

MID-AMERICAN

THE MAGAZINE OF MID-AMERICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

MACU Returns to Houston

Dream **BIGGER.**
Do **GREATER.**

WINTER 2015
WWW.MACU.EDU



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



DEAR FRIENDS,

Composer Alfred Schnittke once reflected over returning to his hometown: “For almost thirty years I repeatedly saw one and the same dream: I would arrive in Vienna at long last. I would feel really happy, for I was returning to my serene childhood.”

It is ironic that Mid-America Christian University is feeling a similar joy because the university is returning to the city of its beginning. In 1985, the university relocated from Houston, Texas, to its present locations in Oklahoma City. Now, 30 years later, we will remain in Oklahoma City while at the same time returning to our birthplace: Houston.

In this issue, you will read about a remarkable opportunity that Mid-America is experiencing by establishing a global learning partnership with Houston’s Community of Faith congregation. The university will again be holding on-ground college courses at Houston’s Community of Faith while 50% of the coursework will be completed online.

If one traces the journeys of the patriarchs like Abraham or even those of the apostles, the leading of the Spirit often returned God’s people to past

locations. Was one location preferred over the other? No. Each location was the launching place for fulfilling Jesus’ Great Commission.

This first global learning partnership is representative of a greater vision of many partnerships to come, partnerships in churches in North America and partnerships throughout the world. Our commitment as a Christian university is to always be where God wants us, when God wants and accomplishing what God wants us to do.

Like Schnittke, we are really happy because we are returning to the city where it all began, where a Bible college grew into a global Christian university. You could say that we are experiencing our own vision motto: “Dream Bigger. Do Greater.” What a wonderful journey of linking together the past, present and future!


Dr. John Fozard, President



Dream **BIGGER.** *Do* **GREATER.**

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



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On the Cover

Bishop James W.E. Dixon II and MACU students at
The Community Of Faith Church in Houston.

**MID-AMERICA
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**



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WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY AT 10 A.M.





The League of EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN

College is a time of formation. From the moment a student first enrolls in an institution, life-changing decisions are being made that will help form who that student is going to become. In the fall of 2015, Mid-America introduced a new student leadership group known as Iron Men that was envisioned to not only help develop college men in their professional careers, but also teach them how to integrate Christian principles in the workplace.

"I have immense respect and appreciation for the ministry of Connecting Business Men to Christ (CBMC)," said Mid-America President Dr. John Fozard.

"With the formation of the Iron Men, I wanted Mid-America to develop a college chapter so that similar discipleship efforts could take place during the college years. I want us to groom and train our Christian men in how to speak and write well. We want employers to know that these students from Mid-America will understand how to be ethically relational with others."

Along with the formation of the Iron Men, President Fozard also developed a chapel series known as the President's Signature Series Chapel. Each month, a Christian professional is invited to speak to the campus for this profound chapel service. Powerful personal testimonies in following Jesus are revealed to students, faculty and staff through this series. The intention is to make known that a faith in Christ can be lived out in the corporate world and Christianity can be used in business practices. Following the chapel service, the guest speaker addresses a class of business majors.

The Iron Men are able to develop a more interactive relationship with these speakers as they join them for lunch in the president's office for personal collaboration with these dynamic leaders.

Two community events are planned annually for the Iron Men. In the fall, the Iron Men will attend CBMC's Salt and Light Award Dinner to honor a local business professional for living out their faith in the marketplace. In the spring, the Iron Men will be taken to the CBMC OKC Metro Prayer Breakfast. Additionally, the Iron Men will enjoy one evening at an upscale restaurant where they will be taught social etiquette skills and have the chance to hear a businessman share his faith in Christ.

In addition to inviting outside speakers to witness to the group, the Iron Men will be led and mentored on campus by a trusted team of Godly professionals: CBMC leader and former Director of Latin America for CBMC Dr. Enrique Cepeda, MACU Campus Pastor Reverend Johnny Bland and GiANT Worldwide Senior Consultant Reverend Don Peslis.

