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Issue #7: Spring/Summer 2015

A publication of Southern Wesleyan University



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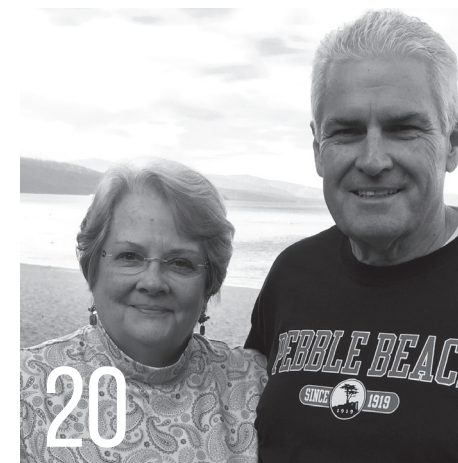
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# Letter FROM THE President

I have been accused of suffering from an incurable disease of optimism, and I freely admit that accusation is true. But in reality it is deeper than simple optimism. It is evidence based, experientially grounded and forged from faith. In Christian circles, this kind of optimism is called hope!

So what is the basis of this hope given the growing hostility toward Christianity, the decay of our forefathers' values and the intrusion of big government in our lives?

First, God is not intimidated by any of this. On our foyer wall in Correll Hall (Administration Building) we have prominently applied the verse "For with God, nothing shall be impossible" from Luke 1:37. I believe our best days are not behind us, but instead right at our feet.

Second, God has a witness and a plan for every generation. Our history in The Wesleyan Church is steeped in building schools like Southern Wesleyan with limited resources, big challenges and quick-to-judge naysayers. This generation is no exception to the fact that God is working, transforming and creating something new. We believe in the power of our graduates to influence, reform and infiltrate society, turning foes into friends, saving the lost, welcoming change and leading with character and strength.

As you read the pages of this latest edition of how powerfully God is working in the life of this, His campus, you will see how true these two statements are.

Our best days start now and His plan is being lived out moment by moment at SWU. Momentum is building like never before. Innovation is sparking a creative revival. Incredible people are joining us to elevate SWU to new heights of excellence, service, generosity and impact.

Thank you for your partnership and prayers as we celebrate the goodness of the King!

With Hope,



Todd S. Voss  
President

## SWU NAMES STRICKLAND AS PROVOST

Southern Wesleyan University named Dr. Tonya Strickland as its new provost.

Strickland, who will begin her duties at Southern Wesleyan July 1, comes from Bainbridge State College, an institution in the University System of Georgia, where she has served as vice president for academic affairs and as a tenured professor of English since 2010. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from the University of Wyoming and her doctorate from Baylor University in curriculum and instruction, with a specialization in writing and English education. She recently completed a graduate certificate in biblical studies from New Orleans Theological Seminary. Strickland is also a 2011 alumna of the USG Executive Leadership Institute.

Strickland is the recipient of several national and Georgia awards, including an Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate Award from the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, a Georgia Governor's Commendation for



Customer Service, a University System of Georgia Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning award, and the Microsoft David R. Pierce Faculty Award from the American Association of Community Colleges for innovative use of technology in the classroom.

She is married to Charlie Strickland, headmaster for Grace Christian Academy in Bainbridge. They have three children, with their first grandchild due in July. Together they enjoy kayaking, racquetball, teaching and discipling others.

"I believe God has been preparing me for this role throughout my life," Strickland said. "That God has called me to SWU testifies to the power of the Lord to love and to lead."

"The entire campus community is electrified with the anticipation of Dr.

Strickland joining our team," President Todd Voss shared. "Her experience, passion to serve and creative ideas are in perfect alignment with what is transpiring at Southern Wesleyan at such a time as this!"

## SWU SELECTS NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND AUXILIARY SERVICES

Southern Wesleyan University named Mark Reeves as its new vice president for finance.

Reeves comes to Southern Wesleyan with more than 25 years of leadership experience in higher education, healthcare, public accounting and financial services with Mayo Clinic, Deloitte & Touche, Hartford Financial and the University of Wisconsin system. He is currently serving as the assistant vice chancellor of financial services for the University of Wisconsin at the La Crosse campus.

"Reeves' expertise in corporate and governmental finance, GAAP and statutory financial reporting, corporate reorganizations, strengthening internal control structures, inclusive strategic planning, short and long-term



forecasting, collaborative process improvement, intentional mentoring and deliberate staff development will serve Southern Wesleyan University well into the future," said Todd Voss, university president.

Reeves earned a MBA from the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire Campus, and a BS in business administration from Drake University. He is a certified CPA, and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Reeves will begin his duties at Southern Wesleyan July 1.



# ACADEMIC UPDATES



## Division of Fine Arts

Music performance at Southern Wesleyan University keeps Newton Hobson Fine Arts Center and Folger Auditorium filled and all campus musicians unbelievably busy. Not only do current faculty and students meet the usual academic demands, but they also host and learn from guest artists, church choirs and many school groups of vocalists and instrumentalists. Recent highlights have included concerts by Tom Trenney, concert pianist; Jeremy Jordan, Pianist; Michael Davenport, Jazz Saxophonist; the SWU Wind Ensemble and Wind Ensemble Pops Concert; SWU Jazz Ensemble and SWU Concert Choir's "A Fall Showcase"

The division has also hosted speakers including Chaz Paxton, SWU music graduate, previewing a SCMEA (South Carolina Music Educators Association) seminar, "Teaching Rhythm," and Karen Campbell, presenting a seminar on the relationship of musculoskeletal health to music.

Festivals have included SWU Fest (353 high school choral students), SWU Fest Too (321 middle school choral students), Upper Region Honor Choir (220 high school choral students), Upstate Intercollegiate Choral Invitational Festival (200 college choral students), and Musica Ecclesia (5 local church choirs plus the SWU concert choir).

SWU's Jazz Band completed their Spring 2015 Tour, including visits to Seneca, Pendleton, Summerville, James Island, Hilton Head, Savannah, and Summerton.

Recitals included SWU Music Majors Formal Recital, SWU Music Majors Honors Recital, and senior recitals from Kayleigh Bray and Sarah Gray. Many SWU musicians, actors, and support teams were involved in "The Sound of Music," presented in March 2015.



## Division of Humanities

The Humanities Division at Southern Wesleyan University has been a beehive of activity this spring and has seen several accomplishments, awards, and honors. The media communication program received a \$25,000 grant to buy ten new Apple computers loaded

with cutting-edge digital production software and several state-of-the-art cameras. This equipment will provide SWU's media communication students with hands-on technical experience that will prepare them well for their professions and to compete in the job market in particular.

History major Zachary Ford received a \$3,000 grant from the South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities' Undergraduate Student/Faculty Research Program in order to conduct research for his honors project on historic plantations in the South.

Media communication major Kimberly Moore gave her honors presentation "Portrayal of Japanese Kenjutsu in Western Samurai Film" on April 24 and received good reviews.

