

# OHIO CHRISTIAN

WINTER 2016

- OCU Launches the Toler Leadership Institute
- 10th Annual Leadership Forum April 19
- New Vision for Teacher Education Department
- Columbus Business First Recognizes OCU for Growth & Excellence

pictured: Rev. David Dean with Dr. Stan Toler



**DR. BENNY TATE**

Dr. Benny Tate has served for over 20 years as the Senior Pastor of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia. The church has grown from 50 in attendance to more than 6,000 under his leadership.

**APRIL 19, 2016 @ 2pm**

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OUR MISSION

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Ohio Christian University prepares students to serve effectively in the church and society by providing a holistic, Christ-centered, biblically integrated education in the Wesleyan tradition.

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Ohio Christian University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

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**DR. MARK A. SMITH**  
President

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Urgency: We Must Develop Pastor Leaders

At a recent pastors conference in Dallas, I was informed that over the last five years, more than 100,000 churches closed, and in the next five years more than 100,000 more churches will close. If you were to close 100,000 businesses, schools, or hospitals in the world, there would be devastating results. However, since the spiritual realm seems like a lower priority, 100,000 churches doesn't matter—right? Wrong!

One estimate is that 1,700 pastors leave the ministry each month. If this trend continues, it will leave a deep and lasting impact on America and the world.

One of the major reasons that churches are closing is the lack of pastors to fill the pulpits. Even the U.S. Government is predicting a pastoral shortage.

Many times Christians walk up to me and ask, "what can we do?" The answer is simple—we must change our worldly mindset. Take for example the sports world. Billions are spent every year on sports memorabilia, tickets, and stadiums. How is it that we are willing to give to causes that do not advance God's kingdom, yet refuse to invest in training pastors? **Now is the time for Christians to make radical change**—stop giving millions to build football stadiums and focus instead on giving to further Christ's Kingdom.

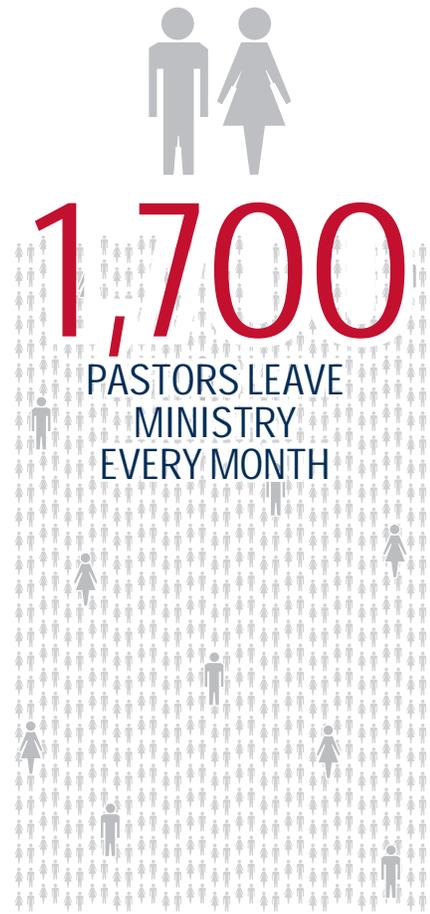
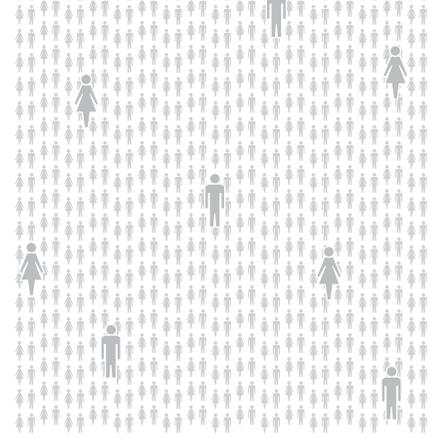
Which one do you think will more greatly impact a nation for eternity?

On the positive side, each year about 1,000 churches are planted across America. Who will lead them? We need pastors! It is OCU's duty and privilege to help fill the gap. We must train thousands of pastors—now. Urgency!

In the more than 20 years I have been in Christian leadership, I have noticed that the leaders who move organizations seize the moment—they are urgent. What does it mean for a leader to seize the moment?

### ***1. Urgent Leadership Requires Mission Focus***

Ohio Christian University is focused on educating students to impact the church and society. This means we will be biblical and conservative. That means we are going to live careful, holy lives from a biblical perspective. This also means that we are not interested in being a university that embraces liberal thought processes that tear down traditional views of scripture. We will continue to support traditional marriage, oppose the drugs and alcohol addictions that destroy our world, and we will do all we can to serve the fatherless, widows, and orphans. We know who we are, and we will be Christ to the world.



## **2. Urgent Leadership Requires Community Awareness**

Urgent leaders see opportunities where others do not. Being aware of what is happening in the Church, the community, and beyond has allowed us to choose the projects that will truly move OCU forward with its mission. Leaders must be aware of opportunity matches. A leader must get out of the office and meet other leaders so needs are met.

those steps. For example, recently I had to choose whether or not to invest many hours in our community to help with its economic development. High risk, high reward, if achieved, but the decision had to be made. I boldly declared a vision to start a \$5 million Business Innovation Center. Today, it is being built; the community rallied to accomplish this vision. **Be courageous. It takes courage to step out and help lead a community.** It takes courage to lead a church or business, but we must seize the moment.

Prayer and fasting give one the inner strength to think clearly and follow the plan of God.

## **3. Urgent Leadership Requires Partnering with Other Organizations**

Urgent leaders partner and make connections with those who can help gain insight into the opportunity being presented. This type of leader understands how to connect with people who have the knowledge and expertise in the new areas being considered. I constantly surround myself with experts on many topics to facilitate growth and opportunities. I have learned that any subject expert is only a phone call away.

## **4. Urgent Leadership Requires Courage**

An urgent leader must have a willingness to be courageous and follow through on vision and projects. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of seizing the moment is having the courage to move quickly on opportunities. Opportunities are fleeting and one must quickly make decisions in this technology-filled world. Many times, I have needed courage to take

## **5. Urgent Leadership Requires Fervent Prayer**

Before beginning any community changing initiative, I spend many hours in prayer to discern the Spirit. On our recent chapel project, I was challenged to raise \$6.2 million in three years. I started with 40 days of prayer and fasting. As I prayed I felt challenged to make sure we had 50 percent of the money in hand before starting the project. Each day I drove around the campus seven times and prayed and fasted the morning meal. I watched as the Holy Spirit led our staff to individuals and foundations, and we have raised \$5.2 million of the \$6.2 million. Prayer and fasting give one the inner strength to think clearly and follow the plan of God. I know God has the last million. I have started my fasting and prayer again. With each new opportunity and new idea, I use the anchor of prayer as the guiding decision maker in my life. Leaders, let's seize the moment together.



A few weeks ago, after prayer and fasting, I boldly declared that Ohio Christian University will help raise up thousands of pastors to address the coming shortage. Numerous church partnerships will focus on selecting and training the next clergy. Already God is moving.

## **Goal: \$10 million**

to establish technology and programming to train thousands of pastors.



### **Personnel to Accomplish Vision**

- **Pastor Mark Fuller** (pictured) of Grove City Nazarene Church in Grove City, Ohio
- **Pastor Bruce Morrison** of Heritage Memorial Church in Washington Courthouse, Ohio
- **Pastor Wendell Brown** of Circleville Church of the Nazarene in Circleville, Ohio

### **Pastor Laboratories**

- **Pastor Gerald Brooks** of Grace Outreach Center in Plano, Texas
- **Pastor Benny Tate** of Rock Springs Church in Milner, Georgia

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# OCU Expands Academic Programs

Over the last decade Ohio Christian University has seen an exponential increase in enrollment, expanded course offerings, job creation, and an alumni base that is changing this world for Christ.

