

MID-AMERICAN

THE MAGAZINE OF MID-AMERICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



A Time for Celebration

***Dream Bigger.
Do Greater.***

SUMMER 2017
WWW.MACU.EDU



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

PERMIT ME TO TAKE YOU BACK IN TIME. The year is 1968, around two months before the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

From the pulpit of the famed Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the young Reverend King spoke of what he called the “Drum Major Instinct.”

Dr. King said, “There is, deep down within all of us, an instinct. It’s a kind of drum major instinct — a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade, a desire to be first. And it is something that runs a whole gamut of life.”

After discussing the nature of the instinct — its virtues and pitfalls — Dr. King prophetically spoke about the concept in recounting how he would like to be remembered upon his death.

“Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice; say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness and all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won’t have any money to leave behind. I won’t have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind,” he said.

I conceive of these words as expressing a silent prayer, a prayer said by men and women of all races and all ages who have been equipped by the Lord with skills and talents of leadership. It is a prayer that God will direct them to put those skills and talents to use on things of

substance that will make this world a better place, not on the shallow, material things of life that only glorify ourselves.

In this issue, we celebrate people whose leadership and influence demonstrate what it means to “live a committed life!” We celebrate events that lift others up and a legacy of generosity. You will discover how the baton of leadership is passing to graduates and how graduates are inspiring future student enrollment.

We recognize that these celebrations are not an end in themselves. Rather, these celebrations and recognitions are witnesses to what it means to “Dream Bigger” and “Do Greater” for God’s work and glory! Within each article is a testimony to Jesus’ words: “When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required” (Luke 12:48).

This issue celebrates the diversity of influences and faithful believers who have embodied the edifying “Drum Major Instinct!”


Dr. John Fozard, President



Dream Bigger. Do Greater.

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COVER PHOTO

Members of the 2016 NAIA Men's Basketball National Championship team show their pride, degrees and rings at the 2017 MACU Commencement Ceremony.

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Graduates, family, friends, faculty and staff gather to celebrate one of the largest MACU graduating classes at the 2017 MACU Commencement Ceremony.

SECOND

DREAM SCHOOL

142 PLUS
VOLUNTEER HOURS

367
SEATS SOLD

OKLAHOMA CITY CIVIC CENTER MUSIC HALL

ANNUAL DREAMSHIP GALA

\$105,000
RAISED



DREAM MAKER:
LIEUTENANT
GOVERNOR TODD LAMB
RECEIVED THE "DREAM
MAKER" AWARD FOR
ADVANCING THE
CAUSE OF CHRISTIAN
HIGHER EDUCATION.

Save the Date
the
DREAM GALA
04.05.18



Jim Lyon

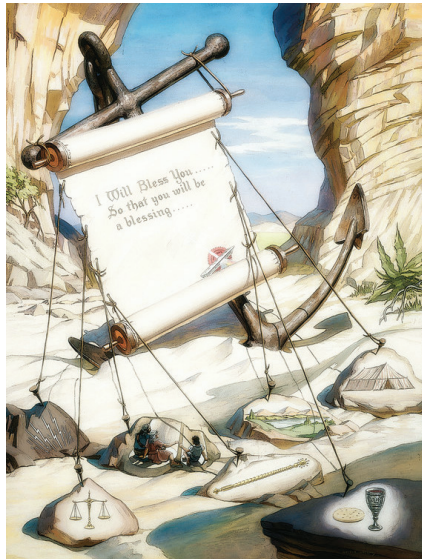
THE CHURCH OF GOD GENERAL DIRECTOR served as the keynote speaker for MACU's semi-annual Spiritual Emphasis Week this spring. Lyon, who became general director of Church of God Ministries in 2013, led a four-day series on reclaiming society from sin. You can view Lyon's sermons by visiting www.macu.edu/watch.

THE Bethel Series

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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SUBSCRIBE, PLEASE VISIT WESLEYANSCHOOL.MACU.EDU.



MACU STUDENTS CELEBRATE SUMMER SERVING CHRIST

While many students use summer months to pause from studies and spend time with friends and family, a few young men and women have elected to travel to churches and organizations across the country for internships.

Internships provide a vital first look into the ministry into which God has called the young men and women of MACU. For students like sophomore James Brooks, a Music and Worship Ministry major, who interned at Shartel Church of God in Oklahoma City during the spring semester, the experience is a perfect complement to the training he gets in the classroom.



"It's been invaluable to me. After putting a year of studies under my belt at MACU and working at Shartel, I've realized how much I've grown. As their youth worship leader, the responsibility was all on me to choose songs, play guitar and sing for these budding Christian boys and girls. It wasn't a weight I carried lightly. The internship helped me grow and realize how the work is done, who I have to communicate with to make things flow smoothly and really just give me a first-hand look at what the position is supposed to be like." - James Brooks

