

CAREY

THE WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE



Art major takes on monumental
**MURAL TO HONOR
WILLIAM CAREY**

STORY BEGINS ON PAGE 11

LETTERS FROM CAREY



Dear Carey Family,

On behalf of William Carey University's board of trustees, faculty, staff and, most importantly, our students, thank you for staying active and involved with your alma mater. And thank you for your prayers. As I enter my third year as president, I am grateful to be leading this university, and I work hard every day to lead Carey to new heights.

We have been busy this year creating a strategic plan that maps our future – and how we plan to get there. At the beginning of my tenure, I said increasing undergraduate enrollment would be a central focus, and I'm thrilled to let you know we've made tremendous progress. This fall, we set new records for on-campus residents, first-time freshmen and transfer students! All of this points to a healthy and growing undergraduate population; we hope and pray it makes us stronger and becomes a pipeline for our graduate programs.

Our "Making College Affordable" campaign is largely responsible for this growth. We kept our tuition low, increased scholarship amounts and eased a financial burden for undergraduate students by paying for their textbooks. William Carey University became one of the most affordable options for a college education – and people took note.

This year, William Carey University was named the "#1 Best Value in Mississippi," out of all 15 colleges and universities. WCU was also named the "#3 Best Christian University" in the country. We feel we bring great value to the lives of our students by preparing them to answer God's call in a Christian environment. We are proud to represent all of you in a way that brings positive attention to William Carey.

Now, more than ever, Christian Higher Education is critically important to our society. You, as alumni, are our best recruiters! I hope you will help us share this good news with others so we can work together to build for the future. Thank you for your love of Carey!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Burnett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ben Burnett, President

P.S. Speaking of building for the future, be on the lookout in mid-October for exciting news about an aggressive plan to seek support for our current and future students.

CAREY

THE WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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William Carey University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award bachelor, master, education specialist, and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of William Carey University.



By This
We Are Known

John 13:34-35



Carey Dinner Theatre presents

WAFFLE HOUSE

The Musical

CAREY DINNER THEATRE CELEBRATED ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY THIS SUMMER WITH AN ORIGINAL PLAY – “WAFFLE HOUSE: THE MUSICAL.”

“Waffle House” is a musical comedy set in America’s favorite diner. It features a cook, waitresses, and regulars everyone will recognize. Just like a real Waffle House jukebox, the music ranges from country, southern rock and R&B to doo-wop and hymns. Songs include “Scattered, Smothered and Covered,” “Ballad of Skedaddle,” “Mama’s Kitchen,” and “I’ve Eaten Everywhere.”

“Cody Stockstill came up with the idea for a Waffle House musical. Cody works for Carey Dinner Theatre as scenic designer and technical director. I’ve mentioned it to students and friends for years. We would laugh and bat around ideas, but it never went anywhere,” said Tim Matheny, WCU’s chair of Theatre & Communication.

This year, Matheny pitched the idea to Obra Quave, CDT’s founding director.

Quave was all for it: “I think it’s wonderful to revisit the idea of writing a musical to celebrate our 50th anniversary. Back in the early days of Carey Dinner Theatre, all the shows were written by our own company members.”

Three CDT staffers collaborated to write the musical: Tim Matheny; Jeanna Graves, an adjunct instructor in the theatre and English departments; and Tae Yong Hong, an assistant professor at Winters School of Music.

“When Tim Matheny told me about the project, I was excited but nervous. I had never written songs before, and poetry is not my forte. But I loved the story-telling of comedians like Jerry Clower when I was a child. Their humor felt familiar and safe because it gently poked fun at people and situations I knew very well,” Graves said.

Waffle House makes Tae Yong Hong think of his first night in the U.S.



“Waffle House: The Musical” was written by three Carey Dinner Theatre staffers, from left, Tim Matheny, Jeanna Graves, and Tae Yong Hong.

1975

The first Carey Summer Showcase (now Carey Dinner Theatre) opened with a cast/crew of 11. "It's Make Believe," by Carey's own Keith Thompson ('78) and Jay Rogers ('77) was just the first of shows written by CDT's own talent.



"I went from the airport to a hotel in Hattiesburg. There was a Waffle House right across the street. I ate my first meal in America at that Waffle House. I thought eating breakfast food at night was strange, but I liked it," Hong said.

The show was performed by seven actors at Joe & Virginia Tatum Theater.

"Waffle House was a fun ride. Songs ranged from silly to poignant. I think people recognized themselves or people they know in these characters," Matheny said.

"Waffle House: The Musical" played to sold-out houses – and Carey Dinner Theatre had to add performances to meet audience demand.



Cast and crew members from CDT's first show pose with cast and crew of "Waffle House."

WCU Hosts

Celebrating YOUR SERVICE



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY'S OFFICE OF MILITARY ENGAGEMENT HOSTED "CELEBRATING YOUR SERVICE: FAITH, FAMILY, COUNTRY" AT CAMP SHELBY IN FEBRUARY 2024. THE EVENT HONORED THE MILITARY COMMUNITY, BUT WAS OPEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, TOO.

The guest speaker was retired U.S. Army Ranger Jeff Struecker, who served in

Somalia during a civil war. In the 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, the 24-year-old sergeant and squad leader was assigned to Task Force Ranger as a part of the 75th Ranger Regiment. During the battle, Struecker led a three-vehicle convoy through intense fire to bring a private wounded in a fall from a Black Hawk helicopter back to base.

Struecker was awarded the Silver Star. His actions in Mogadishu were featured in the movie, "Black Hawk Down," which received four Academy Award nominations.





A SOLDIER'S WITNESS

At age 18, Jeff Struecker enlisted in the U.S. Army as an infantryman.

He served in the 75th Ranger Regiment in positions from private to platoon sergeant. While serving in this unit, Struecker won the David

L. Grange Best Ranger Competition in 1996. He taught ROTC at the University of Louisville and was recognized in 1998 as the U.S. Army ROTC, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Jeff spent his final 10 years in the U.S. Army serving as a chaplain in Airborne and Ranger units.

Jeff Struecker

As part of his story, Struecker shared his Christian witness with the audience.

"If you're living your life simply looking for comfort and convenience, you will never become the warrior that God created you to be. God sends us to go out and impact the world for Jesus. In fact, the Holy Spirit punched me in the face and helped me realize, Jeff, your job as a Christian

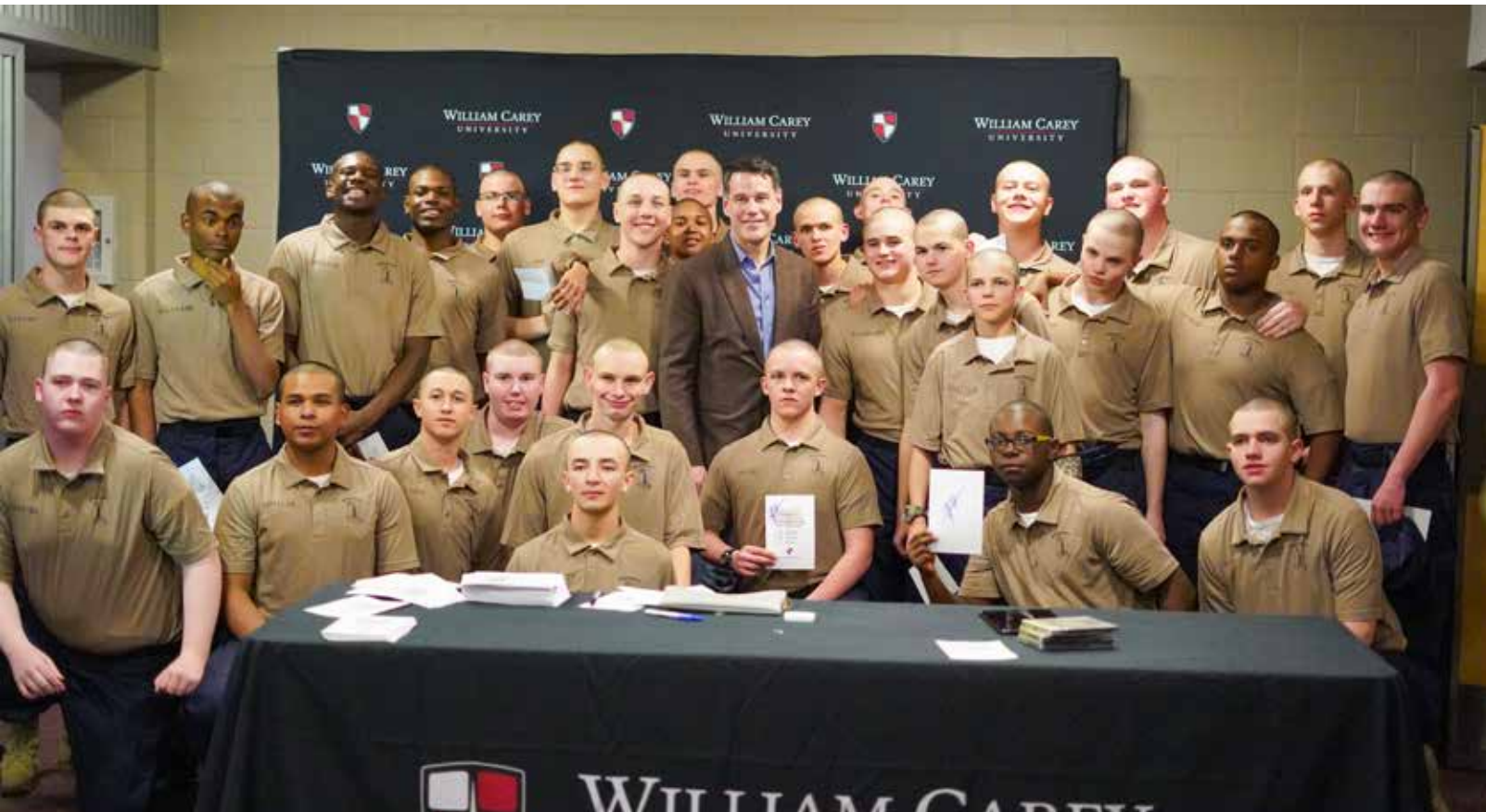
soldier is not just to prepare warriors to meet the enemy. It's to prepare them for eternity."

Struecker holds a Ph.D. from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, along with several other earned and honorary degrees. He is lead pastor of 2 Cities Church in Columbus, Ga. In 2017, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.



RIGHT: *Col. (retired) Mark Prine, special projects officer; US Army Ranger (retired) Jeff Struecker; Dr. Brett Golson, WCU vice president for strategic operations; and Lt. Col. Richard Rowland, deputy commander Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center.*

BELOW: *Camp Shelby Youth Challenge Academy students with Jeff Struecker*





COMMENCEMENT

1,200+ Graduates in 2023/2024 Academic Year





Summer Allen with her family at WCU commencement on May 10.



NEW THEATRE BFA

Spring graduation at William Carey University included a “first” for the theatre department – when Mackenzie Charles became the first student to earn a bachelor of fine arts degree in Theatre for Young Audiences. The new BFA degree program was launched in fall 2022. Charles is the founder of “Open Doors Theatre” in McComb, which specializes in making theatre accessible for disabled actors. A non-profit organization, Open Doors recently received a grant to support the theatre’s mission. In the photo, Mackenzie Charles visits after commencement with her parents, Chris and Jennifer Charles, and Tim Matheny, chair of WCU theatre and communication.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

WCU SCHOOL OF EDUCATION GRADUATES FIRST “GROW YOUR OWN”

Summer Allen of Monticello, Miss., is the first graduate of the WCU School of Education’s “Grow Your Own” program— a partnership with school districts all over the state designed to address Mississippi’s critical teacher shortage.