Instead of slowing down, OCU is just getting warmed up. Over the next five years, more changes are in the pipeline from completing construction on two multi-million dollar buildings to expanding academic offerings to better reflect the job market and student needs.

As early as Spring 2016, Dr. Hank Kelly, Provost, plans to begin offering new programs in English, History, and Political Science. Over the next several years, OCU plans to offer several associate and bachelor degrees in Information Technology (IT), including one in Cyber Security. Other programs include a Master of Education; Reading Certification; and Bachelor of Science in Adolescence to Young Adult Education (formerly secondary or high school) with majors in integrated Mathematics, Integrated English/Language Arts, Integrated Social Studies, and Integrated Science.

“These degree programs pave the way for Ohio Christian University to be the only university in this area besides a few Columbus schools to offer a Teacher Education degree in

Adolescence to Young Adult,” said Dr. Kelly. This will allow successful graduates to teach grades 7-12.

According to Dr. Kelly and Dr. Bradford Sample, Assistant Provost, the decision on which new programs to add are not made in a vacuum. A logical series of deductions take place: marketplace surveys, focus groups, market research, and competitor analysis before moving forward on creating degree descriptions and course plans.

“For example, in IT the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 26 percent increase in the need for IT professionals between 2012 and 2022. The average increase is eight percent. We recognize the need, we did the research, and now we’re ready to help fill that need,” says Dr. Sample.

In addition to new programs, OCU will offer its programs at new off-campus locations to allow more students to participate in Christian higher education.

OCU will continue to work to meet the needs of its students while preparing them to go out into the world as world impacting servant Christian leaders. According to Dr. Kelly, “The past decade has been a period of tremendous growth and innovation at Ohio Christian University. This is an exciting place to be; I can’t wait to see where we will be in another ten years.”



## New Programs for 2016

- English
- History
- Political Science
- Information Technology
- Intercultural Ministries & Business (dual major)

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## 2nd Annual Church Service Day

### More than 700 OCU Students Pay It Forward

More than 700 Ohio Christian University students paid it forward by serving the local church and community during OCU's annual Church Service Day. Student teams assisted with projects like landscaping, painting, cleaning, and organizing at 44 locations in Pickaway County. Some of these include Crossroads Church, Heritage Nazarene Church, and First Baptist Church.

At OCU, serving the church community is a priority, and the local church and community have been instrumental in OCU's growth and success. Many community members expressed heartfelt thanks for the students' hard work and dedication.



MARTHA JO MEADOWS via Facebook

Thanks to OCU and students who do so much for this community! The three girls at our house were delightful. We loved having them and would love to have them back.



**DR. DAVID GARRISON**  
Chair, OCU School of  
Business & Government

## 50 Students Attend Conservative Values Conference in Washington D.C.

This fall, Ohio Christian University students had the privilege of attending The Values Voter Summit. Those who attended were equipped to take a stand for conservative values and learned what they can do when it comes to their faith being challenged. OCU was excited to involve 50 School of Business & Government students in such an event, where they heard from eight presidential candidates and more than a dozen conservative leaders.

Students and forum attendees also heard from OCU President Dr. Mark Smith—who expressed his passion in raising strong Christian leaders and the importance of having a biblical and conservative worldview.

During the Summit, School of Business and Government students showcased servant leadership by sponsoring a breakfast with guest speakers



Jason and David Benham, and Kelvin Cochran. They also organized a break out session later that day with several more special guests.

Ohio Christian University is honored to have been involved in The Values Voter Summit, as it was a great time in informing our students on Religious Freedom and understanding that it's time for the Christian body to stand up for what's right.



Jason Benham, Kelvin Cochran, Dr. David Garrison, David Benham

**“We don’t need more liberal universities to attack traditional American values. OCU will be conservative.”**

Dr. Mark Smith



Watch OCU President Mark Smith’s speech from Values Voter Summit 2015. Scan the code with a smart phone or visit [www.ohiochristian.edu/pray4usa](http://www.ohiochristian.edu/pray4usa)

# OCU Students Respond to Papal Visit “Emergency” in Philadelphia



Students in Ohio Christian University’s Emergency and Disaster Management Program were called upon by the City of Philadelphia through The Salvation Army. Their challenge was to assist thousands of first responders in feeding and hydration efforts for the 1 million people projected to flood into Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families. The gathering was the last major event of Pope Francis’ first visit to the United States.

The drastic influx of people into the City of Philadelphia for the papal visit meant that the crisis level shortages of adequate food, water, and shelter were likely, if not imminent. OCU students distributed more than half a million bottles of water, as well as thousands of meals over the three-day period.

The response to the Papal Visit was a unique opportunity for OCU students to experience a “planned” emergency, as well as to be the hands and feet of Christ to thousands.



**“OCU students have real-world opportunities to practice what they learn in the classroom.”**

Dr. Thad Hicks, Director of OCU Emergency and Disaster Management Program

**DR. THAD HICKS**  
Emergency and  
Disaster Management  
Program Director



# OCU Georgia



The Atlanta Business Journal recently featured Dr. Shawn Thomas discussing OCU's impact in the community.

If you want innovative results, you have to have a leader who isn't afraid to think and lead differently. Such is the case of Dr. Shawn Thomas, the Georgia Dean for Ohio Christian University (OCU), who has enough faith to move mountains and seeks God in every decision in her personal life and in the life of the university campus she leads.

Dr. Thomas and Ohio Christian University help students accomplish their goals and realize their dreams at the prominent university in Clayton County, GA. OCU is committed to offering a complete education that develops students intellectually, professionally, and spiritually. The Atlanta Business Journal sat down with Dr. Thomas to discuss OCU's role in the community now and in the future.

**Q: What's the one thing you want to tell the community?**

A: Education is important to an individual's success; it provides you a competitive edge and helps ensure success in the professional environment. It also fosters competence, confidence, independence, stability, exposure, and so on. Education should be ongoing and lifelong.

Christian education is even more important. Our society desperately needs people who live out a Christian worldview that is based solely on the Holy Bible. In today's time, it is needed more than ever.

Dr. Thomas holds a doctorate in Organization and Management with a specialization in Management Education and a certification in College Teaching. In addition to being Dean, she teaches International Business and Management courses. She is married to Reverend Ronnie Martin Thomas Jr., and they have four children. More than anything, she loves the Lord.

Adapted from Atlanta Business Journal feature by Ann Almond

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Record Attendance for 10th Annual

# Festival of Carols & Messiah

## *A Christmas Gift to the Community*

Warmth and cheer decorated Ohio Christian University's Maxwell Center on December 5, 2015, offering shelter from the December weather. Tables covered with white cloth and dotted with hot beverages lined the foyer, and caring faces greeted guests as they were given a program and seated. Glittering lights on tall pine trees covered with Christmas ornaments illuminated the room, highlighting the 40-piece orchestra below the stage. Above it, choir chairs draped in white robes were stars against a black backdrop.

This was the scene of the 10th annual Festival of Carols and Messiah, which more than 700 community members attended—bringing canned goods as general admission. The goods were then donated to the Pickaway County Emergency Clearinghouse food pantry, weighing in at more than 1,000 pounds.

Led by OCU Professor Dr. Dione Bennett, the concert consisted of professional musicians, OCU students and faculty, and members of the Circleville community. The event featured Christmas favorites and selections from Handel's Messiah and several solo performances.

"This event is truly our Christmas gift to the community. Thank you so much for your support. We couldn't do it without you," said Dr. Dione Bennett.

It was a rewarding and successful night for both students and the community. Ohio Christian University is overwhelmed by the support shown and thankful to all who attended.



