

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

ADVANCE

FALL 2021

MAGAZINE

WHY CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION MATTERS



The Value of Christian Higher Education

p. 16

Perspectives on Prison Education

p. 24

Why We Do Research on CCCU Campuses

p. 32

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FROM THE PRESIDENT | [SHIRLEY V. HOOGSTRA](#)



Cultivating a Noble Life

ONE OF THE THRILLS of my job is being a commencement speaker and witnessing the joy of a family like Sophia's. On that particular graduation day, I could see her family gathered around her as she stood there in her cap and gown with the cords draped over her shoulders, indicating her status as an honors student. Her grandparents were there, too — Juan and Lucia Hernandez, who came to America from Guatemala. Their lives here weren't easy; Juan worked as a painter and Lucia cleaned houses. But their sacrifices were beginning to reap benefits. Their daughter had been able to attend one of the best high schools in the area — and now their granddaughter, Sophia, was graduating with honors and going to medical school. For the entire family, it was a dream come true.

Sophia not only thrived in her academic work, but she also was a leader on campus. With a beautiful voice, she helped lead worship for the chapel program along with others on the praise team who consistently encouraged each other to do their best, to love the Lord, and to serve others. Making time to serve others was a challenge for a pre-med student like Sophia, who was in a difficult, time-consuming program. But at her institution, her mentors consistently reminded her that we aren't the best we can be unless we develop our minds as well as our hearts and souls. That was why Sophia was as dedicated to her time on the chapel team as she was to her time in the classroom.

Sophia represents the kind of graduate that has been shaped by a liberal arts education. To paraphrase a quote from a 2014 graduation speech by the journalist Fareed Zakaria, "You learn to write, speak, to learn, to move through life, be a good citizen, be a better human. ... The goal is to create a noble life." The author David Brooks beautifully described the kind of noble life a Christian college degree cultivates when he spoke to a group of CCCU presidents in 2016, noting that CCCU institutions "have a way of talking about and educating a human person in a way that integrates faith, emotion, and intellect. You have a recipe to nurture human beings who have a devoted heart, a courageous mind, and purposeful soul."

The devoted hearts, courageous minds, and purposeful souls aren't cultivated on our campuses by accident. They are shaped and formed by love — love for Jesus and love for our neighbors that is modeled by those who surround us. They are cultivated because you have faculty and staff who love God and are experts in their disciplines; because you have a community that challenges you, laughs and cries with you, and believes in you. Students learn to develop a noble life because you as Christian higher education leaders provide a model of pursuing the hard work that needs to be done in a way that isn't only for the benefit of you or your campus — it's primarily for the audience of the One who loved you so much that he gave his life for you: Jesus.

At its core, a noble life is built on habits and virtues that become your defining qualities. A Christian liberal arts education helps develop these qualities, preparing students not just for a job but for a lifetime of learning and growth. In his book *The Road to Courage*, Brooks differentiates between the résumé virtues and the eulogy virtues. The résumé virtues don't lead to a courageous, devoted, or purposeful life; the eulogy virtues do. Christ-centered education teaches students that the Spirit of Christ lives in you and, through God's grace, generates the qualities described in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are traits that mark a noble life.

How did Sophia become the person with a devoted heart, a courageous mind, and a purposeful soul? Through the time she spent in chapel, in her classroom, in the dorm where she lived. In every aspect of her daily life on a Christian college campus, the goal was to cultivate a Philippians 4 life: "Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do your best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious — the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. ... Do that, and God, who makes everything work together, will work you into his most excellent harmonies" (Philippians 4:8-9, *The Message*). Christian higher education — the combination of the liberal arts and professional preparation under the Lordship of Jesus Christ — creates the truly noble life. ☺

REGULARS

5
AROUND THE COUNCIL
News from the CCCU

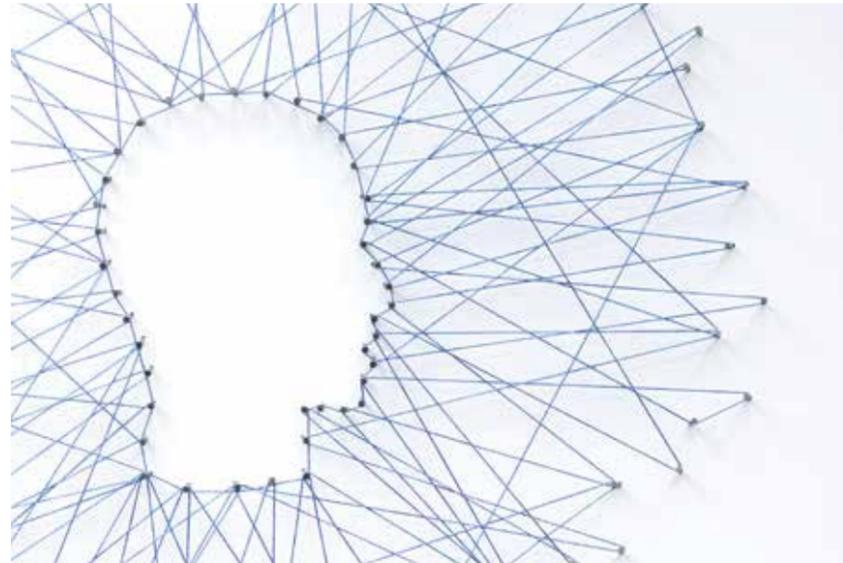
12
ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
By Don DeGraaf

13
ON ACADEMICS
By Stanley P. Rosenberg

14
ON DIVERSITY
By Lena Crouso

54
THE LAST WORD
By Fijoy L. Johnson and
Linda Sommerville

FEATURES



16 THE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The kind of connection that Christian campuses foster is an ideal model for this cultural moment.

An interview with Shirley Hoogstra, David Brooks, and Anne Snyder



24 PERSPECTIVES ON PRISON EDUCATION

CCCU institutions transform the lives of students, including some who are behind bars.

Essay Collection



32

WHY WE DO RESEARCH ON CCCU CAMPUSES

Cultivating a culture of research on Christian campuses is important not only for faculty researchers, but for their students, the campus community, and the wider world.

By Mark Sargent

38

DREAMING OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Americans support efforts to make Dreamers permanent parts of their communities. Congress must act.

By Ali Noorani



ON THE SHELF



44

HOW TO FIGHT RACISM

A new resource for leaders creating practical next steps.

An interview with Jemar Tisby and Heath Thomas

POWER WOMEN..... 50

An interview with Kim Phipps, Deshonna Collier-Goubil, and Nancy Wang Yuen

THE COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES (CCCU) is a higher education association of more than 180 Christian institutions around the world. Since 1976, the CCCU has served as the leading national voice of Christian higher education. With campuses across the globe, including more than 150 in the U.S. and Canada and more than 30 from an additional 19 countries, CCCU institutions are accredited, comprehensive colleges and universities whose missions are Christ-centered and rooted in the historic Christian faith.

THE MISSION OF THE CCCU is to advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform the lives of students by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical truth.

DISTRIBUTION

Advance is published each year in the fall and spring and is mailed to members, affiliates, and friends of the CCCU. It is also available online at www.cccu.org/magazine. Direct questions and letters to the editor to editor@cccu.org.

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Seeing the Forest and the Trees



LET'S BE HONEST: Having a third academic year disrupted by a global pandemic is surreal. Navigating the highs (such as stories of innovation, resilience, hope, and good will) and the lows (such as the stories of... well, everything else) of the last 18 months has also been exhausting for most of us. Typically, the start of a new academic year is full of joy, exuberance, and gleeful anticipation of all that is to come in the year ahead. While that is still certainly true this year, there is also underlying tension, anxiety, and tiredness that has cast a shadow over everything. In the midst of all of this, it can be a struggle just to keep an eye on all the details that must be managed day-to-day on our campuses. In a proverbial forest of challenges and opportunities ahead, it can take all of our energy just to stay focused on the details in front of us to avoid getting hit by a tree branch we might have missed otherwise.

That's why this issue has been such a breath of fresh air for us — and we hope it will provide that for you as well. After a year of focusing on the powerful and innovative ways CCCU campuses were responding to the challenges raised by the global pandemic, we wanted to take a step back and get a larger view. Our primary goal for the issue was to highlight just what makes Christ-centered higher education so valuable for the public square. We wanted to share stories of the difference this kind of education makes in society, including for those who are on the margins or even overlooked entirely. We wanted to encourage you that the work you are doing deeply, truly matters to the world, and in ways you might not quite expect. To use the imagery of the forest again, we wanted everyone to see the forest of Christian higher education and be reminded of all its complex beauty once more — of all the parts that are bathed in sunlight and flourishing as a result, while also keeping in mind those dark, thorny parts that still need to be addressed.

Last fall, I shared how the events of 2020 were reshaping our vision — not just of whatever plans we had for that year, but of our work as leaders in Christian higher education. As we continue on in this year, we'll most certainly need to keep our eyes cast on the immediate obstacles ahead so we can confront them as needed. But let's not miss the opportunity we have to momentarily shift our gaze from the trees that are nearest to us to the forest we're in and reflect on just how amazing is the work God has entrusted each of us with for this specific time, for this specific role, for this specific campus, for these specific students. "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6, NRSV)

MORGAN FEDDES SATRE is the CCCU's communications specialist and managing editor of *Advance*. She is an alumna of both Whitworth University and BestSemester's L.A. Film Studies Center and is currently pursuing her M.Div. at Fuller Seminary.

COMMENTS
Do you have comments about stories in this issue or ideas for stories in a future issue? Email us at editor@cccu.org.

Around *the* Council

NEW INSTITUTIONS JOIN THE CCCU

In July 2021, the CCCU Board of Directors approved the application of two new members:



Conway, Arkansas



Southlake, Texas

PRESIDENTIAL CHANGES

The following institutions have experienced presidential transitions since August 2020. Campuses that currently have interim presidents are not included.

Christelijke Hogeschool Ede (Ede, Netherlands)
Jan Hol, August 2020

Concordia University, Nebraska (Seward, NE)
Bernard D. Bull, August 2021

Cornerstone University (Grand Rapids, MI)
Gerson Moreno-Riaño, June 2021

Crown College (Saint Bonifacius, MN)
Andrew C. Denton, July 2021

Evangel University (Springfield, MO)
Mike Rakes, July 2021

Gordon College (Wenham, MA)
Michael D. Hammond, July 2021

Houghton College (Houghton, NY)
Wayne D. Lewis Jr., June 2021

LeTourneau University (Longview, TX)
Steven D. Mason, March 2021

Lipscomb University (Nashville, TN)
Candice McQueen, September 2021

Nyack College (New York, NY)
Rajan S. Matthews, July 2021

Olivet Nazarene University (Bourbonnais, IL)
Gregg A. Chenoweth, June 2021

Samford University (Birmingham, AL)
Beck A. Taylor, July 2021

Taylor University (Upland, IN)
D. Michael Lindsay, August 2021

Uganda Christian University (Mukono, Uganda)
Aaron Mushengyezi, March 2021

CCCU NAMES NEW AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM DIRECTOR

THE CCCU NAMED Dr. CyBelle (Belle) Barthelmess as the next director in residence of the American Studies Program (ASP), a faith-integrated semester program in Washington, D.C., that offers intensive internships, fieldwork, and coursework to prepare students for Christ-centered careers in professional leadership and service.

"We are incredibly excited to welcome Belle to the American Studies Program team," says Don DeGraaf, the CCCU's senior director of educational programs. "She brings a deep commitment to working with students and an excitement for helping them explore how their faith impacts both their personal and professional journeys."

Barthelmess has worked in the field of international education for 20 years, with experiences that include working on a farm in a remote village in Fiji, serving as the dean of students in South Africa, leading students around the globe and teaching about systemic issues facing cities in the 21st century, and teaching in the sprawling city of Los Angeles.

ASP operates as part of CCCU GlobalEd, a collection of faith-integrated, off-campus study programs for students that foster intellectual, cultural, vocational, and spiritual growth. Following a year-long pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both ASP and the Middle East Studies Program in Amman, Jordan, will safely welcome back students for an in-person semester in fall 2021. Scholarship & Christianity in Oxford, another GlobalEd program, successfully welcomed back students in-person in spring 2021 and will do so again in the fall.

Hi Lon Kang Haaga



THE LATEST UPDATES FROM CAPITOL HILL

THE CCCU'S ADVOCACY WORK promotes and protects its institutions' unique position as Christ-centered, non-profit institutions of higher education that are often in the crosshairs of a variety of issues affecting higher education and faith-based organizations, and/or challenges to religious character and convictions. In the last fiscal year, the CCCU signed onto 94 letters and six amicus briefs supporting our major advocacy issues. Other highlights of our recent advocacy work include:



Charitable Giving | The CCCU continues to advocate for charitable giving incentives, such as the Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act (UGPRRA). It is led by a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers and was introduced in the Senate and House on March 9, 2021. The legislation would raise the \$300/\$600 cap to roughly \$4,000 for individuals/\$8,000 for couples, extend the availability to the 2022 tax year, and eliminate the current exclusion of gifts to donor-advised funds. This opens charitable giving opportunities to non-itemizers — a category that includes many of our young alumni. It encourages additional funding to our universities and incentivizes low- and middle-income individuals to participate in giving to a charitable or faith-based organization of their choice.



Equality Act and Fairness for All Act | The Equality Act passed the U.S. House of Representatives in a 224-206 vote. As drafted, the bill fails to provide essential religious liberty protections that would allow a diverse group of social service and civic institutions to continue to thrive. In pairing religious freedom and LGBT civil rights, the Fairness for All Act underscores that all persons, including LGBTQ people, are created in the image of God and therefore possess full dignity, value, and worth. This approach represents civic pluralism at its best in a society where people with deep differences can live alongside each other with respect and understanding. The Government Relations team has been actively meeting with Senate and House offices to urge Congress to pass legislation that addresses essential religious freedoms and LGBTQ civil rights in a comprehensive, balanced, and enduring way.



LEARN MORE

For more information about the CCCU's advocacy work, visit www.cccu.org/advocacy.



Double Pell | One of our advocacy priorities is to double the Pell grant to ensure more students are able to attend their best-fit college. Doubling the Pell would allow low- and middle-income students to receive funding to attend the school of their choice, as well as maintain educational diversity in the U.S. We joined over 1,100 signatories in sending a sign-on letter to Congress showing support for this important priority.



Title IX | The Office of Postsecondary education held a virtual rulemaking hearing that included an opportunity to provide comments on the former administration's Title IX regulations, which many of our campus officials reported as troublesome. The CCCU made live comments and submitted extensive written comments in defense of the religious freedom protections, as well as flagged other concerns within the regulations for our campuses.



Prison Education | The CCCU has advocated for years to overturn the ban on incarcerated individuals receiving Pell Grants. We were pleased to see the ban lifted as part of the Senate's end of year stimulus package in 2020. Currently, 18 CCCU institutions have successful prison education programs, and we want to grow that number so that more incarcerated individuals can receive the transformative, life-giving Christian education CCCU institutions offer. If your institution has any interest in this, please contact Jacob Dunlap at jdunlap@cccu.org.

Judiciary | *Hunter V. Department of Education*

Current and former students at Christian colleges filed this lawsuit on March 31, which seeks to strip longstanding religious protections from Title IX and would take federal financial aid away from hundreds of thousands of students who choose to attend faith-based colleges and universities. This would restrict student choice, preventing middle- and low-income students from taking their federal aid to these institutions. Seven out of 10 CCCU students receive federal funding, and the withdrawal of financial aid would have a disproportionate impact on low-income and first-generation college students.

While this lawsuit presents frivolous legal claims, the CCCU takes reports of student experience seriously. We are committed to learning, growing, and deepening our understanding of how we can provide and strengthen support for all students on Christian college and university campuses, as CCCU institutions should be places where all students feel

safe, supported, and welcome. CCCU institutions subscribe to a number of biblical convictions, and we believe our institutions' right to teach and instill those convictions in the next generation of believers is protected by the First Amendment.

Maxon v. Fuller Seminary

In this lawsuit, two students sued Fuller Seminary after being dismissed for violating Fuller's community standards when they entered into same-sex marriages. Like all Fuller students, the plaintiffs provided written consent to abide by Fuller's community standards when they applied as a condition of participating in Fuller's theological training. This lawsuit challenges the Title IX religious exemption, which is both statutory and constitutional. Thus, the outcome will have implications for all Christian colleges and universities — specifically their ability to implement biblical standards of sexuality for employees and students. The CCCU filed a brief in support of Fuller because the Title IX exemption is critical to the ability of educational communities to convey their faith to the next generation of believers, and it ensures they can participate in the public square while operating according to their religious beliefs.

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR TODAY'S STUDENTS

Walking with Jesus on Campus
How to Care for Your Soul during College
Stephen Kellough / \$13.99 / ISBN: 978-0-8024-1926-2
Our time at university is almost always a pivoting point, for better or worse. In *Walking with Jesus on Campus*, chaplain Stephen Kellough explores 10 critical truths that typically make or break a student's spiritual life. Whether you are heading off to college, ministering to college students, or are the parent of a college-aged kid, this book will help you better understand how to tackle what lies ahead.

The Essential Scriptures
A Handbook of the Biblical Texts for Key Doctrines
Kevin Zuber / \$24.99 / ISBN: 978-0-8024-2078-7
With an easy-to-use handbook format, theologian Kevin Zuber gives you the biblical underpinnings for the doctrines you believe. Every pastor, scholar, student, and lover of theology needs this book in their library. *The Essential Scriptures* will be a classic that generations of theologians turn to again and again.

The New Reformation
Finding Hope in the Fight for Ethnic Unity
Shai Linne / \$15.99 / ISBN: 978-0-8024-2320-7
Christian hip-hop artist Shai Linne shows how the gospel applies to ethnic unity. Drawing from his experience as an artist-theologian, church planter, and pastor, Shai will help you chart a new way forward in addressing the critical question of what it means for people of all ethnicities to be the one people of God.

CAMPUS RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED TO RECEIVE OVER \$1.5 MILLION FOR STEM RESEARCH

THE CCCU AND SCHOLARSHIP & CHRISTIANITY IN OXFORD (SCIO), the CCCU's U.K. subsidiary, have announced the nine institutions who will receive over \$1.5 million total in grant funding as part of Supporting Structures: Innovative Collaborations to Enhance STEM Research at CCCU Member Institutions, a project designed to support and enhance STEM research among faculty and students at CCCU campuses.

Nine CCCU institutions were selected to receive grants worth up to nearly \$192,500 each to support multifaceted projects on their campuses that will incorporate training, support, and events for faculty members, students, senior administrators, and the communities that feed into and support these institutions. These institutions will expand research opportunities among existing, pre-tenure faculty members in the STEM fields and offer training to deepen their understanding of and engagement with issues pertaining to science, religion, and society. Additionally, the project has a specific fund dedicated to help participating campuses enhance diversity among their STEM faculty.

The institutions selected represent a broad geographic swath in the U.S. and include one Canadian institution:

- Abilene Christian University (Abilene, TX)
- Azusa Pacific University (Azusa, CA)
- Calvin University (Grand Rapids, MI)
- Dordt University (Sioux Center, IA)
- Gordon College (Wenham, MA)
- Seattle Pacific University (Seattle, WA)
- Trinity Western University (Langley, British Columbia)
- Wheaton College (Wheaton, IL)
- Whitworth University (Spokane, WA)

Supporting Structures is made possible through funding provided by the John Templeton Foundation and the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust.



LEARN MORE

For more information, visit www.scio-uk.org/research/supporting-stem/.