“Grow Your Own” enables high school students who want to become classroom teachers to fast-track their careers and graduate from WCU in three years through a combination of dual enrollment classes, an accelerated schedule and hands-on experience as teacher assistants in real classrooms.

Summer did part of her “Grow Your Own” field work as a first-grade teacher

assistant at Monticello Elementary School. Coming from a family of educators, she also completed “Teacher Academy” at Lawrence County High School before she enrolled at William Carey University.

“In high school, I became certain that being an educator was what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I have always been curious about how students grow – academically, socially, and emotionally. The more I learned about what it takes to be an educator, the more I wanted to be a person in students’ lives who helps them grow in those areas,” Summer said.

Summer currently teaches first grade at Monticello.

For more info about “Grow Your Own,” email education@wmcarey.edu.



COMMENCEMENT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE



LONG-AWAITED DIPLOMA

In 1965, William Carey College became the first institution of higher education in Mississippi to voluntarily integrate its student body. Two African-American honor graduates of Rowan High School, Vermester Jackson and Linda Williams, were welcomed to campus. Vermester Jackson graduated – but Linda Williams was unable to complete her degree. Fifty years later, William Carey University officials reviewing the requirements for a bachelor's degree in general studies realized that, under current guidelines, Linda Williams was qualified for graduation. WCU wasted no time in contacting Ms. Williams with the good news. Delighted, Linda Williams received her diploma during spring 2024 commencement ceremonies. She was congratulated onstage by WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett and classmate Vermester Jackson Bester. Dr. Myron Noonkester was also there to celebrate the moment. Myron Noonkester is the son of the late Dr. J. Ralph Noonkester, president of William Carey in 1965 – and a civil rights champion who invited the two girls to enroll. The onstage presentation of Linda Williams's diploma brought the house down as audience members came to their feet to deliver a thunderous standing ovation.



TRIPLE PLAY

An entire family graduated from William Carey University during spring commencement. All three members of the Saidman family graduated with majors in Health Information and Management – but each added a second focus, too. Father

Steven Saidman double-majored in history. Mother Ruth Saidman minored in business administration, and daughter Sarah Saidman minored in music. As students, the family worked at the WCU cafeteria. They plan to start a business together – possibly in the area of financial counseling.



Art Student, Sumer West, Creates *Carey Mural*



WILKES DINING HALL

Phase 1 of a complete renovation of Wilkes Dining Hall was completed in the spring. And Phase 2 will open for the fall term. The project merges old Wilkes Hall's two separate dining rooms into a single, large, high-ceiling space with an open layout. It will seat 500 people – about twice the capacity of the old dining hall. Dr. Valerie Bridgforth, VP for Student Affairs: "Dining is an important component of the student experience, and our on-campus student population is growing. We want to provide our students with a modern cafeteria that meets their needs for both dining and building community." Hattiesburg residents also enjoy dining at Wilkes, especially after church on Sunday and Wednesday for lunch – it's Chicken Day!



When we hear the name William Carey, we think of our school's namesake. Maybe we even know a little history about the missionary pioneer or the decades of history of the school. However, many students leave WCU without knowing much more than a few basic details.

Sumer West, senior art student, saw a need for this to change. "I don't want anyone to come on this campus without knowing who William Carey was, what his mission was, and what the mission of the school is." West is passionate about William Carey University and passionate about making sure students know about William Carey and his work as a Bible translator, a linguist, a missionary, a botanist, and a social reformer. She took these aspects of his life and work and incorporated them into a mural on the side of Thomas Hall. From the image of his translating the Bible, to the image of his baptizing the first convert to Christianity, to his speaking out about the practice of "sati," Sumer visually tells the history of the man, William Carey.

West has not had to work on this project alone. If you have been on campus recently, you may have seen how many people it takes to accomplish this vision. Whether it has been other art students, art professors, or other faculty and staff, Sumer has felt the support and help from the whole Carey family. This project has truly involved the entire

campus. Sumer is more than happy to let anyone come and help paint on the mural. She said, "When I came to William Carey, I was welcomed! It was like a warm embrace and a family, and I wanted to be able to give that back. This mural gives back to the whole campus." This project brings the entire campus together and fosters the familial spirit of William Carey University. One day in particular, Sumer invited the whole faculty and staff to come participate and paint a piece of the wall. More than 100 people stopped by to do their part.

Although it has been a long summer of working in the heat, Sumer and her team have not slowed down and are excited for what is to come. She plans to install two additional mural panels in the upcoming year further depicting the history of the university.

For information on how you can support this project, please email alummi@wmcarey.edu.





UPDATE

WCUCOM Institute for Primary Care

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY BROKE GROUND IN THE WINTER FOR THE COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE'S INSTITUTE FOR PRIMARY CARE (IPC). THE PROJECT HAS TWO PARTS: 1) BUILDING THE MAIN THREE-STORY IPC STRUCTURE; AND 2) DEMOLISHING THE EXISTING COM 1 LECTURE HALLS TO MAKE ROOM FOR EXPANDED CLASSROOM SPACE.

Construction of the 60,000-square-foot complex is on schedule to be complete before the start of the 2025 academic year. The new facility is supported by a \$20 million infrastructure grant through AccelerateMS, the

state's leading workforce development office.

Dr. Italo Subbarao, dean of the WCU College of Osteopathic Medicine, thanked the "Champions of Mississippi" who made the project possible – state and local elected officials and agencies, medical organizations, WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett, the WCU Board of Trustees and WCU's late president emeritus, Dr. Tommy King.

"The Institute for Primary Care represents a singular investment that will have generational benefit for all Mississippians," Subbarao said.

"It's an investment in healthcare that acknowledges the need for training and keeping more primary care physicians and healthcare providers in Mississippi. That's key to better healthcare. It's an investment that will touch and improve the lives of Mississippians throughout the state."



THE INSTITUTE FOR PRIMARY CARE WILL INCLUDE:

- Largest Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine lab in the south;
- Innovative simulation lab for obstetrics and pediatric training;
- Large number of clinical rooms for patient meetings;
- Conference center that will bring the health care industry and local health care providers to exchange ideas and develop solutions; and
- Two large, immersive modular classrooms.

Campus Housing

William Carey University recently completed new townhouse units for students in the College of Osteopathic Medicine. After the medical school's incoming class size increased from 100 to 200 students per year, the demand for additional housing increased. These eight new townhouses on the edge of campus provide housing for 24 students. Each townhouse features three separate bedrooms, three full baths, shared living space, a full kitchen, and laundry room. Students moved in at the beginning of the 2024 fall semester.



WCU: No 1 “Best Value” College in Mississippi

THIS SPRING BROUGHT BACK-TO-BACK GOOD NEWS. IN APRIL, WORD CAME THAT NICHE HAD RANKED WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY NO. 2 ON ITS “BEST COLLEGES IN MISSISSIPPI” LIST. IN JUNE, SMARTASSET RANKED WCU AS MISSISSIPPI’S NO. 1 “BEST VALUE” UNIVERSITY.

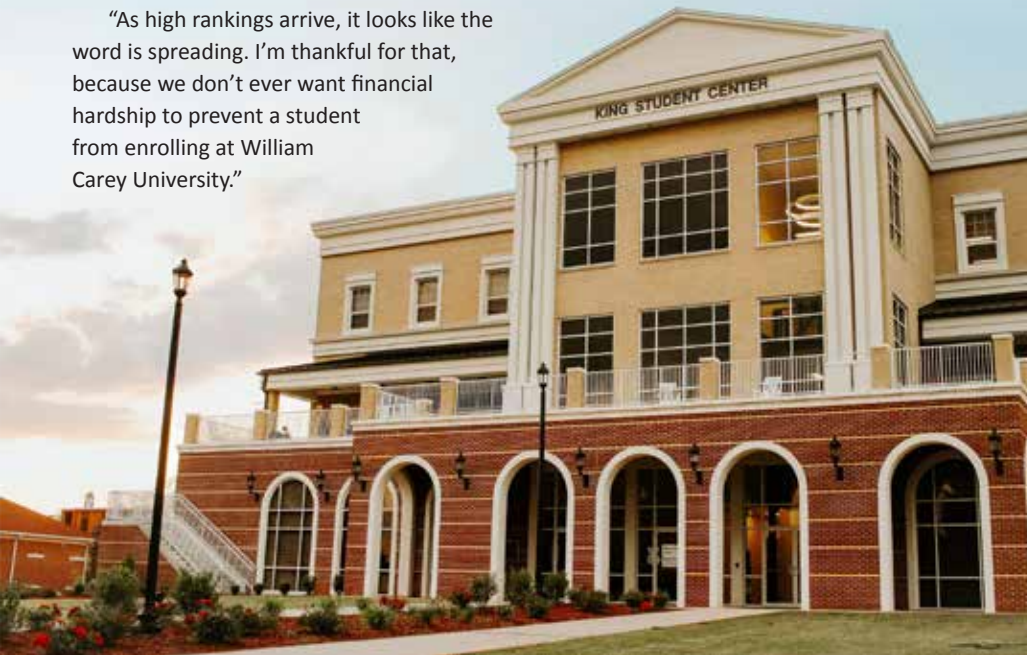
“We’re committed to providing a quality education at an affordable price. Last year, we launched the ‘Making College Affordable’ program – which means low tuition, high scholarships and free textbooks for our undergraduate students,” said WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.

“As high rankings arrive, it looks like the word is spreading. I’m thankful for that, because we don’t ever want financial hardship to prevent a student from enrolling at William Carey University.”

SmartAsset is a technology company that seeks to help people make good decisions about personal finance. In its ranking of Mississippi colleges, SmartAsset considered tuition, living costs, scholarship opportunities, student retention and starting salaries for new graduates.

Dr. Teresa Poole, dean of the WCU School of Education, said investing in students is a core value at William Carey.

“At Carey, students are a priority. Our administrators and teachers really care about students and the communities they serve – and the students know it. We do that because it’s the right thing to do. It feels good to receive a high ranking for it – but we would have done it anyway,” Poole said.



WCU RANKS NO. 2 on “Best Colleges in Mississippi” List

In its annual review, Niche ranked William Carey University No. 2 on its “Best Colleges in Mississippi” list. This category compared colleges and universities both large and small, public and private, church-affiliated and secular. Niche also ranked Carey No. 3 in “Best Christian Colleges in the Nation.”

Founded in 2002, Niche uses data from the U.S. Department of Education to rank education providers from individual K-12 schools and school districts to four-year colleges and universities. This year’s results considered more than 1,000 top colleges and universities in the U.S.

Factors included in Niche’s analysis included academic strength, professors, value for cost, campus life, athletics, diversity, student life, dorms, dining and location.

WCUCOM Earns High Marks from

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT GAVE WCU’S COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE HIGH MARKS IN ITS 2024 RANKINGS. IN THE BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE CATEGORY, WCUCOM EARNED THESE NATIONWIDE DISTINCTIONS:

No. 2 for highest percentage of graduates serving in rural areas;

No. 4 for highest percentage of graduates practicing in primary care;

No. 8 for highest percentage of graduates practicing in areas with shortages of health professionals.