More than  
1,000 pounds  
of food were  
donated to a  
local food bank.



**DR. DIONE BENNETT**  
OCU Professor & Chorale Director



**2016 Chorale Tour**

- |         |                                     |                 |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2/21    | Circleville United Methodist Church | Circleville, OH |
| 2/27-28 | Regional Rally - Grace Memorial     | Columbus, OH    |
| 4/15-17 | Urbana/Larendo, OH, Regional Rally  | Urbana, OH      |

Visit [www.ohiochristian.edu/chorale](http://www.ohiochristian.edu/chorale) for more dates or to host the OCU Chorale.

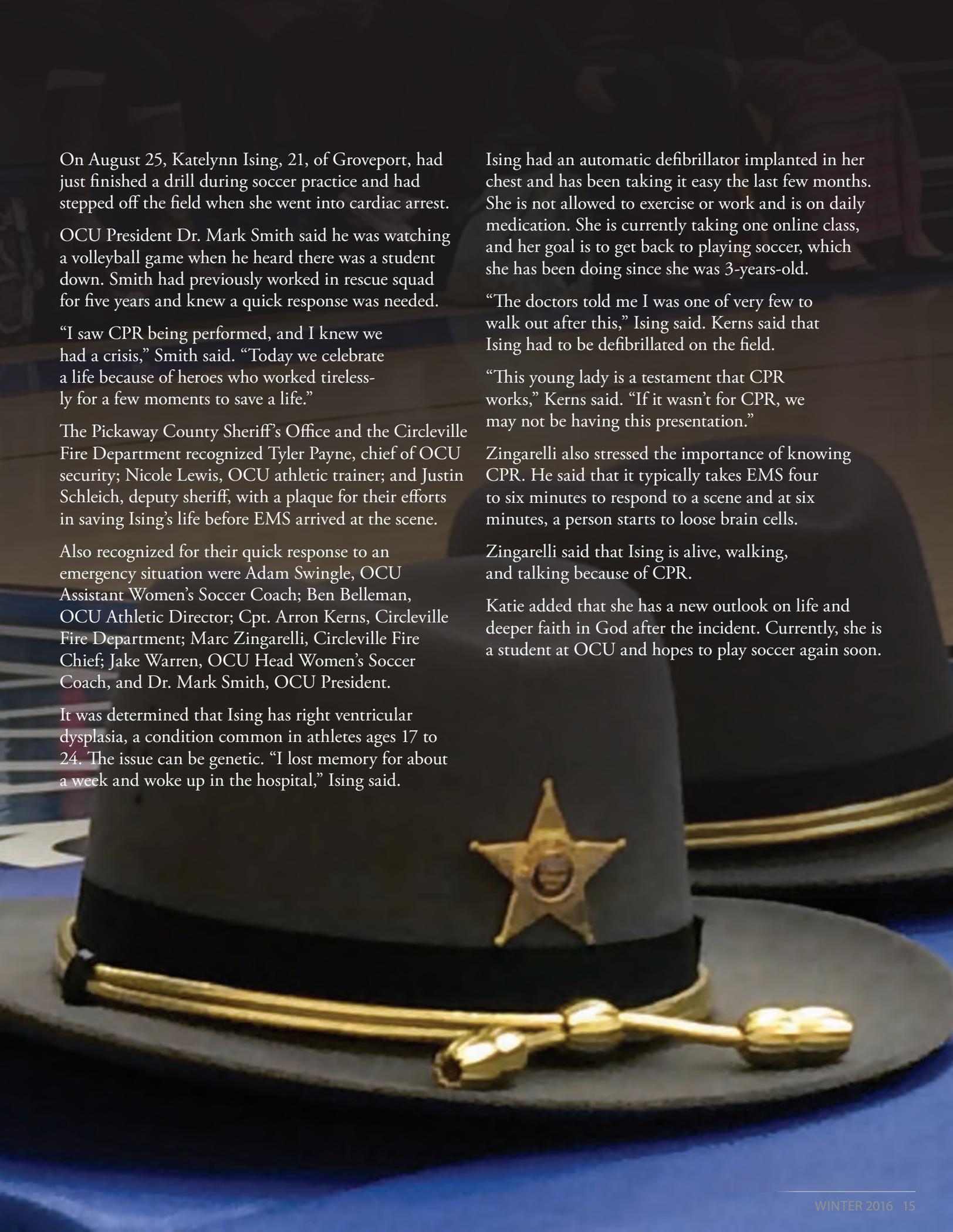


# Local Heroes Honored for Saving OCU Student's Life



Katie Ising stands surrounded by OCU staff members, first responders, and the OCU women's soccer team following a ceremony in which they were recognized for saving her life.

Pictured front row, from left: Tyler Payne, OCU Security Chief; Jake Warren, Head Women's Soccer Coach; Adam Swingle, Assistant Women's Soccer Coach; Katie Ising, OCU Athlete; Deputy Justin Schleich, Pickaway County Sheriff's Office; Cpt. Aaron Kerns, Circleville Fire Department.



On August 25, Katelynn Ising, 21, of Groveport, had just finished a drill during soccer practice and had stepped off the field when she went into cardiac arrest.

OCU President Dr. Mark Smith said he was watching a volleyball game when he heard there was a student down. Smith had previously worked in rescue squad for five years and knew a quick response was needed.

“I saw CPR being performed, and I knew we had a crisis,” Smith said. “Today we celebrate a life because of heroes who worked tirelessly for a few moments to save a life.”

The Pickaway County Sheriff’s Office and the Circleville Fire Department recognized Tyler Payne, chief of OCU security; Nicole Lewis, OCU athletic trainer; and Justin Schleich, deputy sheriff, with a plaque for their efforts in saving Ising’s life before EMS arrived at the scene.

Also recognized for their quick response to an emergency situation were Adam Swingle, OCU Assistant Women’s Soccer Coach; Ben Belleman, OCU Athletic Director; Cpt. Arron Kerns, Circleville Fire Department; Marc Zingarelli, Circleville Fire Chief; Jake Warren, OCU Head Women’s Soccer Coach, and Dr. Mark Smith, OCU President.

It was determined that Ising has right ventricular dysplasia, a condition common in athletes ages 17 to 24. The issue can be genetic. “I lost memory for about a week and woke up in the hospital,” Ising said.

Ising had an automatic defibrillator implanted in her chest and has been taking it easy the last few months. She is not allowed to exercise or work and is on daily medication. She is currently taking one online class, and her goal is to get back to playing soccer, which she has been doing since she was 3-years-old.

“The doctors told me I was one of very few to walk out after this,” Ising said. Kerns said that Ising had to be defibrillated on the field.

“This young lady is a testament that CPR works,” Kerns said. “If it wasn’t for CPR, we may not be having this presentation.”

Zingarelli also stressed the importance of knowing CPR. He said that it typically takes EMS four to six minutes to respond to a scene and at six minutes, a person starts to lose brain cells.

Zingarelli said that Ising is alive, walking, and talking because of CPR.

Katie added that she has a new outlook on life and deeper faith in God after the incident. Currently, she is a student at OCU and hopes to play soccer again soon.

# COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

## OHIO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

# Ohio Christian University Recognized for Growth and Excellence

BY JEFF BELL

There was a pivotal moment during Mark Smith's first year as president at Ohio Christian University 10 years ago – one that put the Circleville-based school on its path of community outreach, enrollment growth and fiscal stability.

The occasion was a town hall meeting at which Smith hoped to gain some perspective on how the community viewed what then was called Circleville Bible College.

"One of the questions to me was, 'Dr. Smith, your school seems to be a monastery that's training monks but not involved in the community. What will you do to lead this community as an educator?'"

