

MID-AMERICAN

THE MAGAZINE OF MID-AMERICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



MACU Receives
Unique Designation
Page 6



*Dream Bigger.
Do Greater.*
Winter 2020

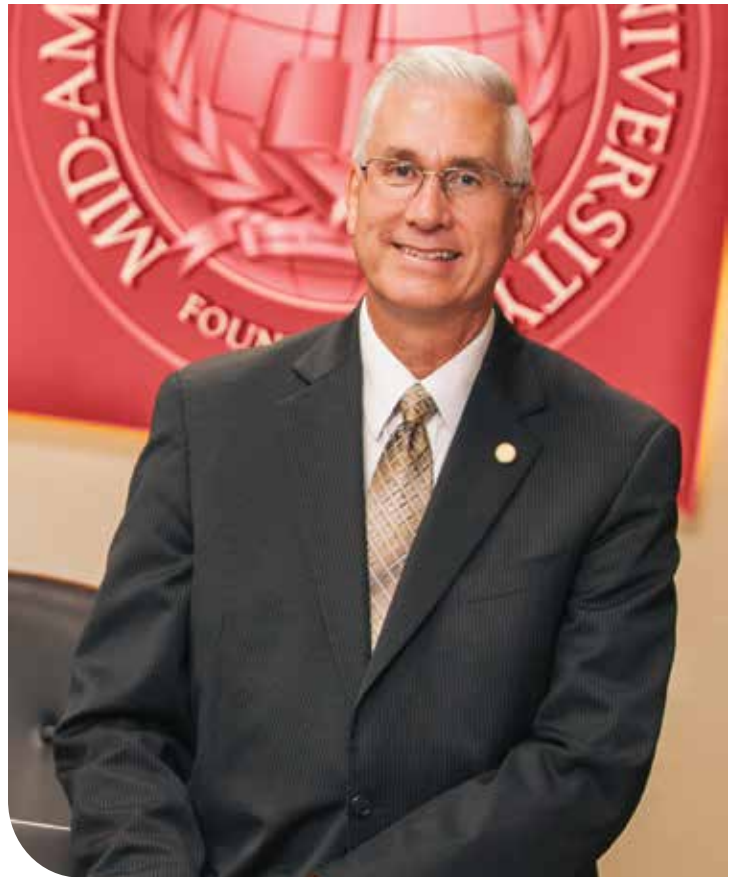
President's Letter

William Randolph Hearst was a very wealthy newspaper publisher who had an incredible collection of art. His northern California mansion was a testament to his insatiable desire for artistic treasures. On one occasion, he learned of some artwork he was determined to obtain. He sent his agent abroad to search for the treasure. After months of investigating, the agent reported that the treasure had been found. To further sweeten the find, Hearst learned that the relic wouldn't cost him a dime. He already owned it! The rediscovered piece was in Hearst's own warehouse with many other treasures that had likewise never been uncrated.

Sometimes we possess accomplishments that we think we still must achieve. Last February, we met with Department of Education officials to inquire what we must still achieve to become a minority-serving institution. The university has intentionally sought to increase its student diversity, as well as increase the diversity of our employees. To our surprise, we had already exceeded the threshold in becoming a "Hispanic-Serving Institution" (HSI)!

According to the Pew Research Center, "...Latinos remain an important part of the nation's overall demographic story. Between 2010 and 2019, the Latino share of the total U.S. population increased from 16% to 18%. Latinos accounted for about half (52%) of all U.S. population growth over this period. They are the country's second-largest racial or ethnic group, behind white non-Hispanics."

Mid-America Christian University has witnessed many of its Hispanic graduates becoming global leaders. MACU alumnus, Mrs. Francellies Otero, Vice President of Membership Relations and Events, helped the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce earn a past designation as the #1 U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Javier Hernandez, a 2014 graduate of the university, went on to earn



a law degree and scored in the top 3% of test scores. He has since become a partner in the law firm Dunn & Hernandez, which specializes in immigration law. These are just two examples of our alumni providing exemplary leadership locally and globally!

In the future, this new institutional designation will allow MACU to apply for federal grants that may provide more scholarships for Hispanic students. In 2020, the university provided over \$450,000 in scholarships to Hispanic students. Future grants will address expanding our faculty diversity and student support services.

Celebrate with us the university's new designation. Refer Hispanic students to MACU. We want you to know that your past prayers and financial support are helping Mid-America's enrollments reflect the nation and world it serves!



Dr. John Fozard, President



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Dr. John Fozard

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Dream Bigger. Do Greater.

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2020 COMMENCEMENT



PHOTO: Brian Alarid, President and CEO of America Prays, delivered the 2020 commencement address.



In a ceremony that looked like no other before it, the MACU Class of 2020 was celebrated Saturday, Nov. 7, at Crossings Community Church in Oklahoma City.

Mask-wearing graduates and socially distanced crowds joined in celebration of 2020's resilient graduates. MACU's commencement ceremony was originally scheduled in May before the pandemic postponed the event. One hundred and eighty-two graduates participated in the in-person ceremony out of a total of 514 graduates.

After a welcome by MACU Board of Trustees member Dr. Jessica Rimmer and honorary doctoral degrees presented to Dr. James C. Burchett and Rev. Clarence Rufus Hill, Jr., MACU President Dr. John Fozard welcomed Brian Alarid, President and CEO of America Prays, as the commencement speaker.

"You've endured more than any graduating class in recent history," said Alarid as he took to the stage before delivering his commencement address on the importance of faithfulness over success.

"Christ is going to be faithful to you," Alarid said. "It's a done deal. You can take it to the bank." He said the real question is this: will you be faithful to the one who has called You?