WCUCOM also received an overall ranking that places it among the most prestigious medical schools in the country for primary care education.

“The consistent high rankings by U.S. News & World Report over the years affirm that the goal of our College of Osteopathic Medicine, to serve the under-served, is nationally recognized to be of primary importance,” WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett said.





WHEELER HOUSE *Past, Present, Future*

After nearly three decades, Wheeler House is again the official residence of the president of William Carey University. WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett made it official on Feb. 12 as he and his wife, Denice, welcomed friends and supporters from the community to a dedication ceremony and open house.

Wheeler House was built in 1962. Over the winter, a small army of people worked to renovate the structure, refinish floors, paint walls and trim, select furnishings, and choose art for the home from the university's collections.

Dr. Burnett and his wife, Denice, moved in a week before the dedication.

THE PAST

Dr. Myron Noonkester, dean of the WCU School of Arts & Letters grew up in Wheeler House. His father, Dr. Ralph Noonkester, was the longest-serving Carey president.

Noonkester described a mostly idyllic childhood in the 1960s, though not without worry about the school's finances and the Civil Rights Movement. Alumna Vermester Bester, one of the first black students admitted after Carey voluntarily de-segregated in 1965, attended the open house ceremony.

"The most dramatic moment in the house occurred in 1966. The previous year, my father had convinced his board of trustees to admit African-American students. There was local resistance of course, but no violence – an accomplishment in Jim Crow Mississippi. But we had been experiencing telephone harassment. Our number was listed, so it was easy to make threats and hang up," Noonkester said.

"When the Klan murdered the great voting rights activist Vernon Dahmer Sr., my father, who was president of the Hattiesburg Chamber of Commerce, led a very public campaign to raise money to rebuild the Dahmer home. One night, he and mother awakened me, my sister and my grandmother. Out in the front yard was a more extreme form of harassment, a burning cross, a message from the Klan – we're going to get you."

Dr. Ralph Noonkester would later help bring Mr. Dahmer's murderers to justice. In 2012, Vernon Dahmer Jr. was a pall-bearer at Noonkester's funeral.

THE PRESENT

Burnett thanked local people and businesses who supported the project with financial contributions, donations of needed materials, and in-kind labor.

"In a tight budget year, generous supporters made it possible to complete this renovation without dipping into the operating budget. This project was 100 percent supported by donations, starting with our late president emeritus, Dr. Tommy King," Burnett said.

In her remarks, Denice Burnett thanked Lindsey Harris of Anderson Design Center, who helped choose furniture and fixtures. She also thanked the Carey art department for curating a selection of pieces for the home from the university's collections. Those works include two by WCU art majors – Cameron Morris and Simon Alvarez.

THE FUTURE

"I hope people will say that I honored the past, but pointed toward the future because the best is yet to come," Burnett said.

"My family wants to live right here at

William Carey University and be a part of the campus culture. It's our on-campus home, but it's your house, too – and you are welcome here. Together, we'll build memories for our students, alumni, faculty, and staff."

Here's a look at people who helped make the renovation of Wheeler House a success:

- Dr. and Mrs. Tommy King
- Dr. Virginia Angelico Tatum
- Dr. Barbara Hamilton
- Ronnie Cockayne, MMI Dining
- Wayne Ross, Commercial Stationery
- Chris Hudson, Hanco Corporation
- Economy Supply
- WCU Facilities Department
- Anderson Design Center
- Elliott Homes
- WCU Art Department
- Myra Meade
- Martina Sciolino



Art major Cameron Morris's charcoal-on-paper work was commissioned as one of Wheeler House's permanent exhibits. It's a memory visualization of the night the KKK burned a cross on the front lawn. She is shown with WCU alumna Vermester Bester and WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.



By This We Are Known

John 13:34-35

WCU Theme

‘BY THIS WE ARE KNOWN’

EACH YEAR, WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY CHOOSES A THEME FROM THE BIBLE TO GUIDE ITS MISSION. THE THEME FOR 2024-25 IS “BY THIS WE ARE KNOWN.”

The inspiration for this choice comes from John 13:34-35, when Jesus says: “I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (CSB)

As early as the second century AD, Tertullian, a prolific theologian and apologist from Carthage, North Africa, reflected on how non-Christians perceived Christians. In his work, “The Apology,” he noted that outsiders would often say, with wonder, “See how they love one another.”

Tertullian wrote extensively

on Christian doctrine, ethics and challenges faced by the early church. Christians were a minority group in the Roman Empire, often ostracized and forced to meet in secret. Even so, people noticed the remarkable love and care believers showed toward one another — a selfless and compassionate love that stood out.

“Jesus’ command to love one another transcends mere politeness, courtesy, and kindness. It requires those who claim Him as Lord to follow His example by loving one another as He has loved us,” said Dr. Brett Golson, WCU vice president for strategic operations, professor of religion, and longtime pastor.

“This year, we aim to explore how Jesus loves us, with the goal of exemplifying His love to one another. By doing so, we bear witness to Christ’s transformative power: ‘By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.’”

MISSISSIPPI

Rural Schools Collaborative’s Newest Regional Hub

RURAL SCHOOLS COLLABORATIVE, A NATIONAL NETWORK OF EDUCATORS AND RESOURCES, ADMITTED MISSISSIPPI AS ITS NEWEST REGIONAL HUB IN MAY – THANKS TO A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY AND MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY.



Dr. Patti Permenter

“Through this joint effort, our goal is clear – equip rural educators with the tools they need and ensure that every child in rural communities receives a quality education,” said Dr. Teresa Poole, dean of the WCU School of Education.

The WCU-MSU partnership, called Mississippi Rural Education Association (MSREA), brings rural educators and advocates together. As a state chapter of the National Rural Education Association, it celebrates the strengths of rural schools in Mississippi, promotes excellent teaching and learning, and supports rural teachers.

MSREA is co-chaired by Dr. Patti Permenter, associate director of the WCU’s Program of Research & Evaluation for Public Schools at William Carey University.

“I am filled with optimism for what we are building together. By harnessing the collective expertise of Mississippi educators and stakeholders, we can create robust support networks that resonate with the needs and aspirations of rural communities,” Permenter said.

WCU rural education initiatives include: 1) “Grow Your Own” partnership with local school systems; 2) Teacher Assistant Waiver program; and 3) Mississippi Teacher Residency grants.



2024

Homecoming

ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF,
AND STUDENTS ENJOYED
HOMECOMING ACTIVITIES
ON APRIL 19-20.



50 YEAR LUNCHEON:
The class of '74 celebrated their 50th reunion.



Save-the-Date
FOR HOMECOMING
**APRIL 4-5
2025**



**CAMPUS
PICNIC**
*Crawfish and
burgers were a
hit with both
students and
alumni.*



EACH YEAR OUTSTANDING ALUMNI ARE CHOSEN FOR INDUCTION INTO THE CAREY ALUMNI HALL OF FAME. THE 2024 INDUCTEES JOIN AN ELITE GROUP OF ALUMNI SELECTED THROUGHOUT THE YEARS. THIS YEAR'S INDUCTEES INCLUDE AN AUTHOR AND MARINE, A SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, A BEAUTY QUEEN, A MUSICIAN, AND A PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT.

JULIE BOYD ('81)

Julie Boyd received her undergrad from William Carey University in 1981 and a master's degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1984. While in college she was a resident assistant, active in campus ministry, and SGA Commissioner of Entertainment. Her senior year, she was voted campus beauty,



Julie Boyd

Miss William Carey, and homecoming queen.

Julie loves people, and she loves to talk... especially about Jesus! She has been entertaining and inspiring audiences from a young age as a humorous storyteller, accomplished ventriloquist, and captivating Christian speaker. She is often featured at non-profit programs, churches, conferences and events for women, seniors, and families.

In 1996, Julie joined the staff of Florida Baptist Children's Homes, now known as One More Child, where she served for 20 years in executive leadership positions. In 2005, Julie received the Jim Strayer Leadership Award from the Florida Coalition for Children, and in 2012, she was appointed by Florida's governor to serve on the Faith and Community Based Advisory Council. She continues to champion the cause of foster care, adoption, feeding programs, and international ministry having served extensively in national and global mission engagements. Julie's primary professional role has been as a development officer. She has been a successful fundraiser for 30 years, leading staff and developing programs for advancing kingdom work.

Julie and her husband, Dr. Charles "Poker" Boyd ('81), have been married since 1982. Charles is President/Founder of Student Ministry Essentials. They reside in Birmingham, Alabama,

where Julie is currently on staff at Samford University. She serves as Director of Parent and Family Programs where she enjoys encouraging, supporting, and walking alongside parents of college-age students.

Julie and Poker have two adult sons, both in ministry. Jay and Lauren have two children and live in Greenwood, South Carolina. Jarred and Megan have three children and live in Greenville, South Carolina. They love spending time with their five grandchildren who affectionately refer to them as "Shug and Poppy!"

ASHTON GARRIGA ('15)

Lauren Ashton Scarborough earned a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences from William Carey University in 2015. She continued her education at Mississippi College earning a Master of Science in Medicine, Physician Assistant studies in 2019.

During her time at William Carey University, she was a member of the William Carey Crusader women's basketball team from 2011-2015 and a founding member of the track and field team from



Ashton Garriga

2012-2014. She also served as a graduate assistant for women's basketball from 2015-2017. She was an active member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, serving as volunteer staff with the leadership camp for high school students.

Ashton was the first certified Physician Assistant with Specialty Orthopedic Group, the largest orthopedic care provider in North Mississippi. She began her career as a healthcare provider at the start of the global pandemic. Although it was a time of uncertainty, she is grateful to have been able to care for patients despite the pandemic. She has enjoyed four years working primarily in the subspecialty of joint arthroplasty. She was nominated and a finalist for best Physician Assistant in the Daily Journals Readers' Choice Awards. She currently mentors high school and college students who hope to enter the medical field as providers.

Ashton currently resides in Tupelo, Mississippi, with her husband Cagen Garriga. They have been married for three years. They enjoy traveling, sporting events, and spending time with family and friends. She is a member of American Academy of Physician Assistants, Physician Assistants in Orthopedic Surgery, and Mississippi Academy of Physician Assistants. She attends West Jackson Street Baptist church in Tupelo.



Sarah Pierce Odom accepts award for late husband, Donal Odom, with President Burnett and Dr. Wes Dykes.

DONALD RAY ODOM ('78, '80)

Don Odom earned a Bachelor of Music in Church Music degree from William Carey College (University) in 1978, followed by a Master of Music in Music History in 1980.

Throughout his college years, Don served several different churches as music director.



Donald Odom

These included youth choir director at FBC, Vancleave, and Minister of Music and Youth at FBC, Bayou La Batre, Ala., Westside Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, and FBC, Sumrall, Miss. During the years at William Carey, he also met and married his wife of 38 years, Sarah Pierce Odom.

From October 1980 until August 1986, Don served as full time Minister of Music and Youth at FBC, Houston, Miss. and then, FBC Sumrall, Miss. In 1982, he, along with Sarah, wrote one of the first children's choir curriculums for combined age children's choirs for the Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention. He also began serving as a children's choir clinician, young musicians camp guest conductor, young musicians festival guest conductor, and as a

curriculum writer for the Church Music Division of the Southern Baptist Convention (Lifeway).