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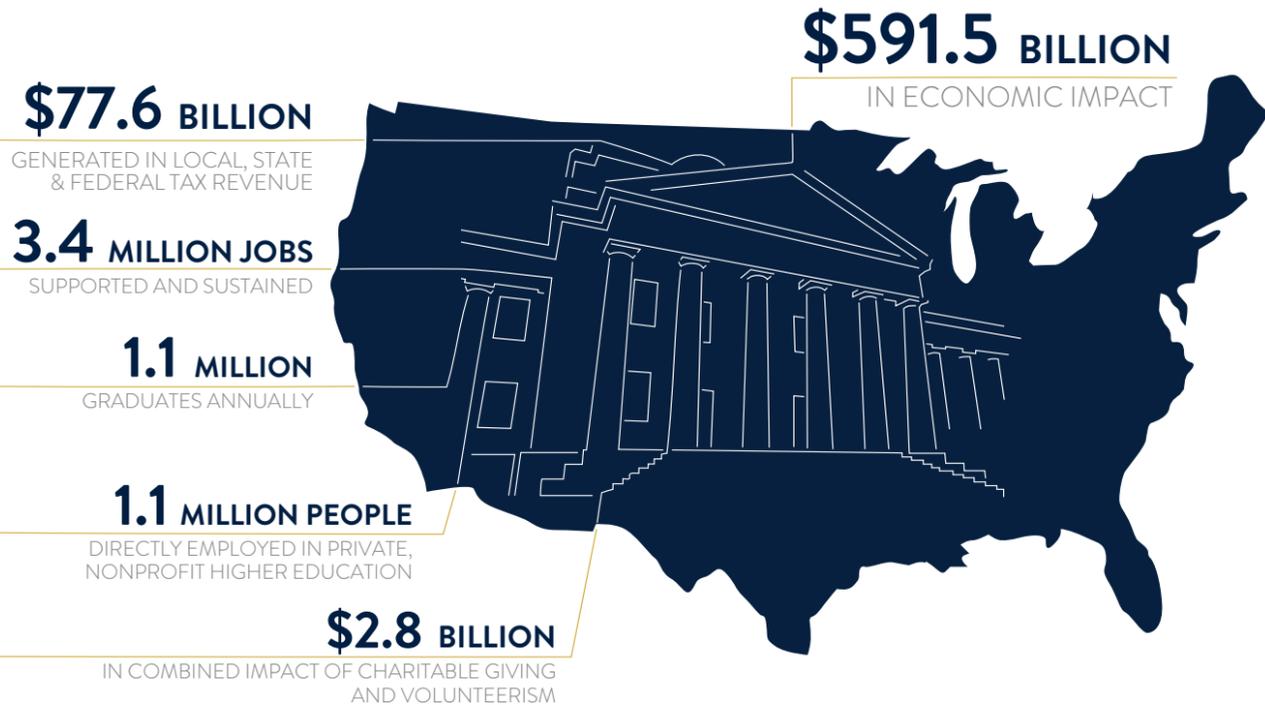
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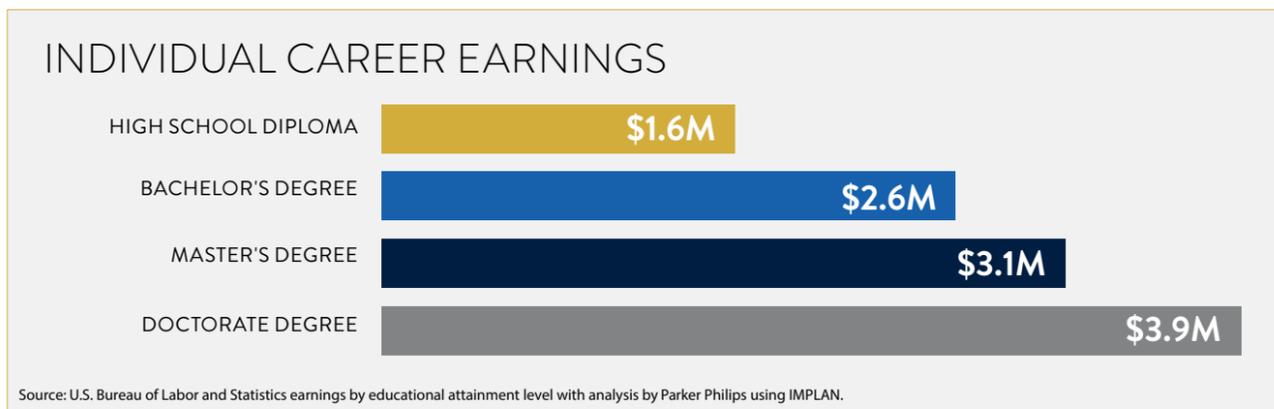
Shaping Lives and Anchoring Communities

The contributions of higher education extend far beyond an individual degree. Private, nonprofit colleges and universities play significant roles in the everyday lives of those living and working in college communities and are important contributors to the nation as a whole. America's private, nonprofit colleges and universities are in a unique position to not only help but lead the acceleration of post-pandemic economic progress across the nation. Serving as one of the nation's primary vehicles for social and economic mobility, private, nonprofit colleges and universities are **accelerating economic growth, creating jobs, and boosting the nation's tax base.**



INCREASING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Higher education leads to many benefits, including opportunities for a lifelong career and financial stability.



To access the full report, visit naicu.edu/ImpactSurvey2021.pdf.

INSPIRING AND GIVING BACK

Rural, suburban, and urban communities throughout the country benefit from the volunteer and philanthropic spirit embodied at many private, nonprofit colleges and universities.

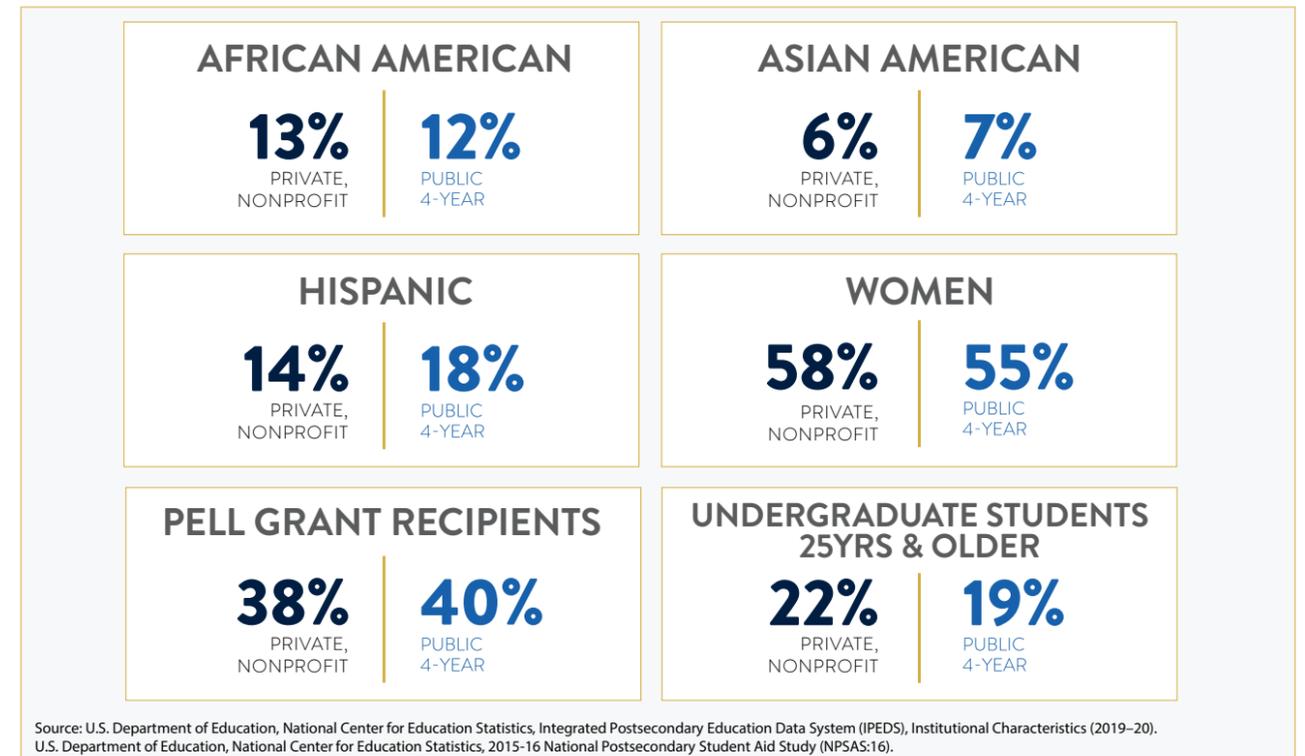


HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED IN A TIMELY WAY



EDUCATING A DIVERSE ARRAY OF STUDENTS

Private, nonprofit higher education educates a diverse array of students across demographics.



The Secret of Knowing How Is Remembering Why



STUDY AWAY PROGRAMS have had a rough 18 months. The pandemic and financial pressures within the higher education landscape have resulted in a wide variety of challenges that point to an uncertain future, leaving administrators asking questions related to if and how these programs can bounce back.

These questions are important, but starting with “how” questions can be so limiting. In his book *The Answer to How is Yes*, Peter Block encourages leaders to dig deeper than simply asking how we do something. Instead, he suggests moving to questions of why that are centered around purpose and impact: “The question ‘How?’— more than any other question – looks for the answer outside of us. It is an indirect expression of our doubts.” Block argues throughout his book that we are too quick to go to the how questions because our culture pushes us to deliver programs that are doable, practical, and popular. But thinking about the “why” means we focus on the differences we can make in this world.

So in light of this advice, and in the midst of the current upheaval in higher education broadly and study away programs specifically, it is worth reflecting on the following questions: Why are experiential study away programs so important to the mission of Christian higher education? Why should we recommit to offering these types of programs, which can be expensive and expose our institutions to more risk?

There are some answers that are true for all of higher education: student demand for programs like these, for example, or an institutional desire to prepare students for a global future. But for Christian colleges and universities,

These programs help students... live into answers of living faithfully in a messy world.

the answers to these questions go so much deeper. Our programs help students ask hard questions and experience the complexities of this world by connecting what they are learning and doing to how they see the world with the eyes of faith.

We must not underestimate the importance of this faith lens as we help students connect habits of the mind, heart, and hands in ways that help students live into God’s story for their lives. Nicholas Wolterstorff describes this process as the development of two eyes: the eye of the mind and the eye of the heart. He writes, “Do not be so focused on knowledge that you neglect compassion; do not be so overcome by compassion that you neglect knowledge. You need both eyes — both the eye of the mind and the eye of the heart, both the eye of discernment and the eye of compassion — to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice.”

Study away programs, when properly facilitated, provide an important opportunity for this kind of development. Not only do students learn deeply, but they also experience the wonder and heartbreak of this world firsthand as they discover how to engage an interconnected global world. “The heart cannot be taught in a classroom intellectually ... it has to be discovered,” says David Brooks in his book *The Road to Character*. Referencing

Augustine, he adds, “Only love compels action. We don’t become better because we acquire new information. We become better when we acquire better loves. We don’t become what we know. Education is a process of love formation. When you go to school, it should offer you new things to love.”

Herein lies the deepest “why” for offering experientially based, study away programs: They help students make connections, learn new loves, and live into answers of living faithfully in a messy world. Throughout this process, students are transformed.

Remembering the transformative nature of study away program answers the question of “why” and provides new resolve as we face questions of how to offer these types of programs moving forward. At the CCCU, we are committed to rebuilding capacity lost as a result of the pandemic wherever possible, as well as to finding new, collaborative projects that expand experiential education opportunities for students in ways that make these opportunities affordable and workable for member institutions and the CCCU. We hope and pray our member institutions will continue to support us in these endeavors. 🙏

DON DEGRAAF is the CCCU’s senior director of educational programs.

Photo courtesy of Kimberly Battle-Walters Denu

Jonathan Kirkpatrick

Making Research Plain for the Common Good



SCHOLARS WHO SHARE their research may encounter many negative responses: eyes glazing over, befuddlement, donors wondering why their money is supporting this instead of something “more tangible.” Sometimes we face misunderstanding or even misconstrual of the research and our findings.

Our communities — both on campus and off — suffer when there is a lack of understanding about the research that happens on campuses. Frequently, our communities do not know how to readily separate out tested knowledge from opinions, and as a result, fears, myths, and conspiracies are rocking our society. What can be done?

Christian higher education’s core enterprise is rooted in the idea that all truth is God’s truth and thus has value and enrichment for both research and student curriculum. But truth must be grappled with; it is not easily accessible. To some extent, the responsibility to make truth more accessible is ours.

An inherent challenge in this is the specialization that has happened in our disciplines. Research in any discipline is often so specialized that much of what scholars study, let alone publish, is not intuitively obvious either to other scholars or the mainstream public. While there are numerous identifiable reasons for this, let me name three that often make scholarship inaccessible.

First, many discoveries confound ordinary and typically reasonable assumptions (quantum theory, anyone?). Second, scholars frequently work on problems that may take generations to fully demonstrate. Galileo’s inferences on the solar system could not be proved for more than 200 years until 1839 when Fraunhofer designed a sufficiently strong telescope. Third, presentation of research — in all fields, including the humanities — is typically wrapped up in technical language that is filled with elite, trained, narrowly accessible terminology and jargon.

The challenge and consequences of making research easily understood has been particularly obvious in light of COVID-19. Vast amounts of misinformation have been propagated. We may wring our hands, but in the end, it is our role as scholars to help the broader community understand our research. Many now speak about learning-centric teaching and communication. We need to apply those classroom methods to communities outside the campus.

Allow me to offer a modest proposal: Consider compiling and disseminating (perhaps on the college website) a dossier of all research faculty have published each year. This summary should have plain language abstracts (perhaps initially drafted by faculty and then edited with help from your PR office) that are accessible to the communities and stakeholders you engage — donors, parents, church and denominational relations, community members, political leaders, etc.

This is not a wheel that needs reinvention; medical and clinical researchers have recently begun doing this in earnest. We can learn from their work. For an example, to the right is insight from my daughter, Adeline, an immunologist by training who now develops plain language summaries and has recently co-authored international recommendations on the creation and sharing of plain language summaries.

By using plain language summaries to share the important academic research happening on our campuses, we can use them as a tool for student recruitment, advancement, and community engagement. Crucially, we can also better share the fruit of discovery and more effectively realize part of our mission as Christian educational institutions to contribute to the common good. 🙏

STANLEY P. ROSENBERG is the CCCU’s vice president for research and scholarship and the executive director of SCIO: Scholarship & Christianity in Oxford, the CCCU’s U.K. subsidiary.

USING PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARIES TO IMPROVE HEALTH LITERACY

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ADELINE ROSENBERG is a medical writer in the patient engagement team at Oxford PharmaGenesis, U.K. This work represents her own opinions.

Handiwork, Holistic Healing, and Hope



AT 9 YEARS OLD, I sat quietly with a pulsating pain in my heart — not a literal pain, but one that was still so real and so deep that I couldn't weep, even though I wanted to. A white man had just hurled both a cigarette and a racial slur at me and my 10-year-old sister to make it clear we did not belong — not on the sidewalk, nor anywhere near him.

This is one of my earliest recollections of what hate sounds like and looks like. Even then, I knew this pulsating pain would not fade quickly. I couldn't cry in that moment, but my soul was deeply affected and in need of compassionate care.

Other moments like that — big and small, explicit and not so nearly as explicit as that moment on the sidewalk — have accumulated throughout my life. My parents were Asian Indian immigrants who rarely talked to us about the racial injustices they experienced. Instead, they reiterated a common immigrant narrative: Work hard; blend in; prove ourselves “fit” to be worthy of the American dream. My Hindu upbringing (I became a follower of Christ in my late 20s) and other cultural aspects of my identity further exacerbated the disconnect I felt and deepened the pain of my soul.

As I reflect on these experiences, I am humbled by the path God has put me on. It has been a long journey, but I see the truth of Ephesians 2:10 in my life: I am his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared in advance for me to do. For me, that good work is a Kingdom calling rooted in the essential pursuit to help make God's inclusive love known to all of humanity and to participate in the ministry of reconciliation.

My current role as a chief diversity officer (CDO) allows me to engage this good work, yet I (and those also called to this work) know it is not easy, particularly for those of us with deep soul pains. It is absolutely essential work if we are to become the beloved community God declares for us to be together on earth as it is in heaven, but it is not easy. This is why care for these leaders is vital.

AN INCREASE IN DEMAND; AN INCREASE IN TRAUMA

The number of CDO positions in higher education has increased 113% since 2015. Current social justice and reconciliation movements have fueled the immediate need for leaders who are prepared to help organizations respond to significant moments while also leading these organizations toward transformation.

The reality is no different at Christian colleges and universities. CDOs are seen as a major factor for how campuses address issues of race, equity, and inclusion. CDOs bring new perspectives to predominantly white institutions, help with recruiting and retention of more students of color, and offer schools guidance on articulating and pursuing a Christian vision of diversity. Oftentimes, CDOs not only require adept and agile knowledge, skills, and dispositions, but they also bring to their work the invaluable and often painful lived experiences of their own marginalization and “othering.” Our soul wounds become central to how we understand and approach our work.

Many diversity officers encounter discouragement, fatigue, and burnout. Diversity leaders serving at Christian institutions, distinctly compelled by a moral compass, are often pressed on all sides. The work they do to help their campus communities through difficult moments often creates reminders of traumatic lived experiences over their own lifetime. Even as they struggle with not belonging, they are tasked with creating belonging. They often feel like they were hired to make a problem go away, rather than to start the long, difficult, visionary work of cultural transformation. As one CDO put it in an April 2021 article in *Christianity Today*, “You're the source of this disruption. You're the one that makes people feel uncomfortable. ... In some ways, you're seen as a heretic.”

A 2016 study found that across higher education, diversity officers last three years on average. Survey respondents said they didn't feel respected enough by administrators, they lacked resources to meet goals, and they didn't know whether they had the authority to make decisions. The discouragement, fatigue, and loneliness of this work leads to an internal pain that affects their lives and reveals an undefinable trauma. For many, that can turn into symptoms of pain that are often undefinable and may be misinterpreted as emotional weakness, distress, or even an inability to lead.

THE NEED TO BUILD SHALOM

What can be done? For CCCU institutions, the biblical concept of shalom can provide a helpful model for providing a deep level of soul care for these leaders. The ancient Hebrew concept of peace, shalom, is meant to bear out the human capacity for wholeness, completeness, and soundness of well-being through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is in shalom that leaders are seen, known, and understood.

There are three voices that speak this shalom climate into existence:

- The pastoral voice: This is a voice of compassion, empathy, and guidance.
- The prophetic voice: This is a voice that speaks out the truth of God with boldness, assertion, and lament.
- The purpose voice: This is a voice that casts vision, provides hope, and confirms a person's calling.

Together, these voices reflect that of our triune God and help cultivate shalom. When an environment of shalom is created, diversity leaders experience a climate

of goodness, safety, and belonging through voices of holistic, compassionate care. It is important to note that this is not mentoring, nor counseling, but rather a process leading to a means of holistic healing. They can address the trauma (new and old) that their work raises, and healing can begin to emerge, strengthening and empowering them in their work.

Beyond individual healing, this soul care can take all of us, connected together by God's inclusive love, to rise again out of the ashes of pain embedded in injustices, and be reminded that we all are his handiwork, created to do the good work God has created for us to do. As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. shared, “All are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be.”

REV. LENA CROUSO, PH.D. ED.S., serves as vice president, chief diversity officer, and a member of the president's cabinet at Southern Nazarene University (Bethany, OK).

