

THE PILLARS

FALL 2023



the **LOGO**
Revealed

HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



Houston Christian University (HCU) has unveiled a new logo, brand identity and messaging that solidifies its reputation as a leader in Christian education and enables the University to extend its reach in attracting and meeting the needs of the next generation of college students.

The new logo is a better description of who we are. It ushers in a new look, but still maintains HCU's commitment to its core convictions and mission to offer students a strong academic foundation grounded in historic Christian belief. It not only captures our new name, but illustrates visually what we strive for, that is, an understanding of how the education HCU offers is informed by our Christian faith.

Education that is separated from the roots of truth, character building, reality, and faith in the one true and living God revealed through Jesus Christ is an education that falls short of its intended goal, that is, to shape our lives with wisdom so that we might be faithful participants in God's work in the world.

The Belin Tower captures the history and work of higher education as it exemplifies in its features the structures of order, tradition and beauty. The cross at the top lifts the eye to the ultimate horizon that defines who we are and what we do as seekers of truth who are made in the image of God. We are grounded in the goodness of God's creation and in spite of the brokenness all around us, we look to the cross, which

points us to the person of Christ, the one in whom the world's hopes for restoration authentically reside.

Carnegie, in conjunction with our marketing team, is hard at work integrating the new logo and branding messaging throughout the HCU campus. From the Houston Christian University sign on the Southwest Freeway, to our parking lot banners, to our HC.edu website, we are implementing our logo in a way that will aid the surrounding community in recognizing and appreciating our new name and visual identity.

We have also joined forces with KPRC-TV, our community partner, to promote our new brand and support various non-profit causes. Be on the lookout for new billboards throughout the city that attest to the cutting-edge degree programs and faith-based focus that set HCU apart as a premier educational institution.

As a University, we celebrate our new name, look and messaging and stand firm on the foundation of core convictions and values that have brought us to where we are today - poised and ready to meet the academic and spiritual needs of the next generation of world-class learners.

Robert B. Sloan



@DrRobertBSloan

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Unveiling Our New LOGO

When Houston Baptist College opened its doors in 1963, the freshman class numbered 193 students housed in a cluster of new buildings with a teaching staff of 30 faculty. The surrounding Sharpstown neighborhood adjacent to the barren campus was in the fledgling stage of development – as Houston’s first master-planned community, it was a remote and lonely place compared to today.

Over the next decade, the campus and the nearby area expanded, and in 1973, Houston



Baptist College officially became Houston Baptist University following completion of a formal self-study for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and approval by the Board of Trustees in November 1972. This new name “stuck” for the next 50 years.



In 1973, Houston Baptist College officially became Houston Baptist University.

But, once again, the winds of change began to blow. An extraordinary transition at the University began with a single spark – the decision to rename, rebrand and craft a new logo that would become the symbol of the future. For 16 years, the then-named Houston Baptist University engaged in a prayerful review process to consider this significant alteration – the reimagining of its very name. Deeply rooted in faith, the University sought guidance and discernment throughout this proposed transformation. On May 17, 2022, the Board of Trustees embraced the positive impact a name change could have on the institution’s future. With conviction and divine guidance, the Board officially approved the switch to Houston Christian University, marking a pivotal moment in HCU’s history.

On September 21, 2022, the new name, Houston Christian University, was unveiled in an open forum with faculty, staff, alumni, past and present trustees, and students. This change symbolized

the culmination of prayer and unwavering dedication to the University’s mission and values.

President Robert B. Sloan spoke during the forum. “We are committed to being a distinctively Christian university that welcomes all Christians to benefit from our excellent academic programs. This historic university appeals to people all across the spectrum of Christian denominational life, and this new name clarifies who we are,” said Dr. Sloan.

Aided by the esteemed higher education marketing firm, Carnegie LLP, and armed with a new name, HCU set out to discover a fresh identity that, not only defined its academic and spiritual image, but also revitalized its athletics program. The goal: create new logos that would capture HCU’s core values, modernize its visual identity and reflect its commitment to excellence in education, as well as athletics.

As the name change set the stage for a transformative narrative, HCU turned its attention to the visual representation that would personify this new identity. With an understanding of the significance of a compelling visual representation, the University, led by Dr. Sloan, embarked on the mission to reimagine the logo.