Peslis meets with the group twice a month to incorporate GiANT leadership tools into the young men's training. GiANT has been a successful leadership tool adopted by Mid-America that uses intentional apprenticeship to develop leaders worth following.

"It is said in Proverbs 27:17 that 'Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.' This is a key verse in the formation of this group," Dr. Fozard said.

"It is not just a club or fraternity. Iron Men is being designed to be a society of disciples of Jesus who

will know how to act and lead in whatever work environment God places them. Iron Men is not just for business majors. It is for those men who wish to be professional in their specific careers and intentional with their faith's influence."

"Being a part of Iron Men really gives me the opportunity to dig down deep into who I am," said Malcolm Mann, a junior majoring in Sociology.

"It provides me with a lot of useful tools that are necessary to being the man that God calls me to be. GiANT training has taught me how to really know myself by understanding my strengths and weaknesses. Before I can lead others, I must first learn to lead myself."

"The best part of all of this is how much I am learning about myself," said Blake Barnett, a junior majoring in Business Administration.

"Once I began to realize how I best interact with people, it became much easier to recognize my role in each situation. I also understand how to appreciate my fellow students' differences and play to their strengths. Interacting with local and global business leaders helps me become more comfortable with myself and learn how to lead in whatever situation I am in."



Students attend dinner at The Petroleum Club of Oklahoma City, November 2015.



Don Peslis, Verej Jazivrar (General Manager, The Petroleum Club of Oklahoma City) and President John Fozard.



President's Signature Series

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Area Director | Christian Business Men's Connection (Oklahoma City)

MR. JOHN G. GILLESPIE

President | Access Financial Group

MR. ROSS HILL

President | Bank2 (Oklahoma City)

MR. JEREMY KUBICEK

Co-Founder | GiANT Worldwide

DR. TONY O'BRIEN

Superintendent | Newcastle Public Schools (Oklahoma)

MR. RAY SANDERS

Chief Executive Officer | Water4
Founder | GiANT Experiences

DR. STEVE TRICE

Founder & Chairman of the Board | Jasco Products

PICTURED

Dr. Steve Trice - started Jasco in 1975 and guided the organization from marketing CB antennas and accessories out of a small corner of an Oklahoma City warehouse into one of the largest and fastest-growing marketers of consumer electronics, home automation, lighting, security, home entertainment, power and mobility products.



Returning TO OUR Birthplace

THIRTY YEARS AGO, MACU RELOCATED

from Houston to Oklahoma City. Through the formation of a learning partnership with The Community Of Faith Church in Houston, MACU returns to the Gulf Coast city it once called home for so many years.

"It was Dr. Peter Ferdinand Drucker who said that in the Industrial Age people went to college, but in the Information Age, college must come to the people. This is exactly what MACU is wanting to do," stressed Dr. Eric Joseph, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives.

MACU will offer online and on-site classes for church members and local Houston residents that desire to obtain a degree. In November, 22 students from The Community Of Faith Church began their MACU studies with some church members beginning classes online while others began meeting in the church's new classroom.

"We must remember that in the early years of our nation, higher education started from the influence and investment of Christian churches," observed President Fozard. "These learning partnerships are coming from local congregations wishing to remain relevant to the needs of their church members as well as the citizens of their communities. In our nation, the African-American congregation has remained the epicenter for compassionate ministries, for promoting social justice and for bringing the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to that city's neighborhoods. MACU is partnering with congregations across America signifying that we are committed to helping people to

'Dream Bigger and Do Greater.' We envision graduates assuming their place in government, school systems, the marketplace and in planting and pastoring other congregations. College degrees also mean more economic opportunities for families who in turn are able to financially support the local church's ministries. So many churches these days are finding their pastoral staff to be 'home grown' leaders. Fewer churches are having to go outside their membership to find quality leadership. More and more churches are seeing this learning partnership as a way to provide theological training for their current staff who complete either a Bachelor of Christian Ministries or a Master of Ministry degree."