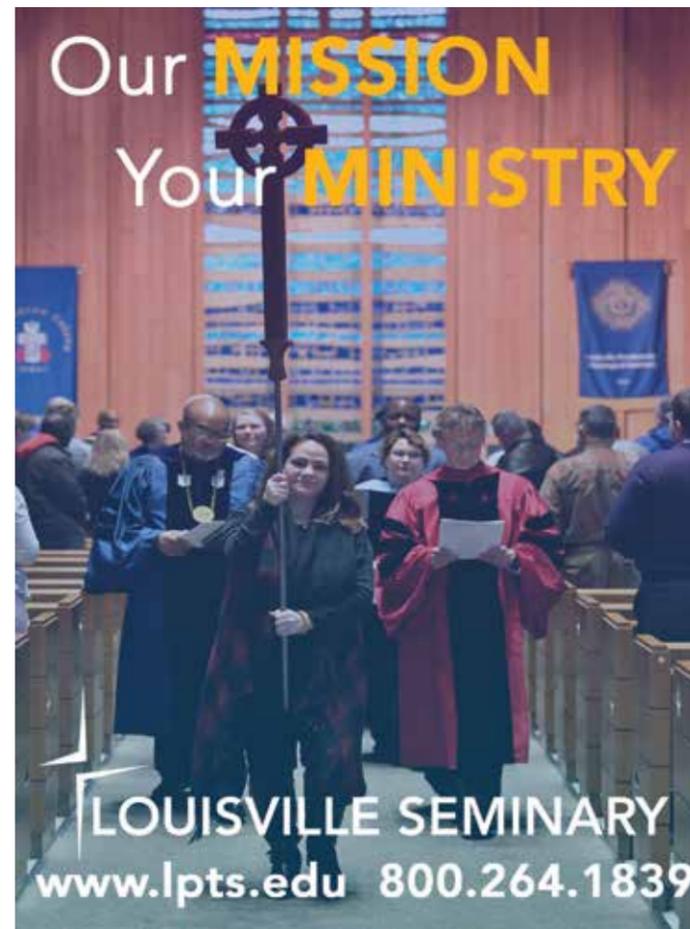
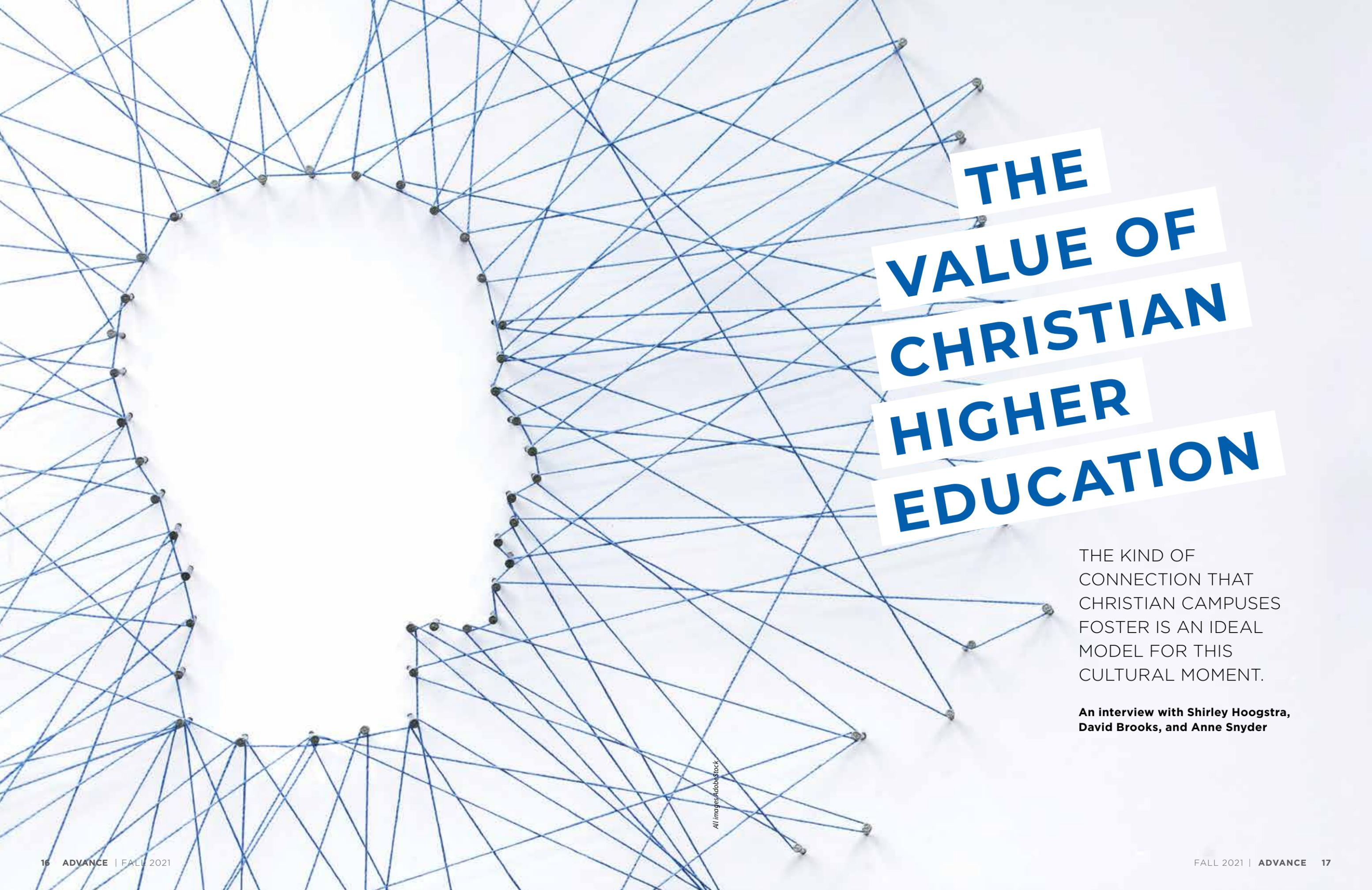


Photo courtesy of Lena Crouso

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THE VALUE OF CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

THE KIND OF CONNECTION THAT CHRISTIAN CAMPUSES FOSTER IS AN IDEAL MODEL FOR THIS CULTURAL MOMENT.

An interview with Shirley Hoogstra, David Brooks, and Anne Snyder

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LEADERS ON CCCU CAMPUSES

understandably recognize the value Christian higher education has not only for the students, faculty, and administrators on campus, but for their communities and society as a whole. But for those outside the world of Christian college and university campuses, the question persists: Why does Christian higher education matter? CCCU President Shirley V. Hoogstra hosted a conversation on this topic with two prominent thought leaders.

David Brooks, one of the nation's leading writers and commentators, has been an op-ed columnist for *The New York Times* since 2003 and also appears regularly on *PBS NewsHour* and *Meet the Press*. He is the bestselling author of several books, including *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life* and *The Road to Character*. He is also the founder of Weave: The Social Fabric Project at the Aspen Institute, which aims to build social trust to address the root cultural cause behind many of America's social problems.

Anne Snyder is a writer and convener committed to exploring questions of class and culture, moral beauty, and a beatitudinal faith. A graduate of Wheaton College, she serves as editor-in-chief of *Comment Magazine* and the host of *Breaking Ground*, a collaborative web commons created in 2020 to inspire a dynamic cross-section of institutions, thinkers, and practitioners to respond to the major crises of the year with wisdom, courage, and clear sight. She is also the author of *The Fabric of Character: A Wise Giver's Guide to Renewing Our Social and Moral Renewal* and the host of *The Whole Person Revolution* podcast.

The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

SHIRLEY HOOGSTRA: Anne, as a Wheaton grad, you're familiar with how Christian education shapes students. What have you found to be some of the most valuable things from your Christian college experience in your life and career?

ANNE SNYDER: I became a Christian in high school after spending my childhood overseas and navigating my teenage years in an aggressively secular setting. So I found Wheaton to be both culture shock and [a time when] I had never been so excited by learning in my life.

[First], the disciplines were integrated. Somehow math could relate to history, could relate to theology, and so on. I wound up as a philosophy major, which I'm sure hammered [the integrative feature] home even further. That horizontal way of thinking has shaped my brain in ways that probably made it difficult to get a job right out of college, but have proven to be really handy in my role as an editor. Wheaton gave me lifelong curiosity around connections, around questions of why.

Then, there was [the fact that] Wheaton didn't operate purely in the intellectual domain, but rather offered a whole sense of head, heart, and helping hands, and a building of community. You were meant to deepen your intellectual life in relationship with each other and with the faculty. And then there was the fact that, at a Christian college, you are ultimately seeking truth housed in the person of Jesus Christ. What's neat about a Christian education is that you're seeking truth but, fundamentally, it's driven by love, and love of a particular historic figure.

That whole-person integration has just transformed the way I write, the way I have followed my footsteps and convictions, the way I have had to sometimes make hard, less popular choices. ... I had a bit of a light-bulb moment, just in the last few months, of realizing that it's actually hard for me to think in an individualistic or siloed way. ... That has its strengths and weaknesses, but I think [Wheaton]'s formation meant that I am always thinking in terms of webs and connections.

HOOGSTRA: Yes, there's an emphasis now on a singular or vocational training, but you can see how the type of educational experience you had lasts a lifetime. David, you went to the University of Chicago, but you have spent a lot of time on CCCU campuses, engaging students and faculty. From your perspective, what comes to mind when you think about Christian higher education?

DAVID BROOKS: I call [the University of Chicago] "the Wheaton of the South Side" because it's kind of like a Christian college

— we had sacred texts. We would dive into a long tradition of scholarship and a traditional moral philosophy. The key thing [about my experience] was that our professors taught us that if we read these books carefully, we would know the secret of life.

And there's a problem with the modern university, which has become a research university that emphasizes specialized knowledge. The problem with that, as a colleague of mine once wrote, is that it makes asking the big questions, like the purpose of life, seem not only inappropriate but unprofessional. You can go to a research university and never ask the big questions. ...

Years ago, Anne and I did a bunch of seminars for research on what became *The Road to Character*. And all the academic places we went — including Yale, where I was teaching — had good discussions, but Wheaton's was the best, because the professors not only read the books [we were discussing], but they were used to applying [the lessons] in their lives. They were used to saying, "No, here's how you should think about that relationship." Or, "Here's how you think about that vocation." It was not simply a set of academic exercises. So it was using a text to produce a certain kind of life that I found at Wheaton and a lot of the other CCCU schools I've been to.

HOOGSTRA: Using a text to build a certain kind of life — that goes to the idea of eulogy values and résumé values that you have written about. If you're using the text to build a certain kind of life, you're going to get a eulogy-values life.

BROOKS: Yes. If you read Homer, you have a certain conception of the good life built around courage and service to the city. If you read Exodus, you

have a version of the good life that's dedicated both to obedience to law and commitment to the community. If you read Matthew, you have a version of the good life devoted to grace and self-sacrificing love. These are different moral ecologies. At Chicago, we couldn't say one was better than the other; they said, "Pick one." At a CCCU school, that's not the approach. The approach is that one is better than the other — one is the true way.

And that doesn't solve all your problems, but you have a sense of what is your ultimate devotion. The absence of an ultimate devotion for a lot of people these days is a very disorienting thing, which I think leads to a lot of fanaticism. You don't know what ultimate truth you're surrendering to or have an ultimate vision of the good. What are you shooting for? What are your goals? If you don't have a sense of goals, then your life just becomes one of wandering and anxiety, because you don't know who you are or where you are going. ...

HOOGSTRA: Do you think that Christians are actually offering this approach to the world enough? It would seem to be an antidote to the polarization that we're having in our culture. So why aren't Christians being leaven, a more pervasive influence to transform things for the better?

BROOKS: When I talk to CCCU schools, many times my message is the same: First, be not afraid. Second, you have what the rest of the world wants. The whole country is filled with spiritual hunger, with no vocabulary to articulate it, and Christian colleges have the vocabulary.

But [often Christian colleges have] a feeling of siege mentality and of being



SHIRLEY HOOGSTRA
PRESIDENT, CCCU

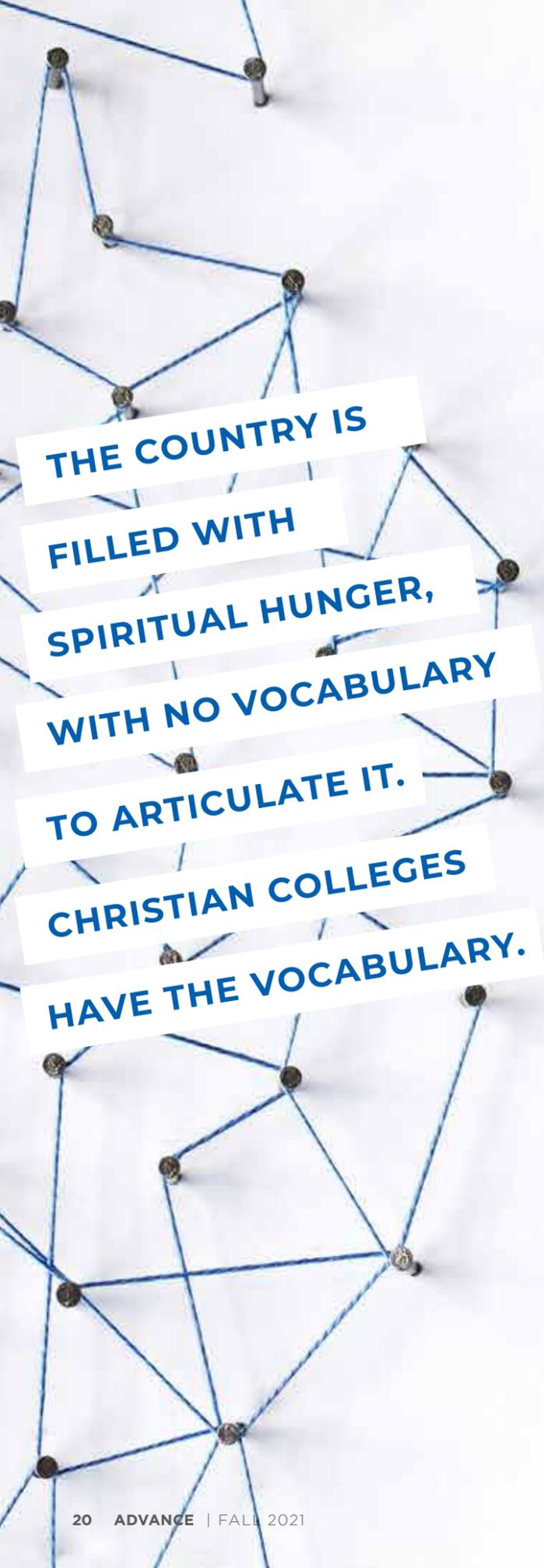


DAVID BROOKS
AUTHOR AND
FOUNDER OF
WEAVE: THE SOCIAL
FABRIC PROJECT



ANNE SNYDER
EDITOR-IN-
CHIEF, COMMENT
MAGAZINE

Photos courtesy of David Brooks, Shirley Hoogstra, and Anne Snyder



under assault, whether for following traditional sexual ethics or other issues. That sense of being under assault produces what I've described many times as a combination of a spiritual superiority complex combined with an intellectual inferiority complex. It creates a sense of, "We can't really go out into the world and say what we've got because they'll hate us."

HOOGSTRA: When you say "siege mentality," of course, I see that occurring. But I think that for us as leaders in Christian higher education, there has to be a conviction that we will not take on that mindset of siege. We will be responsive or even proactive, but we will not be under siege. The Creator God is not so fragile that he cannot take care of anything for which we would be under siege.

BROOKS: You can speak to this more than me, but ever since I've been going to CCCU campuses, the students have always shocked me by how self-confident they were and how uninterested they were in some of the culture war issues. I remember my first visit to a Christian college, Seattle Pacific, and I was interviewed by a student journalist who had metal piercings going up and down her face. And I was like, "Oh, this is not what I expected." Visiting Wheaton for the first time, I expected to find a bunch of megachurch kids. But they were very dissatisfied with that model. And I find, especially in the last four years, there's just a gigantic generation gap between the young and the old. Anne, I think it's more interesting to you to figure out how to be a Christian than it is to [determine] how Christians should operate in American politics.

SNYDER: Yes. Since I'm running a magazine now that is grounded in 2,000 years of Christian social thought, I have been drawn into a variety of conversations, potential projects, and initiatives around Christian witness in the U.S. or, say, fixing evangelicalism. And those are worthy and needed. But in my own Christian education — and I think this is true for many students and alumni I meet from Christian colleges — Christianity is very much the light and the lens by which you view the world and how you see and treat others. And this is no dismissal at all of those who are called to the church and are called to ministry full-time, but I think there is something freeing about that. Christianity is your core identity, but it is also the adjective [to what you are doing] for society.

I'm really drawn to local faith actors who may be running a rehab center, or people who are doing interesting racial reconciliation work in Detroit or working with the disabled. I'm interested in the local manifestations of Christians being Christians, where their faith informs their entire strategy of how they serve those who exist on the margins. That seems to be where the kingdom is unfurling these days, and dwelling there keeps my hope alive.

I think at the broader national level, we get sucked into a very politicized scene, where the levers of change seem confined to hashtag messaging. It's a lot of words, it's a lot of coalition building. And somehow I find that those levers fit very uncomfortably with Jesus' model of influence and social change. There's something to be said for those 12 disciples and that small replication model that

I watch flowering in a million places, often quite small and local. But this broader national Christian thing has become [a matter of] using political weaponry, political words, political strategy. I don't know exactly how to get out of that, but it's almost like two different Christianities.

HOOGSTRA: When I used the word "leaven," I was thinking of influence on a national level, but what you're talking about is leaven that is influencing these local, organic, genuine community spaces where people are living out a desire to be Christian. It's like the Weave project you're working on [at the Aspen Institute] — isn't this part of the leaven that is at the ground level?

BROOKS: Yes, it's how it's embodied rather than studied from a distance. That's why I say there's personal knowledge and there's objective knowledge. One of my heroes is a philosopher named Michael Oakeshott. He makes this distinction between technical knowledge and embodied knowledge. Say I wanted to cook a lasagna. I could read a cookbook, and it will give me some ingredients to put in my lasagna. But if I really want to be good at it, there's a certain knowledge that only a chef has through experience. That's embodied knowledge. And that's knowing when to deviate, that's knowing when to make an exception, that's creativity.

And so, in my view, Christianity is not against objective knowledge, but it offers a different kind of knowledge. In the Bible, the word "to know" is not solely a rational thing; it's also very emotional. When Augustine thought of knowledge, he didn't think of it as studying. He thought that it illuminates us into being a certain person. And even as neighbors, we illuminate each other into being certain sorts of people by the presence we bring into the room, or the quality of the attention. So it's a relational form of epistemology that gets lost in modern science and, frankly, in modern

liberalism, which wants to reduce everything to technique and proposition.

SNYDER: I remember friends and I from my college days discovering the truth of this for ourselves: "To love is to know, to know is to love." There is something about becoming knowledgeable because you love something. David and I often discuss the interpretation of the two Adams in the book of Genesis — Adam I and Adam II. Each one of us has these two Adams within us. Adam I is the one that masters, that desires to win, is very ambitious, wants control over your domain, and seeks excellence. Adam II is the one that is softer, has a desire to seek virtue, to humble oneself before God, and to humble oneself before others. And when we were getting to know each other, David would joke that my Wheaton education had really made me great on Adam II, but we had some work to do on Adam I. He wasn't wrong, and I've since had some more rigorous moments on my own career path where Adam I has had to be sharpened. But I've often found that there's still a dominant impulse moving out of love of God and love of other. A love that motivates excellence in, for example, hosting a gathering, in clarifying a thought in writing, in performing a piece of music. It's a different way of framing David's notion of embodied knowledge, but this love factor feels vital to the distinctiveness of Christian education.