Kim Welborn, associate professor of English education, gave the keynote address at the Upstate Association of Education Office Professionals' annual scholarship award meeting; her speech was titled "Treasure the Unexpected Journey." Professor Welborn was also elected Vice Chairperson of the South Carolina United Methodist Camps and Retreats Board of Directors on April 23.

Seven Humanities majors will graduate in the Spring Commencement on May 8. The Humanities Division faculty look forward to even greater successes and accomplishments to come in the fall.



## Division of Religion

The Division of Religion has just completed an extensive process of curriculum revision and is excited to announce several changes to enhance students' experience in the Christian Ministry, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry and Sports Ministry concentrations.

Among the new developments is a refined curriculum to connect everything to ministry in very practical ways. New courses will include "Launching your Ministry," "Missional Outreach in Ministry" and "Ministry in Cultural Context." Other changes relate to redesigning the Wesleyan Church History component to explore the Wesleyan Church's development in the context of American religious history, as well as the development of a new course in the Faith and Practice of The Wesleyan Church, which will include study of the denomination's discipline and the basics of parliamentary law.

Virtually all requirements for Wesleyan ordination will now be included in the Christian Ministry, Youth Ministry, and Children's Ministry concentrations and practical ministry courses have increased by several credit hours. As we move into the new Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center, it will be with new courses, new curriculum and a whole new feel. The SWU Division of Religion has been made new!



## Division of Science

Under the direction of Dr. Jacob Chapman, the SWU Math Club was formed in Fall 2014 with the goal of providing opportunities for activities and fellowship with others having an interest in mathematics and for university service and recruitment. The club recently held a pie sale fundraiser to celebrate the most significant Pi Day of the century: 3-14-15.

Professor Staci Johnson is collecting data for a Team Based Learning Grant and has applied for a \$50,000 Active Learning Center Grant from Steelcase Education to outfit a classroom for collaborative learning facilitation.

Dr. Rocky Nation and Leah Johnson, a senior Biology/Environmental Studies major, presented results from their water quality research on the Twelve Mile River at the 2014 South Carolina Water Resources Conference in Columbia in October.

The Science Division is working on a possible RN to BSN degree completion program.



## Division of Social Science

Renovations continue at the Leadership in Outdoor Recreation Education (LORE) Center. Preliminary plans are underway to construct a climbing tower to enhance the outdoor adventure program. The \$26,000 project would be used in the LORE program and available for use by internal and external constituencies.

Renovations began at the future site of the Criminal Justice program's crime scene house, which will be used as a classroom and lab for crime scene analysis and storage for equipment and supplies.

During the fall semester, one cohort of 14 AGS students began the Human Services (BSHS) Core at the Central campus. Another BSHS cohort began in January at the Columbia site and two additional cohorts are expected to start this spring, one in April at the North Augusta learning center and one in June at the Greenville learning center.

During summer 2014, social sciences faculty surveyed area law enforcement personnel, revealing that 84 percent of respondents preferred a 12-15 week semester rather than the accelerated format of six-week terms. The most favorable format was online courses with no set class time (asynchronous). Although no decision has been made regarding the feasibility of the criminal justice major in the AGS program, the data has contributed much-needed factual information.

Eighteen students served in internships during the Spring Semester. Six students are serving in various capacities at SWU and others in organizations such as the Dream Center of Pickens County, Pickens County Behavioral Health Services, White Horse Academy in Greenville, Clemson University's Recreation Department and their Marketing and Event Management Department, and Anderson County's Boys and Girls Club.

The Division is continuing to recruit well-qualified adjunct instructors to supplement the fine work and expertise of the full-time faculty. Several new adjunct instructors have been added, or are in the process of being added to teach in the division's traditional programs.



## School of Business

The School of Business at Southern Wesleyan University is celebrating the first graduates of the online BS in business administration and MBA programs this spring. Congratulations to them as well as to all the other graduates!

The MBA program with a concentration in health care administration was launched in March and has been well received by health care organizations in the region. Dr. Lynn Brown-Bullock, the program director, was invited to serve as a senior examiner for the nationally recognized Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. Many health care organizations across the country apply the Baldrige framework to pursue performance excellence.

Faculty and students are engaged in various endeavors. The School of Business has connected with a nationally known leadership organization, Lead Like Jesus, endorsed by Ken Blanchard and Jim Collins. Faculty from the School of Business will be trained as facilitators for Lead like Jesus with the expectation that principles from the organization can be incorporated into the master of science in management and leadership degree.

The School is seeking new opportunities for management and accounting internships for its undergraduate students. Dr. Deb Eischen is leading these efforts. Internships position students well for their careers.

A couple of business faculty, Drs. Charlotte Houke and Bill Raynor, along with AGS alumna Lydia Edmonds went to Haiti in January to assess needs and explore student service learning opportunities in Côtés-de-Fer. This is a collaboration with Build and Bridge to build sustainable communities in economically strapped areas of Haiti. A group of MBA students in North Augusta developed a microfinance project for this Haiti initiative as part of their Advanced Financial Management course.

Drs. Royce Caines and Bill Raynor each have articles that were accepted for publication in The International Journal of Education Research and The BRC Academy Journal of Business respectively.





## School of Education

The School of Education has been very busy in the past year. Some of the happenings:

The School of Education submitted to the S.C. Department of Education and the S.C. State Legislature a proposal to create a Teacher Leader endorsement which will be a component in the Master in Classroom Leadership. The proposal was submitted April 1, 2014, and will be voted on by the Education Committees and the S.C. House and Senate in spring 2015. This endorsement does not currently exist in South Carolina and would strengthen our Master in Classroom Leadership.

The School of Education hosted an onsite NCATE visit November 2-4, 2014. This is part of the cycle of visits that occurs every seven years. The visit was good, but the university will receive official

word when the NCATE/CAEP Board meets in the spring.

The School of Education received national recognition for the Master in Administration and Supervision at all five sites by the Specialized Professional Area and NCATE/CAEP.

The School of Education will be offering a non-certification degree in Early Childhood Development and Family Studies for fall 2015. This degree will prepare students with the knowledge and skills to work with children in a variety of settings. This interdisciplinary approach is preparatory to professional work with children (with and without disabilities) from birth to kindergarten and their families from diverse cultural, ethnic and/or socioeconomic backgrounds in Head Start, hospital and business settings where child development centers are provided.

We celebrate the legacy of Dr. Keith Connor, physical education professor, who has indicated that he will retire at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year. This is Connor's 46th year at Southern Wesleyan. During his tenure he has served as coach, athletic director, and professor. He started all the major sports at Southern Wesleyan, except for track, golf, and women's tennis. The School of Education is searching for a new Physical Education professor, although no one can replace Dr. Connor.

# SWU'S COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNIZED

For the first time in its history, Southern Wesleyan University was awarded a place on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, an honor recognizing the role colleges and universities play in solving community problems while engaging their students in community projects.