"When you finish your race and chase all the dreams in your heart; when it's all said and done and you've gone through all the ups and downs of your life, will you be found faithful?" he asked. "True success in God's eyes is that we're faithful to His calling for us. If you focus on your faithfulness, God will take care of your success."



PHOTO: Rev. Clarence Rufus Hill, Jr. speaks during the ceremony after receiving his honorary doctoral degree.



MACU NAMED **Minority-Serving Institution** *for Growing Hispanic Population*

MACU's thriving population of Hispanic students has led to the Oklahoma Department of Education naming the university a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI). MSIs make up a category of educational establishments based on either historical origin or enrollment criteria. With Hispanic students comprising more than 25 percent of MACU's undergraduate student population, the university qualified on the basis of enrollment criteria.

That means the university is now qualified to receive Title III and Title V grants. The grants can be used for various areas of campus improvement, including for student scholarships, tutoring, retention, recruitment and the employment of Spanish-speaking and bilingual employees in every department.

Executive Vice President Dr. Bobbie Spurgeon-Harris said the distinction will help MACU give back to the Oklahoma City area's growing Hispanic population by offering opportunities that are tailored to that group's needs. "Being able to qualify for these grants helps us help our Hispanic students," said Spurgeon-Harris. "This is an exciting opportunity for us to pour into our Hispanic community and deliver the best educational experience possible."

"This is an exciting opportunity for us to pour into our Hispanic community and deliver the best educational experience possible."

MACU is committed to serving the Hispanic community in a variety of ways, and Spurgeon-Harris said these additional grant opportunities will bolster the university's already-bountiful offerings for Hispanic students.



PHOTO: Celebration of Culture day on Feb. 19, 2020

Currently, MACU offers a Master of Arts in Leadership entirely in Spanish so that Spanish-speaking students can develop their leadership skills and earn their graduate degrees without the obstacle of learning a second language. Additional certificates and learning options are also available through MACU's Thomas School of International Studies (TSIS), which services Spanish-speaking individuals across the globe, and through the university's Bethel Series, which is also available online and entirely in Spanish.

MACU offers a Hispanic scholarship of \$8,000 a year funded by the JASCO Giving Hope Foundation

For Hispanic students seeking a traditional degree, MACU offers a Hispanic scholarship of \$8,000 a year funded by the JASCO Giving Hope Foundation. The scholarship is offered to students of all majors and is paired with discipleship through the university's one-on-one discipleship program. "We have so many opportunities already available for the Hispanic population," said Spurgeon-Harris. "We are excited to see what the future holds for us as we continue to develop these options and add new ones as a Minority-Serving Institution."



ABOVE: Adult student Patricia Gutierrez, 2020.

BELOW: Traditional students Shaylee Montoya, Christian Hardin and Esmerelda Castaneda





BREAKING GROUND

on a New Era of **MACU Athletics**

History was “broken” on the MACU campus this fall as a ceremonial groundbreaking for the university’s new O’Brien Family Training Center was held on the morning of Sept. 2. During the ceremony, the facility’s lead donor, Dr. Sean O’Brien of the Oklahoma Center for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, spoke on his family’s history with MACU and their decision to give towards building the new complex.

“The O’Briens have quite a bit of history with MACU,” said O’Brien, who graduated from the university in 1989. His parents and older brother also attended and graduated from MACU, as did his daughter, son-in-law and nieces. “My family believes in the mission of this university and the fact that they are Christ-centered in everything they do.” O’Brien said he and his family feel blessed to have been the lead donors on the facility, which will be named in their honor. “Mid-America Christian University has given our family a lot. We see this as an opportunity to give back,” he said. “We are excited about seeing what the university will be able to accomplish with this new facility and how it will change the lives of the young people who step onto this campus.” The 18,600-square-foot athletic

Left to Right: Dr. Mark Pickens, Jason Fritts, Eli Pagel, Marcus Moeller, President John Fozard, Dr. Steve Trice, Patrick O’Brien, Patricia O’Brien, Dr. Sean O’Brien, Tony O’Brien, Kris O’Brien, Kylee Grive, Dustin Whitmore.

facility, which is expected to open next August, will include a wellness and weight training room for the entire campus, new coach offices, new locker rooms for outdoor sports, a training room and a practice area with batting cages. “I could not be more excited about what the O’Brien Family Training Center will do in enhancing the student-athlete experience at MACU,” said Athletic Director Marcus Moeller.

“At the core of who we are, our athletic department serves to put Christ at the center of our programs, provide a vehicle for an incredible education and achieve an unparalleled level of competitive excellence,” Moeller said. “Each piece of this facility was carefully crafted to allow us to do these things at a deeper and greater level.” The O’Brien Family Training Center is the first phase of an athletic capital campaign providing necessary resources to student-athletes.

Future phases of the campaign will include a second gymnasium for practices and tournaments, an outdoor facility with restrooms and concessions and sports lighting for the outdoor athletic fields.



If you would like to learn how to leave a legacy through naming opportunities, sponsorships or donations to the O'Brien Family Training Center, visit give.macu.edu or text **MACUAthletics** to **41444**.

Naming opportunities for the accompanying field house and other vital facility facets are still available.

DREAM SCHOLARSHIP GALA

Days before MACU was to hold its fifth annual Dream Scholarship Gala, COVID-19 sent Oklahoma City into a state of shutdown. On Sept. 17th, MACU's Office of University Advancement went on to hold the event completely virtually.

The first-ever virtual Dream Scholarship Gala was an enormous success, and MACU is incredibly grateful for everyone who joined us and helped contribute vital dollars for student scholarships.