President Fozard concluded with the reflection that these learning partnerships are not one-sided where the university is the only one that benefits from growing enrollments.

"Because of growing enrollments and more classroom usage, the university provides a revenue stream to the local church that can be used toward the congregation's capital improvements or leadership development initiatives. We are in discussions of how the university can participate in raising scholarship funds for church members. We even want to use appropriately credentialed faculty from the

congregation to serve as our adjunct faculty members. Who is better equipped to inspire and instruct these students than those faculty members who know the student best and have the immediate respect of the student? Who is better at encouraging learning and helping with student retention than the congregation's own credentialed faculty?"

Academic leaders at MACU note that the university sets an enrollment goal of 14 or more students before beginning on-ground classes. Houston's students will take 50% of their classes at the church and 50% of their classes online, an approach often referred to as "blended learning." Of course, some working adults prefer the convenience of taking all their degree program entirely online. MACU has been approved by the Higher Learning Commission: North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to offer all their degree programs 100% online and expects many students to choose this learning option.

Dr. Kimberly Thomas, GBC graduate and Chair for the Adult School of Christian Ministries at MACU, is eager for the students enrolled in this program to have such a distinctive learning experience.

"This partnership brings an avenue of learning to students that far surpasses the learning experience that a normal classroom can provide. What makes this special partnership unique is the fact that the students in this class all attend the same church. They have the opportunity to grow together, to develop deeper relationships within the body of the congregation by using practicum and project experiences. These students will be able to build their skills and abilities in ministry by using current leaders in the church. That is more than what you can get in a traditional classroom."

Previously known as Gulf Coast Bible College (GBC), MACU relocated to Oklahoma City from Houston, Texas in September 1985. Since that move, the university has grown

from 249 registered students to a current enrollment of 2,554. Students can choose to work towards specialized certificates or an associate's, bachelor's or master's degree. On-ground classes are offered at two Oklahoma City locations and MACU has been offering online degree programs that are tailored to working adult learners since 2001.

"I thank God for the spirit of MACU," said Bishop James W.E. Dixon II, Bishop at The Community Of Faith Church. "Of course, it emanates from GBC that was once located right here in Houston, Texas. It's so good for MACU to come home. The Heights is my birth and raising place. Growing up in Houston, I remember walking past GBC many times on my way to play basketball. I never knew what had happened to GBC and I thought maybe it had closed completely, but years later I met Dr. Eric Joseph and he told me about MACU. I knew this was a divine arrangement."

There was a demand for the Christian Ministries degree in Houston making it the first degree program chosen for this partnership. The intent is to offer additional classes as the local interest dictates.

"As interest develops, MACU will be happy to bring any of its fourteen degree programs to Houston," stated Dr. Bill McDowell, Executive Vice President at MACU.

Learning partnerships are currently being explored in six other locations. If funding permits and the local interest is present, the university plans to add one to two new geographic locations per year.

"This is so exciting to me because I think it begins to establish a model of what should be happening across the nation with other Christian universities and churches," exclaimed Bishop Dixon. "There is no gap between what happens in the classroom and what happens in the sanctuary. I think that is absolutely phenomenal."



M^cCUTCHEON HALL

On October 21, students, local leaders and friends of MACU participated in a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony for the newest 40,000 square feet residence hall.

"It is truly exciting to name a facility [on our campus] in honor of Dr. Lillie McCutcheon. Her life's work is a true reflection of our foundation and vision. She had a profound dedication to Christ and selfless love for His people. Though she had many titles—from national figure, author, radio/television personality, beloved pastor to powerful lecturer—it was her unique ability to enlighten, strengthen and charge women and men for Christian service that earned her tremendous respect. Dr. McCutcheon left a legacy of leadership. May we all strive to influence people for Christ as she did," said Mid-America President Dr. John Fozard.

"Today is especially exciting for us," added Student Government Association President Emily Wells. "As students we understand that our residence halls are much more than a place to rest our heads. They are our homes. This is our safe place where we learn and grow in our studies and in our faith. We are very proud of our campus."