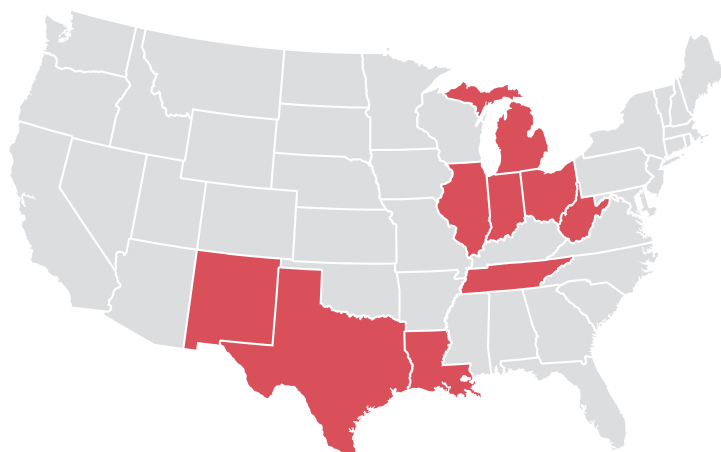
These internships are invaluable to the next generation of Christian leaders. In the classroom, we provide the necessary training – in the internship field, these students get the opportunity to put it to use.

Every summer, students like James selflessly choose to spend their breaks not with seasonal jobs or sunny vacations, but by bettering themselves and others through internships. This sacrificing act comes with

a price: our students traveling both in Oklahoma and across the U.S. accrue many expenses during their summer work, then return to MACU in the fall with financial obligations to face.

Will you consider making a monetary contribution to help provide these young men and women with the scholarship dollars they need? When you give to MACU, your gift – every dollar given – will go directly toward providing scholarship dollars for deserving young students who embody a servant's heart.

In addition to serving in internships across the country, several of our students will travel to the states you see here as part of our camp teams. Please remember them in your prayers this summer.



To help our students today, please visit give.macu.edu. Thank you for your faithful support and giving!



Celebrating ^A Life

It is with heavy hearts we announce the passing of our former First Lady, Peggy Robinson. Mrs. Robinson was the wife of Dr. Forrest Robinson, who served as President of the university for more than a decade. We are thankful to God for the gift of Peggy and her life as a faithful witness for her Lord and her service to God, MACU, the church and to humankind. Please join us as we remember the Robinson family in our prayers during this difficult time.



MATTHEW 10:29 REMINDS US GOD KEEPS HIS EYE ON ALL OF HIS CREATION, SPANNING THE AQUA SPRAWL OF THE SEA TO THE TINIEST BIRD IN THE SKY.

Sparrows, small but busy birds that constantly forage for food, build nests and provide for their young, prove to us that every life has a meaning – and that busy hands and minds promote happy, fulfilling lives.

That's the purpose of The Sparrow Project, a non-profit, faith-based organization based out of Moore, Okla. The Sparrow Project provides a safe environment for post-high school adults with intellectual disabilities, creating a place where these individuals can lead happy and fulfilled lives through job and life skills, creative interests and social activities.

Founder Allison Richey said the idea of The Sparrow Project came to her and other parents of adult children with learning disabilities and handicaps who found themselves in similar situations after their children graduated from Moore Public Schools.

"I quit my job and retired when my daughter turned 22," Richey said. "We stayed home the first year and it was horrible. You can only go shop or go to the Y so many times before you feel like you aren't fulfilled."

Richey and four other parents saw The Sparrow Project officially take flight on April 7, 2016, with a stepping stone craft in her backyard. **Exactly a year later, the group – which had grown exponentially in size – held their classes on the MACU campus for the first time.**

"It's honestly been more than we anticipated," Richey said. "The staff, faculty and student body have been so welcoming. We love being at MACU."

The partnership with MACU and The Sparrow Project first began last fall when the men's and women's soccer teams hosted the Sparrows for a soccer clinic. Co-head soccer coach Zach Bice said that day sparked the conversation that led to the Sparrows' on-campus classes.

"It was an incredible day," Bice said. "Our kids connected so deeply with the Sparrow adults. What they found in the event was so inspiring – it was a God thing."

He said he knew that day was the start of a meaningful partnership between MACU and The Sparrow Project.

"They had a vision and I just thought about how incredible an opportunity it would be for our students," Bice said. "If they could be so deeply impacted in just an hour together, I knew having that kind of influence every day would be a great reward for both our institutions."

And so it has been. The Sparrow Project meets on the MACU campus twice weekly, cooking in classrooms and line dancing in the gym. Their visits are punctuated by chapel services, sports games and high fives shared between Evangelists and Sparrows in the hallways.

"It's a beautiful thing for all of us," Richey said. "I'm so thankful for this partnership with MACU."

For more information about The Sparrow Project, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/TheSparrowProjectMoore. If you are interested in volunteering, email volunteer.coordinator@sparrowprojectmoore.com.



MIKE KEAHBONE

AT 45, MIKE KEAHBONE thought his educational career was irredeemable.

As the senior pastor of Cherokee Hills Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, a devoted husband and father, plus the headpiece of a nationwide speaking ministry, he wasn't sure he would ever be able to go back to school and finish the degree he'd always dreamed of.

"I was cleaning out my desk one day – I never clean out my desk – and I found some of my old college transcripts," Keahbone said.

He'd toyed with the idea of going back to school, but his busy schedule made that dream seem unattainable. Still, Keahbone felt God's presence working within him. He resolved that if he happened to see MACU President Dr. John Fozard at an away men's basketball game down the street from Cherokee Hills, he would talk to him about going to school.