Houston Christian UNIVERSITY

The design odyssey began with many brainstorming sessions and collaborative meetings where HCU stakeholders across multiple departments gathered to share their ideas. These sessions proved to be invaluable



as the collective creativity and expertise of the HCU team illuminated the path, guiding the design process with purpose and resolve.

Fueled by the shared excitement, HCU's Executive Council played a pivotal role in shaping this growing narrative. Their input was an essential ingredient in the ever-changing landscape of design possibilities. The selection of iconic campus symbols became

an integral part of the University's reimagined identity. The vision provided by HCU's Executive Council ensured that the developing logo would be a testament to HCU's values and aspirations: a symbol of the university's unwavering commitment to academic excellence, spiritual growth and community engagement.

Preliminary logo designs emerged, each a brushstroke canvas of possibility. The designs were carefully crafted to resonate with HCU's diverse stakeholders including students, staff, faculty and alumni.

Once the initial logo versions were created, a sampling process was initiated within the HCU community. Employees from various departments were invited to provide feedback and preferences. This initial survey allowed HCU to gauge reactions and perspectives from its own team, ensuring that their voices were heard in shaping the new brand.

But this tale of artistic exploration did not stop within the walls of HCU. The next chapter unfolded when the logo finalists faced the scrutiny of external eyes. The showcase revealed four logo designs. Through focus groups and

sampling, the broader community joined in this narrative and cast their votes from which a clear winner appeared.

The culmination of this collaborative process led to the selection of the logo design that most represents Houston Christian University's identity. Our new logo features Belin Tower with a custom font specifically designed for us. The dynamic colors and

unique typography convey a vibrancy and forward-thinking that aligns with HCU's vision for the future.

Dr. Sloan expressed his gratitude to both the internal and external stakeholders for their invaluable contribution to the logo redesign journey.

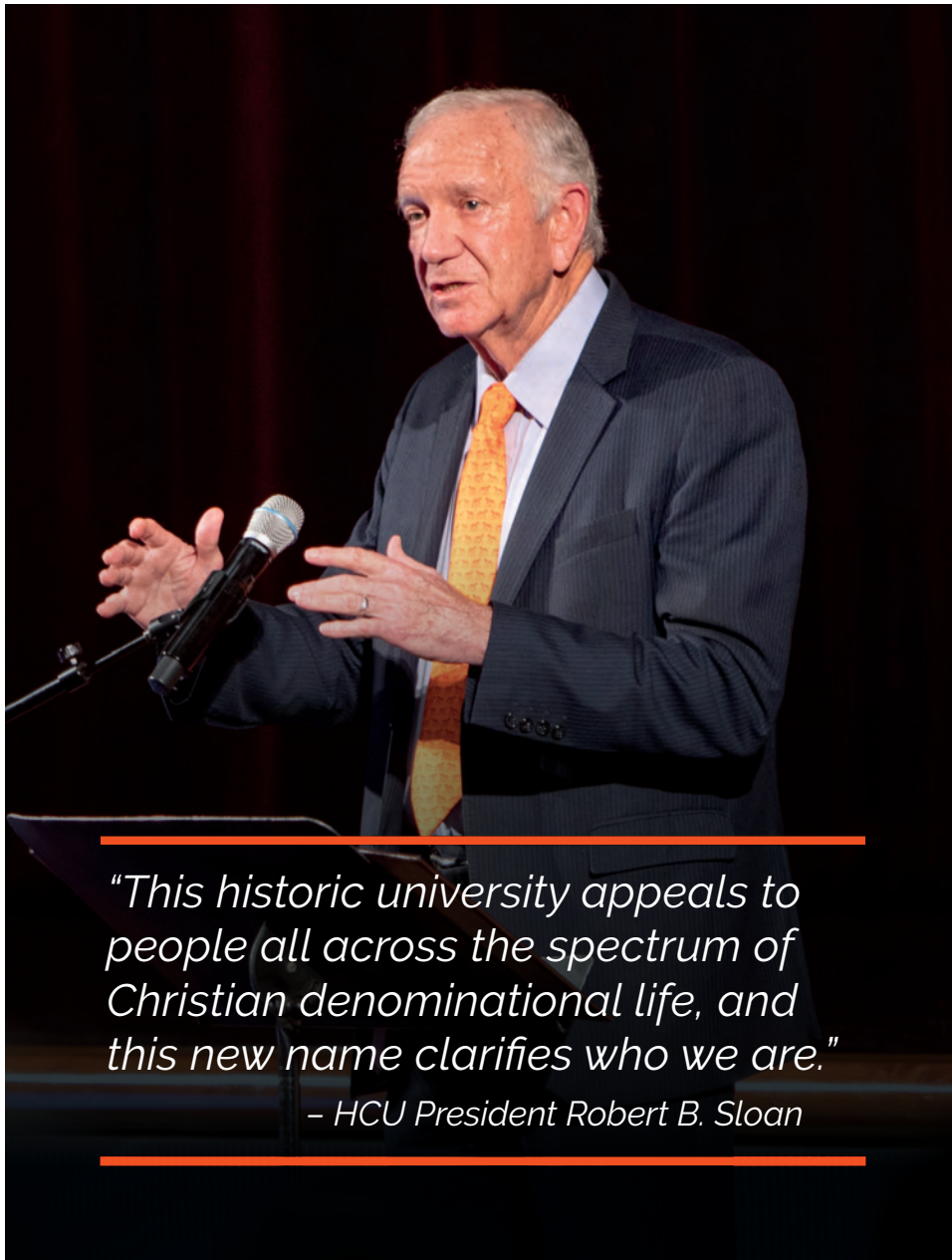
On May 8, 2023, after many months of work, the new logo was unveiled to an enthusiastic response at the faculty and staff End-of-Year Celebration.