MACU produced a 40-minute video on campus, **FEATURING MACU STUDENTS AND ALUMS!** The Dream Gala synced with our annual Phone-a-Thon, which made **954 calls**.

45,000+
views on Facebook

\$14,198
raised via Phone-a-Thon

\$50,000
given as a challenge match

\$52,231
raised via the Dream Gala

\$153,618

raised from efforts this year to contribute to the Evangel Fund,
Funding Student Scholarships!

COVID-19 Update

When the COVID-19 pandemic first encroached on the U.S. back in March, MACU transitioned all classes online to finish out the spring semester. Over the course of the summer, university officials and administrators met multiple times a week to iron out the best course of action for the upcoming school year. Continuing in an online-only format was an option, but it wasn't one that university leaders wanted to take.

"When it became clear that the virus wasn't going anywhere just yet, we knew we had to make a decision," said Student Life Director Blake Carlson. "We didn't want to take the easy route out and tell everybody to go home."

University leaders developed a plan to continue with on-campus classes and activities while also enabling online learning for students who do not feel comfortable returning to the classroom yet.

"Across the board, I truly believe MACU has done a great job in dealing with the pandemic," he said. "I see and hear of other universities struggling much worse than we are when it comes to dealing with COVID-19 cases on campus and communicating with students to evaluate their needs, desires and struggles."

Carlson said MACU made a conscious effort to include student leaders in their decisions regarding COVID-19, including the inclusion of two student government officers on the university's COVID-19 Response Committee. Communication has been open, he said, and expectations have been made clear. MACU has put a litany of safety measures in place to provide students and employees with a safe campus environment, including:

- Mandatory masks
- Daily health and temperature checks
- Social distancing
- Reduced capacity in the university chapel, cafeteria and at sporting events
- Frequent cleanings of high-traffic areas
- Multiple hand sanitizer stations throughout campus
- Contact tracing
- Quarantine dorms

Overall, MACU has seen relatively few cases of COVID-19 on campus, especially compared to other universities. All students who have tested positive throughout the semester have recovered well, Carlson said.

To help keep cases low while still bringing the campus together, MACU has been utilizing technology to help keep students safe and socially distanced. The university's Office of Student Services began offering online tutoring, time management and career services sessions this semester. Those who prefer in-person meetings can still opt for them, with both parties maintaining a safe distance and wearing masks.

Similar changes have been made in the classroom, where large classes and labs have been moved to an A/B format where half of the students are present in the physical classroom while the other half meets virtually.

"A lot of creating and collaborating has taken place across the campus to maintain as much normalcy as possible under the situation", said English Professor Mark Harris, who teaches several classes using the split format. "But despite the challenges, hesitations and concerns, an attitude of 'We're all in this together' has arisen on campus. And we, as a community, really are going to get through this together."



To stay up to date with the latest developments regarding MACU's response to COVID-19, please visit www.macu.edu/coronavirus-updates.



University Update

Faculty Spotlight

Brent Raisley

*Biology Professor,
Director of Pre-Nursing Program*

Some of Dr. Brent Raisley's earliest and fondest memories are the ones he spent surrounded by one of God's masterworks: science.

When he was a young boy, his grandfather operated the largest dairy farm in western Pennsylvania. Raisley and his parents lived on a patch of land his grandparents gave to them, which he described as "basically in the middle of nowhere," with their nearest neighbor more than a mile away.

Rural life suited Raisley just fine — the cornfields, streams and ponds around his childhood home became his outdoor lab. And that, he said, is where his passion for science all started.

"I would go collect frog eggs and watch them hatch into tadpoles, catch caterpillars and put them in jars and watch them turn into butterflies," he said. "I remember being 8 or 9 years old, and on Saturdays, I would just get up and leave the house at sunrise with my bike and a fishing pole and not come back until sundown. I'd come back with scrapes and bruises and who knows what I had in my backpack."

Raisley's love for science never ebbed as he grew — in fact, he just became more passionate about the field. He dedicated himself to the study, going on to earn a PhD from Oklahoma State University. He taught through graduate school and worked in research for several years, which he said led him to some difficult crossroads because of his devout Christian faith.

"I've actually not been promoted and not had research contracts renewed because I was a Christian and not the hardcore atheist biologist that you expect," he said. "But I believe it's important for Christians to be well-versed in both science and theology, especially if they're going into healthcare, science or research."

He said for him personally, his knowledge of science helps him better understand creation — and puts him in even greater awe of God.



Now, he's looking forward to sharing that passion with his students at MACU. Raisley joined the campus faculty as a biology professor this summer. He also serves as the director of MACU's pre-nursing degree program.

He's taught at various levels in the last 20 years but said that college students are his favorite age group — especially biology majors who share his passion for God's creation.

"I enjoy teaching, mentoring and helping students move forward, blaze those trails, get over obstacles and help encourage them to do what they want to do with their lives," Raisley said. "I feel like God has called me to be here at MACU, and He has put me in a unique position where I can teach a combination of science and faith."

Dr. Brent Raisley and his wife have been married for more than 20 years and have two daughters, Maddy and Lily. Outside of the classroom, you can probably find Dr. Raisley outdoors. His favorite hobby is taking care of the family's pets: they have two dogs, two geckos, two rats, a ball python and 22 backyard chickens. He is active in his home church, where he teaches Sunday School and participates in worship teams, choir and missions. MACU is excited to welcome Dr. Raisley to the campus family!