"Lo and behold," Keahbone said, "Dr. Fozard was the first person I saw when I stepped inside the gym."

After approaching and talking to Fozard about continuing his education, Keahbone saw the president's face light up and knew he'd made the right decision.

Now, Keahbone is preparing to tackle his third online class in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies pursuing a degree in Management and Ethics. He said the CAGS program is helping him fulfill a dream that's been in his family for generations.

"The professors are amazing and so helpful," Keahbone said. "There are so many resources MACU has built into

the CAGS program to help you succeed. I have people calling me all the time, seeing how I'm doing, how I'm adjusting, if I need help."

He said his enrollment counselors have a can-do attitude that translates into his schoolwork.

"It's not swim or drown," Keahbone said. "People are there trying to help you swim."

And the effects are immediate. In just the two classes he's completed, Keahbone said he's already learning things he's implemented in his church.

"As a pastor, you have a lot of different roles, ranging from staff management, budgeting and organizational works. It's been really helpful for me personally and professionally."

Even before he decided to finish his degree as an Evangel, Keahbone was no stranger to MACU. As a repeat chapel speaker and leader of this spring's Celebration of Culture, he said he keeps the university close to his heart.

**"GOD'S REALLY USED MACU
IN MY LIFE. I'M SO EXCITED
TO BE A PART OF IT."**



Follow Pastor Keahbone's
Educational Journey! @keahbone

Celebration of Native American Culture

In colorful dances, powerful calls and the pounding of drums, Native American culture filled the MACU campus this spring as the semi-annual **CELEBRATION OF CULTURE** festivities began March 31.

Chapel services kicked off with a visit from members of the Native Praise Choir, a group of approximately 60 women of Native American descent. The singers, affiliated with Indian Baptist congregations throughout Oklahoma, sing for Christ across the world in the languages of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muskogee Creek and Seminole Tribes.

Between traditional Native American songs of Christian faith, the group interwove modern staples like "Amazing Grace" and explained meanings behind some of the more somber pieces, including a song written about the Trail of Tears.

Following the choir's performance, the Oklahoma Fancy Dancers, a professional and highly acclaimed Native American dance troupe, performed several dances along with drums and singing. The MACU faculty, staff and students joined in with warm enthusiasm.

The dancers, decked in brilliantly colored regalia, told stories about the meanings of their routines between performances, including the tale of the famous Butterfly Dance. In her sparkling pink dress, Cricket Rhoads-Connywerdy punctuated her graceful movements with a story of a widow who emerged from mourning with a flapping cape that resembled a butterfly breaking out of its cocoon.

After several performances, Rhoads-Connywerdy hosted a Q&A session on stage, allowing students, faculty and staff members to ask questions ranging from the historical accuracy of the troupe's attire to the nonverbal story told through drums.

Mike Keahbone, senior pastor of Cherokee Hills Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, served as the morning's keynote speaker.

"The heartbeat in MACU's Celebration of Culture event is so amazing," Keahbone said. "It's great to see that mindset towards embracing cultural diversity and a willingness to learn and embrace other cultures. It was an incredible honor for me to speak."

Following the conclusion of chapel services, the MACU family gathered in Café 1412 for Indian tacos and corn soup, allowing time for fellowship and fuel before an afternoon road trip to the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sapulpa, Okla.

BUT THE FESTIVITIES DID NOT STOP THERE.

On April 2, students attended Sunday morning worship services at Cherokee Hills Baptist Church and First Indian Baptist Church of Moore in Moore, Okla., providing opportunities for both integrated and more indigenous experiences.

MACU holds the Celebration of Culture every semester, each time highlighting a different heritage. These services allow the MACU family to better embrace all of God's nations through a broader understanding of His people.

**TWICE A YEAR,
THE CELEBRATION
OF CULTURE
HELPS STUDENTS,
FACULTY AND STAFF
MEMBERS SEE RACE
AND DIVERSITY
THROUGH THE
EYES OF GOD.**

-Dr. Eric Joseph

VICE PRESIDENT FOR
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

TWENTY-SEVENTEEN COMMENCEMENT

ONE OF MACU'S LARGEST GRADUATING CLASSES was celebrated Saturday, May 13 as part of the 66th commencement ceremony at Crossings Community Church in Oklahoma City.

Between songs of celebration and cheers from family members excited to see their student walk across the stage, MACU Board of Trustees member Jeff Russell led the opening foreword.

Six academically excellent grads from the university's two distinct schools were welcomed on stage for their distinguished recognitions, as were reverends Miki Merritt and Richard Mansfield, who received honorary Doctor of Divinity degrees.

As the commencement speaker, GiANT CEO and co-founder Jeremie Kubicek spoke to graduates about how the choices they make will affect this new season of their lives.

"Choices on whom you marry, where you live, what job or career you take, in the company you start or in the partnerships you get involved in — each of these affect the trajectory of your coming years."

He implored the graduating class to cling tight to The Word and not stray from their chosen path.

"You are not those who will lose your way or become callous or weak. You are the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. Begin to lean into who He has made you to be. Know yourself and lead yourself. Build a deep enough relationship that you can truly learn to trust Him — and then your grand finale will come. You have one life and your best years are ahead if you prepare for it."