The rebrand will be implemented across multiple platforms including the University's website, official communications, email signatures, marketing materials, advertising and on-campus signage.

An equally important part of this redesign process included a revamp of the athletics brand. Our famed Husky head received a facelift, its features subtly refined to reflect the new-found energy and dynamism pouring through HCU. With a bold color palette, the revised logo exemplifies the very essence of our beloved Huskies.

The collaborative efforts amongst the University stakeholders, combined with Carnegie, have resulted in logo designs which embody our spirit of academic excellence. HCU





"This historic university appeals to people all across the spectrum of Christian denominational life, and this new name clarifies who we are."

- HCU President Robert B. Sloan

stands poised to embrace a future teeming with possibilities. The revitalized Athletics identity, complete with the enchanting Husky head, will rally students, faculty, staff, alumni and fans alike, igniting a sense of pride and unity. As HCU sets its sights on the ambitious goal of accommodating 10,000 students, these redesigns serve as a powerful testament to the University's commitment to academics, spiritual growth and vibrant community.

With each passing day, Houston Christian University will serve as a beacon to guide students towards a transformative journey. A new dawn awaits. Let the journey continue.

To see all of the new university brand standards, go to [HC.edu/marketing](https://www.hc.edu/marketing).

SPORTS LETTERS

Giving Back

HCU alumni Jess Rogers Dunham and Cary Dunham to co-chair 2023 Spirit of Excellence Gala

Giving back to their alma mater is second nature for Houston Christian University (HCU) alumni Jess Rogers Dunham and Cary Dunham. Members of the Linda and Archie Dunham family, the couple has been generous in their support of the University through the years. The pair will join forces as co-chairs of this year's Spirit of Excellence Gala to raise funds for scholarships for students, marking the first time an alumni couple has chaired the bi-annual event. The tented gala will take place on the HCU campus on Thursday, Oct. 26, featuring emcee Deborah Duncan of KHOU-11's Great Day Houston and Dallas Jenkins, creator, director and producer of "The Chosen," as the evening's keynote speaker.

"We are excited to have Dallas Jenkins, creator of "The Chosen," deliver the keynote speech at this year's Spirit of Excellence Gala as Dr. Sloan presents the University's highest awards -the Spirit of Excellence Award and The President's Award -to the night's honorees," said Jess Dunham.

As dedicated alumni of HCU, serving as gala chairs is a special honor and another part of a unique journey that

began after the two met while serving on the Developmental Board for the McNair Center for Entrepreneurship & Free Enterprise at the University. "We are grateful for the role HCU played in allowing Cary and I to cross paths and later marry," said Jess Dunham.

Looking back, each is also thankful for the strong academic and spiritual foundation that the University provided. HCU was on a quarter system when Cary Dunham was a student enabling him to work during the day and take classes at night to finish his Business Management and Marketing degrees in 1993. Between work and his studies, he also found time to support the Husky athletic teams as a cheerleader, an experience he truly enjoyed.

