIA-era program record for most wins in a season.

The new mark surpassed the previous best set by the 2015-16 NAIA National Championship team, who finished the campaign with a 28-9 record.

And for the second time in program history, MACU won the Sooner Athletic Conference (SAC) Championship during Senior Night with a 80-61 victory over Central Christian University.

With a 19-1 record in the SAC, the Evangels joined some elite company: MACU became just the fourth team in SAC history to ever finish with one conference loss and the first since the 2009-10 season.

Earlier in the season, MACU Head Coach Josh Gamblin reached a career milestone in a 73-59 win over No. 10 John Brown University, earning his 100th career victory in the middle of his fifth season as the head coach of the Evangels.

Gamblin was later honored for his 100th career win during a January match against Southwestern Christian University.

"This group has worked extremely hard on and off the court," said Gamblin. "I am proud of their continued effort. The love they have for one another and the university is truly something special. They have been a blessing to coach."



SENIOR FORWARD ALEXIS SHANNON REACHES NEW HEIGHTS IN 2019-20 SEASON

With aspirations of winning the program's third-straight NCCAA National Championship, the MACU women's basketball team ended the season with a 20-10 record overall and a 12-8 finish in the Sooner Athletic Conference (SAC), securing the No. 4 spot.

A huge part of the Evangels' success has been the play of senior forward Alexis Shannon. In her third year with the program, the product of Noblesville, Ind. has continued to climb MACU's all-time scoring list.

Shannon surpassed Joie Mohr for third all-time with a 26-point performance in a 93-84 home win over Southwestern Christian on Jan. 24.

By making a free throw with 24 seconds left against Langston, Shannon scored her 600th point of the season, becoming only the second player

in the NAIA to reach the 600-point plateau in the 2019-20 season. That makes the second time in Shannon's illustrious career to reach the 600-point mark and puts her just 13 points away from tying her career high.

In her fourth season at the helm of the program, Head Coach Hannah Moeller continues to raise the bar for her team as the Evangels have enjoyed unprecedented success under her guidance.

After a record-setting NCCAA National Championship season in 2017-18, Moeller led the Evangels to a repeat crown in 2018-19, and the Evangels set single season program records for wins both overall and in conference play for the second year in a row.

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Remembering Pat Sanders



For more than five decades, Marvin and Pat Sanders led a flourishing ministry that spanned across the states of Texas, Kentucky, Ohio and New Mexico.

Pat Sanders passed away last fall at the age of 86, rejoining her husband of 61 years in heaven. Although the couple is now at home in Christ, their earthly legacy remains — in part thanks to the Patsy Sanders Ministry Scholarship, recently established in Pat Sanders' memory.

"I think she'd be shocked and humbled," said son Cliff Sanders, chair and professor of MACU's School of Ministry. "She'd be thankful that her legacy can impact students who will in turn make an impact on other people."

He said the Sanders family is thrilled by the scholarship in his mother's name.

"My mom was never able to finish college," he said. "Now, she will be able to help other young men and women complete their education."

Cliff Sanders said the scholarship is a continuation of the years-long ministry his father started many years ago after graduating from Gulf Coast Bible College in Houston.

"It's truly a great thing that means a lot to us," he said. "My parents would both be so proud to see that their ministry is being continued, and will be continued for generations of Church of God leaders to come."

The Patsy Sanders Ministry Scholarship helps provide funds for MACU ministry students who might not otherwise be able to attend school. If you would like to contribute to the scholarship, please contact University Advancement at 405-692-3191 or email nevan.white@macu.edu.

You may also give to the Patsy Sanders Ministry Scholarship by donating online at give.macu.edu.



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