The President's Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions in four categories: general community service, interfaith community service, economic opportunity and education.

Justin Carter, associate vice president for student life, credits Maggie Turner, director of community engagement, for spearheading the application process at the university. According to Turner, 935 Southern Wesleyan students logged a total of 58,499 community service hours during the 2012-'13 academic year, which was the year submitted to review for the award.

"The combined hours between our day of service, Earth Day, education practicums, mission and service trips, athletic team service hours and other community service efforts contributed to our amazing grand total," Turner said. "I consider it an enormous honor to work along such engaged and generous students. They are truly adding value and sharing love with the local and greater communities around them. Kingdom work is being done here at Southern Wesleyan University, and it is exciting to be a part of it."



Southern Wesleyan University students organize food items at Golden Corner Food Pantry in Seneca during Day of Service March 17.

"It is a rather lengthy application that requests data from several university departments. Maggie was responsible for collecting this data, calculating the combined service hours from our institution and reporting these hours in predetermined categories identified by the Corporation for National and Community Service," Carter said. "The actual data collection and reporting took months to complete, but you can see the results of Maggie's hard work."

# ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICANS

## Southern Wesleyan Places 133 Students on Conference Carolinas Presidential Honor Roll

Southern Wesleyan University—eligible for the first time—placed 133 student-athletes on the prestigious Conference Carolinas Presidential Honor Roll for Fall 2014.

Conference Carolinas reported that 2,030 student-athletes were named to the Presidential Honor Roll for Fall 2014. All Conference Carolinas institutions emphasize a commitment to the classroom and the idea of "Academics and Athletics Working Together."

Women's track and field led all programs for the Warriors with 17 selections while baseball and softball each had 15. All programs had at least two student-athletes make the list with nine placing at least

eight on the list and six reaching double digits.

Each semester this recognition is given to student-athletes who achieve a grade point average of 3.2 or higher on the 4-point scale. All student-athletes, including underclassmen, transfers, and those who play non-conference sports, are eligible for the recognition as long as they have participated in a sport for the semester in question.

The Conference Carolinas Presidential Honor Roll is awarded twice each school year, recognizing the scholastic achievements of student-athletes for each semester.

## • 2015 • DAY OF SERVICE



The Day of Service is a day that has been dedicated to serving others. In honor of this day, there are no classes for traditional students. Over 250 students, faculty, and staff participated.

Above: Kayla Eison and Nikki Ashley spent the day cleaning up the Vess house, being converted to a training facility for criminal justice majors. Eison is a sophomore from Spartanburg majoring in Criminal Justice and Ashley is a junior from Belton majoring in Psychology.  
Right: Bre Kowaleski gives the doors at the Central-Clemson Recreation Center a new look with a fresh coat of paint. Kowaleski is a junior Physical Education major from Easley.





# THE SOUND OF MUSIC



Central's "College Hill" was alive with "The Sound of Music" March 20, 21, 27 and 28 as the popular musical returned to Folger Fine Arts Auditorium. Dr. Melanie Rowell, associate professor of music and Southern Wesleyan University alumna, directed the musical. The Sound of Music was previously staged at SWU in 1993 with Rowell, as a student, playing the lead role.



The von Trapp children play hide and seek with Max (Tanner Lambert).



From left: Max (Tanner Lambert) along with Herr Zeller (Ethan Austin) Brigitta (Sarah Turner), Marta (Hannah Turner) and Frau Schmidt (Miranda Hill).



Captain von Trapp (Cameron Tarrant) and Maria Ranier (Ashley Lamos) fall in love with each other.

## next weekend's bucket list.



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# ATHLETIC UPDATES

As we continue through the NCAA DII transition period, SWU and Warrior Athletics continue to work to expand and improve the athletic venues for each sport, for SWU and for the surrounding community.



## VARSITY FIELD

Recent improvements to Varsity Field, the Warriors' softball field, include a retaining wall, which will be the future site for spectator seating. Fundraising efforts continue to complete this seating project.



## PRACTICE FIELD

Work is progressing on a new practice field, located beside the Track and Soccer Complex.



## TRACK AND SOCCER COMPLEX

The most recent addition to the track and soccer complex is the construction of a press box, with bleacher seating to follow soon. This project will give spectators seating as well as provide a professional event management space for track meets and soccer matches.



## CONNOR FIELD

Dr. C. Keith Connor baseball field is currently being enhanced with a new locker room, expanded home dugout space and extended retaining wall. Fundraising continues to improve the hitting area and a beautification project of each foul line area. Future plans include renovation of the visitor dugout space.





## P.B. WOOD GOLF PRACTICE FACILITY

P.B. Wood Driving Range has been expanded to allow for the 'big' hitters. The range now measures more than 300 yards from the front tee box. A newly constructed maintenance building will now house the ball picker and the ball washing system. Fundraising continues for a future club house featuring two hitting bays, two locker rooms and conference room.



## CROSS COUNTRY COURSE

The cross country course was reworked two years ago. Most recently, the finish line area received an upgrade. The project will be complete once the start line area is enlarged and flattened and the finish line is capped off with the construction of a stone archway.



## TYSINGER GYMNASIUM

Tysinger Gymnasium has recently seen some touchups which include chair backs, score tables, ticket area and branding/logo marks throughout.



## TENNIS COMPLEX

Tennis complex fundraising is in high gear as construction should begin soon. Currently the men's and women's tennis teams practice and compete at Nettles Park in Clemson. This new complex would be the site of the men's and women's tennis teams, while also being open to the public.



# SWU BASEBALL PLAYER HITS ONE OF LIFE'S MAJOR CURVE BALLS

Davis Kippen knew he wanted to play baseball from a young age, and he steadily improved as a player, becoming a top recruit for the Warriors during his senior year at Solvay High School in Syracuse, N.Y. The highlight of his high school career was being named Athlete of the Week.

Kippen felt good about this honor, but that was not all he was feeling.

“Me and my coach would be working out three or four hours a day. It was really intense, but then it was taking me five or six hours to catch my breath.”

Doctors diagnosed Kippen with Stage 2 Hodgkins Lymphoma, finding six tumors in his back and four others in his neck and under-arm area. On his 18th birthday, he began rounds of chemotherapy.

During his junior year of high school, Kippen accepted Christ as his savior. He also took a challenge to listen to nothing but Christian music for 30 days. Classmates began to notice a change in Kippen.

“I was really respected because I was a good athlete. I was the popular kid, and I was cocky and arrogant,” Kippen said.

Although cancer threw Kippen a curve ball, he says he didn't feel anger at his situation.

“I came to the Lord way before it, so it was almost like He was preparing me for what was to come. I couldn't have gone through it as easily, as smoothly as I went through it if it wasn't for my faith,” Kippen said.