DISTINGUISHED RECOGNITIONS

College of Arts and
Sciences (CAS)

VALEDICTORIANS

Alana Nicole Miller
Elementary Education

Larissa Ann Runyan
*English: Literary and
Cultural Studies*

SALUTATORIAN

Madison Fowlkes
*Mathematics and Psychology
Multidiscipline*

College of Adult
and Graduate
Studies (CAGS)

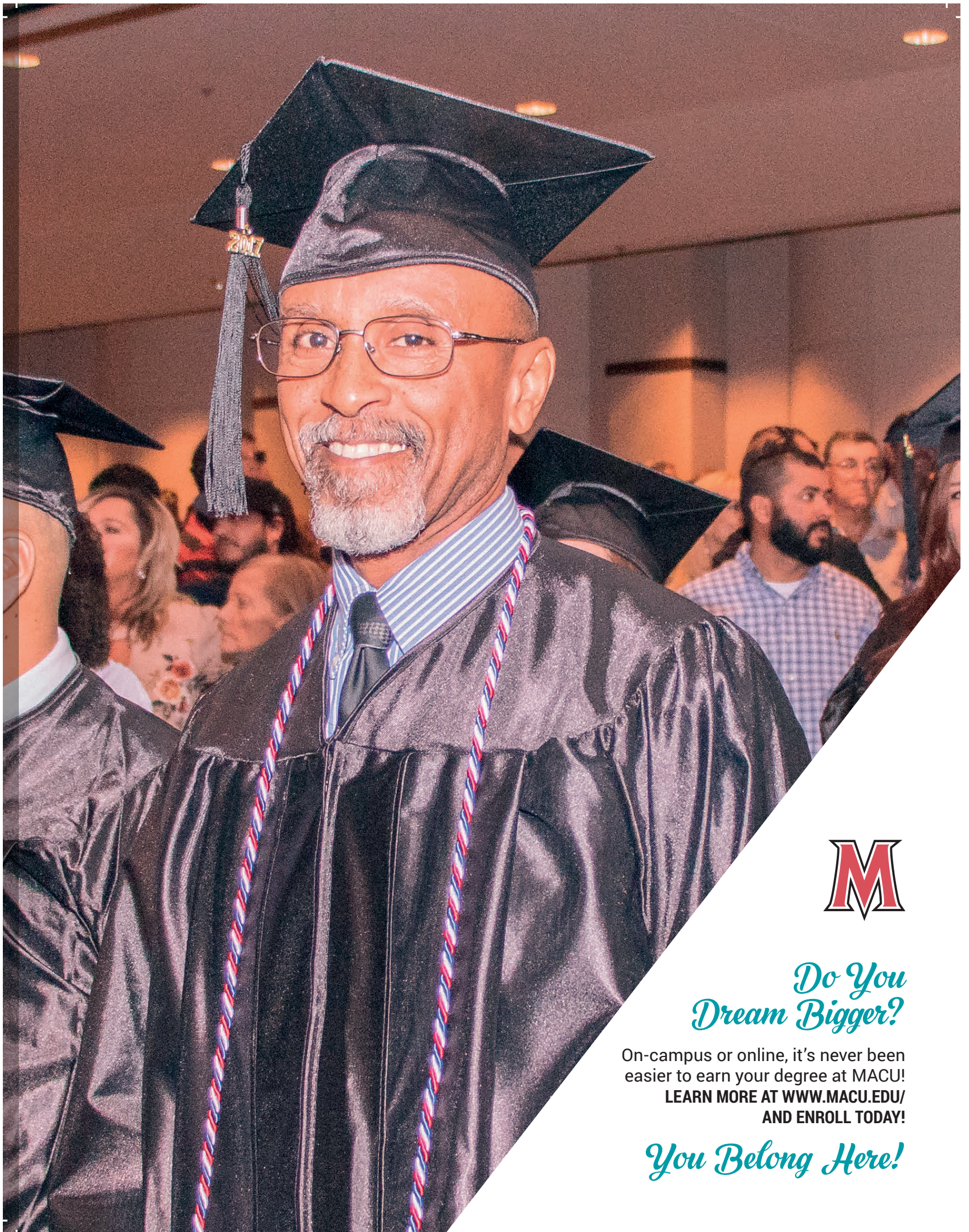
HONOREES, WITH ACADEMIC DISTINCTION

Vincent J. Coale
*Business Administration
and Ethics*

Todd Masters
*Business Administration
and Ethics*

Tarik Boufkiri
Management and Ethics

I would like to offer my sincerest thanks and congratulations to this year's graduating class. Remember to trust in God as He leads you into this new chapter in your life. Your MACU family is proud of your accomplishments!
--John Fozard