This is the second new residence hall developed within two years to meet enrollment needs. Mid-America has continued to grow in student enrollment. Since moving the university from Houston, Texas to Oklahoma City in 1985, the student enrollment increased from 249 to more than 2,500.

The new residence facility, McCutcheon Hall, features larger living areas, laundry facilities on each floor, increased security features and many more living amenities that encourage a successful on-campus residency experience.

President Fozard and the MACU Board of Trustees believe that there is no better expression of a Christian university than its campus community. That belief encouraged the establishment of the "Building A Greater Campus Experience" campaign in 2012. The campaign consists of several phases; Phase One — which included Kennedy Hall (provides state-of-the-art classrooms and a library), a larger Student Activity Center (provides 11,000 additional square feet and computer stations) and a new bookstore — and Phase Two — which consists of two new residence halls.

If you would like to donate to "Building a Greater Campus Experience," please visit GIVE.MACU.EDU



PICTURED FROM LEFT (FRONT ROW)

Dr. Jeanette Flynn; Bob and Olga McCutcheon; David McCutcheon son of Dave McCutcheon; Bob Sr. and Pat McCutcheon; MACU President Dr. John Fozard; MACU Board of Trustee member Dave McCutcheon and his wife Adrienne and daughter Taylor; and MACU Board of Trustees Chairman, Dr. Claude Robold



Julia Carpenter

On November 17, MACU honored Julia Carpenter for 34 years of faithful service to the university. She recently retired from her position as Executive Director for University Policies and Procedures. Julia came to GBC in 1981 and graduated in 1985. During her tenure at MACU, Julia has held numerous positions and influenced many lives. Those positions included, Assistant to the Director of Financial Aid, faculty member in the School of English, Chair of the School of English, Chair of the School of Teacher Education, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Chief Assessment Officer, and her most recent position as Executive Director for University Policies and Procedures.

In an exhibition match against the seventh-ranked NCAA Division I powerhouse, the Evangels battled the University of Oklahoma to a 98-76 loss on the Sooners' home floor at the Lloyd Noble Center in Norman on November 12.

PICTURED: *Bryon Miller (MACU) and Ryan Spangler (OU).*





SPORTS UPDATE

NEW ERA BECKONS FOR THE MEN'S BASKETBALL EVANGELS THIS SEASON

The Mid-America Christian University Evangels capped a historic season in 2015 by capturing their first Sooner Athletic Conference regular season championship and then advancing to the quarterfinals of the NAIA National Championship Tournament in their debut appearance.

New coach Josh Gamblin takes the reins of the Evangels this season after serving one year as a graduate assistant coach at the University of Oklahoma. Gamblin was also an assistant coach for two years at Southwestern Christian University and was the video coordinator for the NBA's Los Angeles Clippers for one year. Off the court, Gamblin has served as NBA All-Star Blake Griffin's personal summer trainer for the past three seasons.

"It is such blessing to be here at MACU," said Coach Gamblin. "I truly love this university and our group. They come to work everyday and enjoy playing with one another. This is such a special place."



Senior Guard Nick Tate

Quite a bit of talent returns for Gamblin from last season's team, as he returns starting forward and blocked shots leader Chris Runnels and also solid reserve Jerrick Massenbuge, who averaged double-figure scoring. Jason Nwisienyi is also back this season and should provide front court help. New additions are Devonse Reed, Bryon Miller, Ex'Zavia Seaton, Malcolm Mann, Trey Slate, Devante Moore, Terrell Savala, Nick Tate and Will Brewer. Longtime assistant coach and recruiting guru Anthony Nero will also be back on the bench along with first-year assistant Brandon Rollins.

FROESE TAKES REINS OF MACU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL IN 2015-16

The Mid-America Christian University women's basketball program is embarking on a new beginning heading into the 2015-16 season. The Lady Evangels are now under the guidance of head coach Seth Froese, who served the past two years as assistant coach under Marcus Moeller, now the school's full-time Athletic Director. Froese is a natural fit to take over the team after helping the squad to their first consecutive winning seasons since joining the NAIA in 2007.