His wife, Jess, earned two degrees from the University -a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Media and Speech Communications in 2000 and a Master of Education in Secondary Education in 2002. She worked in education as a teacher for 7 years and then launched a boutique tutoring company in 2009 catering to Pre-K-to-College students.

While pursuing their studies, each valued the University's family atmosphere, small class sizes and the opportunity



to develop one-on-one relationships with professors. "I enjoyed not being just a person or a number but having the opportunity to develop personal relationships with my professors at HCU," said Cary Dunham, particularly noting the impact Dr. Rusty Brooks, one of his favorite professors, had on his life. His wife echoed his sentiments on the distinctive qualities that set HCU apart from other educational institutions.

"The professors that I met there and the internships I had are things that set me up for life. I owe that all to the University," said Jess Dunham. During their time at the University, the couple also welcomed the opportunity to be around like-minded students and faculty with shared faith and values.

"I think that the professors and the staff that the University hires are critical to helping guide and produce wonderful graduates. Having professors who encouraged you to live in a Christ-centered way was invaluable," said Jess Dunham. With preparations underway for the 2023 Spirit of Excellence Gala, the Dunhams are excited to oversee this prestigious night of recognition and to

participate in a special cause that will raise funds for scholarships for students.

"It's just an honor for both Cary and me," said Jess Dunham of their roles as co-chairs. "I owe everything, every honor, everything I've ever accumulated since I left HCU, to the University. Raising scholarships for students is something near and dear to my heart and will make this a special night to remember."

Cary Dunham is president/CEO of NPH Development, a Houston-based development company. He is also the EVP of Dunham Properties and sits on the board at Memorial Hermann Northwest. His wife, Jess, is the president/CEO of TutorVille, a boutique tutoring firm for Pre-K-College students that customizes each student's educational plan to fit their needs and learning style. She is also the founder/CEO of TutorVille Franchise, a franchising company that works with franchisees nationwide to invest in TutorVille in other cities. And, in 2022, she founded the TutorVille Foundation to provide scholarships to students battling cancer and has supported numerous organizations to support the needs of children.



*Cindy & Dan Wilford,
2023 Spirit of Excellence
Award Honoree*



**Houston
Christian 2023 SPIRIT of
UNIVERSITY**



*Alex & Randy O. '84 Sorrels,
2023 Spirit of Excellence
Award Honoree*



*Nichole & Benny '86 Agosto,
2023 Spirit of Excellence
Award Honoree*

Excellence HONOREES



President's Award Honorees

*Drs. Gloria & Wiley Biles,
2023 President's Award
(posthumous presentation)*

A Life of Service

Rev. Garry Blackmon assumes role as HCU Board of Trustees Chair

Rev. Garry Blackmon is a man of faith who has dedicated his life to serving God and his community. He has given his time and talents to his church as Senior Pastor of Crossway Christian Fellowship and served as a dedicated member of the board of trustees at Houston Christian University (HCU) where he was recently appointed Board Chair.

HCU President Dr. Sloan described Rev. Blackmon as “an outstanding Christian leader.”

“He served as chaplain to the Houston Fire Department for many years, is the longstanding senior pastor of Crossway Christian Fellowship and is one of the most highly regarded ministers in the city of Houston,” said Dr. Sloan. “We are privileged to benefit from Reverend Blackmon’s service as chairman of HCU’s Board of Trustees. Garry was enthusiastically elected by his fellow trustees as a reflection of his leadership, integrity, and commitment to the mission of HCU.”

Rev. Blackmon has been a part of the HCU family, formerly Houston Baptist University, for nearly 12 years and considers it a privilege to serve as Chair at a pivotal time in the University’s history.

“After being elected as the new Chairman of the Board of Trustees, I immediately thought about the words of the late Dr. Oliver Jones, ‘All I am I owe, I live forever in the red!’ I’m very humbled and thankful to my fellow

trustees for selecting me to serve as chair elect. This was something I never expected but, nonetheless, it is a call to service that I’m honored to accept. I recognized that I get to follow so many remarkable individuals who have served in this role, and I will do my best to live up to the examples they have been set before me,” said Rev. Blackmon.