HOOGSTRA: To talk about love within education — isn't that such a unique attribute for an educational institution, to say that a person is the embodiment of love? That you can and should explore that with real depth? What kind of community did you find at Wheaton, Anne, that allowed you to explore some of these things?

SNYDER: I found there such a coherent community — it was faculty, students, administrators. One of my most powerful mentors was César Gomez, who served on Wheaton's custodial staff and who I first got to know on a college

trip to Honduras. Especially for someone coming from a secular educational context, the exposure to such a broad range of exemplars [on campus] of what it meant to follow Christ was huge — all of these people in their different vocations, different activities, different personalities. ... And then to say nothing of the friendships and the drama of being in your 20s while you're trying to figure out all of these things — friendship, romance, etc. — while you're discussing these ideas and challenging yourselves. There's something about the coherence of a community that in and of itself was showing me the many different flavors of the Jesus Way of life.

HOOGSTRA: Yes. I want my grandchildren to be able to have that opportunity to have that formational community. ... David, I want to go back to the weavers in communities you are exploring. Are you finding any connection between faith and those weavers in the community?

BROOKS: Weavers are people who build community in their local neighborhood. We have a friend in Houston who would help undocumented men who'd suffered paralyzing industry and construction accidents. He gave them diapers and catheters and wheelchairs and connected them with social workers. So he gave them lives of dignity and service after horrific accidents. Agnes McKeen in Oregon, her son died by suicide, so she works with families struggling with suicide. Charles Perry in Chicago, he served time in prison, so he works with gang members to try to head them off [that path to prison].

I would say about half are faith-driven. In the South and among the Black community, they talk more about [faith] than in the north among the white community. So half are faith-driven, half are not, but they're all going to be in right relationship with each other, serving some ultimate good. You never meet a weaver who says, "I'm doing this for a

couple of years, but I think I'll quit and go to become an accountant." They know why they were put on this earth, and they want to be in relationship with others.

I think the one thing that faith does is that it sometimes strengthens endurance. We have a friend who has an organization in Shreveport, Louisiana, and he runs hospitality houses, settlement houses. And in some of them, there are married couples who are looking after 40 kids or 30 kids or 20. Looking after three kids is hard. Looking after 20 or 30 is really hard. And to do that year after year, it gets hard to sustain that level of resilience unless there's some higher calling there. It's not impossible, but it's harder.

HOOGSTRA: Do the weavers have communities themselves? Or do you find that there's a need for them to have this kind of community that supports them in this extraordinary work?

BROOKS: Yes, they tend to loneliness as they are working. A friend of ours runs an organization where they mentor 2,000-3,000 kids in the city. That's just a gigantic undertaking — organizing these networks of relationships. And so she's giving, giving, giving; the phone's always ringing, but who's giving to her? So I think for a lot of people in these roles, self-care becomes super important. I used to scoff at that phrase, but I think they hunger for each other's company because they're in the gift-giving business and not in the receiving business.

SNYDER: It's similar to how many parents feel. We're in an age where people's schedules are so unique. We're all very protective of how we run our time. There isn't that sense of sharing — you don't have a neighborhood sharing a car anymore, for example. I think a lot of these weavers do feel they lack that sustaining village behind them where we're all sharing the same norms. I think part of David's idea when he started this was to inspire more of us to exist in this self-sacrificing but interdependent logic so

that woven net would be built. That way, these superstars who are gifted relationally and are constantly serving don't burn out.

HOOGSTRA: Yes. One of the things I hope for this discussion is not only to identify what is going well in Christian higher education, but also to identify those areas where we can activate in new ways because of our unique educational approach and our values. This is an example — coming together as a community to help these weavers seem like a unique opportunity for those who have gone through a Christian higher education.

So, speaking of value, what are one or two things that you would suggest to Christian university leaders about better articulating the value of the enterprise?

SNYDER: I don't know if they can necessarily say this about themselves, but I say it about them as a graduate and as someone who feels like a real beneficiary of Christian higher education. In an age where everything is so ideological, ... there's something about an educational institution that is founded on an utterly different category of value. That is, this embodied knowledge that is oriented in the person of Christ. It's not ideological in the same way. I realize this gets tricky as we talk about Christians and public life these days, but these kinds of faith-based institutions are vital for our democracy. When I speak to public intellectuals that feel suffocated by what you can and can't say on elite college campuses, if they have gone to speak to a [Christian college], they talk about this surprising grace and intellectual oxygen in the room. There's some freedom in the questions that are being asked on Christian college campuses that are not immediately shrouded in ideological suspicion or definition. I think that's an important strength to learn how to defend and hold.

BROOKS: I spend a couple days at Westmont [College] every year with stu-

dents and alumni, but what focuses me is the alumni. We have just general discussions about life and all its aspects, and it occurs to me during those discussions that college can bring to an adult alumni life things that a church may not be able to bring to that life. And so there's the natural progression: You go to a Christian school and then, for adult formation, you go to church. But a college like Westmont has resources that a church doesn't have — a faculty and students and all sorts of things, which in some ways is going to be a richer experience. I would love to see the schools function the way some secular schools do, where your summer trips are with an alumni association. It's a process of continuing the education involved in the places.

So that's one thing I would say. The other thing is needing a balance. I teach at Yale, and when somebody at Yale puts a paper before us for peer review, we're really unpleasant human beings — the virtue of charity is not observed in these circumstances. But sometimes there is an "iron sharpening iron" that comes out of these projects. There's a balance between niceness and rigor. And finding the right balance is something I think some schools may struggle with.

SNYDER: When I graduated college, I felt like I was part of a generation — and I think this is still fairly true — where the commencement speech was, "Change the world!" I think in the realm of justice, that's great and important, but understanding "change it" versus "serve it," I think, is what a place like Wheaton certainly did for me. What I find in a lot of Christian grads is there is this deep appreciation for being taught to think like anthropologists — you're taught to be very curious about the context in which you live. Get that context first, and then you find the pain points and serve in a way that has some redemptive arc. And that's just a different approach [than a secular school]. You're not necessarily graduating as advocates

who are outraged and have all of these formulas of how you need to change to the institutions. Agency is good, and feeling empowered to shape things is fine, but without a normative framework *toward* the good, that [agency] is simply reactive. I worry that we wind up producing people who harm a lot of things. In my own Christian college experience, we learn that we are ambassadors, yes, but we are here to be of service; there is pain out there, and we bear the wounds of a God who bleeds for this [same brokenness]. So find the wounds and staunch them. It sounds subtle, but I think it profoundly affects the posture with which we pursue the public square, our local place, and our vocations.

HOOGSTRA: Last question. It's been a hard year. If we were in a room with presidents and other CCCU leaders, what words of encouragement would you share with them?

SNYDER: This is a specific, almost too-concrete action plan. But every person I know — especially those who don't have Christian faith — if they find themselves invited to a Christian college or university, their whole impression of Christianity in America, and of those schools, usually shifts toward the good. Most Christian colleges, at their best, embody a radical hospitality that I hope they could just lean into even more. ... I have never met a secular person who has walked away [from a Christian campus visit] having had a horrific experience. Not to be overly cliché here, but I do think love has a way of disarming. It's rare to find that in a place that also is intellectually rigorous.

BROOKS: I would just say that what this country needs more than anything else is strong institutions. Faculty, we are not always institutionalists — we write our books, we get to stand in front of classrooms and opine before young people. But it's often about us and not about the institution. But when you're a college president, and you've more or less lost control of your schedule, because there are so many constituencies to serve — when you're doing home visits to raise money; when you're worried in the middle of the night because you hear a siren coming across campus, and you're wondering if it's one of your kids — all these are important forms of institutional service.

I just had a conversation with three retiring college presidents. One was Michael Scales from Nyack College. In extremely tough times, he preserved this wonderful institution where thousands of students have cycled through and been influenced by him. Another was Nathan Hatch from Wake Forest, and he leaves Wake Forest as a pioneer in a university that thinks seriously about character. Again, thousands [of students] will go through Wake and be influenced by him. And the third was my own college president, Bob Zimmer at the University of Chicago. Over the course of a number of years, he took us from being a very good school to being an extremely good school. These are three examples of where leadership made 90% of the difference. And so it can be a thankless job, an exhausting job, but it really is an important job. 🙏



CHRISTIAN COLLEGES,
AT THEIR BEST,
EMBODY A RADICAL
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PERSPECTIVES ON PRISON EDUCATION

CCCU institutions transform the lives of students, including some who are behind bars.

FOR THE 2.3 MILLION individuals currently incarcerated in the U.S. in federal or state prisons, education can be a driving force in changing the trajectory of their lives and propelling them toward successful reentry into society following release. A study by the RAND Corporation found that incarcerated people who participate in education programs are 48% less likely to recidivate and 13% more likely to gain employment upon release. Prison education also saves taxpayer dollars. In fact, every dollar invested in correctional education is estimated to save nearly \$5 in reincarceration costs over three years. However, only 9% of individuals leave prison with a postsecondary education, even though over 70% of incarcerated people desire to participate in an education program.

Numerous CCCU institutions offer educational or professional opportunities to incarcerated or formerly incarcerated individuals. The following essays by incarcerated students, program directors, and CCCU presidents offer a glimpse of the value these programs bring not just for the students who participate, but for campus communities and society as a whole.

MY EDUCATION HAS TRANSFORMED MY IDENTITY

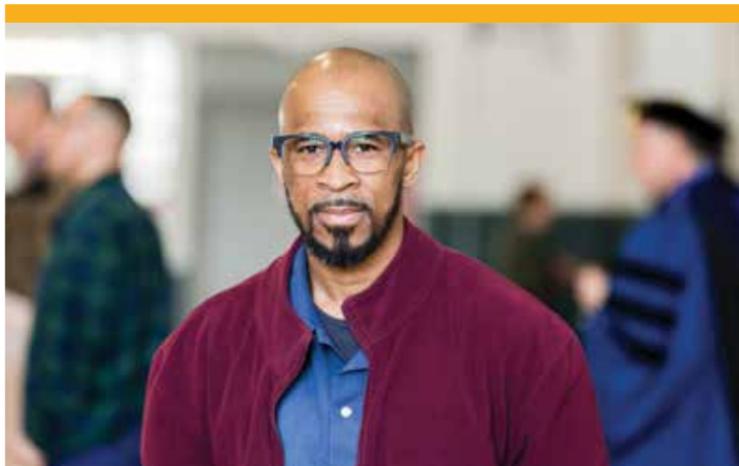
MY NAME IS JAMES (Jamie) Young Sturdivant. I am in my final year of college via the Calvin Prison Initiative (CPI), and I am scheduled to receive my hard-earned bachelor's degree in May 2022. I never imagined I would be accepted into a college program and never would have thought I would excel to the degree that I have thus far. I did not believe I was smart enough.

When I think back to my days in elementary school, I remember most searingly being bullied mercilessly. I hated school and vowed to drop out the first chance I got. Therefore, the highest grade I completed was sixth grade. This was after being held back in the fourth. I had zero interest in school or whatever the teachers were teaching. I even had one teacher force me to stand in front of the class while she encouraged the students to make fun of me; she was the same teacher that held me back in the fourth grade. The bullying ruined my school experience, so I sat in class daydreaming about not being there. Since I was not learning anything, the school thought I must have a learning disability and placed me in a class for special education students. I had no way of refuting their assumption about me, so I started to believe and accept that I must have a learning disability. Once I accepted their label, I stopped trying to learn altogether. I just wanted out of school.

When people asked me what I wanted to be when I was older, I would always say a truck driver. Not because I had any passion for driving trucks, but because I somehow learned I did not need a high school diploma for that job. I heard I just had to go to truck driving school.

I was arrested 10 days after my 17th birthday, and at that point it had been years since I had last stepped foot into a school building. I was, for all intents and purposes, illiterate. I knew words like *cat*, *dog*, and *the*, but that was it. I taught myself how to read while sitting aimlessly in the county jail awaiting trial, and I loved it so much that I started to read anything with words. I went from a first-grade reading and comprehension level to a 12th-grade level in three years. It was at that point I started to question my early diagnosis of a learning disability. Again, I had no way to disprove that diagnosis.

In 2017, I applied and was accepted into the CPI program. I was intimidated by the expectations, but I had reached a point in my life where I wanted to challenge myself. I was afraid that if I told the professors about my presumed learning disability, they would treat me differently; I decided not to play that card. After completing my first



James Young Sturdivant dropped out of school in sixth grade and was arrested at 17. Through Calvin University's Calvin Prison Initiative, he is on track to earn his bachelor's degree in 2022 and has made the Dean's List every semester allowable.

semester, I revealed to my Old Testament professor, Dr. Christiana DeGroot, my diagnosis of being learning disabled. She looked at me and said, "I don't see it." That was all it took for me to no longer believe the misdiagnosis of my elementary school teachers.

I have excelled beyond my imagination while attending college. The lowest semester grade I have earned is a B (twice), and my GPA is currently 3.62. I have made the Dean's List every semester allowable, and I am looking forward not only to graduating but most importantly to being a lifelong learner.

Engaging with the CPI professors and staff has been instrumental in shaping the way I look at myself as a student. I feel that I have value as a human being, despite the horrific crimes I committed 25 years ago. When I walk out of my cell in the morning, I am reminded with every turn that I am a prisoner. When I am in a CPI classroom, I am expected to behave and see myself as a student, and that has given me permission to transform my identity. I am more than a student; I am *imago Dei*.

JAMES YOUNG STURDIVANT is a student at Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary's Calvin Prison Initiative, held at the Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility in Ionia, Michigan.

Photo courtesy of Calvin University

MY WRONGFUL CONVICTION LED TO MY DEGREE

NYACK COLLEGE, A PRIVATE Christian college affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, is also the provider of an in-prison college program in New York. Recidivism, or the act of reoffending, has become a persistent byproduct of our prison system, feeding into the endless cycle of incarceration. As of 2018, graduates of Nyack's program at Fishkill Correctional Facility had a 0% recidivism rate, whereas New York State's recidivism rate overall was more than 40%. Incarceration has become a normal life event for many Black males, with one out of three likely to be admitted to prison. During my own experience with incarceration, the Nyack program provided a cornerstone for my rehabilitation.

As one of the many in the U.S. who are wrongly convicted, I owe my college enrollment to a miscarriage of justice. But even though I was innocent, my incarceration allowed time for me to examine my life. Raised in a single-parent home, expelled from every ill-equipped public school I attended, and wrestling with traumatic experiences meant I was well-suited to fit the Black male stereotype. Confinement gave me the opportunity

to confront my phantoms of want and the ghosts of my past, and it magnified my plight. My attempt to bypass critical steps in life caused me to stumble into prison. Education was a major step I had ignored, but I decided I would ignore it no longer. My high schools were fashioned with bars, metal detectors, violence, and outdated, inferior textbooks; my high school experience prepared me for prison, rather than college. However, once I graduated to prison, I became curious about college.

Inside my cell, I found myself praying to God to be delivered from the fires of my own ignorance. Ironically, others around me were looking for pages of Proverbs — not for self-understanding but to use as rolling papers. But I began to peruse religious texts, autobiographies, historical fiction, and eastern philosophy, where I came across the premature burials of the Confucian scholars. Was I buried alive in support of a discriminatory system that despised me? Identifying with the buried scholars, I began to focus on the educational programs provided in prison, placing myself around prisoners attending Nyack and others who were similarly inclined toward wanting education. Once opportunity came knocking, I answered, and I was received by a professor eager to interview me.

I was accepted. Nyack College believed in me when I had doubts about my own academic capabilities. I defied the odds, overcoming the obstacles created by my environment and poor decision-making. College had a positive impact on my self-esteem, negating the daily humiliations of my prison environment. I was no longer a dehumanized being. I was a college student. My professors guided me to think critically, and I began to use that discipline to reprocess my conviction. God was revealing his grand plan, and I became receptive to the message. I began to work towards re-proclaiming my innocence.

The Nyack program taught me to be receptive to new information, bestowing a fortified confidence that assisted me in the reversal of my conviction. The program also introduced me to the importance of community and our responsibility to friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

Since my release, Nyack has helped me attend college in-person for the first time, participate on a panel at Columbia University School of Social Work, and create UpliftingNY, a nonprofit organization to reduce violence amongst youth. More importantly, the confidence I gained through Nyack helped me to become a better person, son, brother, friend, and father.

JUSTIN COOK is a student at Nyack College (New York, NY); he originally enrolled through the college's partnership with Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison at Fishkill Correctional Facility.



ABOVE: Graduates of Nyack College's program at Fishkill Correctional Facility celebrate their graduation day. **RIGHT:** Justin Cook is one of the participants in Nyack's program.



Photos courtesy of Nyack College

A SMALL INVESTMENT WITH ETERNAL DIVIDENDS

SINCE 2007, COLUMBIA International University's Prison Initiative program has trained 169 inmates to impact South Carolina Department of Correction (SCDC) institutions with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The program's goal is to equip our students to change the culture of South Carolina prisons from the inside by the transformational power of the gospel. The graduates of the Prison Initiative receive accredited associates degrees through a two-year program located within Kirkland Correctional Institution, the Receive and Evaluation (R & E) institution for South Carolina.

Columbia International University (CIU) faculty and staff enter the prison to teach the student-inmates the same courses that CIU offers on our main campus. The student inmates are fully a part of the CIU student body; like their peers, they are taught to know Christ and are trained to make him known worldwide. The Prison Initiative students receive a well-rounded education, including courses in English, psychology, Old and New Testament, public speaking, evangelism and discipleship, and hermeneutics. Students also receive practical training such as hospice care, crisis counseling, men's fraternity, and reentry preparation programs.

In addition to academic training, students engage in hands-on ministry, with the opportunity to minister and share the gospel with every inmate that enters SCDC. Over 20,000 visits to new inmates have resulted in thousands of first-time decisions and rededications to Christ each year. One of our students journaled a powerful experience he had while ministering in the dorms:

"Last week, I went to the Youthful Offender Act Reception and Evaluation dorm with two CIU brothers. We took turns telling our stories and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. That night, 39 young men, mostly gang-bangers, gave their lives to the Lord for the first time. The world calls them worthless. I've been sent to tell them they are precious to God."

The program's impact has been statewide, as graduates are stationed at 22 institutions around the state and serve under the leadership of SCDC chaplains as their assistants and workers. Graduates of the Prison Initiative are being utilized to preach and teach, counsel the bereaved, work in the infirmary and crisis units, serve as character-based dorm leaders, and provide one-on-one mentoring. They are peacemakers on the yard and can relate to their fellow inmates in ways that SCDC officers, staff, and chaplains cannot.

Over 45 of our former students have been released from prison and successfully integrated into society. The recidivism rate for students in the program is 3%, which is one of the lowest in the nation for these types of programs. In addition, the Prison Initiative has been impactful in the rehabilitative and restorative process of men and women who have been incarcerated.

Columbia International University raises \$150,000 each year to administratively support these programs. These low-cost programs yield high eternal dividends.

MARK A. SMITH, Ed.D., is the seventh president of Columbia International University (Columbia, South Carolina).

Inmates in the South Carolina Department of Corrections can earn degrees through Columbia International University's Prison Initiative Program.