"I don't know that there is ever an abundance of ease in the transition from assistant coach to head coach," Froese said. "I think if there is ever any ease in that transition it's because of the leadership and mentoring that you have received from the coaches that you have worked for leading up to that moment. I feel extremely grateful to the men that I have worked under who have allowed me to learn so many of the things that you need to do to be a successful head coach."

Levi Convirs

MACU Sports Information Director
lconvirs@macu.edu



ALL- SOONER ATHLETIC CONFERENCE TEAMS

VOLLEYBALL

Hannah Luedtke - First Team
Camera Broadnax - Second Team
Laurel Church - Honorable Mention

MEN'S SOCCER

Raphael Bonelle - First Team

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Kaci Power - First Team
Kaitlyn Whitten - First Team
Alex Macias - Second Team

COSIDA ACADEMIC ALL-DISTRICT

MEN'S SOCCER

Eric Koeneger

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Kayla Baldwin

ALL-OKLAHOMASPORTS.NET AWARDS

The All-OSN team is comprised of standouts from the NAIA and NCAA Division II institutions from around the state.

VOLLEYBALL

Camera Broadnax - Second Team

MEN'S SOCCER

Raphael Bonelle - First Team
Gleydson Neri - First Team

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Kaci Power - First Team
Alex Macias - Second Team

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MACU WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM ON BEING NCCAA REGIONAL CHAMPIONS & NCCAA NATIONAL SEMI-FINALISTS.



GIVE TO MACU

Would you consider MACU in your year-end giving?

Every gift received benefits MACU's students in some way. Your investment to MACU at the end of this year helps prepare our students for God's calling. Without the continued financial help and prayers from donors like you, we would not be able to share with you the wonderful stories like these below of our students and alumni.



Jan Carlos Matias

Jan Carlos, a sophomore Business Administration major at MACU, has had a life-changing experience since arriving at MACU from his Puerto Rican home.

"I originally came out here to play baseball, but it turned into something much more. My eyes were opened by the love I have been shown at the campus. Through love and support, I have been able to turn my life around. I've stopped doing a lot of stuff that I know God didn't want me to do. I was inspired to turn my life around. There is a difference between just knowing Christianity and actually living it. I'm living it now."



Cheryl Olson

A 2009 graduate of MACU, Cheryl Olson used the inspiration she found at MACU to give back by fostering children and showing them the love of Christ.

"Creating, collaborating, and innovating solutions to local and global problems for the glory of God through Jesus Christ and the good of society is exactly what my degree from Mid-America Christian University prepared me to do. Over the past three years as a foster parent, Jesus has opened doors for me to speak to senators, legislators, state child welfare directors, fellow foster parents, and a host of others involved in child advocacy about the importance of child abuse prevention locally and globally. By following Christ, my home was shown as a model foster home for the state of Florida for two years, while also having the honor of leading an educational support group for foster and adoptive parents in Northeast Florida."

JOIN US THIS GIVING SEASON IN HELPING TO CONTINUE TO MAKE MACU AN INSPIRATION TO STUDENTS AND ALUMNI. ANY DOLLAR AMOUNT OR PRAYER IS APPRECIATED AND WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

GIVE.MACU.EDU • (405) 692-3191

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FOR YOUR UNIVERSITY AND FOR YOU!

KENNEDY HALL

DID YOU KNOW?

Gifts to MACU entitle you to a charitable contribution deduction on your 2015 income taxes, if you itemize deductions. This means the actual cost of your contribution is reduced by the amount you save in tax. For example, if you are in a 33% tax bracket, your gift of \$100 actually only costs you \$67!

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Your contribution to MACU is deductible in the year in which you send the gift. A contribution postmarked by December 31 will be deductible on your 2015 income tax return. Likewise, a credit card gift is deductible in the year it is charged to your card, even if payment to your credit card company occurs later.