In August 1986, Don began his doctoral studies in music at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he also taught as a graduate assistant. While in New Orleans, he served as Minister of Music at Lakeview Baptist Church. In January 1991, the family, which now included daughter, Ashley, and son, Jarrod, moved to Graceville, Fla., where Don began his almost 20 years at the Baptist College of Florida (BCF), now Baptist University of Florida.

In the years at BCF, Don taught voice, music education, church music, and conducted College Choir, College Singers, Male Chorale, and Strike Force (a Contemporary Christian Ensemble.) He also continued as a guest conductor and clinician for youth and children's choirs and led children's choir conferences across the south.

In May 2000, Don became Chair of the Music Division. He toured often with Male Chorale and Strike Force, resulting in the number of music majors more than doubling during his years as chair. Groups also made regular appearances at the Florida Baptist Convention. The curriculum offerings increased and the degree options expanded, including a Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Music, one of the first degrees of

this type to be offered.

In 2009, Don was approached by Dr. Tommy King with the possibility of returning to his alma mater as Dean of the School of Music. After long and prayerful consideration, he and Sarah moved back to Hattiesburg in June 2010.

Building on the legacy of Donald and Frances Winters and the Winters School of Music, Don set out to enhance and expand the music program at William Carey. He worked along with administration, students, and faculty to increase awareness of the Winters School of Music as an excellent choice for studying music. He continued the tradition of touring with the Chorale and other ensembles to churches and high schools across the region. As the number of music majors increased, additional faculty was hired, adding their unique skills and expertise to the program.

A number of major accomplishments occurred between 2010 and 2017. Student enrollment tripled. New degree options were added, along with the reinstatement of a master's degree in music. Online class options were expanded. Accreditation through National Association of Schools of Music and the American Music Therapy Association was renewed.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Alumni HALL of FAME

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Plans were made and construction was almost complete for a new instrumental rehearsal space, studios, classrooms, and faculty office space - the current Multipurpose Building. A dream of becoming the first "All Steinway" school in Mississippi was realized just a few days before his passing.

Don would be the first to say that he certainly did not achieve these accomplishments alone. He first sought God's guidance in any endeavor and was well aware of and appreciated the support of his family. In addition, the backing of the administration and the hard work of faculty, staff, students, and alumni resulted in the phenomenal growth of the music program from 2010 until the time of his death in 2017. Don believed and lived the battle call of all Crusaders - "Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God."

DAVID HENRY MARING ('68)

David Maring entered the University of South Carolina School of Law after graduating from William Carey. After passing the South Carolina Bar exam, he entered active duty in the Marine Corps. Upon his honorable discharge, David



David Henry Maring

opened his law practice in Georgetown, South Carolina. During this period, he held several part-time government positions, initially serving as Andrews City Judge before his appointment as Municipal Judge in the City of Georgetown. In 1976, he became the first public defender for Georgetown County.

In July 1977, at the age of thirty-one, he left the practice of law upon election by the legislature to the state family court judgeship for Georgetown and Horry counties. This made him the youngest judge ever elected. Immediately after taking the oath of office, the Chief Justice appointed him the chief administrative judge for the judicial circuit. During his tenure on this bench, he was South Carolina's nominee for outstanding family court judge in the United States.

David was a champion of court reform. This led him to serve on the chief justice's advisory

committee and as chairman of the state family judge's legislature/ family court liaison committee. In this capacity, over twenty new laws were passed increasing the effectiveness of the court system.

In his capacity as chief judge, he instituted many reforms in his home circuit such as automatic child support enforcement and the appointment of Guardian-ad- Litem in custody cases. In addition, the first mediation of family court cases occurred during his watch. Though carrying heavy responsibilities in his home circuit, the chief justice assigned him to many terms of court each year in counties across the entire state. After serving in that capacity, he was assigned by the Chief Justice to preside as chief judge over Charleston and Berkeley counties.

In 1991, David was elected by the legislature as circuit judge over his home circuit and appointed chief judge. He immediately required terms of mediation of civil matters. This procedure was eventually adopted state-wide.

Soon after his retirement, he became the head of the criminal justice department at Horry-Georgetown Technical College. He left that position to serve as Counsel with his son's law firm.

Upon retiring from the practice of law, he entered the literary field. At this time, eight novels and two memoirs have been published. Several of the books have received Honorable Mention in international competitions.

One of David's favorite Bible verses is "God has told you, O man, what is good, and what He requires of you. That you do justice, show mercy, and walk humbly with your God." David is married to Judy Kay, and they have three children and four grandchildren. They reside in historic Georgetown near Winyah Bay.

ROBERT L. WILLIAMS ('02)

Dr. Robert L. Williams graduated from William Carey in 2002 with a Master of Education in Elementary Education. Robert is an accomplished and dedicated educational leader with a proven track record of success in fostering positive change and driving academic excellence. A native



Robert L. Williams

of Crystal Springs, Miss., Robert has called Hattiesburg home for the past 27 years. While in Hattiesburg, Robert has remained deeply committed to the community he calls home. His passion for education and commitment to student

success have defined his extensive career in various educational roles.

Robert began his journey in education as an elementary teacher in Forrest County Schools before transferring to Hattiesburg Public Schools. He has served Hattiesburg Public Schools for more than 20 years in numerous capacities, beginning as a math teacher at N.R. Burger Middle School in Hattiesburg. Over the years, he progressively moved into leadership positions, showcasing his exceptional abilities in curriculum development, teacher supervision, and program implementation. His commitment to fostering a positive learning environment and dedication to professional growth earned him recognition as the head football coach at N.R. Burger Middle School.

His journey continued as he took on roles such as assistant athletic director and assistant principal. In 2008, Dr. Williams assumed the role of principal at N.R. Burger Middle School, overseeing the instructional and co-curricular programs for grades 7-8. Dr. Williams' leadership was instrumental in transforming N.R. Burger Middle School into a high-performing institution, earning him accolades such as being a Mississippi Administrator of the Year finalist.

His dedication to educational leadership led him to pursue advanced degrees. Robert holds a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education Administration and Supervision from the University of Southern Mississippi.

In 2016, Dr. Williams assumed the role of superintendent of the Hattiesburg Public School District, where he implemented transformative changes. Under his leadership, the district achieved its first A-Level Rating, marking a significant milestone in academic achievement. Dr. Williams successfully implemented a comprehensive strategic plan, resulting in a substantial increase in graduation rates and improved student proficiency in both reading and mathematics.

Beyond his educational endeavors, Dr. Williams served with distinction in the United States Army Reserve, achieving the rank of Sergeant First Class (Retired) as a Petroleum Supply Specialist. His dedication to community service extends to his involvement in the Boy Scouts of America, where he actively contributes to various boards and committees, including the District Council Executive Board and the Twin Rivers Council Board.

Dr. Williams is married to Angela Givens Williams. They are the parents of Anna-Grace Williams and Louis Alexander Williams.

NFL STAND-OUTS

WCU-TRADITION SCHOLARSHIP DINNER

LEGENDARY QUARTERBACK DREW BREES AND, SARAH THOMAS, THE NFL'S FIRST FEMALE REFEREE, WERE THE GUESTS OF HONOR AT WCU-TRADITION'S 2024 SCHOLARSHIP DINNER.

The event was held May 13 at Mississippi Coast Coliseum.

"Our annual scholarship dinner is Tradition campus's largest fund-raising event. Proceeds generated by the dinner are dedicated to providing scholarships for deserving students. It also gives us a chance to connect with scholarship donors and visit with people from the surrounding Gulf Coast communities," said Dr. Cassandra Conner, vice president of the Tradition campus.

During his remarks, Brees talked about his time with the New Orleans Saints and favorite moments from this 20-season career in the National Football League.

Brees led the Saints to victory in Super Bowl XLIV, earning the game's MVP award. He holds the record for consecutive games with a touchdown pass. Brees had five 5,000-yard passing seasons – another NFL record. He places second all-time in career passing yards, touchdown passes, completions and

completion percentage.

Pascagoula native Sarah Thomas is the first woman to officiate a major college football game, the first to officiate a bowl game, and the first to officiate in a Big Ten stadium.

WCU president Dr. Ben Burnett thanked the pair for their time and support.

"It's wonderful to have Drew Brees with us tonight. And of course, we know Sarah! She's a Carey parent – her son plays baseball for Coach Halford," Burnett said.

"Our mission tonight is to help keep college affordable. William Carey's out-of-pocket cost is much less than all the private schools and we're as affordable as Mississippi's public colleges and universities. Getting accepted is only half the battle, and we don't want any student to miss out on a Christian higher education for financial reasons."

More than 90% of William Carey students receive financial aid. For information, email admissions@wmcarey.edu.





Carey Athletics WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS



FOR THE EIGHTH YEAR IN A ROW, THE WILLIAM CAREY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT WAS AWARDED THE COVETED COMMISSIONER'S CUP, GIVEN TO THE BEST OVERALL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT IN THE CONFERENCE.

The Southern States Athletic Conference (SSAC) Commissioner's Cup, presented by MMI Dining, is given annually to the member institution with the most successful all-around sports program for the year.

Following the SSAC awards ceremony, Carey

finished fifth in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Learfield Cup standings.

The Learfield Directors' Cup was developed as a joint effort between the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and USA Today. Points are awarded based on each institution's finish in NAIA Championships.

Carey Athletics was also honored in April by the Mississippi Legislature with a joint Senate and House resolution recognizing the program's growth and achievement.

2024 Spring ATHLETIC Accomplishments

Women's Indoor Track & Field Finishes 2nd at NAIA National Championship

Men's Indoor Track & Field Finishes 4th at NAIA National Championship

Women's Basketball wins SSAC and advances to NAIA National Tournament

Women's Golf wins SSAC Championship

Women's Track & Field wins SSAC Championship

Softball wins SSAC Regular Season and Tournament Championships

Baseball wins SSAC Championship

RJ Stinson (Baseball) named as Finalist for Ferriss Trophy

Baseball wins Opening Round and goes to NAIA World Series second straight year

Women's Track & Field finishes 2nd at NAIA National Championship

Carey Athletics wins SSAC Commissioner's Cup for 8th straight year

Carey Athletics finishes 5th in NAIA Learfield Cup Standings

WOMENS TENNIS WINS *Sportsmanship Award*

THE INTERCOLLEGIATE TENNIS ASSOCIATION (ITA) ANNOUNCED THE SELECTION OF WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY AS THE WINNER OF THE 2024 ITA NAIA WOMEN'S TEAM SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD. THIS AWARD IS PRESENTED EACH YEAR TO THE TEAM THAT DISPLAYS EXCEPTIONAL SPORTSMANSHIP, CHARACTER, AND ETHICAL CONDUCT DURING THE ITA NAIA NATIONAL TEAM INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS.

"We are proud of all of our sports teams and their huge accomplishments on the field, but we value their contribution as citizens even more.

Not only have these women been recognized in the nation for their character, but they have posted the highest GPA of all of our teams on campus with a GPA close to 3.9. We applaud them and Coach Lux for their high standards," said WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.

"Our team strives for excellence on and off the court. We value how we treat each other within the team – but also how we treat those around us. We want to impact the lives around us in a positive, humble way," said Head Tennis Coach Mark Lux.

"The team understands that it's a privilege to be a student-athlete. They are thankful for the opportunity to pursue a degree while continuing a passion for playing tennis. We're honored by the award given by the ITA and coaches as it reflects our values as a team and university."



The WCU Women's Tennis team won the 2024 ITA NAIA Women's Team Sportsmanship Award, which recognizes exceptional sportsmanship, character, and ethical conduct.