Kierston Smith-Columbia International University

TRAINING OFFENDERS AND TRANSFORMING LIVES

Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. (Hebrews 13:3, NIV)

SINCE ITS INCEPTION in 1858, Hannibal-LaGrange University (HLGU) has been deeply committed to providing high-quality Christian higher education for a life of service to God and society. Over the years, traditional on-campus degree programs have been expanded to include extension and online classes to meet the needs of students.

Recently, the university began to explore additional opportunities for reaching new student populations. Out of this desire to minister to our community, state, and world, HLGU explored the possibility of providing education to inmates within the Missouri prison system. For no other reason than the desire to be faithful to God's word and remember those in prison, the dream of starting a program of Christian studies in the prison system became a reality. This partnership was modeled after other effective programs, such as the one in the Angola Louisiana State Penitentiary.

HLGU is pleased to sponsor Freedom on the Inside, a Christian studies bachelor's degree program in partnership with the Missouri Department of Corrections. The Missouri Department of Corrections provides space for classrooms, a library, and offices; it also works to facilitate students' schedules so they can be in class and have adequate time to do their studies. Enrolled students do not pay for tuition, books, or computers. Since students in the Freedom on the Inside program are ineligible for any state or federal assistance and are ineligible for financial aid, the program is sustained through HLGU's budget as well as through donations and grants.

This is an incredible opportunity for HLGU to provide education to inmates, many of whom will spend most of their lives behind bars. This four-year course of study equips students to serve as chaplain assistants throughout the Missouri prison system. Each year, HLGU admits 20 students to the program, and we expect our first graduates to receive their diplomas in 2024.

Freedom on the Inside's vision is to equip students to think biblically, to think deeply, to act justly, and to live as Christ's representatives in the prison system and the world. When the program started, we had a vision for what we hoped to accomplish, but God is at work in ways far beyond what we could have imagined.

Since the program's inception, inmates have been led to Christ, baptized, and disciplined. As a result, a church has been started in the prison to train and equip other inmates and minis-



The Freedom on the Inside program, a Christian studies bachelor's degree program offered by Hannibal-LaGrange University, is transforming life for those who live and work in the prison system in Missouri.

ter to their community. Correctional officers and instructors say that they are already seeing an immediate and positive effect on the prison population. Students understand the importance of communicating their faith walk to other inmates, correctional officers, and the facility administration.

A primary task of Christian higher education is to help students learn to think Christianly—that is, to approach every issue of life with the intent to understand, evaluate, and respond to it in a manner consistent with normative biblical teaching. Our highest commitment as an academic institution is to educate students to love God with their heart, soul, and mind. Students who enter the program through the prison system will receive the same type of education that our students receive on campus. Our hope and prayer is that once they receive their education, they will be able to serve in important, meaningful roles in ministry in the prison system.

ANTHONY W. ALLEN, ED.D., has served as president of Hannibal-LaGrange University since 2012.

Photos courtesy of Hannibal-LaGrange University

CHANGING LIVES INSIDE A PRISON

IMAGINE YOURSELF STEPPING into your classroom in a prison. As you begin instruction, the vision that you have turning over in your head is that of Jesus standing in the center of the classroom, singing and dancing and rejoicing over what he has done and is doing in the lives of your Adults-In-Custody (AIC) students. At several points throughout the course of the day, you find yourself compelled to pause your teaching and share with your students, “Jesus is not finished with you. His plan is to conform you to his image, and he fully intends to glorify himself in you and through you. Keep your eyes on Jesus, because he intends to advance his kingdom inside the prison walls.”

This has been my experience since I began teaching in an undergraduate prison degree program offered by Corban University in Salem, Oregon.

God is changing our AIC students. On the first day of class, one student thumped his chest and exclaimed with great enthusiasm, “I am a Corban University student!” As I engaged this student over the next few weeks, I came to realize the full weight of what he was saying. Before, he had been ashamed and unwilling to forgive himself; now, even though he viewed himself as a “convict” in prison, his self-identity was being transformed. He is indeed a Corban University student.

Just past the midway point of our first semester in fall 2019, I asked students to reflect on and share with me what God had done in their lives thus far. Here is a small look at the deeply appreciative responses they gave to me anonymously:

- “I am relearning how to use my brain, sweeping out the dust and cobwebs, getting the machine running again. I can’t think of anything more mindless than prison. It makes your brain rot. Like everything else, the mind requires exercise, or it atrophies.”
- “Academically, I have been swamped, but it feels good, like I have a purpose in life again. You get this chance to understand how to break God’s word into usable life skills.”
- “God is not done with me yet. He is putting me to work, giving me a purpose for his kingdom. My life of freedom may be over, but I am not down and out. Never count God out.”

One of the challenges students face is having been away from formal education and having to relearn things. But the community students are building together helps overcome this challenge. Every week during study hall, students are helping others who are struggling. As one student shared, “With the cohesion that has happened among the students and teachers, we have been able to help each other.”

The fact that Corban’s program is more than just academics — that it provides Christ-centered education — is also notable for the students in the program. One student remarked:

“The chance to earn a properly accredited degree is great and will never lose its value, but the Christian ethics attached to this education are what catapults this program above others. I can’t overstate how important this is, that we should receive a moral education. No other program does such a comprehensive job of meeting our educational needs when it comes to morality and ethics, as well as a degree that will actually count for something in the real world.”

Eventually, we expect that the majority of our students will be released, having become educated and well-equipped contributing members of our society. This opportunity to develop these students to become who Christ intends for them to be is what motivates me to invest in them academically and spiritually. The prison is a mission field, and it is because of Christ’s work in and through these students that his kingdom will advance. I want to join Jesus in dancing for joy at the work happening here. Don’t you?

AMIT A. BHATIA, Ph.D., is assistant professor and director of the Oregon State Correctional Institution (OSCI) Extension at Corban University (Salem, Oregon).

Paid in Full Oregon

Kristi Jones-Lipscomb University



Students in Corban University’s undergraduate prison degree program attended a convocation in October 2019.

CHANGES FOR THOSE INSIDE AND OUT

WHEN I FIRST TAUGHT a class for Lipscomb University at the Debra K. Johnson Rehabilitation Center in Nashville, Tennessee, it was 2008 and my class was only the fourth to be offered there. To me, it sometimes felt like a furtive experiment, and each week as I took books to the prison, I wondered, “Are we even allowed to do this?” But over the years, about 150 incarcerated (or “inside”) students, at least that many traditional (or “outside”) students, and more than 50 faculty have participated in what is now called LIFE (Lipscomb Initiative for Education). This year, as I serve as director of the LIFE program, I am increasingly aware of how deep the support and wide the influence of this program has become. LIFE is not only allowed, but it is also nurtured by both the university and the state of Tennessee.

The LIFE program’s appeal is partly the promise of transformation — higher education decreases recidivism and offers hope and confidence to the incarcerated student. LIFE classes equip students to address conflict in their lives, practice critical thinking, and set educational and life goals. But everyone who participates in LIFE knows that transformation goes both ways. Everyone who teaches a class, visits as a guest lecturer, or helps set up the stage for graduation experiences transformation as well.

Leanne Smith, associate professor in Lipscomb’s College of Business, speaks for faculty when she says, “Every time I’ve taught at the prison, it has stripped something away that I thought I knew about teaching and caused me to rethink it. It takes me out of my comfort zone every time I go through checkpoint and hear the clang of the bars rolling shut behind me. I quickly come to love the women in my classes and to appreciate how thirsty they are to learn. ... I never fail to walk back out through those clanging bars without knowing that I have been the real student in this scenario.”

Participating in LIFE makes Smith a better teacher: “I am more sensitive to the diverse backgrounds of all my students,” she says. “Any and all of them have their own personal sacrifices in pursuing their education. I may never know the whole of their stories, but I am holding keys of understanding that can make a powerful impact on future chapters. And when traditional students from campus capitalize on the opportunity to come to prison and sit beside inside students, it’s incredible to see the understanding in their eyes change, to see how they come to realize that education is truly life-changing.”

And many outside students have acted on that realization. Amanda Martin cites her experience in LIFE classes as

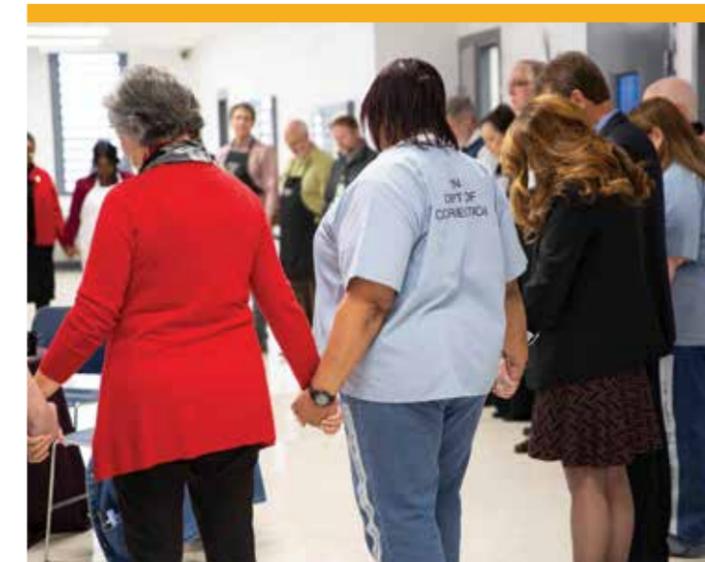
informing her career choices, which now center on a desire to address the negative circumstances that increase a person’s chance of incarceration. After her LIFE classes, she spent summers working on criminal justice reform in Uganda and with low-income clients on civil legal issues in Nashville. When she graduated law school, she worked to reduce poverty and unemployment by increasing economic opportunities in disadvantaged areas.

Martin now directs the Office of Neighborhood, Community and Government Relations at Lipscomb, developing relationships with government partners to financially support the LIFE program. For two years, the state of Tennessee has provided direct funding, allowing LIFE to double its enrollment. Martin says, “The LIFE program not only takes our courses to places we never imagined; it allows us to partner with others who share our passion for transforming lives through education.”

The inside students in the LIFE program tell us that Lipscomb brings light to a dark place, but I hope they know their light shines bright on Lipscomb’s campus. I hope they know their education is not a closed experiment but a rich, life-giving force that changes the Lipscomb community for the better. 🌟

ROBBIE SPIVEY is the director of the Lipscomb Initiative for Education (LIFE) program at Lipscomb University (Nashville, Tennessee).

The Lipscomb Initiative for Education (LIFE) program brings together traditional students from Lipscomb’s campus and students who are residents of the Tennessee Prison for Women.



BY MARK SARGENT

WHY WE DO RESEARCH ON CCCU CAMPUSES

NOURISHING A CULTURE OF RESEARCH ON CHRISTIAN CAMPUSES IS IMPORTANT NOT ONLY FOR FACULTY RESEARCHERS, BUT FOR THEIR STUDENTS, THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY, AND THE WIDER WORLD.



EARLY IN MY CAREER, A COLLEAGUE REMINDED ME THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST GIFTS I COULD GIVE MY STUDENTS WAS CURIOSITY.

“Think less about telling students what you know,” she advised, “but make them excited about what you still want to know.” As a provost, I recalled that advice often when considering the blend of research and teaching in an academic culture. Students flourish when they are in a community defined by wonder.

There is a wide range of vibrant scholarly inquiry at CCCU campuses, crossing many terrains of study. Publications, presentations, and grants have increased over the past several decades. Admittedly, with economic pressures on higher education — and increased demands on faculty time — sustaining a lively culture of research grows more challenging. So it is important to consider why research matters to the missions of Christian colleges and universities.

THE VALUE OF RESEARCH FOR FAITH AND SERVICE IN THE CHURCH

At its best, a Christian college is a laboratory for the next generation of leadership and service in the church. Admittedly, only a small percentage of graduates will become research scholars, but all students' years in a scholarly community can enhance their respect for the protocols, fruits, and ethics of rigorous inquiry. That will shape the way they lead and serve, no matter the field they pursue.

Careful academic scholarship is often the best way of moving out of the all-too-common ideological logjams. Christian values and witness gain influence and credibility when we are alert and responsive to the most recent discoveries and theories. Many of the most acute problems in our world — such as infectious diseases, environmental crises, and economic disparities — are currently compounded by shrill partisanship. This may well be a season, then, when Christian scholars can be distinguished by the nuanced and conscientious analyses that shed more light and less heat on contemporary predicaments.

Many regions, and virtually all of our campuses, have been wrestling more emphatically with issues of justice, especially related to race and equity. I have certainly needed to become more aware of how our history, habits of mind, and social systems have promoted and perpetuated injustices. It is usually the well-researched article that moves me beyond my entrenched opinions and most significantly enlightens me about the policies and practices that could effectively enhance human welfare. As a larger community of scholars, Christian colleges need deeper engagement with the research that helps us consider the most redemptive actions, not only in our neighborhoods but also on our own campuses.

THE VALUE OF RESEARCH IN ALL FIELDS

Usually, conversations on research steer toward the STEM fields, but it has been encouraging to see the progress of faculty-student research collaborations in all fields. Ensuring research opportunities in STEM fields is certainly vital to recruiting the faculty who can engage the widening horizons of opportunity and risk in scientific inquiry, as well as for ensuring that our science programs offer pure research and not simply applied options.

At the same time, Christian colleges and universities embrace values — intellectual humility, collegial respect and collaboration, and our shared faith in Christ — that should make interdisciplinary exploration more common on our campuses. Most of the pressing issues before us require interdisciplinary solutions, the synthesis of knowledge and ideas from many lines of inquiry.

I have been fortunate to observe the intellectual energy and the *esprit de corps* in the “Bridging Two Cultures of Science and the Humanities” programs offered by Scholarship & Christianity in

Oxford (the CCCU's U.K. subsidiary), and I always wanted to do more to model that same kind of interdisciplinary discourse for our students. In those programs, the faculty participants cultivated and continue to share excitement about their research, which keeps refueling their interdisciplinary exchange and camaraderie. As I have reflected on how we might renew the humanities after years of enrollment declines, I have wondered how a more deliberate interdisciplinarity, animated by scholars from multiple fields engaging common research questions with their students, might offer new energy.

THE SPIRITUAL VALUE OF RESEARCH

During my time as a provost, I heard many faculty and students express how much their research enriched their spiritual lives and stirred their hearts for worship. For many, the freedom to explore enhances reverence for the Creator and concern for creation. Sometimes stories of spiritual renewal came in surprising moments. I remember one encounter at a research symposium when students told me about how tracing the impact of the California drought on snakes provided an inspiration for Christian stewardship.

Research also hones our vision for service in ways that can be reassuring or corrective. Often, students and colleagues ask themselves if their impulses to serve, however well-meaning and driven by their faith, had led them hastily to practices that can be counterproductive.

So they learned to value being part of a scholarly community that seeks evidence for effective and ethical practices, even if that process of discernment adds layers of complexity.

THE VALUE OF INVESTING IN RESEARCH

Research does require considerable time and money. I am certainly aware of the difficult trade-offs administrators face and know that we seldom have the resources necessary to match our visions. For the scholar, it is easy to become overwhelmed by the duties of teaching, mentoring, and program management — and then to feel intimidated by the amount of knowledge necessary to understand any topic or to bring a scholarly project to fruition.

But creating and stewarding the opportunities that we can develop for scholarly inquiry can bolster our mission. It is the poetry of Lamentations that reminds us that the mercies of the Lord are “new every morning.” The world is full of trial and wonder, and the promises of morning mercies can prepare us for new discoveries and provide new strength to pursue what is just and true. Good research matters for our academic communities and our neighbors because it amplifies hope.

MARK SARGENT is now a senior fellow at Westmont College, after serving for more than 27 years as provost of Spring Arbor University, Gordon College, and Westmont.

A CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IS A LABORATORY FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE IN THE CHURCH.

IMPORTANT SCHOLARSHIP HAPPENING ON CCCU CAMPUSES

With more than 185 campuses as part of its global membership, the CCCU includes thousands of faculty members conducting important, high-quality research across a broad array of fields. Here is a small glimpse of some of the unique faculty research projects that are having an impact in their areas of expertise.



AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY¹: BIOPHYSICS AND MOTOR ENZYMES

SÁNDOR VOLKÁN-KACSO, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS, PHYSICS, AND STATISTICS²

Sándor Volkán-Kacsó's current research interests are in the broader area of single-molecule biophysics with a focus on molecular-level studies of various motor enzymes, including myosin V, DNA-motor complexes, and problems related to the cellular mechanobiology of cancer. As an undergraduate at a leading university in Romania, he published his first paper, which was about atmospheric light refraction, in the *American Journal of Physics*. In his graduate studies, he researched the phenomenon of fluorescence intermittency (“blinking”) in nanoscale particles; his work on this was published in journals such as *Physics Review Letters*, *Nano Letters*, and the *Journal of Chemical Physics*. Volkán-Kacsó is enthusiastic about teaching physics of all flavors and performing cutting-edge research with students.

¹An institutional recipient of the CCCU grant, Supporting Structures: Innovative Collaborations to Enhance STEM Research at CCCU Member Institutions.
²A faculty recipient of the CCCU Supporting Structures grant.



BETHEL UNIVERSITY (MN): THE TEXTUAL HISTORY OF REVELATION

JUAN HERNÁNDEZ JR., PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

A New Testament and early Christianity scholar, Juan Hernández Jr.'s work in the textual studies of Revelation has led to some major discoveries. Hernández is the lead translator and co-editor of *Studies in the History of the Greek Text of the Apocalypse: The Ancient Stems*, the first-ever English translation of Josef Schmid's landmark German work on the textual history of Revelation's Greek manuscript tradition. The translation was undertaken shortly after Hernández produced a groundbreaking article that overturned widely held assumptions about Revelation's textual origins. Hernández's work showed that the manuscript data Schmid analyzed for one of Revelation's four textual traditions was in fact from the seventh century, not the fourth century as had been assumed for decades. Hernández's book is now considered mandatory reading for any scholars who are studying the text of Revelation.

CALVIN UNIVERSITY¹: WOMEN'S AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

ADEJOKE AYOOLA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF NURSING AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Adejoke Ayoola is known not only for her quality teaching and research, but also for the direct impact she is having on the greater Grand Rapids community. Her research focuses on women's and reproductive health, particularly the impact of unintended pregnancy. Her work has led to the development of two programs for the community. The Preconception Reproductive Knowledge Program (PREKNOP) pairs women with nursing students and professionals who provide education about their bodies, while the HEALTH camp, a summer program run by Calvin's nursing department, brings girls between the ages of 9 and 15 together to learn about health and explore jobs in health care. In recognition of her work, Ayoola was inducted into the American Academy of Nurses 2020 Class of Fellows, a significant milestone in the field.



GORDON COLLEGE¹: WELL-BEING AND ECONOMICS

KRISTEN COOPER, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

With expertise in microeconomics, the economics of well-being, environmental economics, and Christian teaching on the economy, Kristen Cooper's current work focuses on the development and use of well-being measures in public policy. She has received funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for this work, and was previously a Fulbright U.S. Senior Scholar. She recently co-authored a journal article that outlines both the valuable role well-being measures could provide in competition with more traditional economic indicators and the current challenges that make collecting those measures more difficult than traditional ones. Cooper has also published research in other areas related to microeconomics and well-being, such as consumer behavior in “fast fashion” markets and evaluating environmental policy.



INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY: IMPROVING MATHEMATICS TEACHING

JAMES FREEMYER, PROFESSOR, DOCTORATE IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

With a background in both organizational leadership and mathematics, James Freemyer conducted research in Ireland (funded by a Fulbright Scholarship) to explore ways to help U.S. math teachers improve student success and, ultimately, continue to pursue STEM education at higher levels. With additional research in the U.K., South Korea, and Japan, as well as the help of six other CCCU professors, Freemyer co-authored the book *The Next Step: Today's Methods for Today's Math* and published several articles showing that collaboration among math teachers is key to successful teaching in other parts of the world, providing a blueprint for improving U.S. math education.