WE MAKE IT EASY

Put your gift to work faster by giving online. Online gifts to MACU are secure and convenient. Simply go to give.macu.edu. Remember, MACU will keep records for you! Your end-of-year gift will be receipted when we receive your gift. We will send you an annual giving statement of all 2015 gifts to use when preparing your 2015 income tax forms.

All gifts to MACU are 100% tax deductible, and will be used 100% for providing a quality education in a Christian environment. Your gift matters!

MORE INFORMATION?

For more information, email the Office of University Advancement at advancement@macu.edu or call us at (405) 692-3191.

For online or credit card giving, go to
GIVE.MACU.EDU

Shelby Farrar

MID-AMERICA
WOMEN'S SOCCER
PLAYER CLASS OF '18

Shelby Farrar is a twenty-year-old sophomore and member of the women's soccer team at Mid-America. She loves the simple things in life. She loves God, her family and soccer. From the upbeat attitude and the smile on her face that she always displays, no one would ever know that she just might be the toughest person on campus.

A little over a month into the school year, circumstances changed for Shelby. Her dad was unexpectedly diagnosed with stage-three pancreatic cancer in October, leaving Shelby and her close-knit family shaken.

"That week was such a blur," recalls Shelby. "We were all shocked."

Shelby's dad, an Air Force sergeant who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, was given a thirty-percent survival rate. With his blood cells diminished from intense chemotherapy and radiation, Shelby's dad was in need of a bone marrow transplant. Shelby turned out to be the only acceptable donor for her dad, and she didn't hesitate when the doctors asked her if she would be willing to donate her marrow.

From donation to donation, Shelby remained strong. She continued to go to school and play soccer. Her teachers, coaches and teammates helped support

and pray for her which Shelby says has helped her get through some of the most difficult times.

One teammate in particular made a big impact on Shelby.

"I hope and pray that everyone finds a friend like Zana Bryan," said Shelby. "In the Bible, Job had that one friend to weep with. That is what Zana is to me. She's such a huge support to me."

Shelby says Esther Rehbein, Assistant Professor/Chair for the School of Teacher Education at MACU, was also a huge blessing by helping her stay on track in school.

In the middle of November, Shelby's dad took a turn for the worse. His survival rate dropped to below ten percent which caused Shelby to move home to be with her dad. She is currently finishing out her semester through independent instruction from MACU.

"I was angry with God at first. I wanted to know why. After the emotions passed, I was ashamed that I had questioned God's plan. He has me in his arms. He can handle this. My youth pastor told me, 'God has a tough chest, beat on it.'"

Shelby's dad is currently in the Cancer Treatment Center in Tulsa.



For the inaugural Issues Week this semester, MACU students were reminded of the current water crisis that effects communities both locally and globally. Students were challenged to control their own water usage in contribution of helping diminish the local water shortage that exists for our state. On a global level, students were made aware of the fact that 5,000 children die every day from a water-related illness that comes from not having clean water. Students participated in daily interactive events that were held on campus and intended to challenge students to join in the effort to provide clean water to these communities.

MACU has been proud to partner with the locally-based Water4 organization since 2011. The organization was founded in 2008 with a goal of providing clean water to impoverished communities and developing an easier and less expensive method for laying pipeline. In the summer of 2015, several MACU students had the opportunity to travel with the Water4 organization into the depths of the Amazonian rainforest in Ecuador to help kick start a clean-water project in an indigenous tribe community.

MACU junior MaKailee Davis traveled to Ecuador and brought back with her a passion for helping out with the water issue across the world. Davis hopes that, through Issues Week, other students will not only become aware of this problem, but also want to be involved in its resolution.

"When I came back from the Ecuador trip, I was changed for the better. I realized that there is a wide world out there with lots of problems. If we keep wasting water, this water crisis is just going to get worse. Issues Week gives us a chance to help our students focus on these issues. I want to find other students that are moved about these issues so we can rally together and make a difference. I want them to know that it is not just about awareness, but it is also about action. I want our students to roll up their sleeves and get to work on making a difference in the world we live in."