WILLIAM CAREY CRUSADERS

Athletic Promotions

COACH TRACY ENGLISH HAS BEEN NAMED DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AT WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY.

TRACY ENGLISH has served as interim director since September, replacing D.J. Pulley, who held the post for six years. English completed his 33rd season with Carey Athletics. He is a two-time Carey graduate ('86, '90) and played basketball for Coach Steve Knight from 1980-84.

A Hattiesburg High School graduate, English was named Southern States Athletic Conference's Coach of the Year for the 23-24 season. His women's basketball team won the conference championship and made it to the second round of the national championship – finishing with a 22-5 record.



TWO MORE FORMER CAREY ATHLETES, BOTH CURRENT COACHES, WERE ALSO PROMOTED TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

JESSICA GARRIGA, a graduate of Hancock High School and 2004 William Carey alum, was named associate head coach for women's basketball. An all-conference player for the Crusaders, Garriga joined the coaching staff in 2015. In addition to coaching, she is also assistant athletic director and teaches in the mathematics department.

BEN SMITH, who graduated from Laurel High School, is the new assistant director of athletics for external relations. As a WCU student, Smith played for legendary baseball coach Bobby Halford and has served as an assistant under Halford for 15 seasons. He holds two degrees from Carey

('08, '12) and teaches history as well. Smith was also appointed associate head coach for Carey's baseball team on June 1.

"WCU has a long tradition of excellence in athletics. Not only are our athletes successful on the field, with a long line of conference championships and national rankings, they won the state's Halbrook award this year for the highest graduation rate among athletes at independent colleges," WCU President Ben Burnett said.

"This culture of success has been built over decades with a commitment to student-athletes and the university. Promoting former players and graduates of Carey is an investment in the future of our students."



Ribbon-Cutting for

BOBBY HALFORD FIELDHOUSE



A YEAR AFTER BREAKING GROUND ON THE BOBBY HALFORD FIELDHOUSE, WE CUT THE RIBBON ON THE 4,800-SQUARE-FOOT FACILITY. THE FIELDHOUSE IS LOCATED BETWEEN MILTON WHEELER FIELD AND JOSEPH & NANCY FAIL FIELD AND HAS LOCKER ROOMS FOR THE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL TEAMS.

Halford is a two-time Carey graduate ('75, '77) and enters his 39th season as head coach of Crusader Baseball with a total of 1300 wins and 784 losses.

Halford is married to Kathy and they have four daughters, six granddaughters, and one grandson.

WCU Summer Missions

HELP HEAL A BROKEN WORLD



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY'S BAPTIST STUDENT UNION HAD A BANNER YEAR, SENDING 20 SUMMER MISSIONARIES TO 10 COUNTRIES AND SIX U.S. STATES TO SERVE IN HARD-TO-REACH PLACES. SOME STUDENTS MADE CONTACT WITH TRIBAL VILLAGES; OTHERS USED THEIR CREATIVITY AND ENERGY TO MINISTER TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN.

But whatever the assignment, the goal was the same – tell the good news that God has come to heal a broken world through his son, Jesus Christ.

“Summer missions is one of the favorite parts of my job. We send students all over the world and all around our country. They’re helping church planters, they’re helping career missionaries, and some are doing humanitarian work. But whatever they’re doing, they’re taking the good news of Jesus with them,” said Dr. Landon Adams, BSU director.

Seven of this summer’s missionaries served in Washington, Utah, Arizona, Texas, Maryland and New York. Thirteen served overseas in Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia.

“This year, for the first time in my career, we had at least one student serving on every continent except Antarctica,” Adams said.

“As a university, we join in the greater vision of William Carey, who said, ‘Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.’ The summer missionary program provides a snapshot of the two great cooperative efforts of Baptists – missions and education.”



HERE'S A LOOK AT WCU'S SUMMER MISSIONARIES, HOMETOWNS, AND DESTINATIONS:

Ben Arnett of Picayune
Salt Lake City, Utah

Brock Brabham of Waynesboro
Southeast Asia

Cody Broom of Columbia
Southeast Asia

Jackson Corley of Petal
Phoenix, Arizona

Mary Dickerson of Leakesville
France

Chance Douglas of Hattiesburg
Southeast Asia

Michael Domke of Jacksonville, Florida
Southeast Asia

Julie Dow of Petal
Baltimore, Maryland

Katye Freeman of Laurel
Kenya

Sarah Funk of Leesburg, Florida
Kenya

Jacey Garriga of Hattiesburg
South Korea

Jason Gaston of Mobile, Alabama
Redmond, Washington

Ben Hagen of Linn Creek, Missouri
Southeast Asia

Daniel Ibrahimov of Kyiv, Ukraine
Australia

Julia-Ruth Luter of Tylertown
Southeast Asia

Madelyn Lynch of Long Beach
South America

Jade Mallory of Jackson
Arlington, Texas

Kamren Prince of Collinsville
New York, N.Y.

Anna Tilton of Brookhaven
Australia

Jackson Wall of Meridian
Salt Lake City, Utah

Spring Break

MISSION TRIPS

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY SPONSORED TWO MISSION TRIPS OVER SPRING BREAK 2024.

One group of students and faculty from Cooper School of Missions & Ministry Studies and the Baptist Student Union traveled to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The team visited the International Baptist Theological Seminary and interacted with ministry students. They led in worship and youth events at local churches. They helped serve warm meals to homeless people and shared the gospel. This trip also explored future ministry possibilities for the 500,000-plus

university students studying in 42 universities in the capital city alone.

In a second trip, the BSU sent a 20-member team to Maryland to help Broken Wall Community Church in inner city Baltimore.

Mission volunteers worked in and around Northbend Elementary-Middle school – repairing and painting benches, picking up trash, fixing little free libraries, building new furniture, cleaning, organizing, and assisting in at least six classrooms, including a special needs class. The team also helped supply refugee families from the Middle East and Central Africa with needed items and worked as movers for a local man in need of furniture.



ABOVE: *WCU students serve warm meals to homeless people in Buenos Aires, Argentina.*

BELOW: *WCU students and their hosts gather for prayer in the courtyard of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires.*



WCU Announces

North American Mission Board Dependent/Endorsed Scholarships

DR. BRETT GOLSON ANNOUNCED THE NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD (NAMB) SCHOLARSHIP IN JUNE, DURING THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION'S ANNUAL MEETING IN INDIANAPOLIS.

Golson is the vice president of strategic operations for William Carey University – and a former dean of the School of Missions and Ministry Studies.

The new scholarships will be awarded to qualifying and endorsed dependents of NAMB employees. The undergraduate scholarship includes tuition, on-campus housing, textbooks, and a meal plan – with no out-of-pocket expenses.

“The DNA behind this is serving those who serve. God has blessed us to the point that we can turn around now and bless those who are serving. You think about these missionaries on the field all over the world. We want them to be able to drop their kids off not having to worry about anything. We’re going to take care of the kids while the parents are out serving,” Golson said.

The new scholarship program is similar to an earlier one available to International Mission Board families.

“For years, we’ve honored IMB dependents. Now we’re reaching out to NAMB dependents,” said WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.

“It feels like we’re connecting Dr. William Carey, more than 200 years later, to current people serving in the mission field. We’re able

to provide education and relief so they don’t have to worry about the cost of education.”

For information, email finaid@wmcarey.edu.

BELOW: Dr. Brett Golson and Dr. Ben Burnett, far right, meet with North American Mission Board leaders to announce a new scholarship during the Southern Baptist Convention’s annual meeting.



Evidence Wins WGI Regionals



IN MARCH, EVIDENCE WINDS WON 1ST PLACE AT THE WGI REGIONALS IN JACKSON.

Winter Guard International sanctions championship events in color guard, percussion ensembles, and indoor marching bands. The 40 students who make up WCU Evidence Winds use music, visuals, dance, theater, and special effects in a live performance that tells a story. This year’s production, entitled “Renewed,” was inspired by Psalm 24:1: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.” The piece laments that man has not taken care of the earth the way God intended – and rejoices in a depiction of nature being brought back to life. Evidence Winds is part of the Winters School of Music.



Nursing students work with a lab simulation mannequin at the WCU College of Health Sciences.

WCU Nursing Graduates Post 100% NCLEX Pass Rate

IN FEBRUARY, MORE THAN 60 NURSING STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES IN HATTIESBURG, TRADITION/BILOXI, AND BATON ROUGE, LA. THIS GROUP OF NEW REGISTERED NURSES WENT ON TO ACHIEVE A 100 PERCENT PASS RATE ON THE NCLEX LICENSING EXAM – AND THEY DID IT ON THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT.

The Mississippi Board of Nursing released these results based on data from NCLEX, the National Council Licensure Examination.

“The perfect pass rate at all three sites is a testament to our students’ hard work, ability, perseverance, and the quality and dedication

of our nursing faculty and staff,” said Dr. Kelly Williamson, dean of nursing.

These graduates entered a workforce still experiencing shortages due to nurse retirements, a growing number of retirement-age people with enhanced healthcare needs, and workforce exits caused by burnout. The National Council for State Boards of Nursing predicts that almost 900,000 registered nurses, almost one-fifth of the nation’s RNs, plan to leave the workforce by 2027.

“William Carey University is striving to place graduates in areas of most need in our state – doctors, nurses, teachers, and ministers. I’m proud of our huge number of nursing students, more than 800, but I’m impressed by the quality of the nursing program as evidenced by this 100 percent pass rate,” said WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.

For information, visit www.wmcarey.edu/nursing.

WCU’s Health Administration and Education No. 9 nationwide

Forbes Advisor ranked WCU’s Health Administration and Education doctoral program No. 9 in the nation as part of its “Best of 2024” analysis. The program combines online and in-person components to accommodate the schedules of working healthcare professionals – and includes a guided dissertation process, which gives students personalized feedback during their research journey.

*Anna Hillman, Dr. Ben Burnett,
Sarah Crowsey*

Science Graduates Win WCU's Jenkins-Chastain Award

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY HELD ITS 2024 HONORS DAY CONVOCATION ON APRIL 24. THE ANNUAL EVENT RECOGNIZES STUDENTS FOR OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC AND LEADERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS.

WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett presented Jenkins-Chastain Citizenship Awards to Sarah Crowsey and Anna Hillman. Established in 1957, the Jenkins-Chastain Award goes to students who exemplify outstanding citizenship, scholarship, leadership, and Christian service. It is the university's highest honor.

Both of this year's Jenkins-Chastain honorees are graduates of the WCU School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences, which includes an emphasis on STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

"Everyone at the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences is very proud of Sarah and Anna. It's been great to watch them excel in their academic pursuits, while earning degrees in multiple majors and minors in very tough

disciplines. They were also very active on campus and with volunteer activities. Their bright minds and servant's hearts will help shape their community for the better," said Dr. Jessica Brook, WCU chair of biological sciences.

SARAH CROWSEY

Sarah Crowsey is from Purvis, where she lives on a farm with her parents, Rick and Rhonda Crowsey. She graduated from William Carey with majors in biology and forensic science, and a minor in math. In the fall, she will begin work toward a Ph.D. in polymer science at the University of Southern Mississippi.

"Anytime I wasn't in class or helping out as a work study at Green Science, I was usually riding, trimming, or working a horse in some way. Outside of that, I enjoy volunteering at the Edwards Street Fellowship Center thrift store. And I served as a judge for several science fairs, which was a blast," Crowsey said.