Kippen likes to share a story that took place many years ago at Niagara Falls, located in his home state of New York. A daring tight-rope walker wowed the crowds assembled as he walked the tight-rope, often carrying a heavy load. The tightrope walker asked the crowd if they thought he could make it from one side of the falls to another pushing a wheelbarrow across the tightrope. They cheered in affirmation, and the daredevil made his way across with the wheelbarrow. He then asked the enthusiastic crowd if they believed he could carry someone in the wheelbarrow across the tightrope. Cheers again. He asked for volunteers and the crowd grew silent.

Not quite as daring—yet still powerful—was the request sent by Southern Wesleyan University's baseball team via social media using the hashtag #getin4davis—a call for others to rally around Kippen

with their prayers as he would find out from doctors in September if he was cancer-free. A Kippen family friend had T-shirts printed with a picture of a wheelbarrow and the hashtag. On Sept. 17, Southern Wesleyan students, faculty and staff gathered at the square in the center of campus to continue lifting up prayers.

That day Kippen received the news that he was free of cancer. He enrolled at Southern Wesleyan for the Spring Semester and began competing as a Warrior.

On Oct. 29, Kippen visited Southern Wesleyan, receiving an enthusiastic welcome from his new teammates and others. He began attending SWU in January.

Baseball teammate Avery Mahon says Kippen's “no excuses” mentality has resonated with the team.

“I couldn't wrap my mind around the fact that Davis considered something so terrible a blessing in his life. He knew the whole time that he was going to fight and he was going to win the fight,” Mahon said. “Cancer has a way of putting life in perspective and Davis has showed us that the things we stress over on a daily basis really aren't that big of a deal in the long run.”

During his junior year of high school, Kippen sensed God's call on his life to serve Him and protect others spiritually. His goal is to someday serve in missions in a country where people desperately seek hope and are in need of a saving knowledge of Christ.

A purpose Kippen sees as a SWU student is helping his teammates and classmates grow in their own faith.

“Now is the time to connect with those people and have them cherish life, get them to realize that baseball is fun,” Kippen said. “We love it; it's a big part of our lives; but it isn't all of our lives.”

Top: Kippen giving his testimony in chapel  
Opposite: Kippen runs bases during Warriors baseball practice



## MIKE GILLESPIE SWU HEAD BASEBALL COACH

Gillespie recalled getting the news of Kippen's diagnosis after signing him to the Warriors Baseball Team. As the new academic year approached, he and his team began praying together.

At that point he obviously didn't know what the future would hold as far as school and baseball. But just getting to know Davis and wanting to honor him for his commitment gave him motivation to battle through. He didn't get a chance to attend in the fall. Once he was cleared in September, he knew everything was on track for enrollment in January.

We had been praying starting Sept. 1 at the square. I was really impressed at the amount of people who showed up. I think we were up there at 7 o'clock or 7:30 just prior to him going in. To get college students up at that time is a big deal. We had professors there, administration, and even the president.

He hasn't had a chance to get into many games in the spring. He was out the last part of the spring with his high school season and of course he missed any opportunity to do anything during the summer. He missed being in here during the fall and that put him back a little bit, but he is a hard worker. His first weekend, he got here and was in the weight room twice a day on his own. He's really working hard to get his strength back. His swing is getting better, his arms are getting stronger and his endurance and stamina are picking up as well.

He had a series of scheduled scans in March and that was something that he had set up prior to enrolling in January. Just normal post-cancer scans, I guess you could say. They all came back clear.

Kippen has a great testimony and our team has had the opportunity to hear it on multiple occasions. I think, going into the cancer, his faith was strong. This has obviously made it a lot stronger. It helped him put things in perspective. He loves baseball, but he understands that life is more important.

With his presence—just his size—God carries strength within that. His walk is really strong and our guys are quickly noticing that as well. He likes to joke around and try to keep things light, but he is a hard worker.





# #SWULIFE

Student Instagram photos  
from Spring Semester 2015

Follow @swu\_edu and  
@swu\_alumni or search  
#swulife on Instagram for  
more SWU photos

Photo credits: @16littledistrations, @aaronredwine, @amber\_collins92, @camelineverquit, @caseyshearin, @champ\_squires1, @cokercoke, @dege326, @emilytlooney, @jonstegenga, @kristyn\_dyches, @nstegenga, @sam\_zrim23, @swu\_edu, @swurickmanlibrary, @tannergibson, @tlambert92, @williamsfosc



# LIVING THE KINGDOM VISION

## *An Interview with Buddy & Joan Rampey*

Buddy and Joan Wood Rampey look back on their personal and family connections woven throughout the history of Southern Wesleyan University and share their thoughts about the transformation of the old stone campus church to the Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center. SWU officially took ownership of the building and property in April 2015.

### **Where were your parents living when the two of you were born?**

**Joan** In Verville on the campus of the school. These were former Army barracks that had been moved to the campus and turned into apartments. My parents were professors and my dad rejoined my mom there following his service in World War II. Buddy's dad came to school on the G.I. Bill after his wartime service, moving into Verville as well. Buddy and I were born five months apart in the same hospital in Greenville.

**Buddy** I've had numerous people tell me they remember when I was born because they walked into a classroom and my dad had written on the chalkboard: "It's a boy." We lived there until Dad graduated, so I was there the first four years of my life. I have just a few memories of that time. My uncle, Dr. R. C. Mullinax (married to my dad's sister, Helen), served as the college president, and we made frequent visits to their home.

### **Share some of your memories of being on the Central campus.**

**J** One of my early memories was our returning to the campus for what was called Harvest Days, a precursor to Homecoming. I remember long rows of tables set up on the grassy area between Childs Hall and the current library, filled with massive amounts of home-cooked food. Students and their families, faculty and others affiliated with the school would attend. When my brother, Don (Wood), became a student in the fall of 1961, our trips became more frequent. Eventually, my sister, two other brothers and I became students here.

### **Buddy, when did you know you were called into ministry?**

**B** I felt like when I surrendered my life to the Lord, that's what it included. I just knew that His call to ministry was a part of the package for me. This was when I was in the eighth-grade. I pastored churches for more than 32 years, first as staff and then as lead pastor, primarily in North Carolina. Then in 2004, I was elected to serve as the South Carolina District Superintendent.

### **How did you decide to come to Central to attend college?**

**B** My dad (Marshall Rampey) said I could go anywhere I wanted, but "if you want me to pay for it, then this is where you need to go." He was on the Board of Trustees for several years.

**J** My Dad (Dixon Wood) said virtually the same thing. A member of the Board of Trustees for 28 years, he absolutely loved this school, just like his father before him!

### **How did you meet each other?**

**J** Although we didn't actually "meet" at the time, our parents lived near each other when we were each born. We met when we both became students at what is now Southern Wesleyan University in the fall of 1965.