Smith said he returned to campus and told his administrative team and faculty members that "if we do nothing else, we are here to educate this community. That will be our focus."

Today, Smith can point to numerous milestones to illustrate that Ohio Christian is getting things done for Circleville, Pickaway County, and southern Ohio.

At the urging of community leaders, Ohio Christian created programs in logistics and business. It also has added nursing, criminal justice, substance abuse counseling and several other fields to complement its Christian ministry offerings. The university's Trailblazer Academy program lets high school students take classes for college credit.

Smith strongly encourages faculty, staff and students to volunteer with community organizations and churches. In addition, the university has become an important partner in Pickaway County's economic development efforts and one of Circleville's larger employers.



*Members of the women's volleyball team exit the Maxwell Center at Ohio Christian University.*

### Economic development engine

Ohio Christian has become an important partner in Pickaway County's educational and economic development efforts, said Circleville Mayor Don McIlroy.

One of the best examples is the Southern Gateway Economic Innovation Development Center that will be built on the Ohio Christian campus. The university donated land for the building, which will provide incubator space for startup businesses and serve as a job-creation and work-force development hub for the community.

McIlroy said Smith has been a champion

for the project, helping land state and federal funding for it. That includes a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

The mayor also credits the university with playing a major role in an effort to increase the rate of those with bachelor's degrees in Circleville and Pickaway County. It has grown to about 18 percent, up from 12 percent four years ago.

"None of this would have been accomplished without the leadership of Dr. Smith and his team," McIlroy said. "He's been a god-send for this community."

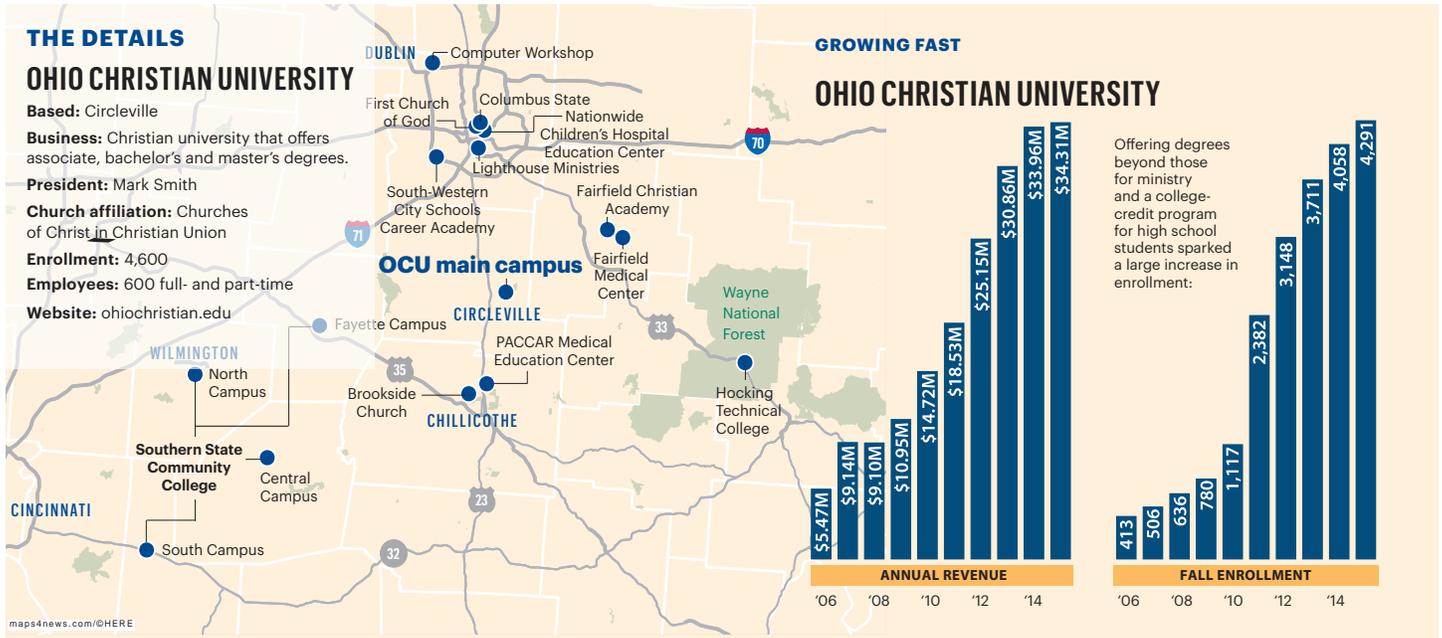
Circleville Bible College had 380 students when Smith was hired in 2005. The college, which was renamed Ohio Christian University during his first year on campus, now has about 4,600 students, most of them taking classes online. The school's main campus also is supported by 14 satellite sites – 13 in southern and Central Ohio and one in Atlanta, Georgia.

The university has 600 full- and part-time employees compared with the 50 who greeted Smith upon his arrival. Ohio Christian estimates its annual economic impact now surpasses \$75 million compared with \$5 million 10 years ago. It also has spent more than \$30 million on new buildings and other capital improvements over that span. About \$4 million of that came from federal, state and local grants, and the rest is from fundraising and operations.

### Turnaround story

The college was struggling to make payroll and was in operational financial distress when he arrived, said Smith, who has a doctorate in education from West Virginia University and completed the executive management program at Harvard University's Institute of Educational Management.

Among his first moves was to focus on marketing and student recruitment. He also spent time on community outreach and better engagement with churches, including those



affiliated with the Churches of Christ in Christian Union, which founded the bible college in 1948.

Smith reallocated money from operations to marketing, and hit the road to raise money for the school. He says Ohio Christian has greatly benefited from its friendship with alum John Maxwell, a leadership expert, speaker, coach and author who has sold more than 19 million books. Smith said Maxwell has introduced him to many in the corporate world who have provided financial support to the university since Smith took over 10 years ago. Maxwell is a big donor.

A major key to the school's growth has been its rapidly increasing enrollment. While recognizing the need to broaden the university's academic offerings to attract students, university and church leaders have continued to focus on providing a Christ-centered, biblically integrated education.

"We are living our Christian faith through community service," Smith said. "We embrace Judeo-Christian principles of honest living and hard work according to the Ten Commandments."

He said Ohio Christian is a conservative university – and proud of it – at a time when many colleges are challenging traditional beliefs about capitalism and the greatness of America.

"People are flocking to us because they are tired of people putting down America," Smith said. "At Ohio Christian University, we teach that capitalism is a great thing and that work ethic is great thing.... We still believe in the American dream and America's greatness."

Ohio Christian is well regarded by its peers for its ability to balance its religious mission



Ohio Christian President Mark Smith runs a university that is one of the best managed financially in the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

with the need to offer academic programs that attract students, said Ralph Enlow, president of the 200-member Association for Biblical Higher Education in Orlando, Florida.

"They've achieved some pretty remarkable things," Enlow said. "Dr. Smith is looked at as being one of the most entrepreneurial and visionary leaders in our network."

He said only about 20 percent of his association's schools are performing as well financially as Ohio Christian, and about 10 percent

are facing "a fair amount of financial distress."

The rest are holding their own in navigating what Enlow called the "rough seas of distraction" in higher education. That includes distance learning becoming the biggest growth area for enrollment and the rising number of college students outside of the traditional 18- to 22-year-old demographic group.

Jeff Bell is a freelance writer.

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## Dr. Mark Fuller

### Grove City Nazarene Pastor Named Dean of Ministry at OCU

Mark Fuller was born into a Nazarene parsonage, the son of Dr. and Mrs. Gene Fuller. He attended Mid America Nazarene University, where he met his future wife, Sue, also a pastor's child.