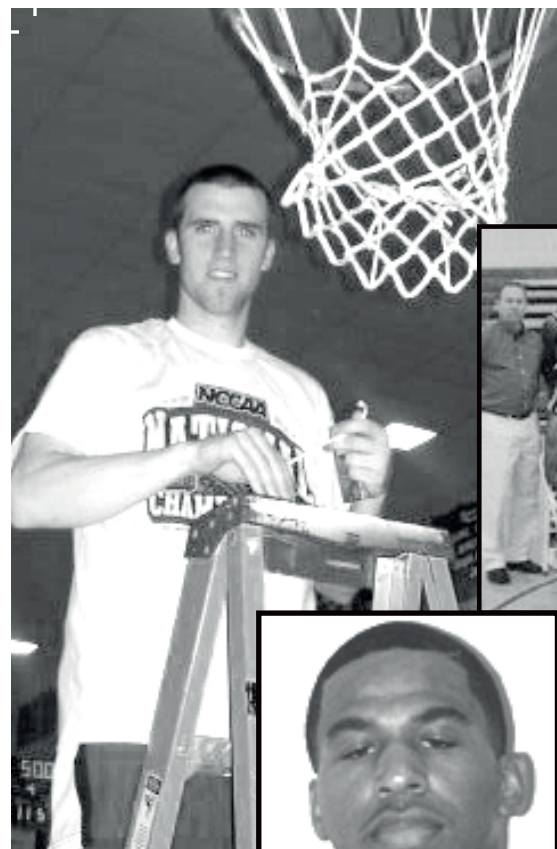


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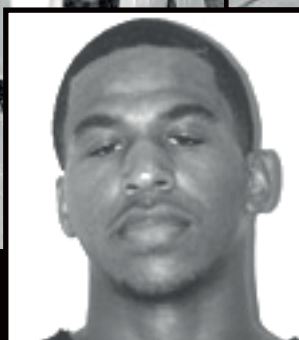
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You Belong Here!

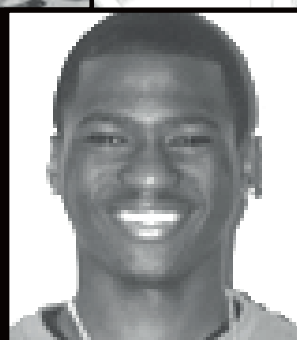


Trace Wilkins
cuts the net.

#55 Jonathan Peaslee
— current missionary
in Columbia with
Athletes in Action



Donald Thorne



Andre McCoy

MACU MIRACLE



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF EVANGEL CHAMPIONS

FOR LEGENDARY COACH WILLIE HOLLEY, it was the game of a career — a career that spans four decades, 813 wins and lands within the top twenty of all divisional levels in college basketball.

As they faced off against a fully loaded Southwestern Christian University team in the NCCAA-Division II national championship, Holley saw his Evangels down by 12 points with a minute and a half to go. There was standing room only in the Gaulke Activity Center that night in 2007 — and Holley could only describe the fans' raucous roars as "deafening."

"It was the loudest gym I've ever been in," he said. "And I've been in a lot of gyms."

The sound exploded as did the Evangels' shot at winning the national championship — MACU's last chance to do so before transitioning to the NAIA. With just over a minute to go, Donald Thorne hit a trey and paved the way for Tracy Wilkins to score three consecutive more, tying the game just ahead of the buzzer. With that last shot made by Wilkins, the 'MACU Miracle' would be forever etched into MACU history.

Andre McCoy remembers that shot well.

"I threw the ball to Wilkins from half court and he came through next, with the game-tying shot," McCoy said. "It was a feeling like I've never felt before."

But even that feeling paled compared to the one when the Evangels dominated the Eagles during the overtime period, becoming national champions with a final score of 112-107.

"I'm a pretty laidback guy," McCoy said. "I try to stay even-keeled. I don't get too excited when things are good or too down when things are bad. **I was completely out of character that night.**"

McCoy wrenched off his jersey, twirling it in the air like a streamer, then took to the stands and rushed to his family first. Ten years later and now an accomplished Christian rapper, he still puts his family first — he's a loving husband and father of four. But after his marriage, the births of his children and his salvation in Jesus Christ, McCoy still ranks the "MACU Miracle" as one of the best moments of his life.

It's a sentiment Thorne echoes.

"I remember looking up at that scoreboard and seeing we were down by 12. A lot of heads were down when we came into the huddle," Thorne said.

He recalls looking at one of his doubtful teammates and grabbing him by the arm.

"I told him, 'It's not over. You have to believe. When you're confronted with trials in your life, you face them with prayer and obedience,'" he said. "You'll always find your way."

Since that night, he's added personal trainer alongside national champion to his list of job titles, but the lessons Holley and his teammates taught him remain steadfast.

"Never quit, never give up and always keep your faith," Thorne said.

Wilkins said that faith is what helped propel the Evangels to victory.

"We always believed we had the talent and that we were the best team in our division," he said. "We were humble enough we knew we had to work hard for it, but we were hungry enough to want it. I think that made a huge difference."

Although his three pointers brought the Evangels back from the brink of defeat and helped carry them to victory, Wilkins said he doesn't feel right taking sole credit for the big win.

"It's always a team effort," he said. "There were plays before mine that happened and plays after mine that happened; all of those mattered. We won it together."

After cementing his team's spot in school athletics history, Wilkins graduated with two degrees and served as an assistant coach to Holley before entering the healthcare field. Today, he works with organ transportation and transplantation in Tennessee, but said MACU is never far removed from his heart or his mind.