### **At what point did you accept Christ?**

**J** When I came to the college in the fall of 1965, I came as a good Wesleyan girl from a good Wesleyan family and a good Wesleyan church with a good Wesleyan youth group. Arriving for my freshman year, it took only about six weeks for me to find myself in a total spiritual nosedive. Shortly before returning for my sophomore year, I found enough strength to make a break with the influences that had set me on that downward spiral. On Oct. 9, 1966, during a Fall Revival service (now called Spiritual Emphasis), I knelt at the altar of First Wesleyan Church and in those moments of prayer surrendered my life to Christ in a full realization that I was not "good" just needing to be better, but was a sinner in great need of a Savior's grace.

When I stood up to leave, Buddy was sitting there on the front row of the church, having stayed to pray for me! We weren't dating at that point; we just knew each other—it was a very small campus! But that night was the beginning of our relationship.

**B** We had actually gotten to spend a little bit of time together that summer when I was at her home while traveling with a music group. But we weren't dating yet.

### **Reflect upon the men whom the Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center is named.**

**B** I was one of the 100 students Dr. Nicholson prayed for when he came to teach at Southern Wesleyan University. He was someone I had known before I came to the school and I deeply appreciate his influence in my life. There's a very close connection between his family and my mother's family. My maternal grandfather led Dr. Nicholson's father to the Lord in Walhalla.

I also knew Dr. Mitchell all of my life and felt an extremely close connection with him. Just to think about the opportunity for a ministry center on campus to carry on that legacy is a marvelous thing.

**J** The names on this facility represent giants to those of us who were in The Wesleyan Church in the Twentieth Century. But I also think of the preservation of this structure for students, like myself, and others for whom this was their place of worship and prayer during their years at the school, as well as the place where the weddings of many students were held. I think of those in the university community who trace so much of their community life to this place. It's a significant site for people who have been a part of the university, whether they were religion majors or not.

### **I'd like to get your perspective on the transition of the former ALIVE Wesleyan church building to SWU.**

**B** I was elected as district superintendent in 2004, the same time Tom Harding came to serve as assistant pastor at First Wesleyan Church (now ALIVE), next to the campus, and give leadership to launching a new service in Folger Auditorium. It was a delight to be involved in some pre-planning about this new service before I ever knew I was going to be doing this job. Meetings with colleagues and with FWC pastor, Rev. Fred Andrews (former lead pastor, now serving as pastor of congregational care at ALIVE), Dr. David Spittal (former SWU president) and others spurred the dream forward. These meetings, the expressed need for something new in both the university and church communities, and the vision and leadership of Pastor Fred became the impetus for this to happen. It became clear in our discussions that Rev. Tom Harding was the person who really needed to come and lead that service.

After experiencing substantial growth, the church came to the place where they needed to build. We ran into the situation of their needing to leverage that building in order to make it financially feasible for them to proceed. The university wanted the building, but at that time it was not in a position to purchase it. We really were "between a rock and a hard place." A church that has a building and property in a "normal" location, you turn around and sell it and that's a part of your relocation funding. That was not the case here. It was not your normal location.

**J** It would have been disastrous to market for sale a building that's sitting in the middle of campus that the university would love to have some day. While we must consider carefully the preservation of things of the past just for the sake of sentimentality or hesitation to change, this place, I believe, can be both a practical tool and a worthy tribute to these two men and those who are remembered with tributes throughout the building.

**B** A District Board of Administration (DBA) member, Charles Tegen, and I made a visit to Dr. Craig Dunn of Wesleyan Investment Foundation. He asked, "What's the district commitment to this?" The district had slightly over \$1 million in a fund that could be designated to such a need as this. The DBA made the decision (I recused myself, since I am a member of ALIVE) to give ALIVE \$1 million and to let the university know that the district would hold the property until the time the university was in a position to



Joan and Buddy Rampey

purchase it.

This was a step of faith; there were no guarantees from the university. This was simply a dialogue between the chairman of the Board of Trustees, the president, a few members of the District Board of Administration and myself. The desires of the school were clear and the district was in a position to hold the property and leverage the funds needed by this growing church.

At every level, you have people working toward the vision and mission and having a kingdom vision. It's not just about the university; it's not just about ALIVE; it's not just about the South Carolina District; it's not just about the Wesleyan denomination. But through all levels of the denomination, there was involvement, there was interaction and there was a mutual commitment to making sure the right thing happened. As far as I'm concerned, that's just a beautiful thing in terms of the value of something larger than just a local church.

The district and ALIVE Wesleyan Church have both made significant contributions toward the capital campaign for the center. The district gave a gift for the naming of the lobby as a memorial to Allen Mitchell, son of Dr. and Mrs. Virgil Mitchell, who, while a ministerial student at what is now Indiana Wesleyan University, was killed in an auto accident. These funds were from the sale of property that was the site of a S.C. District church, named as a memorial to Allen until its closing several years ago. An additional contribution was given by both the district and church as a matching gift to fund the chapel.

It is such a privilege to be involved in the growth of the university. I am thrilled to realize that it remains so decidedly committed to the mission that has been there all along and to hear the students give their testimonies that are similar to ours.

The ALIVE congregation has become the first church in the district to exceed the 1,000 mark in attendance and on Easter 2015 had 1,672 present for their services! The university is thriving and expanding and will need the classrooms that are located in the ministry center this Fall. In addition, the district will now be able to leverage these funds toward additional church multiplication projects. And, God gets the glory for it all!



# NICHOLSON-MITCHELL CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CENTER REACHES \$1.4 MILLION GOAL

The Division of Religion at Southern Wesleyan University is moving closer to its goal of a new home, thanks to the completion of the \$1.4 million Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center campaign.

According to University President Todd Voss, the goal covers Southern Wesleyan's purchase of the former ALIVE Wesleyan Church facility and property and also renovations. ALIVE Church moved in 2013 to a new facility approximately a mile from the Central campus.

"What's happening now is the development of construction documents; they are about 80 percent complete," Voss said. The university now closed on the church property as well.

"It was a pleasure working on this amazing project with a committee that was truly committed to seeing the Campaign through to the finish line," said Lisa McWherter, vice president for advancement. "Campaign success does not haphazardly come to pass; efforts must be strategic, time sensitive, organized, and it always helps to have prayer warriors on your side. The timing of this Campaign completion couldn't have been better. God's handiwork is always right on time. We thank the 800-plus donors who made this Campaign successful and give our Heavenly Father all of the glory."

Committee members are Ray Barnwell, Bob Black, Joy Bryant, James Capps, Mary Costello, Mari Gonlag, Glenda Hoyle, JoAnn Lyon, Don Milstead, Marlin Mull, Tony Payne, Amy Reese, Robert McIntyre, Lisa McWherter, Buddy Rampey, Dan Seaborn, Todd Voss, Jim Wiggins, Paul Wood, and Earl Wilson, an honorary member.

Meeting this goal is a dream come true for Mari Gonlag, Division of Religion chair.

"From the time ALIVE Wesleyan Church began to talk about relocating, we've been dreaming of this possibility. Both faculty and students of the Division of Religion are thrilled with the completion

of the campaign and the beginning of the remodeling process," Gonlag said. "We can hardly wait to get into the new Center. With new classes, newly revised curriculum and new students next year, the completion of the Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center will be the capstone."