God spoke to Mark through a homiletics (preaching) class at Nazarene Theological Seminary and challenged him to embrace His call. He and Sue began their life-long journey of pastoral ministry in 1977.

After serving as an associate in Olathe, Kansas, and as pastor in Arlington, Texas, the Fuller family moved to Arizona in 1987. Mark pastored CrossRoads Nazarene Church for 18 years. The church saw tremendous growth under his leadership in addition to planting several other churches.

He has served as Senior Pastor of Grove City Nazarene (The Naz) since 2005 and has led the largest Nazarene church in North America into a new chapter of ministry and outreach. In 2010 Mount Vernon Nazarene University conferred upon him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

Mark enjoys golfing and brushing up on his trumpet skills. He finds great fulfillment in pouring his life into young leaders. He has authored the book, "Consumed—An Introduction to the Holy Spirit," and has contributed to several religious periodicals.

Mark and Sue have three daughters: Lindsey Gibson, Courtney Gastin, and Kelly – all of whom are educators.

## Dr. Jeffrey Jones

### New Vice President for Advancement

Ohio Christian University is pleased to welcome Dr. Jeffery Jones as Vice President for Advancement.

In addition to a passion for Christian higher education, Dr. Jones brings extensive experience in university advancement. Previously, he served as

Vice President for Advancement at Geneva College and Director of Development at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, California.

Mr. Mark Taylor has been named Vice President Emeritus of Advancement and will continue his work with donors and estate planning. OCU welcomes Dr. Jeffery Jones as he continues his calling in building Christ's Kingdom.



"Part of my calling is to use the talents and abilities God has given me to help Christian higher education institutions raise resources to fulfill their mission."

Dr. Jeffrey Jones



## TOLER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

### OCU Launches Toler Leadership Institute

Ohio Christian University recently participated in the flagship project of Toler Leadership, launching the Stan Toler Leadership Institute.

Rev. David Dean '69, Director of Church Relations, led this initiative to provide a new resource tailored to developing leaders. Through the Toler Leadership Institute, Rev. Dean and Dr. Stan Toler '69, are working to strengthen the tie between Ohio Christian, the local church, and OCU students.

On the institute's formation, Dr. Toler said, "I am honored and humbled to have my name associated with my alma mater. As someone who has devoted most of his life to

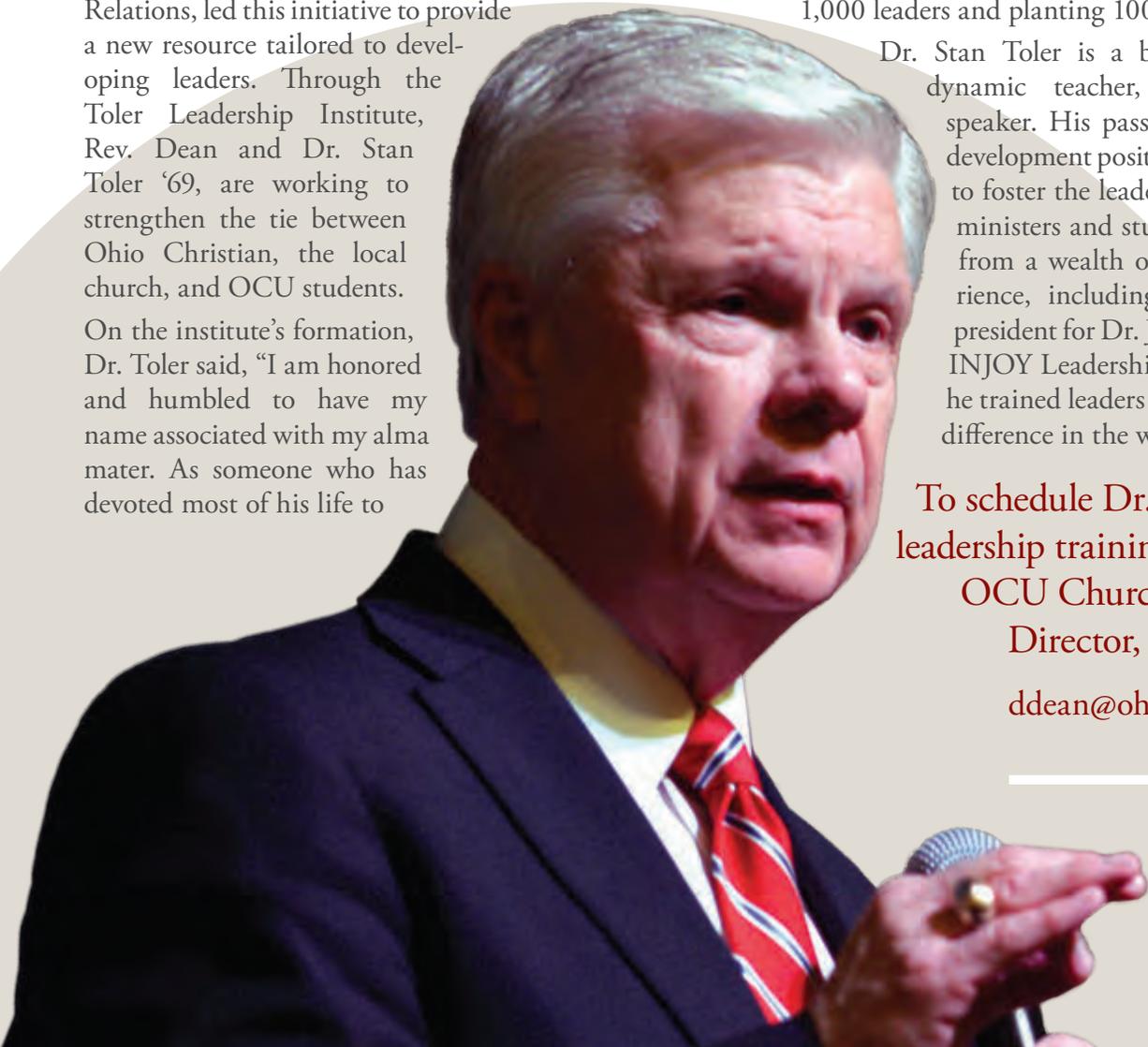
developing leaders, I am delighted that this will be the main focus of the Institute."

Dr. Toler, Rev. Dean, and Ohio Christian University set high goals for the Institute—namely, training up 1,000 leaders and planting 100 churches.

Dr. Stan Toler is a bestselling author, dynamic teacher, and passionate speaker. His passion for leadership development positions him uniquely to foster the leadership potential in ministers and students. Toler pulls from a wealth of leadership experience, including serving as vice president for Dr. John C. Maxwell's INJOY Leadership Institute, where he trained leaders to make a positive difference in the world.

To schedule Dr. Toler for leadership training, contact OCU Church Relations Director, David Dean

[ddean@ohiochristian.edu](mailto:ddean@ohiochristian.edu)  
740-477-7694





Teacher Education Department  
Chair Valerie Jones and family



# OCU Teacher Education Programs

- Early Childhood (Grades PreK-3)
- Middle Childhood (Grades 4-9)
- Music Education
- **NEW!** Adolescence-to-Young Adult

# Valerie Jones

## NEW CHAIR, NEW VISION FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Over the past several years under the leadership of Dr. Valerie Wilson, the Teacher Education program experienced accelerated growth, quickly becoming the second largest program at OCU. That growth will continue under the leadership of new Teacher Education Department Chair Valerie Jones, who joined OCU over the summer with more than 16 years of teaching experience.

“We’re preparing now to be ahead of the game, so that when the State is ready, we’re ready,” Jones said.

Jones and the OCU Administrative Staff plan to begin offering the AYA degree option in January 2017. Ohio Christian will be the only school in the region to offer an AYA degree option.