The Issues Week activities included the planting of symbolic flags in the front lawn of the campus, a blue

color fight and several speakers and videos that had powerful and heart-wrenching messages on what it was like to work with Water4 and help bring clean water to communities in need.

"With the activities we had planned for Issues Week, we wanted to not only demonstrate how an individual can monitor their own water usage and help affect the local water issue, but also we wanted to raise awareness of the global issue of clean water access," said MACU Campus Pastor Jonathan Bland. "Partnering with Water4, we challenged students to join financially in ending the global water crisis. During Issues Week, MACU raised over \$1,500 that will go towards a water well for a community. In the summer of 2016, MACU's Global Learner program will lead a trip to Uganda to help in drilling that well. In this way, students will see the full-circle impact of their efforts and learn how they can become a problem solver in the world."

The next MACU issues week is planned for the spring semester of 2016 and will focus on the issues of hunger and poverty.





Dea Dietrick

In May of 2015, 63-year-old Dea Dietrick was the proud recipient of a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Ethics from Mid-America Christian University. She graduated summa cum laude with distinction as one of the top five students in her class.

Five years ago, Dietrick's world was turned upside down after finding herself newly single. Her only source of income would now come through a small salary from employment at a church.

At 58 years old, her best option to ensure a stable future was to return to school. She enrolled at MACU in May 2010, carrying a full-course load each semester, a full-time job and a side job.

"One day my attorney looked at me and told me she didn't know if we would be able to recover any of the assets and it looked as though I needed to investigate how to earn more money and plan for a sustainable retirement," Dietrick recalled. "I reasoned that obtaining a degree was the only way possible to provide for myself. After investigating several local schools, I found MACU to be conducive with my lifestyle. My thought was to work at the church during the day and open a counseling office at night. That plan has taken a slightly different form, but I am doing what I love and intended: using my degree and professional experience to serve others to experience life satisfaction and well-being."

After graduation, Dietrick founded A Dynamic New You, LLC, a firm dedicated to helping individuals exercise their leadership capabilities. She serves as counselor, coach, public speaker and a John Maxwell Certified Trainer.

"My ultimate goal is to help individuals understand their significance and use their passion to live a life of influential leadership and authentic satisfaction. I want to help them bring their ultimate best to their employer," she said.

Today, this MACU alumna has a powerful and inspiring testimony. While most people her age are preparing to settle down and retire, Dietrick has reinvented herself.

"I'm proud of this because it gives me authority to encourage others to go after their dreams and rise above their circumstances. If I can go to college to earn a degree while working full-time, I have a few things to share about the value of hard work and determination," Dietrick beamed.

"My feeling is you can't let life get to the point where you just sit down and sigh," she said. "I think what happens with older people, those who have given or put a lot into what they're doing all their life – they don't feel respected anymore. The culture is changing and they feel they should stop. I think it's important to invest in others, especially as seniors, because you have wisdom you can share with people who want to change and grow."

An Oklahoma City resident, Dietrick attends Crossings Community Church and is a member of Early Risers Toastmasters, American Business Women's Association, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and is active in several smaller networking groups and volunteer opportunities.

THE Bethel Series

The Bethel Series is designed for Pastors and Ministry Staff, Sunday School Teachers, Bible Study Leaders, Christian Counselors and those who desire a deeper understanding of the Bible.

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"As a soloist, chorister and worship leader for over 25 years, this course has helped me to redefine 'what worship means to me'. With Sandi Patty as our professor/mentor, combined with other student worship leaders across North America, this experience has been such a blessing as we are learning, growing and communicating all together as one voice."

- Ian, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

"The CWAL journey has been both challenging and uplifting. The regular interaction with Sandi has just been a blessing. I thank God for the newly found family members in Christ as we, not only go through this, but humbly GROW spiritually and musically."

- James, Houston, TX

APPLY NOW! THE NEXT GROUP BEGINS JANUARY 12, 2016.

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