The goal of the Nicholson-Mitchell Center is to provide relevant and innovative approaches to ministry with the timeless values of the Wesleys' spiritual heritage and to prepare the next generation of servant-leaders for a breadth of ministry essential in contemporary culture.

The Nicholson-Mitchell Center is named for Drs. Roy Nicholson and Virgil Mitchell, revered as "giants" of the Wesleyan faith. Nicholson came to SWU in 1918, when it was known as Wesleyan Methodist College, to study for the ministry. For the next 75 years, he rose through church leadership to become the first and only full-time president of the Wesleyan Methodist Church where, in a dozen years, he literally made today's Wesleyan Church possible. Mitchell was the beneficiary of a federal work-study program at Wesleyan Methodist College, where he married Mary, his college sweetheart, served as pastor and teacher, and nearly became college president when The Wesleyan Church re-elected him as general superintendent.

Buddy Rampey, superintendent of the S.C. District of The Wesleyan Church, studied under Nicholson and grew up knowing Mitchell from the time he was a youngster living on the Central Campus.

"I count it a privilege to be involved in the growth of the university and to see it remain so committed to the mission that has been there all along, and we realize that's happening," Rampey said.

Tom Harding, senior pastor of ALIVE Wesleyan since the church was in its former location, said that the church and university enjoy more than a century of history together.

"The Nicholson-Mitchell Ministry Center will be a standing reminder of our shared mission in the world. The multiple acts of Christian generosity between the South Carolina District, Southern Wesleyan University and ALIVE Wesleyan Church is a story that needs to be told over and over again," Harding said.

Above left: Bob Black, left, and Jim Wiggins, co-chairs for the Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center campaign, unveiled a check celebrating the success of reaching the \$1.4 million goal. Black is a professor in the Division of Religion and Wiggins is former VP for development and a former trustee.

Left: Southern Wesleyan University's \$1.4 million Nicholson-Mitchell Christian Ministry Center campaign has reached its goal. Pictured outside the center are committee members, from left: Rev. Jim Wiggins, committee co-chair; Rev. Fred Andrews, ALIVE Wesleyan Church pastor of congregational care; Lisa McWherter, SWU vice president for advancement; Todd Voss, SWU president; Joy Bryant, SWU executive director for alumni and constituent relations; Bob Black, SWU professor of religion and committee co-chair; and Mari Gonlag, Division of Religion chair.





# SEEKING LASTING SOLUTIONS FOR EARTHQUAKE-RAVAGED NATION

Five years after a powerful earthquake devastated an already destitute island nation, Southern Wesleyan University is working with an Upstate organization to create long-term solutions to break a cycle of poverty.

Following the earthquake, Haiti experienced an unprecedented influx of foreign aid, much of which provided short-term relief; however, Haiti's economy is little improved, as evidenced by widespread poverty and unemployment, and a majority of residents living on \$2 or less per day. For every 100 students who start first-grade, only seven reach high school.

Joshua Paul, a native Haitian who is also an Upstate physician and Southern Wesleyan graduate, and Todd Voss, president of Southern Wesleyan, signed a memorandum of understanding Dec. 17 as a step towards creating lasting solutions in the form of entrepreneurial development aimed at improving local economies.

"The benefit of the partnership for Southern Wesleyan University is the provision of an international exposure for their students, whether it's through international ministry or international business," said Paul.

Paul organized Build and Bridge, a cooperative of professionals and friends from various backgrounds and nationalities who are determined to make a difference for Haiti through the creation of sustainable projects that use the natural resources of the region.

A vision team was formed, consisting of Paul, Richard Ameris and Daniel Brilant from Build and Bridge; Charlotte Houke and Bill Raynor, SWU business faculty; and Lydia Edmonds, who received her MBA from SWU's adult evening program in 2013.

The team was in Haiti Jan. 2-6 to assess needs at Côtes-de-Fer and surrounding communities. They met with local governmental officials, including the mayor of Côtes-de-Fer and other officials; also education officials and local Wesleyan pastors and officials, including Doucet D. Desronvil, national superintendent of The Wesleyan Church in Haiti and Robert Noel, pastor of the Wesleyan Church in Jacmel.

The team toured the market area of Côtes-de-Fer, as well as their sport park and stadium, public housing and a technical school construction site. Under Guillaumette, several technical schools are being constructed, including the one in Côtes-de-Fer, Haitian President Michel Martelly's hometown. Guillaumette expressed interest in collaboration with Southern Wesleyan, offering office space at the Côtes-de-Fer technical school if needed, and housing for students

traveling to Haiti. The building of these schools is unprecedented in Haiti's history, according to Guillaumette, but there is no budget for supplies and equipment. He expressed hope that these items could be donated.

The team also attended local Wesleyan services and assessed the church's classroom facilities once used for a school. The team also took part in a town hall meeting held at the Wesleyan Church in Côtes-de-Fer, attended by approximately 100 people, including the mayor and business owners. The purpose of the meeting was to gain the trust of the citizens, hear their concerns and share that SWU is working in collaboration with Build and Bridge and wants to help them with their businesses.

Raynor addressed the meeting saying, "We are eager to learn from you about the local area. We should be able to use the advantages we have and share with others what God has given us."

Voss feels that opportunities for the future will engage students in projects that will go beyond theory and make a difference in the lives of the people of Haiti.

"For me it's sort of the real need of a country and how Southern might be able to come alongside and assist the citizens in Haiti to make a difference in their lives," Voss said. "The church-business technology kind of model is really in our sweet spot."

Paul stated that Haitians stand to benefit from programs that are developed, whether they are in business or technology.

"This model of pouring into a country is a reverse of what international business courses usually do, which is take away from a country—visit, eat the food, visit the businesses, then take the experience and knowledge home," Edmonds commented, adding that their goal is to help in a permanent and lasting way to benefit local economies in Haiti.

"We plan to support them basically to advance the economic needle forward," Paul said.

"Consistent with our Christian mission, this will open the doors to offer the opportunities for business students to go beyond theory and make a real difference in the lives of our Christian Brothers and Sisters in Haiti," Houke said.

For details and to make a contribution, contact Build and Bridge by emailing [hello@buildandbridge.org](mailto:hello@buildandbridge.org). To contact Dr. Paul, email [jpaul@buildandbridge.org](mailto:jpaul@buildandbridge.org). Checks should be made to the organization's fiscal sponsor, Global Partners, and designated for "Côtes-de-Fer Fund", P.O. Box 50434, Indianapolis, IN 46250.



Background: a street of Port-au-Prince.

Charlotte Houke (second from left) and Bill Raynor, along with Lydia Edmonds (second from right), pictured with a group of Haitian women they met at Côtes-de-Fer Wesleyan Church.