This fall the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) was so impressed by the quality of OCU’s teacher education programs that they awarded the program seven-year accreditation. Most universities get a two- or five-year accreditations, so a seven-year accreditation—the longest accreditation CAEP awards—speaks to the quality of OCU’s program and commitment of its staff to providing a quality, comprehensive education.

**“Graduates from OCU’s Teacher Education program are sought after. Almost all of the local Christian schools—and the majority of area public schools—are coming to us saying, ‘You produce quality teachers. We want them.’”**

—Teacher Education Department Chair Valerie Jones

Ohio Christian University’s Teacher Education program graduates competent, confident, caring, and qualified teachers.

Jones and her team have big plans for the Department over the next several years—

- Launch Adolescence-to-Young Adult Education degree
- Launch a Masters of Education in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies
- Offer graduate coursework in Summer 2016 for area teachers
- Launch Intervention Specialist and School Counseling licenses

In response to the demand, the Teacher Education program is working toward offering an Adolescence-to-Young Adult (AYA) Education degree (formerly Secondary Education). Jones and her team have placed the initial inquiries into offering the program to the State of Ohio, and the team is working now to put together curriculum and other necessary items so that when the State is ready to review the program plan, OCU is prepared for it.

“Our accreditation success now would not have been possible without Dr. Wilson’s leadership over the last several years,” said Jones.

Part of what makes OCU’s Teacher Education program exceptional is the constructivist philosophy it’s built upon, according to Jones, “Our philosophy of learning—constructivist theory of learning—is hands-on and student centered. Teachers can still teach the standards, but without the monotony and skill-and-drill of worksheets.”

OCU recognizes the importance of experiential learning. Graduates of OCU’s Teacher Education program will accumulate approximately 200 hours of field experience—double the required amount—before student teaching. Students are placed in a classroom as early as the second semester of their freshman year.

Ohio Christian University is excited to have students who are stepping up to be the educators who will lead the next generation with confidence.

**ENROLL TODAY!**  
[www.ohiochristian.edu/teach](http://www.ohiochristian.edu/teach)



## Nicole Davis

### THE MBA EXPERIENCE

Nicole Davis, a young professional enrolled in the Masters of Business Administration program at Ohio Christian University, shared why she loves the MBA program at OCU.

- The flexibility of attending just one night a week. This enables me to care for life's other responsibilities (e.g., work and family).
- Affordable tuition. OCU works diligently to keep prices low for their students, which means I can afford a great education.
- Every class is unique. The core foundation of the university is to provide an education based on biblical truths, so professors integrate a Christian worldview into every lesson.
- Classes are taught by high quality professional faculty practitioners.
- I'm more than a number. Going back to school as an adult can be intimidating, but everyone here goes above and beyond to make sure your transition will be smooth.

I feel blessed to be a student at OCU and I'm sure that you'll love it here as much as I do.

"Every class is unique because the core foundation of the university is to provide a high quality education based on biblical truths."

**COLUMBUS  
BUSINESS FIRST**

**OCU MBA Program  
Ranked #5 in Ohio**

# Flex MBA



## OCU Unveils Flexible MBA in Onsite/Online Format

Columbus area students now have a new option for MBA classes—a blend of onsite and online learning—Ohio Christian University’s Flex MBA.

This forward-thinking format allows students

- To have face-to-face interactions, while cutting back on in-class time
- Fewer in class hours per week supplemented with online assignments
- Interactive class time with industry professionals and their organizations

Dr. Bradford Sample, Assistant Provost and Vice President for Academics in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies at OCU, says, “This new format is part of our overall effort to better meet the needs of our student by providing more flexibility and support.”

The MBA program provides the leaders of today and tomorrow with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in a competitive business environment. It emphasizes critical and strategic thinking, business management skills, ethics, and real-world applications.

“My prayers were answered this week when I found OCU after a long search for the right school for my graduate studies.”

dcamp1989 via Instagram

Ready to invest in your future?  
Visit [www.ohiochristian.edu](http://www.ohiochristian.edu)  
or call 1-855-OCU-GRAD today.



# B I V O C A T I O

"Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentm



## BIG BLESSINGS

### in Small Places

| By Joseph Leighton, '80



**A**s an OCU student, I interned at Grace Ministries. I originally felt the call to minister full-time, but my calling changed and I have spent most of my ministry as a bivocational pastor. In submitting to God's plan, He blessed me with several lessons through this journey.

One is financial flexibility for both the church and pastor, as well as understanding the pressures that my church families face. This also allowed me to travel to Central America and Asia—producing opportunities to counsel, pray, and sow seeds of God's Word, love, and grace.

Other lessons have been challenging. Through my first wife's illness and death, I gained precious insight in lessons of humility, extending mercy, and forgiveness.

Bivocational opportunities invite us all to consider God's calling. Following God's calling doesn't always mean leaving home and occupation. It might mean recognizing that God has provided you with a job so that you might lead His church.

*Joe Leighton, Classes of '80 & '87, is affiliated with Ameriprise Financial Services and pastors Salem Chapel UB Church near Junction City, OH. He resides near Lancaster with his wife Tracey and their son Colton.*

N A L  
 akers just as he was.”

## OCU Moves to Bivocational Ministry Focus

At Ohio Christian we realize it's imperative for ministers to lead through example. **All OCU ministry graduates will be equipped with a professional degree in addition to their ministry oriented degree.** Being a bivocational minister has its advantages:

- Stronger financial base for both the church and pastor
- The church can do more for missions and ministry when staff financial needs are kept to a minimum. The Pastor's family can live with less financial strain when there are two incomes.
- The bivocational pastor experiences greater freedom to lead.
- The bivocational pastor-led church is more apt to allow their pastor to be real.

## OCU Bivocational Ministry Programs

- Christian Ministries & Business
- Intercultural Ministries & Business
- Intercultural Ministries & Emergency Management
- Worship Leadership & Business
- Worship Leadership & Psychology



# Tired of Low Interest Rates?

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## *Charitable Gift Annuity Rates*

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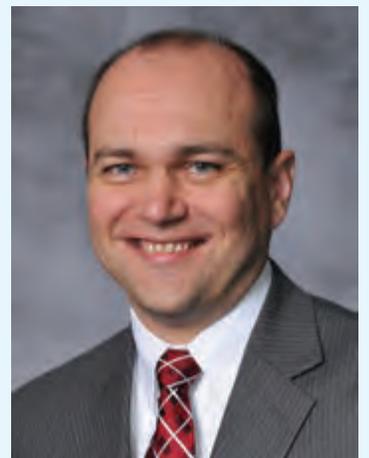
Age	65	70	75	80	90
Annuity Rate	4.7%	5.1%	5.8%	6.8%	9.0%

### Two Lives

Age	65/65	70/70	75/75	80/80	90/90
Annuity Rate	4.2%	4.6%	5.0%	5.7%	8.2%

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**DR. JEFFREY JONES**  
 Vice President for  
 Advancement



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- Adjunct Faculty
- Admissions Counselor
- Recruiters

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Information Technology Jobs  
Contact Dr. Ryan Whisler at 740-477-7721  
or [rwhisler@ohiochristian.edu](mailto:rwhisler@ohiochristian.edu)

- Web/Drupal Developer
- Database Administrator
- IT Support Specialist

# Meet the



## Employees of the Year (from left)

- **Tricia Lucas**, Administrator of the Year
- **Tricia Bradley**, Administrator of the Year
- **Michael Burchett**, Faculty Person of the Year
- **Rachel Sones**, Staff Person of the Year
- **Reece Sorley**, Community Ambassador Award



## Natasha Brown

*Advancement Specialist and Recruiter, OCU Georgia*

Mrs. Natasha M. Brown is our newest Advancement Specialist and Recruiter. She was born in Mobile, AL and is a graduate of Florida A&M University. She has an extensive sales and management background and brings 11 years of experience from SunTrust Bank. Natasha is married to Kenyatta, and they have 3 beautiful children. She is a member of Berean Christian Church in Stone Mountain, GA. She is excited to be a part of the OCU team as a Recruiter and Advancement Specialist and is looking forward to changing lives through education and assisting in finding donors.