He commends the University for its steadfast commitment to cultivating the study of a biblical worldview in higher education, the stewardship of the scriptures, and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He values the opportunity to work closely with Dr. Sloan, HCU board of trustee members, the executive staff and academic leaders to uphold these core Christian convictions.

A well-respected leader in the community, Rev. Blackmon has served in a leadership role with Promise Keepers, Inc., worked to rebuild urban communities through “Serve the City,” a non-profit redevelopment project and ministered in various cities across the country.

A Houston native, Rev. Blackmon was ordained in 1985 and aims, through ministry, to see Christians walk in the blessings of the Lord. He is a dedicated spiritual leader, husband, father of four and humble servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the 2022-23 HCU Board of Trustees Chair, Rev. Blackmon serves along with Vice Chair, Rev. Ramiro Peña, and Board Secretary, Steve Kerns.





The Houston Business Journal
**LANDMARK
AWARD**

The Morris Family Center
for Law & Liberty

The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty on the campus of Houston Christian University (HCU), was chosen as a winner of the Houston Business Journal (HBJ) 2023 Landmark Award at a luncheon held on April 21 at the Marriott Marquis Houston.

The annual awards program recognizes the top commercial real estate projects in the Houston area completed in the previous year that help sculpt the look, feel and image of the city. Projects also were evaluated on excellence in land planning, design, construction, economics, marketing and management.

“Houston is our home, and we are greatly honored to be chosen for this significant award, especially as it relates to our commitment to this great city. We are grateful for Jackson & Ryan Architects and Tellepsen and the opportunity they have given us to

support Houston and to enhance its historic look, feel, and image,” said HCU President Robert Sloan.

The Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, comprised of a main building modeled after Independence Hall, was chosen over five other finalists in the education category, including Bellaire High School, The Branch School, College of the Mainland – Industrial Careers Building, Fort Bend ISD’s Lakeview Elementary School and The San Jacinto College Anderson – Ball Classroom Building.

The Center’s main building heightens awareness of America’s history and the nation’s founding principles in a unique and innovative way. The authentic design of the structure gives visitors a sense of stepping back in time to the setting where the founding fathers debated and signed



the nation's defining documents – The Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. The building was also designed as a field trip destination for school children and educators, in the Houston area and beyond, as well as a conference center for civic groups and the business community.

“Independence Hall at HCU not only symbolizes our commitment to teaching our nation’s founding principles but beautifies our campus and city. It highlights the importance of architecture and physical spaces and how they enhance the educational mission of an institution. I hope that this building becomes an inspiration to all who visit our campus and the thousands of commuters who see it from the highway each day,” said Dr. Chris Hammons, Director of the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty.

Tellepsen, the general contractor of HCU’s Independence Hall and surrounding complex, and Jackson & Ryan Architects, the architectural design team, were contracted to work on the multi-million-dollar construction project which was completed in August of 2022.

An official ribbon-cutting ceremony, held Sept. 15, 2022, signaled the opening of the Center and paid tribute to Dr. Stewart Morris, Sr., HCU Founding Father and lead donor on the project, as well as members of The Morris Family and other key donors.

Projects were recognized in 17 categories ranging from Lifetime Achievement, Education and Multi-Use to Industrial, Community Impact and Historic Renovation.

HBJ featured the finalists and winners of the 2023 Landmark Awards in the April 28th edition of the Houston Business Journal.



Medal of Honor

Dr. Chris Hammons, Director of the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty and government professor at Houston Christian University (HCU), was awarded a prestigious National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) Founders Medal at this year's state convention.

HCU President Robert Sloan provided a letter of recommendation supporting Hammons' nomination and described him as "an ideal candidate for the award because his unselfish and tireless efforts to teach American history and political science and promote our nation's founding principles far exceed his work with [HCU] students, extending to numerous members of the Houston community and beyond."

"Dr. Chris Hammons is a dedicated, creative educator who deserves recognition for his outstanding leadership and service in our community," said Dr. Sloan.

Named for the four women who founded the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1890, the medals recognize citizens who have given unselfishly to their community, state or nation far beyond his/her employment obligation or normal duties. Each year, one recommendation is made by the organization's nominating body in each of four categories: Heroism, Youth Achievement, Patriotism and Education.