"The loyalty built into MACU speaks for itself," he said. "The growth that MACU is seeing now is not some coincidence."

Wilkins said MACU has a bright future ahead.

"There are so many stories and legacies to be left there," he said. "We're just one part of it. It continues with the next generation of students. There's so much to be done there and I couldn't think of a better place for someone to start a new chapter of their life than with the opportunities at Mid-America Christian University."



ANDRE MCCOY was born with MACU in his blood. The son of Gulf Coast Bible College graduates, he played under the same basketball coach as his father before him and left his legacy on and off the court as a national champion.

Ten years later, he still keeps up with the sport he loves, passing the ball with his four children and traveling the south with several men's basketball leagues. But there's another passion in his life — a fire stoked during his time as an Evangel.

"My love of music hit the ground running at MACU," McCoy said.

He wrote songs for his teammates and his friends on campus, even peppering in professors into some of his rhymes. His budding talent was encouraged through chapel performances and concerts with classmates, and eventually led to McCoy landing a record deal with Church Boy Entertainment.

Under the Christian-based label, McCoy has released four projects as Lil' Dre. He dropped his latest album, "Live Free," this spring.

"Every album I release represents a different stage in life the Lord has brought me to," he said. "'Live Free' is a big speech on where I am right now. I'm learning how to live

free and enjoy life outside of sin, outside of this fleshly nature, without bottling myself up by looking at the Bible as a not-to-do list."

McCoy said the project focuses on what Christ does, not what He doesn't allow. That makes for a lyrical celebration of faith, family and friends that draws from the same inspiration he's always had: God's Word.

"I usually base every song off of Scripture and how it helped me transform my life," he said. That means many of his songs focus on God and family — in fact, his wife and children sing and rap with him on "Live Free."

"It's important to me to have them with me," McCoy said. "My God is first and my family is second."



You can catch Lil' Dre touring across several Oklahoma churches this summer, as well as at local carnivals and family-friendly functions. In addition, you'll find "Live Free" available for purchase digitally through Apple Music, iTunes, Google Play and Amazon.

Andre McCoy



Left to right: Asha McCoy, Saraya Lee McCoy, Mya Evano McCoy, Andre McCoy, Laea Eve McCoy, Daniel James McCoy

GAME PLAN 4 LIFE CHARACTER AWARD

CONGRATULATIONS

MALCOLM MANN



As senior guard on MACU's men's basketball team, Malcolm Mann's on-court accolades have been well documented, but his transcendent impact off the court is now being recognized in a big way.

Mann received the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Game Plan 4 Life (GP4L) Male Student-Athlete Character award at the NCCAA's annual Hall of Fame Banquet on June 1 in Louisville, Ky.

To be considered for the award, student-athletes had to consistently demonstrate love, integrity, faith and excellence within college athletics, their campus and their community.

"It humbles me to receive this incredible award of character from an organization I deeply cherish. To be recognized by the NCCAA in this fashion is an incredible honor. I am forever grateful to them and to MACU for the opportunities that have been given to me. God is so good!"

This is not the first honor Mann has received for his outstanding character. He also earned the school's first-ever "Heart of the Evangel" award last year.

"I am unapologetically biased, but I cannot imagine a finer young man to represent the NCCAA's core values than Malcolm Mann," said MACU Athletic Director Marcus Moeller. "Simply put, the story of Mid-America Christian University and our athletic department is far better off today than when Malcolm first arrived on campus."

As the men's basketball head coach, Josh Gamblin had the best seat in the house for Mann's buzzer-beating, game-winning shot that propelled the Evangels to their first-ever NAIA National Championship last season.

But it's clear Gamblin appreciates everything about Mann that goes far beyond the hardwood.

"I cannot put into words what Malcolm has meant to me and our program," Gamblin said. "To say he is special would be an extreme understatement. He is mature well beyond his years and what he has done for our campus and program is historic to say the least. He is the perfect representative for the NCCAA and the GP4L award."

In addition to hitting one of the most famous shots in school history, Mann also recorded a single-season record (as an NAIA school) with 184 assists last year and finished his career with 338 assists, the fourth most for the Evangels as an NAIA program.

Mann's off-the-court endeavors have included interning at Frito-Lay in Flint, Mich., where he served the community affected by the Flint water crisis. He also became the first ever basketball player at MACU to become president of the Student Government Association. Mann graduated this May and plans on returning to MACU in the fall to work on his graduate degree in Business. Mann continues to pray for God to allow his life to be a blessing to others.

MACU IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE MALCOLM AND HIS HISTORIC CAREER AS AN EVANGEL!



2ND ANNUAL MAACS MACU ATHLETIC AWARDS CEREMONY



Reverend Steve Chiles served as the keynote speaker at the second annual MAACs.

On May 2, MACU held its second annual athletics awards ceremony — known fondly as the MAACs — at the Oklahoma Sports Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. It was a night of elegance that celebrated the many achievements and accomplishments of MACU's student-athletes throughout the season.