**Apply today! [www.ohiochristian.edu/jobs](http://www.ohiochristian.edu/jobs)**

# Team



**Cindi Celske**

*Director of AGS Academic Operations*

Cindi Celske recently joined OCU as the Director of AGS Academic Operations. She started her career at IBM and has extensive background in managing projects, organizing processes, and working with information systems as well as

developing university courses. Cindi is currently working toward a doctorate in Higher Education and Organizational Change at Benedictine University. She earned an MS in Instructional Design & Technology from Western Illinois University and a BA in Business Administration with a concentration in Computer Science from Augustana College. She previously worked at Western Illinois University, a public institution, and she feels very privileged to work at a place like OCU that glorifies the Lord.



**William Harle**

*Director of Humanities and Social Sciences, AGS*

After a successful business career in employee benefit administration, Bill returned to college as an adult learner to study English. After completing a BA in English at Rollins College and an MA in

English at New Mexico State University, Bill joined the English faculty at Bryan College in Dayton, TN. During his 10-year tenure at Bryan, Bill established the Academic Support Center, helped create the annual Undergraduate Research Conference, was voted Teacher of the Year by the faculty, served as Faculty Chair, oversaw the creation of new online and adult programs, served as the accreditation liaison during Bryan's SACSCOC decennial accreditation process, and was the Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Studies. Bill joins OCU as our new Director of Humanities and Social Sciences. He currently resides in Dayton, TN, with his wife, Carla. Together they have three adult children who live in Wales, UK; Alaska; and Florida.



*Class of 2016*  
**COMMENCEMENT**

**April 30, 2016**

## Coming Events

- Mar 7-11 Spring Break (Traditional Program)
- Mar 19 Dinner & Concert
- Mar 25-28 Easter Break (Traditional Program)
- Apr 2 Mr. & Miss OCU Banquet
- Apr 9 Georgia Commencement
- Apr 14 Community Action Day
- Apr 19 Leadership Forum
- Apr 30 Commencement
- Oct 6-8 Homecoming Weekend



## 2015-2016 Men's Basketball Starts First NAIA Season with 10-1 Record

Ohio Christian University men's basketball made a huge splash for the Trailblazer's inaugural season in the NAIA and the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (KIAC). The Blazers started the season with a victory over #7 ranked Union College. In his OCU debut, Marquis Jackson scored 41 points, going 12 of 22 from the field while also hitting 7 of the 12 triples he attempted. The Trailblazers went on to claim a

five game winning streak, including an impressive win over top-25 team Robert Morris University, with a score of 84-82 in triple overtime. In a much anticipated match up with Taylor University, OCU secured a 82-72 victory over the Trojans. Marquis Jackson once again shined, scoring 35 points on 12-16 from the field. The Blazers look to continue this hot start throughout the 2015-2016 season.

**"Beating the #7 team in the nation in our first NAIA D2 game was a big, exciting win for our program."**

Coach Tony Stockman



# ZERS

## ERIC HAMNER TO LEAD OCU CROSS COUNTRY



Coach Jim Diltz    Coach Eric Hamner

After five years of leadership, Coach Jim Diltz has handed the Ohio Christian University Cross Country program over to Coach Eric Hamner. Diltz started the program in 2011.

“It has been an exciting five years for cross country at OCU, said Diltz, “I remember going door-to-door in dorms to recruit for the first year. The program has become more competitive each year, and we were able to create a team culture that will be conducive to the further growth of the program.”

### Program Highlights

2011: First win (over Salem International University)

2012: Brooke Gardner became OCU’s first Cross Country All-American after finishing 3rd at the NCCAA Division II National Meet

2013: Kaylee Stowers became OCU’s second All-American at the NCCAA Division II National Meet.

2015: Women’s team qualified for the NCCAA National Meet in Division I. Kyle Benecke and Dylan Newton qualified for the men. Kyle set a new OCU record for the 8 K and gave OCU its highest individual finisher at the men’s nationals.

Joining the NAIA has created a more competitive atmosphere for the program. “We ran with experienced runners and for the first time competed in the KIAC conference meet,” stated Diltz, “The future looks bright. I thank the University for allowing me to be part of its rapidly developing athletic program.”

## Women’s Soccer Kicks Off First NAIA Season with Winning Record

Ohio Christian University men’s soccer finished 8-11 overall and 2-4 in the KIAC in its first season competing in the NAIA. The women’s soccer program finished 11-9 overall and 5-3 in conference play. Ohio Christian’s Volleyball program finished 12-19 and 6-8 in the KIAC. The men’s and women’s soccer programs earned a spot in the NCCAA Division I Regional Tournament, with the women coming up just shy at Houghton College for a chance to move to the NCCAA Division I National Tournament.

### Josh Murton Men’s Soccer Coach

*“This was a great season of learning and growth for this program. We had some tough lessons but also had some great successes that will guide us into another successful campaign.”*

### Danielle Heffernan Women’s Volleyball Coach

*“Our first season competing in the NAIA was exciting! It was challenging and we were competing at a high level.”*





# Updates

We value our alumni and know that the mission of Ohio Christian University could not continue without their support.

Pray, Participate, Represent, Support, and Employ are the top 5 ways that our alumni can support Ohio Christian University. Contact the Alumni Relations Office today to learn of the many ways to connect to your alma mater.



Jonathan Faulks  
Director of Events &  
Alumni Relations

## Share your story!

Email to [alumni@ohiochristian.edu](mailto:alumni@ohiochristian.edu)

or visit

[www.ohiochristian.edu/alumni](http://www.ohiochristian.edu/alumni)



*Abigail Josephine Beavers*

*Born May 16, 2015*

*Jason & Anastasia (Mckillip) '06 Beavers*



*Michael & Lanae Ann (Henneman) '11 Nitz*

*April 18, 2015*



*Christian '13 & Brooke (Grow) Smith*

*May 9, 2015*



*Charlotte Renee Smith  
Born May 16, 2015  
Chase '09 & Leslie (Turner) '09 Smith*



*Ryker Patric  
Born June 14, 2015  
Reece '15 & Julia Sorley*



*Seth '13 & Kelsey (Owens) Brisker  
September 5, 2015*



*Tremayn '14 & Tia (Collier) '14 Blanks  
August 29, 2015*



*Steve '08 & Samantha (Webb) Thompson  
October 30, 2015*



*Emma Grace Davis  
Born October 17, 2015  
Jeremy & Adrienne (DeMint) '12 Davis*



## **OCU Scholarship Referral Program**

*Refer a student today!*  
[ohiochristian.edu/kingdombuilders](http://ohiochristian.edu/kingdombuilders)



Emily Swedberg



Justin Dishong  
Scott Applegate  
Jake Marburger  
Mike Farrell



Maranatha '84:  
Bruce Morrison  
Diana Knisley  
Susan Long-Jones

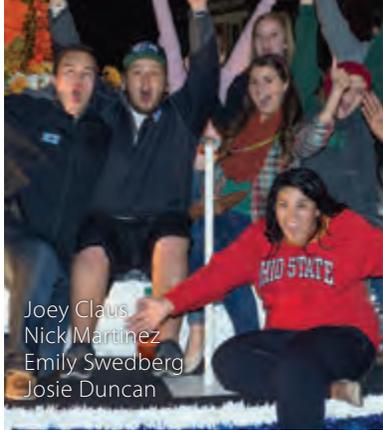
# OCU Homecoming Celebrates Nine Years of Building Community

Homecoming at Ohio Christian University is a time for students, faculty, and alumni to celebrate the new school year and welcome the next generation of leaders into the OCU family. This year, nearly 1,000 students, alumni, family, staff, and friends attended Ohio Christian's ninth annual Homecoming celebrations.