Joshua Paul of Build and Bridge, left, and SWU President Todd Voss, sign a Memorandum of Understanding for a collaboration that will help build sustainable communities in economically strapped areas of Haiti.



# SERVICE A PART OF SWU STUDENT'S LIFESTYLE

Tim Prendergast, a student enrolled in the master of science in management degree program at Southern Wesleyan University's North Augusta learning center, works to ensure that veterans receive the benefits and resources they have earned as a result of their military service.

Prendergast, director of veteran outreach services for the Augusta Warrior Project, served in the U.S. Army from 1979 to 2005 and

retired as a Sergeant Major. A native of Pennsylvania, Prendergast initially wanted to follow his father and grandfather's footsteps and become a coal miner, but he decided instead to join the military because of his desire to serve his country. His inspiration comes in part from his great-uncle, Thomas J. Prendergast, who was killed in World War I and had an American Legion Post in Republic, Pa., named for him.

When he was working as an EMT, Prendergast would notice Southern Wesleyan's North Augusta learning center at 802 East Martintown Rd. as he rode by in his ambulance.

"Ultimately, I discussed SWU with AWP's Education Advocate, Al Steele, who is a work colleague of mine and decided that I would contact SWU for further information about the MSM program," he said. Prendergast also learned about Southern Wesleyan from someone he knew who recently graduated from the MSM program.

Prendergast was impressed with a learning environment that provided a Christian worldview from a management perspective. Also, the format and convenience of the 18-month MSM program appealed to him.

"The program, while demanding, fit my lifestyle in being able to balance family responsibilities, work and course requirements," he said.

Prendergast's family shares a passion for serving others, whether it's sharing a smile, becoming involved in community projects or going on a mission trip. He and his wife Elena, who is currently pursuing her doctorate degree as a family nurse practitioner, have gone on medical and construction mission trips to the Dominican Republic. Prendergast traveled to New York for three weeks as an EMT to help during Hurricane Sandy. One of their three children, a high school senior soon to graduate, plans to go on a teaching mission to Zambia for a month.

"We purpose to make serving a part of our lifestyle; it is a core family value," he said.

As a military friendly university, Southern Wesleyan works closely with veterans to ensure that they take advantage of VA benefits available to them. The university also offers discounts to active-duty military personnel.

For details about discounts and other benefits Southern Wesleyan offers to military personnel, contact Donna Pittman at (864) 644-5536 or email [dpittman@swu.edu](mailto:dpittman@swu.edu).



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# WHY I GIVE

Southern Wesleyan has not only provided a Christ-centered education during my time here, it has also been one of the most formative parts of my life! This place has provided opportunities for me to grow and to be stretched into the person I am today. Growing up, I never thought that I would have the opportunity to attend a university. I figured if I made good enough grades I could attend a technical school and find a job. However, when the time came for me to choose the next step, Southern Wesleyan was there with open arms. As soon as I stepped onto the campus, I knew this was it! I had no idea how it would happen, but I put my faith in the Lord and knew there was an awesome team of people working to find every avenue possible for me to enroll.

It is because of donors who give generously to SWU that I was able to attend. From the very beginning, I wanted to give back to SWU and I was able to do this through the time and talents with which God has gifted me. I recently realized that I was able to give more than those things and began to give financially! Through this, I learned that God is in the small things as well as in the big things. Giving to Southern has only increased my love for SWU, and I consider it a privilege to be able to give and to help students, like me, experience this place that I call home!

KAITLIN MESSICK  
PSYCHOLOGY, CLASS OF 2015





# ALUMNI NEWS

## 1951

**1** **DARL FOWLER** welcomed a new great-grandson into the world when Arthur Braxton Thompson was born Dec. 18, 2014 to parents Scott and Britta Thompson and big sister, Adeline Grace. Britta is daughter of Larry Fowler and granddaughter of Darl and Mary Fowler ('51).

## 1982

Upstate Business Journal interviewed **RAY LATTIMORE** about Marketplace Staffing, the company he founded 19 years ago. Lattimore shared his insights about leadership and inspiration from his years as a student at SWU, then known as Central Wesleyan College.

## 1990

**2** City of Clemson Police Chief **JIMMY DIXON** received the Catherine Smith Award at the State of Clemson Luncheon Feb. 3. He graduated with a BS in business management and a management of human resource degree.

## 1991

**DARREN SCHAUPP**, director of program operations for American Leprosy Missions, headed to Myanmar in early March to meet with government officials and officials with Novartis Foundation, as a project gets underway to combat the transmission of leprosy in that nation. Schaupp calls the partnership with Novartis a "game changer" in the fight against leprosy. Visit [leprosy.org](http://leprosy.org) for details and to provide support.

## 1994

**3** **DERRICK & PAULA PREUSZ LEMONS** are pictured with their children, Nathaniel and Zachary, during a recent trip to the United Kingdom. While there, Derrick collaborated with the faculty of prestigious universities and Paula gave a talk at Kings College in London about her educational research. Both are on the University

of Georgia faculty.

**4** **PAULA PREUSZ LEMONS**, associate professor of biochemistry and molecular biology in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Georgia, received the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. Lemons has become nationally-recognized as a leader in science education and has been noted by colleagues for her ability to make her classes engaging, regardless of their size.

## 2003, 2007

**5** **CAMILO** ('03, '06) & **STEPHANIE OTT RODRIGUEZ** ('07) announced the birth of a son, Luca, born at 10:39 a.m. April 3.

## 2007

**6** **MORGAN HARPER MCKENZIE**, ('07) and **GREG FISH** ('03) completed their national board certification, becoming two of three SWU graduates within the School District of Pickens County to earn the honor this academic year. McKenzie, an Elementary Education graduate, is a K4 teacher at East End Elementary School in Easley and Fish, a MED graduate, is a teacher at Easley High School.

## 2008

**AMY BURNETT**, who teaches mathematics at Berea High School, was named a finalist for Greenville County Teacher of the Year. Burnett, who has 10 years of teaching experience, is a MED graduate from Greenville.

**AMANDA LINK HARRIS** ('08, '14) was named Walhalla High School's Teacher of the Year and her father, **DALE LINK** ('85), was named Teacher of the Year at Tamasee-Salem Middle/High School. Amanda earned a BA degree in English Education and her Master's of Education in Classroom Leadership from SWU. Dale is a Religion graduate. Both schools are part of the School District of Oconee County.

**7** **SEAN GASPERSO**n received his Ph.D. in industrial organizational psychology from North Carolina State this past December. He now works with Castle Worldwide in test development and psychometrics. He graduated with his master's in IO psychology from East

Carolina University in May, 2010, where he met his wife, Jenna Hartinger Gasperson. They live in Raleigh, N.C.

## 2009

**AMY BONNETT** was named Teacher of the Year at James Island Elementary School, located in the Charleston County School District.

**8** **THOMAS CRANE** and his wife **JUDY** celebrated their 31-year wedding anniversary together on March 3 on top of Stone Mountain in Georgia. Thomas and Judy also raced each other on go carts like old times back when they were dating.