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY¹: PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY, AND KNOWING GOD

MATTHEW BENTON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In both quality and quantity, Matthew Benton is known for his scholarship, particularly in his areas of expertise: epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of religion. In philosophy, journal articles are a key marker of success, as many journals have acceptance rates of less than 5%; Benton's articles regularly appear in these top-tier publications. He was awarded a grant from the John Templeton Foundation for his work exploring what, exactly, it means to "know God" epistemologically. In 2020, he was given SPU's Scholar of the Year award.



SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY: DISABILITY IN THEATER

CAMERON HUNT MCNABB, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

An English professor with interests in premodern drama as well as disability studies and pedagogy, Cameron Hunt McNabb has been making a name for herself for her high-caliber research in the studies of disability in the Middle Ages. She has published widely on medieval and early modern literature, and serves as the editor for the open access *Medieval Disability Sourcebook*. Her latest book project recently received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. It will focus on the representation of disability in theatrical performances and how disability studies can be applied to theater and drama.

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY¹: INNOVATIVE USES OF NANOMATERIALS

SHANE DURBACH, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY²

In the field of chemistry, Shane Durbach's present area of focus is in nanomaterials. His current research investigates various synthetic strategies for shaped carbon nanomaterials. His recent work has branched out into two innovative areas: 1) The use of solid waste materials as either catalysts for carbon material synthesis or as sources of carbon to make these nano- and micro-sized carbon materials, and 2) The synthesis and application of colloidal, shaped, inorganic crystalline solids as templates for hollow or filled carbon materials. Durbach is researching how these nanomaterials can be used in creating composites for low-cost building materials and other beneficial community related uses, as well as in photocatalysis (the acceleration of a chemical reaction by light), such as converting carbon dioxide into fuels.



WHEATON COLLEGE¹: INNOVATIVE MUSIC COMPOSITION

SHAWN OKPEBHOLO, PROFESSOR OF MUSIC (COMPOSITION, MUSIC THEORY)

Shawn Okpebholo is a sought-after and award-winning composer whose artistry — spanning multiple styles and genres — has resulted in many prizes and honors. Most recently, he was named by the American Academy of Arts and Letters as the 2021 laureate of the Walter Hinrichsen Award for music, which honors some of the world's most important and innovative composers. He also was awarded a two-year residency with the Chicago Opera Theater for their 2021-2023 seasons. A graduate of Asbury University (Wilmore, KY), Okpebholo's work has been performed on five continents, in more than 40 U.S. states, and in almost every major U.S. city.

THE STATE OF STEM AT CCCU INSTITUTIONS

GROWTH IN STEM AT CCCU INSTITUTIONS

2009-10 BACHELOR DEGREES AWARDED



INCREASE IN TOTAL NUMBER OF STEM DEGREES AWARDED

2018-19 BACHELOR DEGREES AWARDED

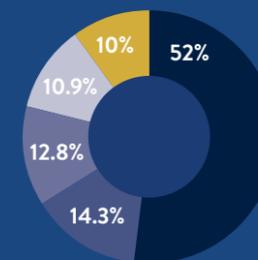


PERCENTAGE OF STEM DEGREES OUT OF ALL DEGREES AWARDED AT CCCU INSTITUTIONS

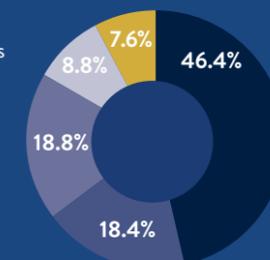


DISTRIBUTION OF STEM AREAS AT CCCU INSTITUTIONS

As % of all STEM degrees awarded in 2009-10

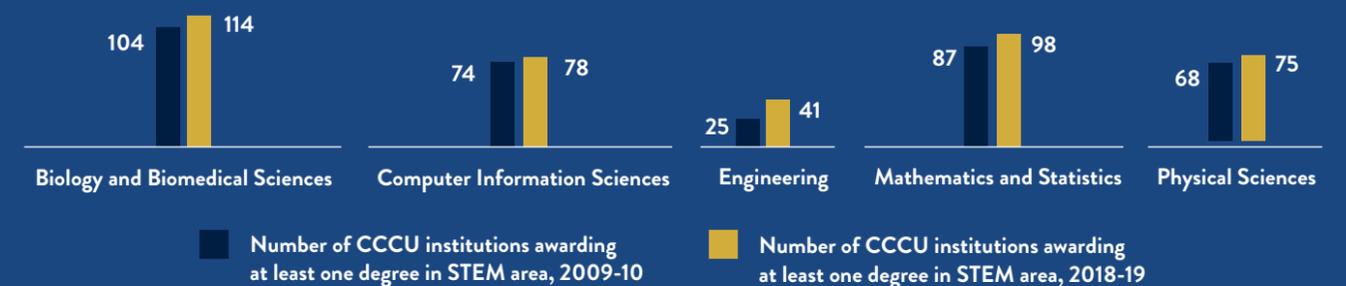


As % of all STEM degrees awarded in 2018-19



- Biology and Biomedical Sciences
- Computer Information Sciences
- Engineering
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Physical Sciences

INCREASE IN CCCU INSTITUTIONS OFFERING AT LEAST ONE STEM DEGREE

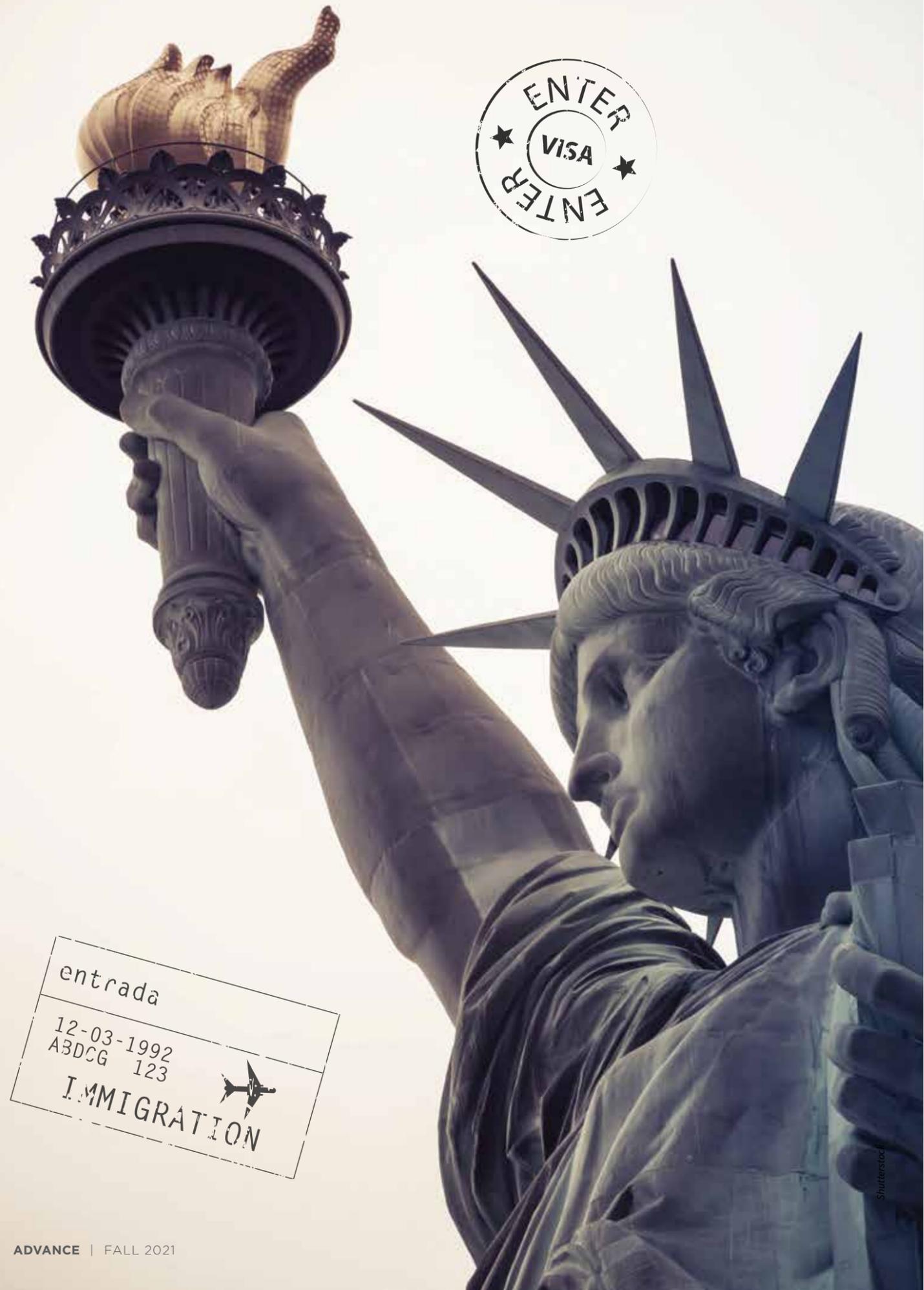


Compiled by Jeff Clawson, Pete Jordan, and Stan Rosenberg. All data comes from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

This research was supported by a grant to SCIO (Scholarship & Christianity in Oxford) and the CCCU from the John Templeton Foundation. A more comprehensive report with information on campus diversity and STEM is available from www.scio-uk.org/research/supporting-stem.

Tailored reports for individual CCCU institutions are also available for purchase. To buy a tailored report for your own campus, contact stem.support@scio-uk.org!

¹An institutional recipient of the CCCU grant, Supporting Structures: Innovative Collaborations to Enhance STEM Research at CCCU Member Institutions.
²A faculty recipient of the CCCU Supporting Structures grant.



Dreaming of a Brighter Future

Americans support efforts to make Dreamers permanent parts of their communities. Congress must act.

BY ALI NOORANI

I REMEMBER MEETING Bernardo Castro for the first time in December 2017. He was soft-spoken and a bit shy, but he had a clarity of purpose.

At the time, he was a full-time undergraduate at Brigham Young University studying business administration. But when we met, he was 2,000 miles away from Provo, lobbying legislators in Washington, D.C., for immigration reform.

Bernardo is a Dreamer whose parents brought him here when he was 4 years old. His memories of Chilpancingo, Mexico — his birthplace — are dim at best. Arriving in small-town Utah in 1995, his family immediately felt welcomed by their church and community. As he told me earlier this year, “Utah is very welcoming of hardworking individuals, and my parents fit right in.”

As a young adult, Bernardo applied for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), soon becoming one of hundreds of thousands of Dreamers — immigrants brought to the U.S. as children — working and attending school since DACA was created in 2012. The purpose of Bernardo’s 2017 trip to Capitol Hill, where we first met, was to share his story with lawmakers and urge them to bring stability to the lives of DACA recipients, as well as Dreamers who are not eligible for DACA.

Nearly four years later, all Dreamers continue to live in limbo.

Court challenges to DACA have been a steady presence in Bernardo’s life. Attorneys general in Texas and nine other states filed a lawsuit in 2018 challenging the legality of DACA, and in July of this year, a U.S. district court judge ruled in favor of the states — and deemed DACA “illegal.” While existing DACA recipients remain temporarily protected, no new applications will be processed, and a follow-up ruling could end protections altogether.

That’s why Congress must act to cement Dreamers’ contributions — permanently. In every way but paperwork, Dreamers are as American as they come.

AMERICANS AGREE: ACTION IS NEEDED

The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act — the DREAM Act, which gave rise to the term “Dreamers” — was first introduced in Congress in 2001 by Sens. Dick Durbin (D-Illinois) and Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). It would afford those who entered the U.S. as minors the ability to work, attend school, and attain permanent residency if they meet certain qualifications.

It didn’t pass the Senate. In the two decades since, at least 10 similar proposals have been introduced in Congress — always with bipartisan support — but none has passed both houses and made it to the president’s desk. The closest call was in 2010, when the DREAM Act



passed the House but fell five votes short of moving to a final vote in the Senate.

Fast forward to 2021, when multiple proposals in Congress could assure Dreamers' futures. Sen. Durbin and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina) have introduced the Dream Act of 2021. In the House, a bipartisan vote in March passed the American Dream and Promise Act, which would offer conditional legal status to up to 2.3 million Dreamers.

Neither bill has yet gained traction in the Senate. Some Republican senators have argued that the bills are too broad, or that the conversation surrounding Dreamers should wait until migration challenges at the border are addressed. But these issues are separate, and Congress can — and should — address both.

If Congress were to take action on Dreamers, it would do so with bipartisan support. Polls consistently show that strong majorities of Americans, across party lines, support a permanent solution for Dreamers. Nearly two-thirds of American voters support the opportunity for Dreamers to earn citizenship, according to a poll from Politico/Morning Consult; another poll from CBS News found that 85% of American adults favor allowing Dreamers to stay in the U.S. legally. That's 85% of all Americans — not just Democrats or Republicans. In today's hyperpolarized politics, few issues in Washington come near that threshold.

The past year has shown us just how essential Dreamers are to our nation. They were on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic: By one estimate, more than 1 million Dreamers are essential workers, fulfilling critical roles in facilities and construction, food services and production, health care, essential transportation, and education.

Separate estimates in recent years have found that over the course of a decade, Dreamers would contribute \$433 billion to the GDP, \$60 billion in fiscal impact, and \$12.3 billion in Social Security and Medicare taxes.

So, how can we make legislation happen? To start, Democrats and Republicans need to put the good of the country ahead of political opportunism. There is an opportunity for bipartisan, incremental immigration legislation that starts with a solution for these young immigrants. As Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) said in January, "I am ready to act on that and come up with a stable future for these young people who have done nothing wrong. They came as children, and I think that is a good place to start."

Those of us who care about Dreamers and depend on their contributions can help by asking our senators and representatives to support a solution with urgency.

OPTIMISM AND UNCERTAINTY

I saw Bernardo again this year, this time via Zoom.

Now, Bernardo is married and is an entrepreneur. He still has the broad smile, soft voice, and clarity of purpose. But there is also a sense of confidence that comes with age and experience. In our conversation, he had a clear vision for his career and his family — an energy that was palpable even through a screen.

As he shared all he had done over the last few years, his optimism was infectious.

"I think there has never been a better time to start a business," he said. "And I say that because I really feel like America is still the land of opportunity. If you're willing to put into work, to put into sacrifice, you can really get out of it whatever you want."

But he was quick to point out that this conversation was not about him. It was about the Dreamer community he's so committed to — some protected by DACA, some not. As he put it, "[W]e want to show that in America anyone can make it."

In 2017, we both hoped legislative action would have passed by now. But Bernardo and his fellow Dreamers haven't given up hope, and neither should we.

Certainty — of a future in this country, of family unity, of the opportunity to thrive — is at stake for Bernardo, for the Dreamers whose stories are featured in this issue, and for the hundreds of thousands of others stuck in limbo. But it's also at stake for everyone on their campuses, in their churches, at their workplaces and in their communities.

With an overwhelming majority of Americans cheering Dreamers on, the ball is in Congress' court.

ALI NOORANI is the president and CEO of the National Immigration Forum, author of *There Goes the Neighborhood*, and host of the podcast *Only in America*.

Courtesy of Ali Noorani

My Christian College Changed My Life; Passing the Dream Act Would, Too

BY ANA LUCIA CHAVEZ

THANK YOU FOR the chance to be heard and to represent many Dreamers such as myself. My name is Ana Lucia Chavez. I was born in El Salvador in 1999, and soon after I arrived in the U.S. at the age of four. I have lived in Smyrna, Tennessee, for 18 years, and I was raised in a supportive, hardworking, and family-oriented home that my parents cultivated for me and my siblings.

From a very early age, I was always eager to learn and I was attached to the compassion I found in education. The public schools I attended — John Coleman Elementary, Smyrna Middle School, and Smyrna High School — fostered so much light and love that school became a place where I felt seen and encouraged daily. I can say with much certainty that all the teachers I have had in my lifetime stood out as great professional role models. They also influenced me to want to become a great teacher myself.

But as everyone began to apply to and choose the college of their choice, I was terrified that I would not get a chance to achieve that. Many barriers stood in my way to make this dream a reality. However, something in me knew that I had to find a way to making this dream of pursuing higher education a reality and affordable. I went to my high school

counselor's office, and she referred me to an ESL teacher who knew about a scholarship that helped DACA students like me. I am a proud recipient of the Equal Chance for Education Scholarship program, which opened the doors to many great college options, including Lipscomb University, Cumberland University, and Trevecca University. I visited the Trevecca campus with a close friend who walked the journey with me in applying and receiving the ECE scholarship as well. I knew that Trevecca was the place for me when I was showered

with so much kindness from the campus, and its beautiful scenery also captivated me.

I was pleased to experience higher education in a private Christian college because it was incredible to be surrounded by people who fearlessly spoke about their beliefs and knew they could rely on one another in any circumstance. There was shared joy, sadness, hurt, confusion, and all emotions of the spectrum. My experience at Trevecca made me a wiser person and taught me to seek understanding and wisdom in God.

If the legislation for Dreamers to receive a passage to citizenship passes, it would make a tremendous difference in my life. It would release the burden I carry on my shoulders of heavy concerns for my future in many aspects — economically, socially, emotionally, mentally, and physically. I would finally feel like I belong, and my family's hard work will pay off; they would be able to live just as safely and comfortably as everyone else. I feel like we will finally take one more step into the world that God intended for humanity.

ANA LUCIA CHAVEZ graduated from Trevecca Nazarene University (Nashville, Tennessee) in 2021 with a bachelor's in social work.

Trevecca Nazarene University became home for Ana Lucia Chavez, a DACA student.





From ‘Undocumented’ to ‘Future Citizen’

Education has transformed my understanding of my own identity.

BY JESUS GOMEZ

DURING MY SENIOR year of high school, the future was beginning to look like a bridge that had no railings and was littered with broken planks. My only path forward appeared to be higher education, and if I did not follow that path, then there was nothing but a mighty fall off the bridge. I was not a 4.0 student with excellent SAT scores, and I knew college costs were an immense burden that my parents had never experienced. However, I was not worried about my undocumented status; I already knew it would create barriers.

Even with all these challenges, I wanted to take my chances and see how far I could get. In the midst of this, Fresno Pacific University (FPU) appeared with a too-good-to-be-true opportunity. I was offered the Samaritan scholarship, which is of tremendous aid in covering tuition costs, and the path to higher education no longer looked impossible.

As an undocumented student attending FPU, my experience has been by far one of the most positive of my life. Over the past three years, I have been able to develop personally and in my leadership abilities. At the beginning of my experience, I felt that being undocumented put me at a disadvantage for full engagement with the greater community. Once I realized that the power behind

the “undocumented” label was nothing more than a blockage of my own creation, I brought it down and proceeded to identify instead as a “future citizen.” As of now, I am proud to say that my biggest accomplishment at FPU has been founding the Future Citizens and Allies Program, an organization that seeks to empower undocumented individuals politically and personally through breaking down identity constructs and employing the growth mindset.

Passage of legislation that can help future citizen students like me pursue higher education is necessary to create equity for all college students. Legislation like California’s AB 540 law, which exempts qualifying nonresident students from paying supplemental tuition fees, is an example of higher education public policy that can benefit undocumented students. But beyond tuition costs, indirect college expenses also make it costly to pursue this path. This past year, one of the most significant challenges I faced was food insecurity. If there were state or federally funded benefits that could help undocumented students with food expenses, then perhaps my academic year could have been much better and enjoyable for me.