OCU Homecoming celebrations focus on bonds forged and connections remembered; students and alumni mingle together as the past, present, and future of the university community. This year's Homecoming featured many events including the Linking Legacies Golf Tournament, Josias Rodriguez 5K Run & Walk, Legacy Chapel, Torch Run, Alumni Baseball game, FNL Reunion, and Alumni and Friends picnic.

More than \$25,000 was raised to further Ohio Christian's mission at the Linking Legacies Golf Tournament, where 136 golfers in 34 teams competed for prizes and bragging rights. The third annual Josias Rodriguez 5K Run and Walk brought in nearly 200 participants on Saturday morning, which in turn raised hundreds of dollars for the Josias Rodriguez Ministry Scholarship Fund.

The Harvest Homecoming concert featured spectacular musical talent such as the Hoppers, Brian Free & Assurance, the Booth Brothers, Ivan Parker, Talleys, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Karen Peck & New River, Whisnants, and Jason Crabb, a multi-time Grammy winner. Make plans now to attend the 2016 Harvest Homecoming concert!



Joey Claus  
Nick Martinez  
Emily Swedberg  
Josie Duncan



Mike Mains



Jason Crabb



*From top to bottom*  
Torch Run & Bonfire  
FNL Reunion/Mike Mains & the Branches  
Harvest Concert, Jason Crabb  
Women's First Place, Rodriquez 5K Run

The vacation you need with the music you love!  
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PRODUCTIONS



Brooke Karmie  
Olivia Wireman  
Lexie Jacobs

# Save the date!

## Homecoming Weekend October 6-8, 2016

- Torch Run & Bonfire
- Legacy Chapel
- FNL Reunion
- Alumni & Friends Picnic
- Josias Rodriguez 5K Run/Walk
- Alumni Baseball Game
- Linking Legacies Golf Tournament

[ohiochristian.edu/homecoming](http://ohiochristian.edu/homecoming)

## Harvest Homecoming Concert October 13-15, 2016

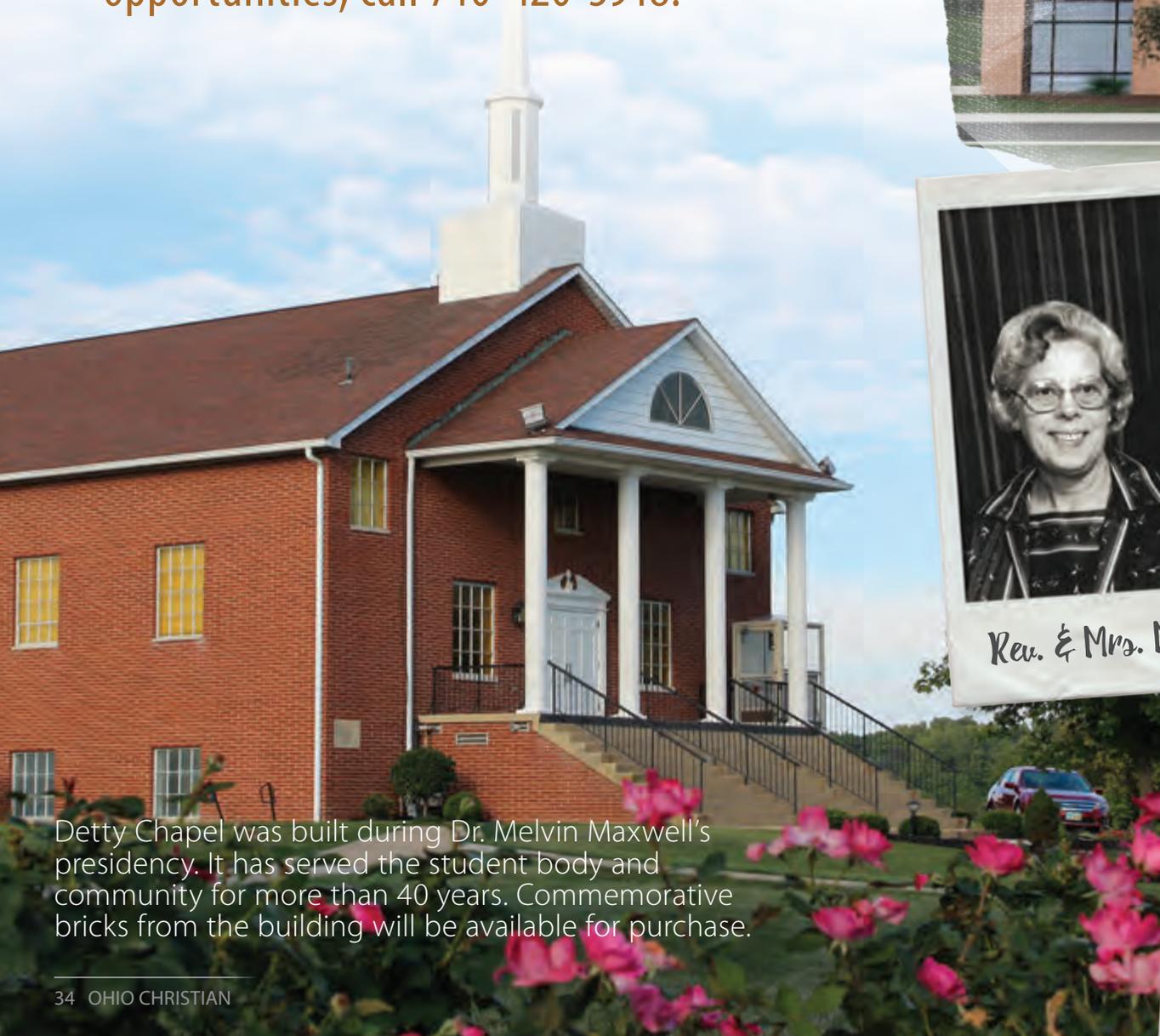
The Collingsworth Family, Greater Vision, the Booth Brothers and more!

For more information call 888-238-6858 or visit [www.abrahamproductions.net](http://www.abrahamproductions.net).

# Then & Now

## New Ministry & Performing Arts Center Coming 2017

For naming and commemorative giving opportunities, call 740-420-5918.



Rev. & Mrs. Melvin Maxwell

Detty Chapel was built during Dr. Melvin Maxwell's presidency. It has served the student body and community for more than 40 years. Commemorative bricks from the building will be available for purchase.





**“Mr. President, it is time for a new chapel. God will be with you as you move the campus forward, and I will pray for OCU.”**

Dr. Melvin Maxwell



The cornerstone and bibles that were placed in the foundation of Detty Chapel will be displayed prominently in the new chapel.



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10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



**DR. JOHN C.  
MAXWELL**



**DELTA PRESIDENT  
ED BASTIAN**



**HALL OF FAME QB  
JIM KELLY**

## EVENING SESSION 6 PM

- \$40 Reserved Seating
- \$25 General Admission

APRIL  
**19**  
2016

## EXECUTIVE SESSION 11 AM

*Limited seats. Call 740-477-7789*

- Lunch and roundtable leadership training with Dr. John Maxwell, Ed Bastian, and Jim Kelly
- Picture and autograph opportunities

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**RYAN SCRIBNER**  
Executive Director, Pickaway  
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**JONATHAN SWEET**  
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or call 740-477-7789

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