"After I finish my Ph.D. at USM, I'm interested in a career in chemistry or polymer science. But I'll also be running a second business breeding, training, and selling horses."

ANNA HILLMAN

Anna Hillman of Beaumont is the daughter of Stacey and the late Becky Hillman. She graduated with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry. In the fall, Hillman plans to pursue a master's degree in medical biological sciences at Mississippi College.

"I'm graduating a year early, so I'm going to take that year and get my master's degree. After that, I want to come back here, attend the WCU College of Osteopathic Medicine and become a doctor. I really don't have a medical specialty in mind. I want to go wherever God leads me," Hillman said.

As a student, Hillman was a President's List scholar and took part in wide variety of activities – including Diamond Girls, Cheer Team, Pi Omega Sorority, and Pre-SOMA (Student Osteopathic Medical Association). Hillman volunteered once a week at Merit Health Wesley, helped crew CareyWOW, WCU's freshman orientation, and served three years in the Student Government Association.

Faculty PUBLISHING & PRESENTATIONS



BIRD

Dr. Joseph Bird, dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies, authored “Spiritual Defense: The Breastplate of Righteousness” in “Holding the Ropes,”

formerly the “Carey Pulpit,” published by WCU’s Cooper School. Dr. Bird is also a Carey alumna ('08) and assistant professor of religion.



BURMEISTER

Dr. Melissa Burmeister, associate professor of pharmacy, coauthored the following articles: “Incretin-based pharmacotherapy for reducing prostate cancer risk,” in “U.S.

Pharmacist.”

“Assessment of education in a community hospital on healthcare providers’ knowledge of and attitudes toward medical marijuana,” in “Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning.”

“Current and emerging therapies for bipolar disorder,” in “U.S. Pharmacist.”

“Differential effects of cannabis constituents on schizophrenia-related psychosis: A rationale for incorporating cannabidiol (CBD) into a schizophrenia therapeutic regimen,” in “Frontiers in Psychiatry.”

“Emerging therapies for ulcerative colitis-induced pain,” in “U.S. Pharmacist.”

BURMEISTER, DELGADO, GRAHAM, AND YANG

Drs. Melissa Burmeister, Elina Delgado, William Graham, and Caiyun Yang coauthored to publish a retrospective study titled “Real-world community hospital hyperglycemia management in noncritically ill, type 2 diabetic patients: a comparison between basal-bolus insulin and correctional insulin.” The article was published June 11 in the “Journal of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences” in collaboration with “Frontiers Publishing Partnerships.” All four professors teach in the WCU School of Pharmacy.

Delgado, Graham, Yang, Burmeister



CAMERON

Wes Cameron, assistant professor of music, composed the choral work, “My Help Comes from the Lord.” Published by Hope Publishing, the work has a text based on

words from the journal of John Wesley: “I felt my heart strangely warmed. I trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation...He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me.” Additional text comes from Psalm 121: “My help comes from the Lord” and Psalm 89: “My song shall always be the loving kindness of the Lord.”



CLARK

Rebekah Clark, instructor of religion, contributed to “Women in Ministry,” in “Holding the Ropes,” formerly the “Carey Pulpit,” published by WCU’s Cooper School of

Missions and Ministry Studies. Rebekah is a Carey alumna ('11) and Ph.D. student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.



CROCKETT

Dr. Bennie Crockett, Jr., professor of religion and philosophy, authored the article, "What Is Truth?" in "Holding the Ropes," formerly the "Carey Pulpit," published by

WCU's Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies. Dr. Crockett is also co-director of the Center for Study of the Life and Work of William Carey, D.D., (1761-1834).



FASTRING

Dr. Danielle Fastring, director of student research, WCUCOM, was selected as president-elect of the Mississippi Public Health Association (MPHA). Dr. Fastring

is also an associate professor of preclinical sciences in the COM. She will serve a three-year term: president-elect, president, and past president.



GLAZE

Dr. Tim Glaze, associate professor of religion, authored, "Living Well: The Shield of Faith," in "Holding the Ropes," formerly the "Carey Pulpit," published by

WCU's Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies. Dr. Glaze served as BSU director for over 25 years and holds the William Carey Endowed Chair of Missions.



GOLSON

Dr. Brett Golson, vice president of strategic operations, authored "The Gospel of Peace and the War Within" in "Holding the Ropes," formerly the "Carey Pulpit," published by

WCU's Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies. Dr. Golson is also a Carey alumnus ('97) and professor of religion.

HABIB AND LEGRADI

Dr. Heba Labib, assistant professor of preclinical sciences, WCUCOM, and Dr. Gabor Legradi, professor of preclinical sciences, WCUCOM, presented a poster titled, "A cadaveric study of variations of the posterior cerebral artery," at the American Association of Clinical Anatomists) 41st Annual Meeting held at Weill Cornell Medicine, NY, in June 2024. The poster won the "Clinical Anatomy Translational Research Award."



JOHNSON, JOHNSON, AND ZACHARIAH

Dr. Fruzsina Johnson, professor of preclinical sciences, Dr. Robert Johnson, professor of preclinical sciences, and Dr. Brian Zachariah, associate professor of clinical sciences, WCUCOM, published "Chapter 9: Circulation" and "Chapter 10: Heart" in the textbook "Advanced physiology and pathophysiology: essentials for clinical practice," 2nd edition. The first edition of this textbook won the PROSE award in nursing and health sciences from the



Association of American Publishers in 2022.



KNIGHT

Dr. Brandon Knight, assistant professor of strategic communication & leadership and director of forensics, has published two articles: "Desiring God and

Christian Hedonism: awakening an immanent joy," in the "Journal of Beliefs & Values," and "Freedom to Save the Body (of Christ): False Wisdom, True Wisdom, and the Rhetorical Chemotherapy of Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, in the "Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric."

Dr. Knight also authored "The State, the Self, and Shame" in "Holding the Ropes," formerly the "Carey Pulpit," published by WCU's Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies.



MASSEY

Dr. Lorie Watkins Massey, professor of English, helped to facilitate a workshop about using Digital Yoknapatawpha in the classroom at the 2024 Society for the Study of

Southern Literature conference in Gulfport. She was joined by colleague John Padgett of Brevard College. Massey and Padgett are both senior collaborating editors on the digital humanities project that maps and helps readers explore the worlds of William Faulkner's fiction.



MCGEE

Dr. James McGee, professor of Criminal Justice, presented at CrimeCon 2023 in Orlando. His presentation was titled, "Waco, 30 Years Later."

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Faculty

PUBLISHING & PRESENTATIONS

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**MCSWAIN**

Dr. Thomas McSwain, Jr., adjunct professor of religion, authored “The Helmet of Salvation” and “Preaching Jesus in the Black Church,” in “Holding the Ropes,”

formerly the “Carey Pulpit,” published by WCU’s Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies. Dr. McSwain is also a Carey alumnus (’98) and pastor of Beautiful Zion Baptist Church in Hattiesburg.

**PEDEN**

Wesley Peden, instructor of religion, authored “The Sword of the Spirit” in “Holding the Ropes,” formerly the “Carey Pulpit,” published by WCU’s Cooper School of

Missions and Ministry Studies. Peden is a Carey alumnus (’20) and a Ph.D. student at NOBTS. He also serves as associate pastor of Crosspoint Church in Gulfport.

**PUTNAM**

Maegan Putnam contributed to “Women in Ministry,” in “Holding the Ropes,” formerly the “Carey Pulpit,” published by WCU’s Cooper School of Missions and Ministry

Studies. Maegan is a Carey alumna (’23) and the administrative assistant for the Cooper School.

WELDON, WHITE, BURMEISTER, BREESE, DELGADO, KELLETT, VIDAL, NOSSER

Drs. Jennifer White, assistant professor of pharmacy practice, Abby Weldon, assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences, and Melissa Burmeister, associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences, published “JAK inhibitor–related cardiovascular events and venous thromboembolism in RA,” in “U.S. Pharmacist.” Pharmacy students Marlene Nguyen, Jeffrey Bruni, Anne Dang-Vo, and Kardarius Felton co-authored the article with the professors.

Drs. Weldon and Burmeister also published “A look at non-small cell lung cancer and its current and emerging therapies,” in “U.S. Pharmacist.” Students Kennadi Johnson and Isabella Rubenstein co-authored the article.

Drs. Weldon and Burmeister presented “Strategies for elevating student retention in an accelerated pharmacy program at the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy annual meeting. Co-presenters included Drs. Donna Breese, professor of pharmacy practice, Elina Delgado, assistant professor of pharmacy practice, Kristin Kellett, assistant professor of pharmacy practice, Charles Breese, professor of pharmaceutical sciences, Robin Vidal, assistant professor of pharmacy practice, and Joseph Nossier, assistant professor of pharmacy practice.

WISEHART

Melanie Wisehart, assistant professor of music, delivered a conference presentation alongside two music therapy students, Cecilia Escobedo and Lauren Martinez, at the Paul D. Cotten Memorial Student Music Therapy Conference in Senatobia, Miss. The presentation was titled: “Empowerment at the core: reflections from a music therapy practicum experience.” Lauren and Cecilia shared their clinical expertise with other music therapy students in the state, while Wisehart provided context on the theoretical orientations that informed their practice and shared insights from the clinical supervisor perspective.

Lauren Martinez, Melanie Wisehart, MMT, MT-BC and Cecilia Escobedo





Senior Leadership Changes

Carey Added One New Administrator and Promoted Four Others

DR. NOAL COCHRAN

Dr. Noal Cochran joined the senior leadership team June 17 as provost and vice president of academic affairs.

Cochran has a bachelor's degree in polymer science and a master's degree in science education. He has taught chemistry and psychology at the high school and community college levels. He earned his second master's degree in marriage and family therapy and worked in a variety of positions at Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources and the Mississippi Department of Mental Health.

"As an ordained Southern Baptist minister, Dr. Cochran has a connection to our Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies – and is deeply committed to the mission of William Carey University," said WCU President Dr. Ben Burnett.

"Finally, he was a K-12 school administrator before moving to higher education in 2015 as part of William Carey's School of Education. We are very happy to welcome him back."

Cochran returns to William Carey after six years at the University of Southern Mississippi, where he was associate dean for Educator Preparation and Accreditation. His work at USM also included serving on dissertation committees. He is an active keynote speaker, appearing more than 30 times at conferences across the nation.

"God has blessed my life's journey with many doors, some of them narrow and challenging and some of them wide and full of promise. Regardless of the door, I never felt like I walked through it alone. That feeling has never been stronger than now as I return to William Carey University. It is good to be home," Cochran said.



The selection of a new provost and vice president of academic affairs comes after a lengthy search process. A committee made up of faculty, staff, vice presidents and deans evaluated candidates – finally interviewing six finalists from a large pool of applicants.

Dr. Cochran and his wife, Laura, have been married for 33 years. They live in Hattiesburg and have one daughter, Valorie, a third-year law student at the University of Mississippi School of Law.

DR. CASSANDRA CONNER

Dr. Cassandra Conner assumed the new role of associate provost for distance learning. She will continue to serve as vice president of the Tradition campus, a position she has held since 2021.



As associate provost, Conner will take part in the academic oversight of

WCU's online learning options – developing strategic planning goals, ensuring that online programs meet high standards and are responsive to student needs, collaborating with faculty to integrate distance learning into the academic framework, fostering dual credit partnerships with K-12 school districts, and making sure each program meets relevant standards for accreditation.