My higher education experience as an undocumented student has been one of the greatest personal develop-

ment opportunities that I could have. While my documentation status is often considered a barrier, I have learned to view each challenge as one that gets me a step closer to achieving my goals, and not as a hindrance that determines my potential for success. Thanks to my experience at FPU, I have put the “dreamer” identification to the side and given myself the “future citizen” label instead, because my success requires me not to hope for the best but to take action to achieve the best. 🌱

JESUS GOMEZ is a senior at Fresno Pacific University (Fresno, CA), where he is majoring in political science and serves as coordinator of the Future Citizens and Allies Program.

Courtesy of Jesus Gomez



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How to Fight Racism

A new resource for leaders creating practical next steps.

AN INTERVIEW WITH JEMAR TISBY AND HEATH THOMAS

There is no shortage of discussion on the problems of racism, but moving from conversation about racism into actionable items that fight racism can be a daunting task. Historian, theologian, and bestselling author Jemar Tisby uses his latest book, *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice*, to help Christians do just that by providing a practical framework for pursuing racial justice.

Heath Thomas, president and professor of Old Testament at Oklahoma Baptist University (Shawnee, OK), recently had a conversation with Tisby about the book, its framework, and how it can specifically help Christian college and university leaders think through these issues and develop practical, actionable steps to pursue justice and racial reconciliation. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

Heath Thomas: In this book, you provide a practical, engaging approach. And it sounds very simple: Awareness, Relationships, and Commitment, or ARC. But it's strategic. So talk to us a little bit about how you came to this formulation. Why these three [steps]?

Jemar Tisby: Every time I speak, or write, or teach about racism and racial justice, during the Q&A portion, every single time there's the question: What do we do? Honestly, I'd get frustrated with my responses, because ... they were a smattering of responses that weren't really focused. So I started working on this framework, and I noticed patterns of different suggestions people would give for practically addressing racism. And it occurred to me that most of what I heard could fit into these categories.

Awareness is where you're building your knowledge about the way racism and white supremacy function. That's reading books, watching documentaries, visiting historical sites, things like that. But there was this other element that actually, evangelicalism was really strong on — the relational element. ... Ultimately, you're going to have to interact with real people, other image bearers, build relationships, understand one another, empathize with one another, right?

But you have to do it well, you have to do it respectfully, you have to do it in a way that respects the image of God and other people.

Then the missing component for a lot of Christians, particularly white Christians, was this commitment aspect. Because we have to understand that racism is not just a matter of interpersonal attitudes — [like] one person not liking another, using the N word, saying you can't drink from the same water fountain. It's actually embedded in the way we do life together, which is structured around policies, broadly conceived.

Policies can be within your organization, where you recruit for new employees, who's on your board of trustees, how you determine promotions, and things like that. Policies can also be at the governmental level — local, state, and federal policies. I love history, because it has the receipts. If you go back far enough and you look at some of the laws that are commonplace today, you can actually see that in their conception, they were very discriminatory in their intent, but it's invisible [to us today] because they may not use the words "Black" or "white" or "race." So we've got to look at that commitment to changing policies and interactions on a system-wide level.

Thomas: I'm an Old Testament professor by training, so all of this sounds strangely resonant to me. ... We know about the Persian period and the Babylonian period, where God's people lived in the land but the restoration was not nearly so bright as what God's people might have thought. Because they weren't quite in the Promised Land, they still had people over them. ... Why do you think it is that there seems to be resistance when we apply that to America or other nation states subjugating vast swathes of people? What do you think the disconnect is there, especially for Christians?

Tisby: I think we need to understand, first of all, that race and religion have been mutually constitutive in the U.S. context; they grew up together and formed and shaped each other. In my first book, *The Color of Compromise*, we go all the way back to the colonial era. In 1667, a group of Virginia assemblymen — white Anglican men, you had to be a Christian in good standing publicly in order to serve in an office like that — make a law that says baptism would not free any enslaved Native American person, or African descent, or mixed-race descent. So there you have religion, race, and even the legal system all intertwined — which persists to this day. We can talk about them individually, we can distinguish between them, but we can never really separate race, religion, and politics.

At the same time, we are talking about a phrase that upsets some people: white supremacy. Racism is a component of white supremacy. White supremacy simply says in various ways that white is right, superior, or even central. A very innocuous example of this: When you go to the grocery store, it's all just food — until it's Mexican food, or Chinese food, or sort of non-standard, non-European. The same with theology. When I was in seminary, it was all just theology — until it was Black theology, or Latin American theology, or Asian American theology. It only needs a label when it is non-European or

non-white. That's part of the way white supremacy manifests itself.

All that is to say that if you are categorized as white in the United States, you're not taught how racialized our society is. Part of it is that this is invisible to people in the majority, such that a lot of white people don't think of themselves as white — I'm just Mark, or John, or Susie. You have to sort of remind them that they have a race, too.

Then the other thing is that there's a vested interest in keeping the status quo if it maintains your advantage. It really takes a spiritual reckoning to say, "I'm going to lay down these privileges that come with race in the United States, so that others might have more opportunity or the opportunities that I now enjoy." And so you get all of that together — that's a recipe for resistance.

Jemar Tisby, Historian, Theologian, Bestselling Author



Thomas: When you think about this practical framework, this model would seem like it holds great promise for higher education spaces. But even in higher education, [this work] is very contentious. How do you see this model fleshing itself out in higher ed?

Tisby: There's also [a difference between] higher ed and Christian higher ed. In a way, the latter is even harder to change because, like I said, race and religion have been mutually constitutive. It's also a matter of discipleship — you can't start with a running start. You have to start with baby steps to really walk people into this, especially the folks who hold the levers of power in higher ed — they tend to be older and grew up with different understandings on this stuff. So it's an uphill struggle.

So the first thing we actually need is courage; the second thing we need is to count the cost. Sounds a lot like the gospel, doesn't it? I promise you, no matter how circumspect you are, no matter how well planned you are, you are going to tick some people off when you start to make some real changes around race and ethnicity so it's more equitable. There's a way you can do it that doesn't make anybody mad, but that's really just window dressing. It's very superficial, and it's not going to help the people who are most impacted.

By the way, that's an awareness piece. This is a paradigm shift that we've got to go through. You have to center the marginalized; this won't make sense unless you are prioritizing the needs of the people who have been victimized. If you're looking at this from the perspective of the people who are already empowered and trying to slowly shift their mindset ... it's not going to work. What you have to do is keep in mind the most vulnerable in your communities and what's good for them. Start with that, and then let's change some things.

If I was an administrator or I wanted to make changes in my department, I

would take that ARC model — Awareness, Relationships, Commitment — and develop a racial justice strategic plan based on it. I would assemble as diverse a team as I could; this has to be collaborative, and there has to be buy in. Then I would say, "What are we doing in our sphere of influence" — whether that's the classroom, your discipline, your department, your school, your university — "what are we doing in our sphere of influence to intentionally build awareness around race, racism, and racial justice? What are we doing to intentionally build meaningful relationships at all levels? And what are we doing on a policy level?" You don't even have to start with governmental policy — look at your campus and say, "What are the ways that we've structured this thing? What are the rules that we make and assume are race neutral? How might they adversely impact people of color and Black people in ways that we didn't intend or anticipate but nonetheless are true?"

We've got to understand that when it comes to issues of racism, it's not about intent — it's about impact. Think of the analogy of a blind spot when you're driving your car. You've got these mirrors, but there's a blind spot, so usually you crane your neck to look behind you and actually physically check the blind spot. But say you don't do that, you're changing lanes when there's a car in your blind spot, and you hit the car. Did you mean to hit the car? Was that your intent? No. But guess what, there was still impact, and you've still got to do something about it. It's the same with race and racism. You may not intend to offend; a policy may not intend to be inequitable. But the impact is [there], so we've got to look at that, too.

Thomas: That's an evocative illustration, but there are some who would say, "Wait a second, haven't we already been talking about this? We've been talking about this ad infinitum for decades." What would you say to those who would say, and with good faith, "Hey, we've been talking about

this. What we're trying to make people aware of is all differences. Aren't we united in Christ? Isn't that the great unity?" So how would you engage those who might say we've already got too much awareness?

Tisby: I'd be curious about what makes the person ask that question instead of inquiring to learn more about race and racism. I would bet if you peel back the layers, there's feelings involved. Nobody wants to feel uncomfortable in this conversation. And certainly, if you're white, you don't want to feel implicated. You never want to think of yourself as racist or even simply participating in a racist system. So I suspect there's more behind that question than a practical matter of tactics.

But if you want to address it on that, you would say, "Well, when did we have this great racial reckoning? When did we have this flowering of racial knowledge? As a matter of fact, aren't there bills being proposed and passed right now, under the guise of protesting critical race theory but actually have nothing to do with critical race theory and [are about] everything to do with an accurate accounting of our racial history as a nation? So there are efforts not to raise awareness; there are efforts to curtail awareness on this issue."

Think about Christianity. Do we ever stop talking about the crucifixion and the resurrection? Didn't that happen a long time ago? Didn't I confess my sins and become a Christian? Why do we revisit this every time we take communion? Why do we revisit this in every sermon? Why do we revisit this again and again and again in the Bible? Why? Because it's important. Because we have to remind ourselves of these truths because we're forgetful; we have to erect memorial stones.

The last thing I'll say is that Christians should be the most ardent pursuers of truth. In what we're talking about [when it comes to race], though it's painful, it's true. We know, as people of faith, that repentance begins with truthful confession. And we cannot begin to really change, let alone repair and reconcile, until we've

spoken the truth again and again and again to whomever needs it. And it's an iterative process, not something you hear one time and it's done. So that's why we have to keep talking about it now.

Thomas: In the book, you talk about doing reconciliation the right way, and one of the things [you mentioned for doing this] that I keyed on — and maybe this is because [as an Old Testament scholar, this has been] my area of focus for the past 15 years — is lament. So talk to us about lament and how it can aid in reconciliation.

Tisby: I'm so glad that you're studying lament, because I think it has so much to do with racial justice in our pursuit of repair and reconciliation. You can't understand the good news until you understand the bad news. You can't really have your heart healed by Christ until it's broken over your own shortcomings and rebellion. As we're looking at the racial sins of this nation, I'm convinced that so many people are hard-hearted; their hearts have not been broken over it. I'm convinced that people who make facile analogies to some contemporary event or social media outrage and call it like a lynching have no idea what lynching was actually like. I'm convinced that people who do their weddings on plantations have no idea what plantation life was like for the enslaved. I'm convinced that people who proudly fly Confederate flags and would march and rally in protection of Confederate monuments have no idea the true causes of the Civil War nor what it cost.

For me, history has helped to give me a much more tender heart for what's actually happened. I studied the Elaine Massacre [of 1919], which occurred about 30 minutes from where I live. Nearly 200 Black women, men, and children sharecroppers were killed by white people who took trains from three different states to converge on this tiny town based on the lie that Black people were assembling to take over the region by force, when all

they were doing was organizing to get fair prices on the cotton they themselves picked. When you read about the fact that they were literally hunted down like pheasants or ducks in fields, that the U.S. military was involved, and that no one was ever held to an account, you have a broken heart for this.

So start with history, because it is never better than we thought; it's always worse. Especially for white Christians. I think there's this tendency to think that even if you acknowledge that racism was bad, it's past tense; that it all occurred before, it was solved, and that, yeah, there's issues here and there, but by and large, everybody has a fair and equal shot in life. But I don't know that the white church in the United States has developed the spiritual discipline of lament, particularly over racial sins and their complicity in it. If your

Heath Thomas, President and Professor of Old Testament, Oklahoma Baptist University



Photo courtesy of Jemar Tisby

Photo courtesy of Heath Thomas

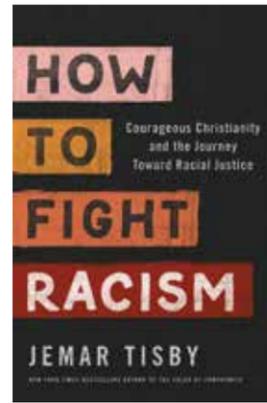
church or school was around in the early 1970s or before, there's probably some racial history that you've got to dig up, confess, lament, and repair. ...

Thomas: Commitment is key. I'm in Oklahoma, and in 1921, the Tulsa Race Massacre occurred. Going back to our [university's] history, one of the pastors of a Baptist church around here — who ended up being a president in my seat — he linked that to the curse of Ham. So it's impossible to not face that head on. One of the things that we've done is that we established the 1921 Memorial Scholarship with some of our African American churches in the Southern Baptist [Convention] or the Oklahoma Baptists. We've partnered together to provide full-tuition scholarships for some of our African American brothers and sisters.

We can't change the past, but we can project a new future. That's going to take what you've said — courage, commitment, a lot of good relationships, and getting outside of ourselves more than we thought necessary. So in terms of commitment, I've just framed up an example that might be useful, but share what you think commitment could look like in higher education.

Tisby: Scholarships are great. I mean higher ed, as we both know, can really transform the prospects of somebody's life — and even more importantly, [transform] somebody's paradigm and perspective and empathy for humanity. That's what a good education brings.

I would also say, in the same breath, that even before I offered a scholarship [for students], I would make sure my institution was a place where Black people and people of color could flourish. ... I say that from an experience standpoint. I originally enrolled in a Ph.D. program at a seminary. But I got out after a semester because it was a predominantly white institution and did not have the faculty, the library resources, the archival resources to do the kind of work I wanted to do on race and religion. So



**How to Fight Racism:
Courageous Christianity
and the Journey Toward
Racial Justice**

By Jemar Tisby
(Zondervan)

all of this is commitment; all of this is policy stuff.

So one, have we done focus groups and surveys of current and alumni Black students and people of color, and really made changes based on their input? Because otherwise you're bringing more and more people into what's going to end up being a toxic environment. Number two, have we audited our curriculum for places we can strategically and proactively incorporate lessons about race and racism in all disciplines? Obviously, it lends itself to things like history and sociology, the humanities, and literature, but every discipline has a history. Where does race show up in the history of the development of mathematics, or economics, or whatever it might be?

The other thing is, where do you recruit your students? Where are you getting them? What churches are they going to? And are there partnerships with churches where you can work in tandem? Because it's not just the life of the mind, it's the life of the spirit that you're trying to cultivate in students.

And really, I would start with trustees and executive leadership. If people at the top don't actually want this — and I don't mean in a “we'll sign the paper that authorizes the group or the initiative” way, I

mean, really want it — it's always going to hit a wall. It's going to get tough; there's going to be donors who threaten to withdraw money. ... If your executive leadership isn't prepared to lose seven figures, forget it.

Learn from HBCUs [historically Black colleges and universities]. These are the places that continue to produce the highest proportion of professionals — from doctors, to lawyers, to engineers — who are Black. What are they doing there [that helps them succeed]? Now, you're not going to be able to replicate everything, because they're all Black, and that's a big part of it. But you can learn from them. Every situation is different. But if we do begin with the understanding that the sort of way we do things in terms of policy needs to come under scrutiny, then I think that's actually a good start in terms of a mindset.

Thomas: So let's conclude this time with the title of your book: *How to Fight Racism*. Now, intuitively, we know racism is wrong. But talk to us in more granular detail. What is racism? Why should it be fought? What is the emulation of Christ that comes as we fight racism together?

Tisby: There [are a couple of] shorthand definitions of racism that I use. [One is] Beverly Daniel Tatum's, where racism is a system of advantage based on race. Another shorthand definition: racism is prejudice plus power. These are especially important as we talk about accusations of reverse racism. True enough, anybody of any race or ethnicity can be prejudiced towards somebody else because of their race or ethnicity. That's absolutely true because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. But it is not true that every race or ethnicity has the power to enshrine their prejudice into policy, which is what has happened in the United States when it comes to white people putting it into practice on a broad scale.

In my book, I've emphasized the systemic and institutional aspects [of racism], but [there are] interpersonal aspects that I think we don't realize when it's happening. There are three

main movements in terms of how racism manifested itself interpersonally in terms of beliefs and attitudes. One was a theological justification for racism. You mentioned the curse of Ham — [the idea that] God made it this way. In the early days [of racism], that's what people really clung to. That transitioned in the mid- to late-19th century — particularly around Darwin[']s time] — to a biological justification of races. ...

But the latest manifestation, which is invisible to most people, is cultural racism. It is the idea that a people group, because of their culture, are experiencing these inequalities and hardships and bringing it on themselves. So here's how it looks: “Don't go to that part of town.” “Those people just want a government handout.” “Those people are just more prone to crime. It's not a problem with policing, it's that they commit more crimes.” But here, you are saying an entire group of people, which usually happen to be Black or people of color, are actually more prone to criminal behavior — why? When you peel back the layers, that's when you get to the racism.

So all of this is happening. And the scary part is, it's getting more bold and more vocal. ... A couple of years ago, at the grand opening of the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, Myrlie Evers-Williams — who was the widow of Medgar Evers and a civil rights activist in her own right — held a private press conference that I was able to go to. Somebody asked the question — and this is back in 2017 — “How does now compare to you to the 1960s in the Civil Rights Movement?” And she says, “It feels the same.”

I've often said we are in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement of our day, and I'm not being hyperbolic. I firmly believe that, as we look at the erosion of voting rights, as we look at the promulgation of laws and rules against teaching certain kinds of history, we are going to have to be active in terms of marches and boycotts and maybe even getting arrested for non-violent direct action protests, the same as

WHEN IT COMES TO RACISM, IT'S NOT ABOUT INTENT — IT'S ABOUT IMPACT. THINK OF A BLIND SPOT ... YOU'RE CHANGING LANES WHEN THERE'S A CAR IN YOUR BLIND SPOT, AND YOU HIT THE CAR. DID YOU MEAN TO? NO. BUT THERE WAS STILL IMPACT, AND YOU'VE STILL GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

we were in the 50s and 60s. And here's the thing: As we look back at that movement, we asked, “Where were Christians? We know that a lot of Black Christians were involved; where were white Christians?”

So the question is: Where are we going to stand in the Civil Rights Movement of our day? A lot of us look back and say, “Well, if I was alive, I would have marched with King; I would have done the protests; I would have stood up for justice.” But the reality is, what you're doing right now is exactly what you would have done then. So we've got to think about the kind of world we want to live in, the kind of people we want to be, and the kind of legacy we want to leave. It's not for some other people or some other generation. It's for us right now.

Thomas: Right, and so as followers of Jesus, what is our guiding light? What is our principle? Is it Micah 6:8? What is it?

Tisby: I think the Old Testament has so much to teach us for this moment in any ways that we want to pursue justice. For me, my go-to verse has been Joshua 1:9. God says, “Be strong and courageous,” but what I love about it is God just doesn't give us a command — he attaches a promise to it. He says, “I'll be with you wherever you go.” That's the promise of God's presence. That's the promise that God will be with us, which became a person — Emmanuel,

God with us in Jesus Christ. So now, as Christians, we have every reason to be strong and courageous in this struggle against racism and this journey toward racial justice because not only do we have God with us, we have God in us through the Holy Spirit. ... And guess what? We were never going to be a majority. [God said] we'd be more like the leaven, the mustard seed, the remnant. So don't wait for the crowd; it's not coming. ...

And we're dealing with powers and principalities; we aren't dealing just with earthly stuff here. But what I've learned — and I'm no activist, but to the extent that I've taken a stand for racial justice, I've experienced a nearness of God and an intimacy with God that I never knew before. Because there's an experiential aspect to the faith. You've got to live it. Right? When we jump to the New Testament, we've got to read James again.