MACU SOCCER

LET THERE BE LIGHTS

As MACU's athletics programs continue to reach new heights, the university's soccer field is being outfitted with new lights. Until now, Evangel Field has had no outdoor field lights, forcing games to be played during daylight hours, with little fan attendance on weekdays as a result. That will all change this December as field lights are installed on the field, thanks to a generous donor.

"The lights will make a tremendous difference on so many levels, with the most dramatic impact being on the times our games are played," said Athletic Director Marcus Moeller. "Right now, we play a lot of afternoon games that prevent parents, local recruits and the community from attending because they are still in school or working."

Moeller said the lights will allow kick-offs to be moved to more favorable time frames so that families and members of the community can attend games. "No matter what the sport is, the gameday atmosphere when you're on a college campus under the lights is unforgettable," he said. "Hosting night games will be a very fun student experience for the entire MACU and local community."

Additionally, Moeller said that having lights added to the soccer field will keep student-athletes from missing more time in the classroom. Currently, players have to miss class even for some home games due to the narrow window for scheduling games during the daytime hours.

He also said that it will allow student-athletes more opportunities to practice. Currently, Evangel Field and the practice field are shared by both the varsity men's and women's soccer teams as well as the men's reserve team, meaning all three teams currently have to schedule practices by sunset.

The lights are on track to be fully installed this semester and will be put to use for the second half of the 2020-21 season. In addition to lights being installed on the field, the soccer facility will also receive another upgrade in the form of a new entrance building. That facility will house a ticket booth, public restrooms, concession stands and an official locker room for referees. The building will be located at the northwest entrance of the soccer field, replacing the current entrance.

"This year has presented an incredible list of challenges that none of us saw coming," Moeller said. "To be at a university and to have donors, alumni and support staff so committed to enhancing the on-campus student experience and the on-campus student-athlete experience is a tremendous show of positivity for the university. I'm very grateful to be at a place that, in the midst of very hard times, is finding ways to grow, expand and continue to offer what we have at an even higher and better level."





OFF TO A STRONG START

It's game on for MACU's Esports team, which just capped off its inaugural season of competition with a playoff run for Super Smash Bros. Ultimate. Coach Daniel Peaslee said he's heartened by the program's early successes and is looking forward to seeing how it will grow in the months to come.

"The students have been really enjoying it," said Peaslee, who coaches MACU's 15-player Esports roster. "Their passion and their drive to constantly improve, combined with the team bonding that comes with coordinating and strategizing with your teammates, all of that combines into a healthy program. We have a great foundation, and I'm really proud of what we've already accomplished this first season."

In addition to Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, the MACU Esports team also plays League of Legends and Rocket League. This season, the Evangelists saw some fierce competition, including taking on the reigning champions of the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) during the first week of play.

"Esports gives us a unique opportunity to interact with schools and players across the country," Peaslee said. "Esports isn't regional or sectional, it's national."

"Esports gives us a unique opportunity to interact with schools and players across the country."

"We play schools from the east to the west coast and anywhere in between." He said it puts the Evangelists in a unique position to not only play against a variety of opponents but also to showcase what sets MACU apart from its competitors: the university's dedication to building champions of Christ. "Above all else, we are



PHOTO: Esports athlete Ethan Davidson is a member of MACU's League of Legends team.

representing God," said Peaslee. "In all things we do, we want to achieve that level of play where we're bringing our best but we're not putting competition before Jesus."

This season, all of MACU's games were played on campus due to social distancing. Peaslee said that when restrictions loosen in the future, he looks forward to hosting more gameplay and tournaments on campus. With competitive gaming seeing a surge in Oklahoma City, he said local tournaments would provide people who may have never heard of MACU with an avenue to come onto campus and get interested in the school.

For now, he said he's remaining focused on the upcoming spring season while also recruiting players for next fall. If you or someone you know is interested in playing for the MACU Esports team, you can submit game footage or request more information by emailing daniel.peaslee@macu.edu.



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FALL SPORTS SEE SUCCESS in first half of the season

Due to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) moving most of its fall sports championships to the spring, the Mid-America Christian soccer and volleyball programs will be playing split seasons. All three of the Evangels' fall sports programs have had very impressive starts to the 2020-21 season.

The Mid-America Christian women's soccer team under 10th year Head Coach Evan Dresel is the highest scoring program in the entire NAIA. After tying a program record five goals and dishing out two assists for an NAIA era record in a 10-1 win over Texas A&M-Texarkana on Sept. 26, senior forward Liz Lozano became the program's first-ever NAIA Offensive Player of the Week.

The Evangels played their final match of the 2020 season at Southwestern Assemblies of God (Texas) on Nov. 13 and will return to play with a non-conference home match against Houston-Victoria on Feb. 12, 2021.

The MACU men's soccer team has also picked up right where it left off from its NCCAA National Championship in 2019. As of Nov. 7, the Evangels under the 2019 NCCAA Coach of the Year Mitchell Sowerby possess a 6-1 record and have been defensively dominant, allowing only four goals in the six matches and have posted four shutouts.

Just like the women's team, the Evangels wrapped up their 2020 portion of the schedule on Nov. 13 at SAGU and will be back in action on Feb. 12, 2021, for a non-conference match against Houston-Victoria.

Under first-year Head Coach Holly McKamie, the MACU volleyball team is off to its best start since joining the NAIA in 2007. As of Nov. 7, MACU holds a 9-3 record and even posted the program's longest win streak since joining the NAIA by winning nine in a row from Sept. 5 through Oct. 22.

The Evangels have accomplished several firsts during the run, which included garnering the program's first-ever NAIA Attacker and Defender of the Week awards.