Some of the awards given included:

Teammate of the Year

Erika Brown

Team Academic Award

Softball

Player of the Year

Trey Slate

Male Athlete of the Year

Jerry McNew

Female Athlete of the Year

Sarai Rodriguez

Heart of the Evangel

Morgan Wardlow



Jerry McNew and head baseball coach Adrian Savedra



Sarai Rodriguez and head women's basketball coach Hannah Moeller



SOFTBALL SENIOR WINS 'HEART OF THE EVANGEL' AWARD

THE "HEART OF THE EVANGEL" award is given to one student-athlete every year. It epitomizes the bold, humble messengers for Christ MACU has chosen as its mascot. After winning the award this year, senior softball pitcher Morgan Wardlow penned the following tribute to the school she loves:

Many lasts are approaching me as I graduate from MACU: my last college softball practice, my last game, my last final and numerous others. Another was my very last sports banquet. To receive such an award after being on the ballot with numerous other students that embodied what it means to have the heart of an evangel was an honor.

I share all this not to brag about my own accomplishments, but rather to brag about what Mid-America Christian University has given me in the past two years. I can say with complete confidence that this university has bettered me as a teammate, a student, a friend, and most importantly, as a follower of Christ.

For such an incredible Christ-based institution to allow me to represent them on the softball field with MACU across my chest and in numerous other facets of life, let alone present to me such a prestigious award, has been one of the most life-changing opportunities.

To attend a university that declares Christ as the center of all we are has been more impactful than I ever anticipated. It's a common occurrence to have my professors pray for us prior to every class. These prayers aren't done out of monotony and routine. The prayers lifted up are ones that have more heart and genuineness than I've ever heard prayed before.

If for some reason I was lent the opportunity to go back and choose where my last two years of college would be spent, I would choose MACU a thousand times over.

This school and everyone in it have become a family to me. They'll forever be a part of me, just as I will forever be indebted to MACU for providing me with a firm foundation to step out in society, meeting an incredible group of lifelong friends and for having met the love of my life.

**FOR ALL THAT, I THANK YOU
MACU. I'LL ALWAYS BE PROUD TO
CALL MYSELF AN EVANGEL.**



LARISSA
TATE

SOFTBALL PLAYER EARNS SPOT IN 2017 RED CROSS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

MACU softball student-athlete Larissa Tate, a sophomore outfielder from Binger, Okla., has been chosen as a member of the prestigious Class of 2017 Red Cross/NAIA Collegiate Leadership Program.

The program is a collaboration between the American Red Cross and the NAIA to inspire a new and diverse generation of Red Cross volunteer leadership through exemplifying the five core values of the NAIA "Champions of Character" program.

"To be selected to such a small prestigious group is a tremendous honor for Larissa," MACU Athletic Director Marcus Moeller said.

"We couldn't be more proud of how she represents MACU and our athletic department. We look forward to seeing Larissa go and have a great impact on those that she is fortunate enough to work with on this trip."

This will be an incredible and unique opportunity for Tate to receive first-hand coaching, mentoring and professional leadership training that will be presented by senior leaders at the Red Cross, one of the nation's largest and most trusted non-profit organizations.

Tate will then have the opportunity to become a Red Cross ambassador and give back to the community by recruiting blood donors on campus.

"Larissa is a great person and is a very motivated and organized young lady," softball head coach Robert Wakefield said.

"She is the definition of a leader. This is a tremendous honor for her, our team and MACU. We are honored to have her here on our softball team and as a student-athlete on campus."

The Red Cross/NAIA Collegiate Leadership Program is in its 11th year and is set to begin with two weeks of energetic leadership coaching at the Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington, D.C. from June 5-16.



LARISSA
RUNYAN

VOLLEYBALL SENIOR EXCELS ON THE COURT AND IN THE CLASSROOM

MACU senior volleyball student-athlete Larissa Runyan put in quite a year under head coach Mike Freeman.

Runyan ranked third on the team in both kills (264) and digs (334) this season for the Evangels, but one could argue her biggest triumphs came off the court.

The Oklahoma City native and English major was selected to the prestigious College Sports Information Directors of America Academic All-America team as a second-team selection with a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Runyan was one of only four student-athletes named to the first and second teams.

She also was a CoSIDA Academic All-District selection while earning NAIA and NCCAA Scholar Athlete honors and a SAC Academic All-Conference nod.

"My parents instilled a hard work ethic in me when I was younger, and that work ethic has stuck with me through college," Runyan said.

"Sometimes being a perfectionist is my greatest weakness, but it is rewarding to have reached the end of my time at MACU with some terrific results. I am extremely thankful to all of my professors, classmates, teammates and my coach for providing advice and encouragement along the way."