Thomas: Be doers of the word.

Tisby: And when you do the word — which is earlier in Joshua 1, right? “Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth. But be careful to do all that is in it.” And when you do it, that's when you experience God's presence. You can't sit back and pontificate and think your way into the promises of God. You've got to take the step of faith and live your way into experiencing those promises. 🙏

Power Women

How administrators can support faculty who are also mothers.

AN INTERVIEW WITH KIM PHIPPS, DESHONNA COLLIER-GOUBIL, AND NANCY WANG YUEN

FOR CHRISTIAN WOMEN called to both motherhood and the academy, the challenges of trying to balance career, family, and faith can be overwhelming. Enter *Power Women: Stories of Motherhood, Faith, & the Academy*, a new book created by and for Christian academic mothers navigating this complex calling in life. With a wide variety of contributors from different backgrounds, academic disciplines, and stages of both parenting and career, the volume offers data, personal stories, and resources not only for academic mothers, but also for administrators and other faculty who seek to support the professor mothers among them.

For the book's editors, the project was personal. Nancy Wang Yuen is an associate professor of sociology at Biola University (La Mirada, CA), a sociologist, and a pop culture expert. Deshonna Collier-Goubil is the founding chair of the department of criminal justice at Azusa Pacific University (Azusa, CA), where she is now serving as interim dean of the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences. Both are also mothers.

Kim Phipps, who is in her 17th year as president of Messiah University (Mechanicsburg, PA), spent many years as a professor on Christian campuses, and is a mother herself, interviewed Yuen and Collier-Goubil to talk about the book and how it can be used by CCCU leaders to support the academic mothers on campus. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

KIM PHIPPS: I'd like to start by asking both of you to share what motivated you to work on this particular volume.

NANCY WANG YUEN: I was part of a professor mothers group at Biola University. Most of us had young children and were trying to navigate a complex and challenging work environment [while] balancing our family and our faith and our work, whether that was research or teaching and service. ... Out of that working group came a desire to document what we were going through [in order] to be able to share some of that wisdom and to disseminate it to a larger audience. I think that there are some very unique challenges that Christian women of faith who are professors, both in Christian universities as well as non-Christian universities, face in being able to balance these often competing but synergistic interests in our lives. The germination of the seeds of that became *Power Women*. ...

DESHONNA COLLIER-GOUBIL: There is a dearth in the research, so there's a gap where the experiences of Christian faculty moms hadn't been discussed. So we put our heads together to think about what are some of the unique experiences, challenges, and joys, and that's how we came up with the list of topics and contributing authors.

PHIPPS: There's a lot of interesting data in here. ... There were two things that I think administrators should especially be thinking about. ... One is the tenure gap for academic moms, who are three times less likely than men with children or women without children to get tenured. Second, there's the data that shows that even though they may have a dip in their publication productivity early on in motherhood, academic moms actually produce more publications



than their peers over time. What can we do on our campuses to better support academic women who are also mothers, and how we can make it possible for them to achieve their professional goals?

YUEN: I think that tenure looks different across the different CCCU campuses, and that there isn't [always] the "tenure clock" in the same way that there is in a lot of universities. [But there is] tension in the fact that women, especially women with children, are slower to get tenure or don't achieve tenure as much because of that tenure clock. There's the intersection between the tenure clock and the biological clock, which makes it really difficult to be productive in those first years of the tenure clock because you kind of have to choose between having children or being productive. And if you do have children, then [you may] have to sacrifice or at least be very strategic in being able to balance the research

and writing — and when you become a new professor, you also have to teach and do service. It's a lot to have to do in those first years.

Part of the reason why I chose my first job to be at Biola is because there was no clock — I could actually have children and delay tenure if I wanted to. And that was actually really a selling point for me. But I know that at other universities, if there is a tenure clock, there needs to be flexibility. Especially with that statistic that comes out of one of our chapters on research by Dr. Maria Su Wang, where she finds that mothers, even with additional children, are actually more productive [after the initial years of child-rearing], which is so counter to what university administrators imagine. There's that stereotype that if you have lots of children, then you're not going to have that productivity. But that's actually not true in terms of statistics. I think that that's very valuable to know that in

fact, if we were to just delay that clock a bit, that mothers with children actually are as much, if not more, productive in terms of research productivity. I think universities need to be very mindful of that, especially administrators, in instituting parental leave ... for both mothers and fathers. So especially at Christian universities, we really should be supportive of families and allow for that kind of flexibility.

PHIPPS: Absolutely. Christian universities and colleges have an even greater responsibility, I think, because of what our value system is — to care for families. And yet when I talk to women across the CCCU, sometimes they find a real resistance to that kind of flexibility and unwillingness to address some of those challenges. And they see it as sometimes rooted in the way the church broadly is structured. I wondered if that was also your perspective — that sometimes our



Kim Phipps is president of Messiah University.



Deshonna Collier-Goubil is interim dean of the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences at Azusa Pacific University.



Nancy Wang Yuen is an associate professor of sociology at Biola University.

Lisa Trabough | Courtesy of Deshonna Collier-Goubil | Courtesy of Nancy Wang Yuen

AdobeStock

own theological commitments, which really aren't related to this issue, but somehow they adversely affect the way we support families on our campuses, particularly women.

COLLIER-GOUBIL: Yes, I think on Christian campuses, we do have this mixing between our theological perspectives and our church experiences, into this unique place of employment. ... We have a chapter by Dr. Teri Clemmons that talks about the misperceptions of maternity leave in the academy. ... There's this thought that maternity leave is like a vacation, so mom faculty should be super productive during those times. But having [an infant] at home or, if you've adopted children, introducing kids into your home, it's completely chaotic, and your time is all over the place. That should definitely be considered by administrators.

But I think the main takeaway [in the book] for administrators — specifically on Christian campuses, where oftentimes leadership roles are male dominated — should be listening to the stories. Throughout the book, there are so many personal stories that will help to identify and give voice to your faculty's needs. That might help administrators when they're thinking about tenure and promotion decisions.

YUEN: Yes, and I think that parental leave often looks different for men and women. Men do use parental leave often to do research, whereas women as the primary caregivers — not just in Christian households but across society — find it much more difficult to be able to catch up on work or complete projects while also taking care of children.

We've seen this during the pandemic. We started this [book] several years back, but ... there's research that's already showing that there's a huge productivity gap ... because of the shutting down of daycares and places where children can go when parents are working. Mothers



Power Women: Stories of Motherhood, Faith, and the Academy

By Nancy Wang Yuen (Editor), and Deshonna Collier-Goubil (Editor) (IVP Academic)

are bearing the brunt of that, and now women are seen as less productive because they can't use that time. How can they possibly balance helping young children get on Zoom to do their classes, and on top of that teach their own Zoom classes and write a book? This is asking way too much. But we're seeing that administrators, more than ever, need to be sensitive and understand the unequal societal expectations placed on mothers to care for children, especially during this time. ...

COLLIER-GOUBIL: This also tags onto ... promotion opportunities into administrative positions. Coming out of the pandemic, there's been a lot of movement in our economy — economists are calling this the Great Resignation because so many people are shifting positions. How many of our mom faculty even have the energy to apply for a position that may have become available in their university? I think administrators need to identify those faculty and send them a note and encourage them. ... Sometimes, they just need that nudge, because it was a very difficult period of time for people who had to both care

for their children at home and then also work at the same time. ...

PHIPPS: One of the things I appreciated is that the book was hopeful while clearly pointing out the challenges. There were wonderful messages of how to support each other well. Could you speak to the importance of creating spaces, whether on campus or in the church, for people to listen to each other's stories and then learn from those stories to be able to put support mechanisms in place?

YUEN: Absolutely, and there needs to be funding for it. [For our group,] what was lovely was that we were able to get some money to have lunches. Because professor mothers, our time is so limited. Most of us are trying to schedule our classes so that we can go home and be able to spend time with our kids, help them with homework, or just let the babysitter or caregiver off. ... But our mental health, our spiritual health, our emotional health is so important. So being able to have that watercooler time to be able to talk with colleagues to share information — that's so valuable, as we know, for professional growth and advancement. ... [It was so helpful to have the funding] to sit down, eat, and be able to share wisdom and resources. ... But we also were able to get money for speakers [to come to the lunches]. One of our contributors, Dr. Doretha O'Quinn, was one of our speakers for the group. ... From that visit, she was able to then mentor a lot of professor mothers who really got so much from her previous talk and how she was able to navigate successfully all of that before us. All of that is so essential for Christian institutions to support professor mothers in that way so that we can contribute and grow and give more back to the university and our students.

COLLIER-GOUBIL: We also have a couple other [chapters highlighting]

holistic support. Dr. Yiesha Thompson speaks from the perspective of being an adjunct faculty and that, even for adjuncts, there's need for that support so that they can share resources to improve their craft. Dr. Yvana Uranga-Hernandez talks about homeschooling [and working], which completely blew me away — because this is a dream, sometimes, I think a lot of Christian moms have about wanting to homeschool and wanting to work. And here she is, doing both. A part of that was her connecting with these support services in selecting her homeschool community. So, she talks about how that support is needed. Nancy and I have a chapter where I also talk about being a solo parent. My husband passed away two years ago, so I solo parent our twins. I talk about my village — it's an old African proverb that it takes a village to raise children — so I talk about my village and what that looks like.

I think this book can be such a support to even spark these conversations. At the end of the book, we have discussion questions to use as a tool to help the mom faculty to begin to think about how they can find this support ... and for administrators to say, "Okay, what's the list? How can we support you best? Here's where we can put our money where our mouth is because we want to invest in you who bring so many gifts to our campus."

PHIPPS: Do you start [those conversations on the book] with administrative leadership? Do you start with a group of professor mothers themselves? Do you start with a mixed group? What do you think would be the best way to introduce this book into the fabric of a CCCU campus community?

COLLIER-GOUBIL: I would say all hands on deck, especially coming out of the pandemic. I think prior to the pandemic, I probably would have said start with professor moms to help them to

MOTHERS, EVEN WITH ADDITIONAL CHILDREN, ARE MORE PRODUCTIVE [AFTER THE INITIAL YEARS OF CHILD-REARING], WHICH IS COUNTER TO WHAT ADMINISTRATORS IMAGINE. ... SO ESPECIALLY AT CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES, WE REALLY SHOULD BE SUPPORTIVE.

identify the unique needs of their particular campus. But coming out of the pandemic ... it would be beneficial to campuses to have both administrators reading this together as a reading group, and then also allowing professor moms, these power women, to have a reading group as well. There are two different things that are going to happen from those two different groups.

For professor moms, they're going to be able to identify and kind of begin to creatively come up with what they can do to band together to have scholarship ... [and] to craft a better idea about how to move forward in their careers. For administrators to get together and to read the stories ... [it will help them identify ways] to come back and offer support that would speak so much life into these women, which then reverberates throughout the entire university — the departments will be better, the programs will be better, and the students will be better....

YUEN: I remember when I attended a dinner at the president's house as a new faculty, and I had to bring my child. I was wearing her, and I definitely felt like some people were like, "Where's your husband?" They were kind of confused by my existence because I was not what they imagined a new professor to look like. ... There are biases [like these] that I think administrators, if they are reading [the book], they could talk about, whether it's in themselves or in members of their division. In terms of retention, we need to unearth and be able to address that, because those biases can turn into toxic work environments for professor mothers, who have so much to contribute. These power women have so much to contribute. 🗣️



To watch the full conversation, visit www.youtube.com/CCCUvideo.

Advancing Diversity By Training Leaders

BY FIJOY L. JOHNSON

AS AN ASPIRING LEADER, I believe that Christian higher education has the opportunity and the ultimate gift to help students reach their academic goals and create a wholesome person rooted in faith. As *New York Times* columnist David Brooks told CCCU leaders a few years ago, "You [Christian colleges] have what everybody else is desperate to have: a way of talking about and educating the human person in a way that integrates faith, emotion, and intellect. You have a recipe to nurture human beings who have a devoted heart, a courageous mind, and a purposeful soul. Almost no other set of institutions in American society has that, and everyone wants it."

It is imperative that the CCCU maintains its emphasis on integrating faith and higher learning. For our students to love truth and pursue it, we must show them that education can strengthen and extend their faith and put it into action.

That is one of the reasons I was grateful for my recent experience attending the CCCU's Leadership Development

Institute (LDI) alongside nearly 30 CCCU leaders from across the country. After much time apart, it was refreshing and encouraging to have fellowship with other CCCU leaders. More importantly, I was able to see the love of Christ in the leadership that was represented at LDI. Every leader there showed me that it is essential for godly leaders to rise and encourage students to be Christ-like in their love for one another.

In a profound presentation, CCCU president Shirley Hoogstra stated the shared goal of CCCU institutions: to shape students who act for the public good out of love for Jesus Christ at a cost to themselves. Additional sessions addressed diversity realities in Christian higher education and the importance of diversity in creating a holistic leadership framework. They emphasized why our campuses should be at the forefront of pioneering the cause for interethnic justice and act as catalysts for social change on a broader scale within local, national, and global communities.

We, as Christian leaders, must take ownership in showing love to diverse people. Never has there been a more critical time in Christian education to provide a learning experience that educates the whole person by integrating faith, emotion, and intellect so that our graduates will have purposeful souls that impact society. The current racial issues our nation faces further compel us to train future leaders that the world desperately needs. My time at the LDI also demonstrated to me that our campuses should become a safe place for all God's diverse people. The word of God is the beginning point of understanding the nature, words, and works of Christ, which can serve as an on-ramp to cross-cultural leadership.

As I reflect upon my time at LDI, I feel blessed to have fostered meaningful relationships that I will continue to cultivate and grow. I hope to be able to impart the knowledge I have attained to aspiring leaders. More importantly, I fully recognize I am in this part of history to positively empower those who are defenseless and positively impact our community and society. I believe the onus is on us to show the world how to love our neighbors and genuinely represent Christ.

My own leadership journey has taken many unexpected twists and turns, but I believe I have an instrumental role to play in Christian higher education. As I navigate the unknown, I entrust to God the path I should take not only to impart the wisdom I have gained over the years but also to be a voice for the voiceless. 🙏

FIJOY L. JOHNSON, D.Min., is the assistant director of campus ministry at Lee University (Cleveland, TN).



Photo courtesy of Fijoy L. Johnson

Attendees and resource leaders of the 2021 CCCU Leadership Development Institute pose for a group photo at the Cedar Springs Retreat Center in Sumas, Washington, in June.



Leadership: A Journey of Discernment

BY LINDA SOMMERVILLE

"THE RACE DOESN'T always go to the swift, but it does go to the runner."

This obvious yet profound statement got my attention at the most recent CCCU Women's Leadership Development Institute (WLDI). Sherilyn Emberton, president of Huntington University, shared this thought with the cohort of nearly 30 women leaders from CCCU schools across the country, encouraging us to "use whatever resources God has given you" to lead well in our situations and keep running the race, no matter what obstacles we may face.

Leading well was a theme echoed by MaryKate Morse, dean of Portland Seminary, as she helped us unpack the story of Queen Esther and her "for such a time as this" leadership moment. Esther's story was an invitation for us to consider how God might be uniquely calling each of us to step up and out of our comfort zones, find our own voices as leaders, and prayerfully lead our organizations forward in these troubled times.

Both of these images — that of a runner, needing grit and determination to keep going, and the image of Queen Esther, needing discernment, vision, and courage to step into her leadership moment — resonated with my own thinking about leadership these days. Never has there been a more important time in Christian higher education for godly and gifted leaders to lead well as we seek to shape our students into the transformational servant leaders needed in our world. In the face of lightning-fast and often unpredictable change, we must continually be developed and stretched as leaders so that we'll be ready to face whatever challenges lie around the next corner.

Photo courtesy of Linda Somerville



Attendees and resource leaders of the 2021 CCCU Women's Leadership Development Institute pose for a group photo at the Cedar Springs Retreat Center in Sumas, Washington, in June.

For those of us in this year's WLDI cohort, after more than a year of responding to the challenges of COVID and the rapidly shifting landscape of higher education, we were ready for a break (which the beautiful setting provided). But beyond rest and meaningful connection, we were also hungry to be sharpened in our leadership strategy, identity, and skill so that we could be the leaders God designed us to be, able to meet the demanding challenges of the moment and to consider where God may be leading us next. As I looked around the room, I couldn't help wondering who might be next to become a university president or provost.

While I have learned never to say never to God, I don't sense that either of those roles is my next step. But if "what's past is prologue," as Shakespeare wrote, then I feel comfortable saying that whatever God has next for me will likely be something I can't imagine now. My own leadership journey has taken many twists and turns, and God has not always shown me what's next around the corner

— sometimes because I wasn't ready to see myself in a new leadership role, but sometimes because, like Queen Esther, God was still preparing me for my own "such a time as this" leadership moment.

So while I seek to continue leading faithfully right where I am, I also continue to look for ways to grow as a leader in order to be ready when the next leadership opportunity comes. As leaders, we don't have to be the smartest or the fastest runner — but we do have to run! And to run well, we must continue developing our leadership so we're ready for the next challenge or opportunity God brings. Most importantly, we need to "run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith" (Hebrews 12:1-2). May God grant us the wisdom, vision, and strength to lead our schools well this coming year! 🙏

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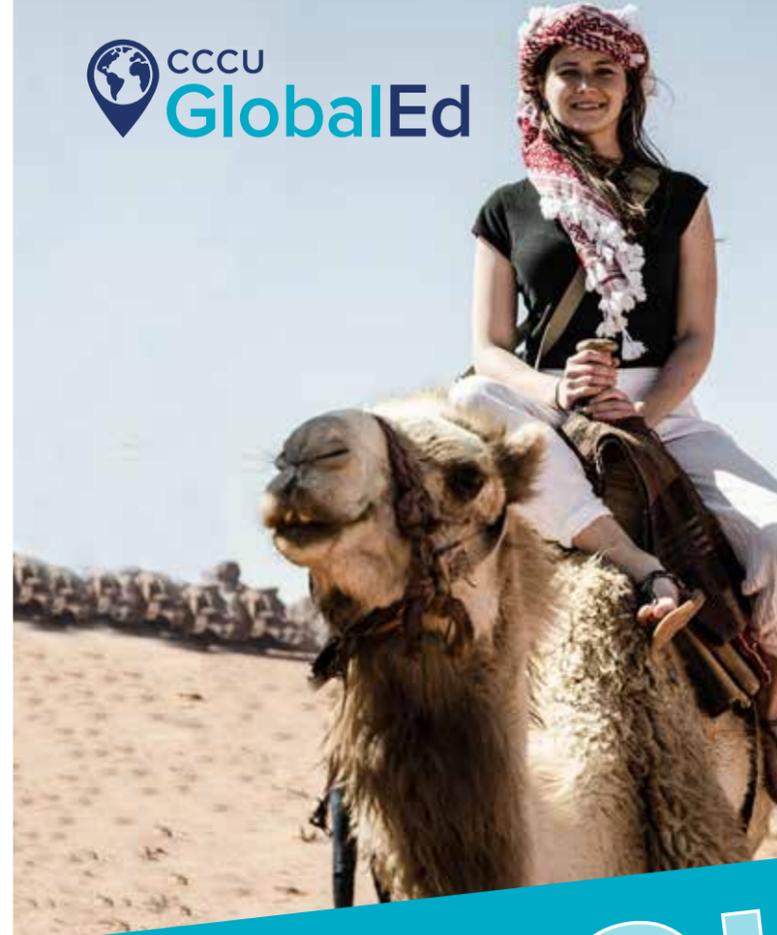
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