MACU played its final regular season game of the 2020 season at home against SAGU on Nov. 13 before it was selected to compete at its second straight NCCAA National Championship in St. Paul, Minnesota from Nov. 19-21.



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL RETURNS to SAC action in January

The Mid-America Christian women's basketball team has high expectations for the 2020-21 season after the team was selected by the league's coaches to finish third in the Sooner Athletic Conference Preseason Poll released in mid-October.

Despite the Evangels having some huge shoes to fill due to the graduation of three-time NCCAA and NAIA All-American Alexis Shannon, the Evangels return some strong talent from last season's squad that went 21-11 and finished fourth in the SAC league standings with a 12-8 mark.

The Evangels also have a promising crop of incoming talent, headlined by three transfers from Northwestern Oklahoma State in McKenzie Lamer, Kyleigh Leverich and Presley Payahsape.

As of Nov. 21, Mid-America Christian is posting a 3-1 record after opening the season with a pair of wins over Oklahoma Wesleyan and Baptist Bible College (Mo.) before falling in a very competitive battle with No. 2 Wayland Baptist. In the multiple record-setting 116-31 win over Baptist Bible on Oct. 28, Evangels Head Coach Hannah Moeller earned her 200th career coaching win in her ninth year as a head coach, including her fifth at the helm with MACU.

The Evangels have five non-conference games remaining on the 2020 portion of the schedule and will be off during the month of December before returning for Sooner Athletic Conference play in January.



MEN'S HOOPS LOOKS TO REPLICATE record-breaking 2019-20 season

Coming off one of the best seasons in program history, the Mid-America Christian men's basketball team will be looking to replicate its success from last season. The team was picked to win the Sooner Athletic Conference by the league's coaches in mid-October and the team is getting national recognition after being selected as the No. 2 team in the 2020-21 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Preseason Poll.

Under the SAC Coach of the Year Josh Gamblin, the Evangels are coming off their winningest season since joining the NAIA in 2007, finishing the year with a 30-2 record and winning the program's second-ever SAC league title with a 19-1 conference mark, becoming the first team in ten years to finish with just one league loss.

MACU also earned its fourth bid to the NAIA National Championship Tournament as well as the program's first-ever No. 1 seed before the event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite losing some stellar talent from last season's squad, including NAIA All-American and the NCCAA Player of the Year in Ashford Golden, who is playing professionally in Portugal, the Evangels bring back a very talented lineup.

MACU also looks to be reloading for the 2020-21 season with some strong incoming talent, headlined by junior forward Malik Malone, junior guards Caleb Riggs and Jasiah Lewis and senior point guard Omar Boone.

As of Nov. 20, the Evangels have begun the season 4-0. They will be off during the month of December before returning for Sooner Athletic Conference play in January.

SPORTS UPDATE

NEW COACHING HIRES for MACU Athletics

The Mid-America Christian University Athletic Department is proud to announce some coaching changes for the winter and spring seasons.

After a legendary playing career with the MACU women's basketball program, Alexis Shannon is returning to the program as the Graduate Assistant Coach. Shannon ended her Evangels playing career as the program's second all-time leading scorer with 1853 points while earning three NCCAA First Team All-American and three NAIA All-American Honorable Mention nods.

On the men's basketball side, Torrey Young is returning to the program as a student assistant coach after a two-year playing career with the Evangels. Young was a key part of back-to-back NAIA tournament teams, including last season's Sooner Athletic Conference championship team.

After helping guide the Evangels baseball team to its winningest season in the NAIA era, Brett Stanton was promoted to the Interim Head Coach position in May. During the 2020 season, the Evangels posted a 21-10 overall record, putting up record offensive, defensive and pitching marks before the season was abruptly cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Joining the MACU baseball staff is Kyle Barrett, who was hired in July to take over as the team's Assistant Coach and will primarily serve in the pitching coach role for the Evangels. Barrett comes to MACU after a stellar coaching career at Antelope Valley (Calif.).



MACU Launches Two New Programs

MACU partners with OCU Kramer School for Pre-Nursing Program

This summer, MACU began a program partnership with Oklahoma City University's Kramer School of Nursing to provide students with an avenue to a nursing degree. The articulation agreement allows MACU students to complete degree requirements for the first two years of OCU's nursing program, preparing them for application and admission into the Kramer School of Nursing as junior nursing students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

By completing their first two years of nursing studies at MACU, students can save big on tuition: a traditional undergraduate semester at MACU costs \$8,784 while undergraduate tuition at OCU is \$14,047 per semester. The partnership also provides MACU students with a smooth transition between schools, said Assistant Vice President of Enrollment David Rose.

"When a student transfers from one university to another, it's not unusual that they would end up losing some credit because it doesn't fit into the new major as cleanly as they had hoped," Rose said. "But in this transfer



pathway that was jointly developed between MACU and OCU, it really ensures that the student does not lose any credit in transfer because the pathway has been clearly articulated." Rose said students will be able to move into OCU's BSN program without losing credit, being put on a waitlist or losing any time in their pursuit of a nursing degree.

Students transferring into the Kramer School of Nursing will be required to meet all admission requirements, but Rose said the program will allow those requirements to be met before applying. "MACU is very excited to be working with OCU in this manner and thinks that it serves the students at both of our institutions very well," he said. "The students will be coming out of this program very uniquely academically prepared," Rose said.

Interdisciplinary Studies Degree Gives Adult Students A Flexible Option

For students looking for a flexible degree that's specifically oriented towards their career goals, MACU has launched the B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies, a versatile degree program that allows students to receive a completely personalized education. "We wanted to offer a degree that allows students to explore options and learn a little about a lot," said Dr. Carol Fowlkes, who co-chairs the traditional side of the degree program.