"Dr. Conner established herself as a proven leader with nearly 30 years of experience in K-12 schools on the Gulf Coast before coming to work at Carey," Burnett said.

"Her leadership as vice president for the Tradition Campus is already paying off with enrollment growth and plans for expansion. In her new role as associate provost, she can use her experience to develop more fully our relationship with online students and K-12 school districts."

In 2011, Conner retired as an administrator in the Mississippi public school system, where she served two K-12 school districts as teacher, assistant principal, principal and, ultimately, director of curriculum and instruction and director of technology for the Harrison County School District. She joined the Carey family the same year as academic dean of the Tradition Campus and was later promoted to vice president.

Conner is a member of the First Baptist Church of Gulfport, the Rotary Club of Gulfport-Orange Grove, Phi Delta Kappa, and the American Conference of Academic Deans. She is a board member of the Gulf Coast Business Council and the Rotary Club of Gulfport-Orange Grove. She was selected as a 2020 "Woman of Achievement" finalist for the Lighthouse Business and Professional Women's Organization. Conner received a 2020 "Forever Young" award from the Mississippi Gulf Coast Young Professionals and a 2023 "Coast Top 10 Community Leader" award. Gulf Coast Woman magazine selected her as one of the "100 Successful Women to Know" in 2023. She is married to Johnny Conner, a Mississippi Power Company retiree, and they have two children and one grandson.

DR. WES DYKES

Dr. Wes Dykes has added associate vice president of recruitment to his role as dean of



the Winters School of Music, a position he has held since 2018.

"Dr. Dykes has been a great recruiter since he stepped on campus more than a decade ago," Burnett said.

"He started the

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Senior Leadership Changes

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Spirit of Carey marching band from literally nothing. It has 105 members now and it's still growing. Dr. Dykes and his team have doubled enrollment at the Winters School of Music to more than 260 students in just a few years. This history of success in recruiting can now help the whole university as he shares his expertise with other departments."

Dykes joined the Carey faculty in 2012 as coordinator of the instrumental program, which includes major performing groups and ensembles. His first success at WCU was growing the instrumental program from 18 students to 140 students in three years. As dean of the Winters School, he has spread that success to all music programs.

Building on his passion to reach students for Christ in his new role as associate vice president of recruitment, Dykes said he wants to help William Carey recruiters interact with as many prospective students as possible.

Dykes is originally from Pensacola, Fla. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Southern Mississippi, a master's degree in music education/conducting from the University of South Carolina, and a doctorate in musical arts/conducting from the University of Southern Mississippi.

He has taught and served in schools and churches for more than 34 years – each time spurring growth. Dykes is a member of the National Association for Music Education, National Band Association, and Mississippi Bandmasters Association. He is also worship pastor at Hardy Street Baptist Church in Hattiesburg.

Dr. Dykes said, "My goal is to attract as many students as we can to William Carey, help them learn their craft, teach them to know and grow in the Lord – then go out and change their world."

DR. BRETT GOLSON

Dr. Brett Golson provides leadership for the departments of Admissions, Recruiting, International Student Affairs, Media Relations and Marketing, Alumni Engagement, Veteran and Military Affairs, and Church Relations in his new role as vice president of strategic

operations. He previously served as vice president for Spiritual Development and Church Relations and dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Ministry Studies.

"Dr. Golson is a Carey graduate – most of his family are Carey grads. He has done a tremendous job for more than a decade. His passion has resulted in broad knowledge and skill in marketing the university. In this new position, he will be an advocate for all of our fantastic employees who promote WCU and attract new students," Burnett said.



In his work with the Cooper School, Golson launched the Intercultural Studies major, which allows students to study missions while pursuing a double major in their chosen professional field. He also developed the Cross-Cultural Business Management major in collaboration with the School of Business, the Christian Ministries major, and the Arabic Language and Culture program.

In 2014, Golson received the HEADWAE Outstanding Faculty Award established by the Mississippi State Legislature. He was voted WCU Faculty Member of the Year in 2013 and 2018 and honored as Administrator of the Year in 2024.

Golson holds bachelor's degrees from William Carey University and the University of Southern Mississippi. He earned master's degrees in divinity and theology, and a doctorate in expository preaching, from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Before joining WCU in 2012, Golson was a full-time pastor and adjunct professor at Mississippi State University.

Over the course of his career, he has led 35 mission trips overseas and many trips in the United States.

Golson and his wife, Karen, have four married children. They are active members of Hardy Street Baptist Church, where Golson also serves on staff. They enjoy hosting college students in their home and being grandparents to 11 grandchildren – and counting.

DR. DAVID WELDON

Dr. David Weldon has been named dean of the William Carey University School of Pharmacy, replacing retiring dean Dr. Michael Malloy. Previously serving as associate dean, Weldon joined the pharmacy faculty at WCU's Tradition campus in January 2017.

"I know that I leave the program in good hands with David. He's played an integral role in creating its successful culture," said Dr. Malloy.

Dr. Weldon said, "The guidance I've received under his deanship has been very valuable. I want to weave the School of Pharmacy even tighter into the fabric of the Gulf Coast as we grow together, university and community, as partners."

A native of Clarksdale, Dr. Weldon earned his PhD at the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy in 2008. He was vice chair of pharmaceutical sciences at Loma Linda School of Pharmacy in California before coming to WCU to help open the new School of Pharmacy.

"I love it when students tell me how impactful access to professional health education has been for them. I know we are helping to advance future generations," Dr. Weldon said.

The WCU School of Pharmacy offers the only accelerated Doctor of Pharmacy degree on the Gulf Coast – from New Orleans to Pensacola. Students complete the program in two years and 10 months instead of the usual four years.



New Scholarships

THE CHARLES J. BROWN SCHOLARSHIP

Charles J. Brown is a native of Hattiesburg and attended high school minutes from the campus of William Carey University. He graduated from L.J. Rowan High School in 1958 and served as senior class president. After high school, he enlisted in the United States Army and served from 1958-1969 returning home a decorated war hero with two Purple Hearts, two Bronze Stars for Valor, and numerous other citations with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, Vietnam, 1967. He achieved the rank of Platoon Sergeant.

Brown says he chose to attend Carey because he wanted to go to a school where he was free to pray. After graduating from Carey with a Bachelor of Science in 1973, he began a 27-year career with the Mississippi Employment Security Commission.

Brown has committed his life to serving God and those the Lord has placed in his life. His unwavering determination to overcome adversity and hardship is an inspiration to all who have the privilege to know him. He has received countless awards and recognitions from his community and has served on an impressive number of boards and councils. His life is a testament of how God blesses others through a person with a willing heart.

Brown and his family established this scholarship because his desire is to use what God has blessed him with to help students attain an education while growing in their faith.

The Charles J. Brown Scholarship will honor a Hattiesburg High School graduate and Hattiesburg native with preference given to an education major who is involved in community service.

THE BILL AND CAROLYN CARTER SCHOLARSHIP

The Bill and Carolyn Carter Scholarship was established by Carolyn Carter in 2023. Carolyn Dismukes Carter is a 1966 graduate of William



Mr. Charles J. Brown with his sons, Jermaine (left) and Jerome (right), and Dr. Ben Burnett

Carey College and is thankful for the good influences Carey has had in her life and the lives of others. She began her college career at Carey in the music department, but God led her to complete a degree in education. She taught private piano lessons for 18 years while her children were young, served her church in the choirs, and taught public elementary school in four different states.

Carolyn married her husband William S. "Bill" Carter in 1967. Together, they welcomed two sons, one in 1969 and the other in 1972. Bill received his Master of Hospital Administration from Trinity University, San Antonio, TX. The family moved to Dallas in 1974, when Bill accepted the position of administrator at Baylor Hospital. In 1984, Carolyn received her Master of Humanities from the University of Dallas. Their family's values have been God centered and their goals have been to continue learning and to strengthen those around them. Just as William Carey, the cobbler, set the example to be a light to the world, William Carey University is a great support to students. Carolyn's desire is to promote blessed learning for young adults to continue this heritage.

The scholarship will honor a music or education major.

THE BILLY VAUGHAN MEMORIAL WORSHIP LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

The Billy Vaughan Memorial Worship Leadership Scholarship was established by his family and friends in loving memory of a life well lived. From a very young age, Billy used his love for music and for the Lord to serve others. He dedicated his life to helping others worship God through music in a number of Baptist churches as well as serving four years as a chaplain service specialist in the United States Air Force. Billy completed a Master of Music degree from William Carey College in 1977 during which time he was diagnosed with recurring lymphatic cancer. He continued in full-time music ministry until his health declined in 1989. After leaving vocational ministry, Billy and his wife Mary Helen volunteered in many areas of service until his health restricted him to his home. Billy loved using music to worship his Savior and encouraged others to do the same.

The scholarship will honor a married music major with a concentration in Worship Leadership, with preference given to a family with small children.

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New Scholarships

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

THE LINDA BARFIELD SUDDUTH MISSIONARY DEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIP

The Linda Barfield Sudduth Missionary Dependent Scholarship will help underwrite the generous scholarship that is awarded to all dependent children of full-time International Mission Board personnel. Linda's brother, Jim Barfield, established the scholarship in her memory in March 2024.

Linda was born in Kosciusko, Miss., on August 12, 1942, and grew up with her brother and two sisters (Jim Barfield of Jackson, Betty Johnson (Billy) of Summit, and Jane Russell of Kosciusko). She graduated from Kosciusko High School and married James "Jimmie" Sudduth, October 31, 1960. Linda postponed attaining her own college degree to raise and educate her family, getting her husband successfully through his undergraduate degree and later her children through undergraduate degrees and law school before completing her Bachelor of Business Administration degree at Belhaven University in 1999.

Linda began her professional career in San Bernadino, Calif., working as a legal secretary for a small law firm. After moving back home to Mississippi, she mastered the skills of typing, Gregg shorthand and stenography, attaining Certified Shorthand Reporter status and transcribing the official transcripts for several Mississippi courts including Forrest County Court and Youth Court. After a career that spanned six decades, Linda retired in 2014 as the court reporter for the Honorable Patricia D. Wise of the Fifth Chancery Court District of Hinds County. Linda was active in the Mississippi Court Reporters Association, serving several terms as editor of its newsletter, *MS/Strokes*, including her own "Little Bits of Stuff (matching her initials) section. As successful as she was in her career outside the home, Linda's compassion for others, particularly her family, was unparalleled. Those who were privileged to call her "Mom," knew they were loved, and loved unconditionally. Her family was her focus and her passion, in both her words and her actions. Linda's and Jim's commitment to their family was never more evident than during the birth of their first-born,

Susan. Undaunted by doctors who told them a newborn with Downs Syndrome would create difficulties and hardships on very young parents and advised them to place Susan with a health provider so they could continue on with their lives, Linda and Jim refused that advice. Instead, they engaged the best medical and educational practitioners and, with love and determination, raised Susan to become a beautiful, generous, accomplished woman.

Linda's care and compassion extended beyond her family. She was always willing to lend a helping hand to a colleague at work or volunteer in the community. Strong in her faith, Linda was a lifelong active Baptist church member, singing in the choir and leading Sunday School classes, with her last home church being Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Ridgeland, Miss.