## 2010

**DANIEL FURR**, an elementary education graduate and a fourth-grade teacher at Dacusville Elementary School in Pickens County, was recognized by Magic 98.9 radio as this month's Teacher Who Makes Magic.

**STEPHANIE GUERRA** was accepted to Christian Brothers University Physician Assistant program.

**JESSICA RAINES HULSEY** had her baby, Michael Jeremy, weighing 8 lbs. and 21.5 inches long.

**ASPEN FAYE JOLLY** was born March 8 to Nathan and Brittany Buchanan Jolly, weighing 5 lbs. 9 oz. and 19 inches long.

## 2011

**9** **COURTNEY BRACKEN** got married to Eric Scott on Feb. 7.

## 2012

**BROOKE DAVIS BRIDGES** completed her nursing program at Clemson University.

**TYLER MCGRADY** participated in the White Coat ceremony at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) in Spartanburg. McGrady is a SWU pre-med graduate. The White Coat ceremony is held at more than 100 medical schools nationwide and emphasizes the importance of both scientific excellence and compassionate care for patients.

**ADEGBUYI OGUNBULE**, a BSBM graduate from the Charleston learning center, opened Sweet Savor African Restaurant and Cuisine, the Charleston area's first Nigerian restaurant, along with his wife

Dayo. They are located at 5060 Dorchester Rd.

**10** **COURTNEY RAGSDALE** is pictured with her baby boy, Parker Blaze Ragsdale, born Nov. 28, 2014.

**COURTNEY WEBSTER**, a forensic science alumna, married Josh Thompson Oct. 25.

## 2013

**RUTH BUTKA** was named Teacher of the Year at Whitesville Elementary School, located in the Berkeley County School District.

**ERIN KING JOHNSON** is now a doctor of pharmacy candidate at Wingate University School of Pharmacy.

**DEIDRE PEARSON** was named Teacher of the Year at EXCEL Academy at Morningside Middle School, located in the Charleston County School District.

**JASON REESE** has been appointed as residence director for Eagles Rest Bed and Breakfast, located at the Central campus. He is also employed by Pioneer, the university's food service. His wife, Amy Shepard Reese ('12), is administrative assistant to the VP for advancement.

**CRYSTAL PROPE**s passed her board exam and is now an ASCP certified technologist in molecular biology.

**STEVE SENE**, among the first MEDAS graduates at SWU, was hired Nov. 3 as an education associate over career and technology licensure at the S.C. Department of Education.

**AIMEE SPRINGER** completed her nursing program at Anderson University.

## 2014

**GORDON OVERHOLTZER**, a psychology graduate and current research assistant at SWU, has just been accepted to Georgia State University Neuroscience Institute's doctoral program. Gordon will begin this program in the fall.

**KIMBERLY SPAINHOUR** was hired in March as a forensic technician at SLED.





## FACULTY AND STAFF

**11** **CHARLOTTE HOUBE**, professor of business, is pictured with her new twin grandchildren, Preston Henry Pond and Timothy Howard Pond, born April 8 at 2 a.m. They are also the grandchildren of Tim Pond ('08) a SWU alumnus and formerly a chaplain for N. Augusta AGS students. Tom earned his master of ministry from SWU.



11

## IN MEMORIAM

### 1958

**REV. GEORGE ROBB FRENCH** passed away Nov. 18 after a major stroke. French received a BA in religion from SWU, then known as Central Wesleyan College. While attending, French pastored Seneca Wesleyan Church for two years. He received an M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary in 1961. French is survived by his wife, Ann of Hobe Sound, Fla. They have been married 49 years, just three months short of celebrating their 50th. He served in ministry at various Wesleyan churches, as well as ministry to native American populations in Alaska. He became president of Florida Evangelistic Association (FEA Ministries) and Chairman of the Sea Breeze camp in 1979.

## STUDENT

**LAURA E. PORTER**, a student enrolled in the adult evening program at Central, passed away Jan. 5. Porter enrolled in 2012 and was completing a BS in business management.

## FACULTY & STAFF

**EVELYN BANKER**, wife of **REV. STAN BANKER**, passed away Dec. 18 following an illness. Stan and Evelyn were married for 73 years, have three children, as well as grandchildren. Stan was SWU's concert choir director and taught music courses. He is in the SWU Fine Arts Hall of Fame. He was also the Music Pastor at First Wesleyan, Gastonia, N.C. Rev. Ken Dill, university chaplain, recalled how Stan and Evelyn "ministered very dearly" to his grandparents and parents, who were members there.

## SPAUGH RECEIVES MITCHELL AWARD

*Award given annually for excellence in pastoral ministry.*

James Spough, lead pastor of Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church, Hertford, N.C., received the Virgil A. Mitchell Award for Excellence in Pastoral Ministry April 1 at Southern Wesleyan University in Central.

"Today's recipient has proven himself to be a person of excellence in the manner that Dr. and Mrs. Mitchell wanted to recognize," said Mari Gonlag, chair of Southern Wesleyan's Division of Religion.

James and Amy Spough were called to serve the church, located in rural Perquimans County, which is tucked away along the Albemarle Sound and coastal rivers of northeastern North Carolina. When the Spoughs came to Bagley Swamp Church, attendance averaged around 50 on a good Sunday. Since then, the church has grown in impact, attendance and outreach, now serving nearly 300 people through its various ministries. The church recently completed a 12,000 square foot facility. Spough has also been involved in his community through memberships in civic clubs, the volunteer fire department, schools and outreach agencies.

Spough was ordained in the North Carolina East District of The Wesleyan Church in 1997. He is a 1990 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He received a master of divinity degree in 1996 from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky. Spough, who grew up near Winston-Salem, N.C., is married and has three children, including his son Kaleb, currently a senior religion

major at Southern Wesleyan.

Spough came to the Lord in high school through the influence of Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and credits much of his spiritual formation and call to the ministry of Dan and Cynthia LeRoy and the Chapel Hill Wesleyan Church, which he attended during part of his college years and beyond.

He has served the North Carolina East District in multiple capacities including youth and children's camps, the District Board of Ministerial Development, and is currently a member of the North Carolina East District Board of Administration and serves as district secretary.

More than 20 years ago, Dr. Virgil Mitchell and his wife Mary established the Virgil A. Mitchell Award for Excellence in Pastoral Ministry. It was established to encourage excellence in ministry, to enhance the importance of pastoral ministry, to express gratitude for Mitchell's own ministerial education received at SWU, and to exalt Jesus Christ. The award is presented annually by the Division of Religion and the Southern Area of The Wesleyan Church.

James Spough, lead pastor of Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church, Hertford, N.C., received the Virgil A. Mitchell Award for Excellence in Pastoral Ministry April 1 at Southern Wesleyan University in Central. Pictured from left is Amy Spough, James' wife; James Spough; and Todd Voss, president of Southern Wesleyan.



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