Did you know that our Students pursuing a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies at MACU can choose two or three disciplines offered by the university and combine them into a customized degree program. For instance, an Interdisciplinary Studies major could

complete 12 hours each of classes in Digital Marketing and English, while choosing an 18-hour concentration in Business. "The degree is completely customizable to a student's individual needs," Fowlkes said. "It is designed to offer students an opportunity to participate in a goal-oriented education that is directly relevant to the student's intellectual development and career aspirations."

The B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies is offered as both a traditional, on-ground degree for high school seniors and college transfers; as well as an on-ground, online or hybrid degree for adult students. Fowlkes said the degree may be especially attractive to adult students who just need to earn a Bachelor's degree but do not necessarily need for it to be in a specific field.

"Many employers offer tuition assistance for their employees to earn an education. The B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies is a great option for these students who need to earn their undergraduate degree without focusing on a specific major," she said. "It's also a fantastic option for students who just love to learn and want to dabble in several different fields of study."

How to Get Enrolled

Enrollment is now open for these new programs as well as more than a hundred more degree and certificate programs. For more information, please email enroll@macu.edu or call 888-888-2341 to speak to an enrollment counselor.

Achieve Excellence AT MACU

Earn Your Certificate or Graduate Degree Today!

MACU has flexible options that work for your life. Choose from more than a hundred degree and certificate options that can be taken 100% online or one night per week on campus. Some exciting programs have classes beginning soon, including:

Data Analytics

Digital Marketing

Education

Healthcare Administration

Leadership

MBA

Nursing (partnership with OCU)

Psychology and Counseling

...and many more!

10% alumni discount

When you pursue your Master's Degree with us! Offer is valid for all MACU Alumni.

Classes
Beginning in
January and
February

YOUR.MACU.EDU
888-888-2341



YEAR-END GIVING

Makes a Difference!

An unprecedented year is coming to an end, and 2021 will be here before we know it! Now more than ever, MACU students are relying on your help to receive student scholarships. As you begin planning for the new year to come, would you consider making a year-end gift to help our young men and women receive a top-notch, Christ-centered education?

Your impact could be doubled!

A generous donor has committed to matching up to \$50,000 in Year-End Gifts!

WAYS TO GIVE

Gifts of Cash:

- Checks can be mailed to University Advancement at
3500 S.W. 119th St. OKC, OK 73170
- Give online at give.macu.edu
- Use your phone to text **EVANGELS** to **41444**

Gifts of Appreciated Stocks, Bonds, or Other Securities:

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

**All year-end gifts to MACU are
tax-deductible as allowed by law!**

"I feel that God has called me to become an orthopedic surgeon. I love sports, and as a basketball player, you see a lot of athletes hurt themselves. It gives me an opportunity to be involved with something I am passionate about while helping others heal through their injuries. My education at MACU has helped prepare me to apply for medical school and given me an experience I couldn't receive anywhere else.

The scholarships I have received have prevented me from going into significant debt while attending school. It would have been a huge struggle for me to try to go to school, play basketball and work full-time to pay for college. I am so grateful to the people who

give to scholarship funds and make it possible for students to attend school without the burden of student loans and debt."



Ossyana Ozoani Senior, Biology

"My dad had some heart issues when I was growing up and when I would visit him in the hospital, I became really interested in the patient care side of medicine combined with the science side. I am awed by what God has left for us to take care of each other. I applied to nursing school this fall after completing my prerequisites at MACU.

Without scholarships, I would not be on the path to becoming a healthcare professional because I wouldn't be at MACU. It is so important to make a Christian education affordable because when it isn't, students choose state schools. The scholarships I received through the JASCO Giving Hope Foundation, church match and my academic scholarships gave me the opportunity to be able to come here and study and learn science from a Christian perspective that you can't get at a secular university."



Landon Clay Palmer Junior, Pre-Nursing

MACU Admissions Team Welcomes **TWO NEW COUNSELORS!**



Job hunting in the middle of a pandemic wasn't where Madeleine Williams expected to find herself this year. After taking a job straight out of college, she realized that the position wasn't for her and asked God to help her find a better fit. With many Americans displaced by COVID-19 and countless businesses forced to shutter their doors or cut back on their workforce, the search wasn't easy.

"I was just driving to my aunt and uncle's one day, trying to figure out what to do with my life, and I passed MACU and realized I didn't know much about the university," Williams recalled. "It wasn't on my radar whatsoever, but I felt God urging me to look into it."

She looked up the university online and found an open position for an Admissions counselor, a role she felt naturally drawn to. During her time as an undergrad student at Oklahoma State University, Williams put in many hours of volunteer work at the OSU Foundation, where she found her passion for working with college students. "It was straight passion for me," said Williams. "I was spending hours there each week, doing it all for free, because I was passionate about what I was doing. Knowing how I felt about that piqued my interest into higher education and going to work in a university."

Although COVID-19 has significantly shaped the way that the MACU Admissions team operates this year, Williams said she's thrilled to be a part of the office and enjoys meeting with students virtually through fairs, text messages, Facetime and other electronic means.

"MACU is a dream job for me," she said. "I grew up in a Christian household, so Christian beliefs have always been at the top of my radar. Being able to work for a Christian university that stands behind the values I value and my morals, it's a dream come true. You can't beat combining work and religion all in one."

MADELEINE WILLIAMS

From the first step she took on the MACU campus, Rachel Tapps knew there was something different about the university—and that in her senior year, she had finally found a campus that truly felt like home. Now, she's eager to deliver the same experience to a new generation of Evangelists as an Admissions counselor.