THE DR. GEORGE BERGER MISSIONARY DEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIP

The Dr. George Berger Missionary Dependent Scholarship was established by his loving wife, Jo Ann. The proceeds from

this fund will help underwrite the generous scholarship that is awarded to all dependent children of full-time International Mission Board personnel. "Expect is great things from God; attempt great things for God" was William Carey's motto. Dr. Berger lived by this motto as he served the Lord, his family, and others. After he graduated high school in Baton Rouge, La., he felt God calling him into ministry. He prepared for this call by attending William Carey University, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Clinton Theological Seminary. He met and married his wife Jo Ann while attending Carey. After Dr. Berger graduated from WCU, he was blessed to pastor churches in Mississippi and Louisiana for 30 years. The next 23 years, he served as Director of Missions in the Hattiesburg area. During his 53 years of ministry, he led teams to partner in missions in other countries and in the states, leading and hosting the World Changers in Hattiesburg at WCU.

After moving to Hattiesburg, Dr. Berger and his family were members of 38th Avenue Baptist Church where he served as a



deacon and was on the missions team. Many missionaries and their children spent their furlough time in the mission home owned by the church. During that time, he watched the missionaries leave their college-age children at WCU and go back to serve in their countries. It was then that Dr. Berger realized the importance of the missionaries' kids (MKs) being able to attend WCU without their parents having the burden of the cost. Dr. Berger went to be with the Lord on October 7, 2023, but his legacy lives on through this scholarship and through the recipients as they prepare to go out and serve the Lord in many ways and avenues of service.

THE TED AND JANIE BOWER MISSIONARY DEPENDENT SCHOLARSHIP

Ted and Janie Bower met at Carey and have remained loyal supporters of the institution and its students through the years. Ted majored in church music and graduated in 1979. He went on to earn the MBA in 1997. He retired in 2012 after 30 years with South Mississippi Electric Power Association. Janie earned mathematics degrees from Carey in

1977 and 1980. She retired from teaching for 32 years in public schools in 2009. Ted has served on the alumni council and the board of trustees, and Janie is a part-time math instructor and supervisor of mathematics student teachers at Carey.

The Bowers are members of Main Street Baptist Church where they sing in the worship choir and play handbells. They are dedicated to serving missionaries and their families.

THE DR. EUGENE OWENS TEACHER RESIDENCY SCHOLARSHIP

The National Center for Teacher Residencies has awarded \$200,000 to establish the Dr. Eugene Owens Teacher Residency Scholarship. The Carey Teacher Residency program will administer the scholarship. The program aims to support and empower educators who reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the student they serve.

The scholarship offers an opportunity for a college graduate to earn a master's degree in elementary education with a special education endorsement. The program is designed for non-certified teachers.

Dr. Owens, a long-time professor at WCU, began his career in Laurel in 1967 and was instrumental in transforming education in Mississippi. He became the first Black superintendent of education in Laurel and later revitalized the Educational Leadership program at WCU. Owens retired in 2017 and was honored with a WCU Legacy Stone in 2019. His contributions extend beyond education to community service, including roles with the Salvation Army Advisory Board, the Crime Stoppers Board, and the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art Trustee Board.

To discover how you can establish a scholarship in a loved one's honor or memory, contact Karen Golson, director of advancement, kgolson@wmcarey.edu.

To donate to these or other scholarships, visit wmcarey.edu/advancement.



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Please remember to update your contact information with the alumni office and let us know about your good news so that we can celebrate with you and include your news in the class notes section of the magazine! Send updates to alumni@wmcarey.edu.

Class

NOTES

80s

DON BIADOG '83

Don was presented the President's Lifetime Volunteer Service Award for "consistently garnering 500 hours of volunteer service annually for over one decade." The award was presented by Major General Michael J. Borgschulte and Lt. Col. Robert J. Weingart in San Diego. Don started volunteering in elementary school and still follows the Boy Scout's slogan, "Do a Good Turn Daily." The President's Lifetime Volunteer Service Award requires a minimum of 4,000 hours of documented volunteer service. Examples of Don's service include taking two weeks of personal leave to volunteer in New Jersey and New York following Superstorm Sandy in 2012; weekend community relations projects (schools, orphanages, campsites, etc.) in

Japan and Korea; humanitarian aid to Iraqi children near the Baghdad International Airport, risking his life to deliver aid to hundreds of orphaned children.

JEFF MURPHY '84

Jeff received the Anton T. Boisen Professional Service Award at the grand banquet during the Association of Professional Chaplains National Conference in June. Jeff has been a board-certified chaplain since 1993. He previously served as a staff chaplain at UMMC in Jackson and currently serves as a chaplain at Tyson Food. He earned a B.A. in history from Carey and the M.Div. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The award honors one of the early pioneers in clinical chaplaincy and pastoral care education and is given to a board-certified chaplain for excellence in professional chaplaincy and unique contributions to contemporary pastoral care.

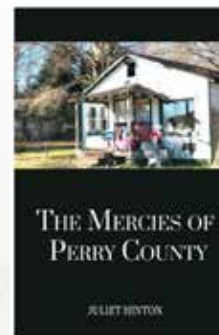
TERRY TINSLEY '88

Terry Tinsley, Ph.D., first received gubernatorial appointment to the Virginia Board of Counseling back in 2011 and has been subsequently reappointed by each Virginia governor to date. During a recent publicly held board meeting, the board held officer elections. Following nominations, and by unanimous vote, Tinsley was elected the new Chair of the Virginia State Board of Counseling. Tinsley serves as vice president for residential program services at Youth for Tomorrow in Bristow, Virginia.

90s

ROBERT CROSS '98, '02

Robert is a provider at the new Oxford location of Lifeworks Counseling, a leading provider of mental health services in Mississippi. Lifeworks Counseling offers an integrated faith-based counseling approach, combining the best practices in clinical counseling psychology and healthy Biblical life principles. Robert earned his bachelor's degree in psychology and biblical studies from Carey in 1998. He went on to earn his master's degree in counseling psychology in 2002, also from Carey. He holds a doctor of professional counseling degree from Mississippi College and is trained in eye movement desensitization and reprocessing.

JULIET HINTON '99, '00

Juliet has published her first book of poems, "The Mercies of Perry County," about the people, history, and landscapes of the county where she grew up. The book is available through Finishing Line Press, BN.com,

and Amazon.com. Juliet earned both the bachelor's and master's degrees in business from Carey.

00s

PATRICK BRADY '05, '18

Following Patrick's passing in February, his father, mother, and brother joined colleagues from William Carey University - Tradition Campus and the School of Nursing to plant a Japanese magnolia tree in the Tradition Butterfly Garden to honor his memory.

He earned the RN from Charity School of Nursing in 1983, then a master of science in nursing from Carey in 2005. He held two doctorates: the doctorate in nursing practice from University of South Alabama in 2010 and the Ph.D. in nursing from Carey in 2018.

DEENA KEASLER '05, '06

Deena has been named chief financial officer at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Golden Triangle. She serves on the senior leadership team and participates in the operational decision-making processes necessary for the hospital

to fulfill its mission. She is responsible for the overall financial operations of the hospital. Deena earned the bachelor of science in business and the MBA from Carey. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling to new places, touring historical homes, and exploring the outdoors.

10s

ALEX LAHASKY '14

Alex received the prestigious Milken Award in February 2024 at Blue Valley West High School where he teaches 11th grade social studies. Award Founder Lowell Milken, Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Randy Watson, and U.S. Representative Sharice Davis presented the award.

LESLIE LANGHAM '13, '17

Leslie has been selected as assistant principal at North Woolmarket Elementary Middle School. She earned her masters and specialist degrees from Carey. Her husband Paul is also a Carey graduate. They have two sons, Joseph and Matthew.

CHRISTOPHER PERMENTER '15

Chris was chosen as an honorable mention winner for the 2024 Tony Awards Excellence in Theatre Education Awards. He is the first Mississippi teacher to receive such recognition. The Excellence in Theatre Education Award, sponsored by Carnegie Mellon University, is presented each year by the Tony Awards. Chris and the other 17 honorable mention winners were cited for their outstanding service to their students and focus on advancing theater education. Chris teaches at Ocean Springs High School.

KYLE '11 AND LAURIE '09, '21 STEWART

Kyle and Laurie have begun a new ministry as house parents at Homes of Hope for Children in Purvis. They are extremely excited about how the Lord will use them as they minister to the girls who are in their home now and in the future.

JEREMY PEAGLER '17, '19

Jeremy has been selected as principal of South Pike High School. He previously served as principal of Loyd Star Elementary and as assistant principal of Brookhaven High School. He holds a bachelor of arts in psychology from Mississippi College, a master of arts in Christian counseling from Houston Baptist University, and the education specialist degree and doctoral degree in educational leadership from Carey. Jeremy is married to Avery, and they have three children: Emma Claire, Eli, and Ethan.

20s

RYAN ETHRIDGE '22

Ryan accepted the call to be the worship pastor of First Baptist Clinton. Ryan is thankful for the training he received at Carey. Ryan said, "The degree I pursued gave me foundational tools to begin my ministry in the church, and I can thank William Carey for that!"

Alumni & Faculty


**HUGHIE RAY ALFORD '62***May 23, 1935 – November 5, 2023***NONA KAY STRICKLAND ALFORD '74***March 30, 1945 - May 15, 2024***KIMBERLY A. BEECH '98***April 20, 1973 - November 04, 2023***DR. PATRICK "TONY"****BRADY JR. '05 AND '18***Former Faculty**April 12, 1961 - February 8, 2024***WILLIS LANGLEY "BILLY"****BRAZIL III '65***September 21, 1943 - November 11, 2023***LINDA JANE CLINTON '68***August 4, 1947 – November 11, 2023***RHONDA PHILLIPS HARRIS '96***March 23, 1973 - November 7, 2023***STANLEY WAYNE HENSON '77***November 10, 1954 – April 20, 2024***TERRY P. JOHNSON '77***December 15, 1955 - June 6, 2024***DR. CAROL JONES***Former Faculty**June 26, 1950 — May 9, 2024***DONALD S. LANCASTER '74***May 20, 1936 – April 23, 2024***CHARLES LAMAR LIFER '61***June 16, 1938 - April 30, 2024***CHRISTOPHER EVERETTE LOVELY '02***April 4, 1978 - October 30, 2023***ELEANOR BERNICE MCINTOSH '56***October 28, 1934 - December 17, 2023***ANCE ELMO MCLAURIN '58***November 20, 1935 - April 28, 2024***GRADY LEWIS MYRICK SR.***Former Trustee**December 12, 1935 - May 25, 2024***MARGAURITA OUTLEY '94***April 3, 1973- September 30, 2023***DR. EUGENE D. OWENS, JR.***Former Faculty**August 27, 1945 - December 1, 2023***DONNIE V. PARKER '69***June 12, 1947 - December 30, 2023***ANGELA "ANGIE" SCHINTZIUS '16***August 30, 1970 - December 30, 2023***ALBERT "BART" SHAW '68***May 24, 1941 – October 3, 2023***LINDA FAY MATTOX SIMS '55***October 30, 1933 - May 4, 2024***WANDA WARD WESTBROOK MATTHEWS '81***November 13, 1950 - October 31, 2023***RUTH MURFEE WYATT '80***November 11, 1941 — May 11, 2024*



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Gifts of any amount are crucial to the growth and development of scholarships. Donors may make single gifts by mail or through our online giving page at any time. To schedule recurring gifts, contact the Office for Advancement.

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