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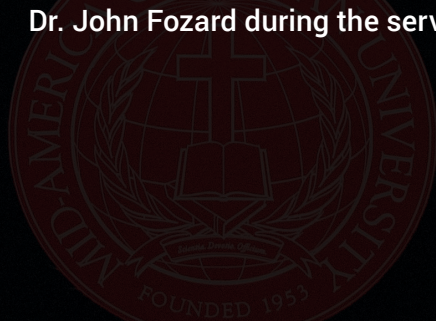
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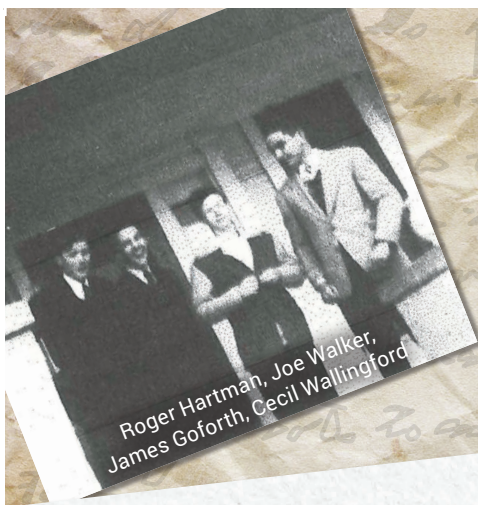
MID-AMERICA
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



JASCO CHAPEL DEDICATION

DURING SERVICES THIS SPRING, MACU dedicated the campus chapel to the JASCO Giving Hope Foundation. As a longtime supporter of MACU, JASCO has generously given scholarship dollars and renovation funds to help revolutionize the chapel's sound and video systems. A plaque recognizing JASCO's contributions was unveiled and prayed over by JASCO founder Dr. Steve Trice, MACU Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Claude Robold and MACU President Dr. John Fozard during the service.





Roger Hartman, Joe Walker,
James Goforth, Cecil Wallingford



A young
Joe Walker



Joe Walker visits with Ministry Professor Justin Key and MACU ministry students to discuss their plans for the summer

Eternal Investment

AT TEN YEARS OLD, JOE WALKER HAD BEEN TO CHURCH TWICE.

The only child of a working single mother, young Walker couldn't understand the pit-pattering of feet he heard every Sunday morning as his friend James ran down the apartment stairs.

"I finally asked him, 'Where in the world are you going on Sunday mornings?'" Walker recalled. "That's how I found out about the Straight-shooters."

The Straight-shooters were a group of young boys – many of them impoverished and unaware of God's love for them – who were counseled by a faithful member of a local church, the late Clifford Ray.

Ray, affectionately known by the boys as C-Ray, was a sign printer who felt God's calling to begin the Straight-shooters ministry. He purchased a bus, which he used to cart around "dirty, barefooted" boys like Walker and his friend James.

In his life, C-Ray saw thousands of boys like Walker come to know Christ through weekly meetings, picnics and field trips that blended fun activities with Bible lessons.

"If C-Ray didn't reach us, nobody would have," Walker said. "I wouldn't be a Christian today if James hadn't come down those stairs to see Ray's class."

He said he carried C-Ray's lessons with him throughout his life.

"He not only taught us about Jesus, he taught us about life. He told us to dress professionally and marry a Christian woman."

All of them did – and their marriages have lasted 50 years or more, as have their friendships. Ray, James and two other Straight-shooters remained friends for life.

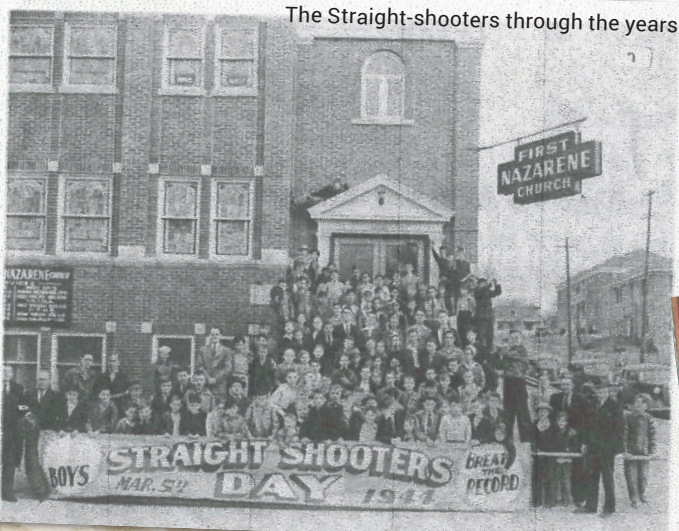
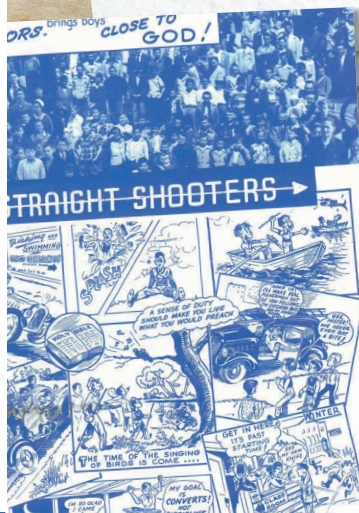
Now a retired businessman whose former and current clients include JCPenney and United Airlines, Walker is putting into practice another of C-Ray's great traits: his charitable giving.

In addition to helping restore C-Ray's original bus for a new mobile ministry, he has included MACU in his will as part of an eternal investment in the university.

"I wanted to do something to help young ministers," he said. "I want to use my money to help the cause of Christ."

Because of Walker's generous gift and the hearts of donors like him, his legacy will always live on through MACU students. If you would like information on how estate planning might benefit you or your family, visit give.macu.edu/ or contact the Office of University Advancement at 405-692-3191.

The Straight-shooters through the years





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