After graduating from MACU this year, Tapps got her first job out of college back in July with an insurance company, but she found the position wasn't a good fit for her. "I kept praying for God to put me where I was supposed to be," she recalled, "and he brought me right back to MACU."

Tapps said that even though she was only at MACU for her senior year, her time at the university left an indelible mark on her life. After transferring to play basketball, she majored in Communication, Media and Ethics, which she said helped prepare her for her new role in the Admissions office.

"I enjoyed my time here at MACU, and I feel like this is the perfect job to give back to this university," she said. "I love to connect with people, and that's what this job is all about: connecting with students and bringing them on campus." That's proven somewhat difficult in the era of social distancing and restrictions on gathering.

Tapps said that the Admissions team has learned how to innovate during the COVID-19 pandemic, replacing their usual booths at high schools and transfer fairs with online opportunities, text messages and old-fashioned snail mail. "We really try to get our prospective students on campus as much as possible right now just so they can have the experience that I did when I first came here," said Tapps. "You become family as soon as you step on campus. That was my experience, and I look forward to walking alongside new students as they get to experience that for the first time as well."



RACHEL TAPPS

Student Spotlight

Addie Cross

Addie Cross knows what it's like to hit rock bottom. She found her footing as a personal trainer right out of high school, leading to a 16-year-long career in fitness that suited her high-energy, positive attitude.

"I was one of those people who didn't think mental health issues were real," she said. "If something was wrong, I thought you just needed to work out or go for a walk. But then it happened to me."

The day was unordinary: she'd just finished working out and had gone into the tanning bed to relax afterwards, as she always did. But just as Cross began to relax, she experienced her first panic attack. It would become one of many as anxiety began to control her life, ultimately developing into a crippling panic disorder.

"I went through three years of having my entire world flipped on end," she said. "I was afraid to leave my own home. Nothing felt so odd to me in my whole life as going inside a shell and becoming a hermit. I was terrified of what was happening to me."

At 33 years old, Cross said she began to question if she wanted to be on the earth anymore. Plagued by panic attacks and agoraphobia, she felt as if there was no way out — and no way back to the life she once lived to the fullest.

"I walked into the bathroom and it was like Satan himself was telling me to kill myself," she said. "I remember looking at myself in the mirror and I thought 'If you're going to do it, do it now.'"

But then, she heard a voice — the voice of God.

"She's had enough," He said," Cross recalled. "And I went from being so sick that I thought I was going to die to wanting to share the healing power of God with everyone."

When she went through that painful period of anxiety, God started speaking to her heart about helping others struggling with mental illness and other conditions. Cross knew she wanted to help others, but she didn't know how to start. She quit her job as a personal trainer and began working at her mother-in-law's flower shop in Moore, Okla., which gave her time to think about her goals — and face some of her biggest fears.



PHOTO: Addie Cross celebrating graduation with loved ones.

When she went through that painful period of anxiety, God started speaking to her heart about helping others struggling with mental illness and other conditions.

"I never went to college. I never wanted to go to college. I didn't think I was smart enough because of what others in my world told me and because of how badly I struggled in high school," Cross said.

She faced many of the same worries common to adult students: she didn't think she would be accepted because of her poor grades, that it would cost her and her husband too much money and that she wasn't cut out for college.

"My mom was my biggest fan," she said, "and one day she told me, 'Addie, you are going to go to Mid-America Christian University.'"

That same day, Cross said her whole life changed. She was enrolled in the university's licensed professional counselor (LPC) track, beginning with an undergraduate in

psychology. In 2018, she graduated from the degree program with honors — something she thought would never be possible.

"I didn't even get to graduate from high school. I had to go to an alternative night school to get my diploma because I struggled with school so badly," she said. "I thought I hated school because I could not learn."

Utilizing MACU's online courses, Cross said she realized that in a virtual environment, she could tailor the atmosphere and the pace to fit her personal needs.

"It was conducive to my way of being able to learn," she said. "I wasn't going to be embarrassed by other people because I was in the safety of my own home. I didn't get distracted by other people. I could make a safe place for me to learn, and I thrived in it."

After receiving her bachelor's degree, Cross moved on in her educational journey by beginning her master's program. Tragically, her graduate journey was fraught with personal loss. She lost her beloved mother, father and stepbrother within a six-month period of time.



"My professors were unbelievable," she said. "Those two years when I was in school and my mom was sick, I would have so many late assignments. I would get phone calls in the middle of trying to do homework that she was being taken to the ER, and my professors would say 'just go, go to your mom.' They never made me feel like I was making excuses. They put her life and the value of her in my life above everything else."

Cross said the love and encouragement she received from her family, professors and online classmates carried her during one of the most difficult periods of her life.

"My professors and classmates truly became my family," she said. "These were people I didn't even know when I started my degree, and now these people have seen me on my face, and they have walked with me through some of the hardest times of my life."

"My professors and classmates truly became my family..."

Now, despite insurmountable obstacles, Cross is preparing to graduate with her master's degree and finishing up her candidacy at Metro Family Therapy and Counseling, also in her hometown of Moore. She said she is looking forward to being able to help others who find themselves in difficult situations.

"If I could do this, anyone can. I believe God has called me to help people who need to be helped. What makes me love psychology more than anything is knowing that maybe I can be a light in somebody's darkness and maybe I can help lead them to the healing power of God," she said.

"They might not even know who God is and that's okay, but God knows me and maybe he will use me in whatever way he sees fit to help save people from getting to the place where he found me in the bathroom that day."

If you feel that God has called you to help people who are struggling with mental disorders, addictions, family conflicts and more, MACU has multiple degree programs to help prepare you with the education you need. Our Psychology and Counseling programs are enrolling now. Visit www.macu.edu for more information or email enroll@macu.edu to start your journey today.

PHOTO: Matt & Addie Cross

Staff Spotlight

Morgan Alsip

It's a time that Morgan Alsip remembers clearly: the morning of June 25, 2000, when a sermon on the Lord's Prayer changed his entire devotional life.

Already a devout man of faith, Alsip began having a morning time of devotion. Four years into the routine, with not even the sun for company, he heard the voice of God speak to him early on a quiet autumn morning.

"In my spirit, I heard God ask, 'Would you come work for Me full-time?'" Alsip recalled. "While I thought I was a dedicated Christian, I never thought anything about going to work for Him on a full-time basis."

At the time, Alsip had found success in the banking business, where he had worked since the age of 19. He went to his Pastor, Mike Ebert, for guidance, who advised Alsip that he was missing just one thing: an education from Mid-American Christian University.

Taking a leap of faith, Alsip moved his family to Oklahoma City, where he got started on his ministry degree. After graduating in 2007, he began working full-time for the university in the advancement office. His finance and banking background made him an excellent candidate for the position, and his prowess paved the way for him to earn his current title as the Executive Director of Church Relations.

He retired from the position, which he considered a dream job, on Nov. 15.

In his 13 years with MACU, Alsip has had the opportunity to travel to churches across the U.S. to meet pastors and churches who were already supporting or were interested in supporting MACU and its mission. He said along the way he became exposed to an incredible variety of ways to worship the same amazing God.



"When we began traveling all over America, something I learned is that church can be done in more than one way, and just because it's different doesn't mean it's wrong," he said. "I thought there was only one way to serve communion or to have an altar call. It truly expanded my understanding of Kingdom work, which is what MACU teaches: that the Kingdom of God is broad."

Alsip said he is thankful to the churches he has visited for their faithful support of the university and said he hopes they will continue giving to help young men and women who are called to serve.

In Alsip's absence at the university, church support will remain as important as ever. MACU's Office of University Advancement will continue to reach out to churches to provide support and connectivity, especially during these days of challenge. MACU wants church leaders to know that we are available now as always. To contact University Advancement, please call 405-692-3191.

LEFT: Morgan and Carol Alsip at the 2019 MACU Board of Trustees meeting, held at the Petroleum Club in downtown Oklahoma City.

TOP: Morgan and Carol Alsip with their grandsons, Johnathan and Nathan Dickson, on the MACU campus.

Before the university was ever established as South Texas Bible Institute in 1953, Dr. James Curtis already believed in the school and its mission. Alongside the university's first president, Dr. Max Gaulke, Curtis was instrumental in bringing the university into existence. After STBI was established in Houston, Curtis and his beloved wife, Helen, continued to be fervent supporters and recruiters for the university.

When it came time for James Curtis to retire from his longtime tenure as a Church of God minister and evangelist in the late 90s, the couple decided they wanted to live on the university's campus. They sold their home in Albuquerque, giving much of the money from the sale to the school while moving into a newly-constructed duplex on the MACU campus. During that time, James Curtis served as the campus pastor. James Curtis continued to serve and give to MACU up until his heavenly homecoming in 2003. After his passing, the campus community wrapped their arms around Helen Curtis, who became something of a matriarch to the university.

"She'd come to chapel all the time, sit in the cafeteria and watch students come by," recalled Executive Director of Church Relations Morgan Alsip, who forged a treasured and long-lasting friendship with Helen Curtis after he came to the school as a student in 2005. "As a pastor's wife, she was used to taking care of people. She'd pick up the phone and invite staff, faculty and students to come over so she could prepare them a meal. She just wanted to let people know that she loved them."

Helen Curtis reunited with her dear husband and her precious Lord and Savior in heaven in 2018. Although the Curtises have departed this earth for their heavenly reward, their impact continues to be felt across the campus today. "Sister Helen had a special place in her heart for the students and ministries at MACU," Alsip said. "When she spoke to parents whose children were considering coming to MACU, she would always tell them, 'If money is the only thing stopping you from coming to Mid-America, don't let it. The money will be found.'"

"When she spoke to parents whose children were considering coming to MACU, she would always tell them, 'If money is the only thing stopping you from coming to Mid-America, don't let it. The money will be found.'"

To help students pay for their education, Helen Curtis helped begin the scholarship fund named for her husband, the Dr. James H. Curtis Scholarship Fund. To date, it has helped countless young men and women receive scholarships that allowed them to attend and graduate from MACU.

"Brother James and Sister Helen believed in the mission of the university and wanted to help fulfill that mission the best that they could," said Alsip. Through the couple's love for the university and its students, they have done exactly that. MACU is eternally grateful for supporters like Dr. James and Dr. Helen Curtis, whose faithful prayer and giving has personally touched the lives so many of our students.

Eternal Investment



ABOVE: Sister Helen Curtis and President John Fozard during the 2014 groundbreaking of the new Residence Halls.
BELOW: Sister Helen Curtis with MACU students Ed Stewart and Caleb Jones.

If you are interested in giving to the Dr. James H. Curtis Scholarship Fund or the General Scholarship Fund, please contact University Advancement at 405-692-3191 or visit give.macu.edu.

What's Next?

JAN 5 Adult Classes Begin
JAN 20 Traditional Classes Begin
FEB 25 Evangel Experience
MAY 1 2021 Commencement
MAY 3 MACU Golf Classic