Dr. Hammons was the recipient of the Mary Smith Lockwood Medal for Education, presented by Marcy Carter-Lovick, State Regent of the Texas Daughters of the American Revolution and DAR Life Member.

"The Mary Smith Lockwood Medal for Education honors an individual who has shown exemplary achievement through service and leadership in promoting education outside the formal educational process," said Carter-Lovick during the awards presentation.

Dr. Hammons was recognized for his passion and commitment in championing efforts for construction of the Morris Family Center for Law & Liberty, a multi-million-dollar complex comprised of a main building modeled after Philadelphia's iconic Independence Hall. The complex provides dedicated space for HCU students and students



across the city and state to learn about American history and the nation's founding principles.

"It was an honor to be selected for such a prestigious award. The mission of the Center was supported by a very enthusiastic audience. I think, for many of them, this was the first time they had heard of Houston Christian University, and they were very impressed by the work we are doing here," said Dr. Hammons of his selection.

Stewart Morris, Jr. supported Dr. Hammons' nomination for the award and applauded him for his leadership which played a role in the construction of the iconic Independence Hall on HCU's campus. He has been instrumental in the development of the Morris Family



Center for Law & Liberty and is the son of HCU's Founding Father Dr. Stewart Morris, Sr.

"The intention for the use of the building will be to serve [HCU] students as well as the community for all ages to educate, restore pride and understanding of these principles and the blessings they bring," said Morris, Jr., president of Stewart Security Capital.

United States Air Force Retired Brigadier General Donald Wagner echoed the positive praise for Dr. Hammons' nomination in a letter of recommendation for the award.

"Dr. Hammons markedly embodies all of the criteria of this award in his endless outreach to the Houston community by sharing his profound knowledge of political science,

American history and the formative principles on which our Nation was founded," said Wagner.

HCU Alumna Betsy Poage Miller '84, who spearheaded support for Dr. Hammons' nomination, concurred with sentiments expressed regarding his selection for the prestigious medal.

"I cannot think of a person more deserving of this award than Dr. Hammons for his selfless pursuit of the building of this replica of Independence Hall, and his desire to teach the youth of this community what the Founding Fathers sacrificed to make us a country," said Miller.

To learn more about the NSDAR and the Founders Medals, visit www.DAR.org.

Dr. Chris Hammons honored by Alpha Chi National College Honor Society

Dr. Chris Hammons was one of seven advisors recognized for 20-plus years of service by the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society. The organization recognized the distinguished advisors for their remarkable milestones of service and dedication to academic excellence through their work with Alpha Chi.

Lara Noah, National Executive Director of Alpha Chi, expressed her appreciation for the advisors, stating, "It's an honor to recognize these advisors' service with special pins that symbolize our heartfelt appreciation for the dedication and commitment they have shown through their work with Alpha Chi."



Service pins are awarded at five-year intervals, starting at 10 years of service. After 15 years of service, gemstones are added to the pin for each additional five years of service.

This year will be Dr. Hammons' last as a chapter sponsor. "After 25 years, I feel like it's time to pass the torch. It's been a real highlight of my career and great fun," said Hammons. Under Hammons' leadership, the campus carillon that chimes hourly from atop the Hinton Center was gifted to the University by the Alpha Chi campus chapter. Dr. Russ Hemati, HCU Associate Professor of Philosophy, will serve as the new campus sponsor and will assist with this year's induction ceremonies before taking over the chapter.

Alpha Chi National College Honor Society invites membership to juniors, seniors, and graduate students from all disciplines in the top 10 percent of their classes at its member institutions. Since the Society's founding in 1922, Alpha Chi members, charged with upholding the tenets of Truth and Character, have dedicated themselves to "making scholarship effective for good." Alpha Chi is a certified member in good standing of the Association of College Honor Societies.

HCU Names 2022-2023 Piper Professor

Dr. Sarah Katelynn (Katie) Alaniz, Associate Professor of Education in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences has been named HCU's 2022-2023 Piper Professor.

Dr. Alaniz teaches graduate and undergraduate degree programs where she works with students seeking to make a positive impact in schools and society. Her course development and teaching experiences include courses in instructional design, educational applications of technology, collegial coaching and theories and applications of systems thinking.

She also serves as Director of the Center for Learning Innovations and Teaching Excellence (C-LITE), supporting colleagues in their endeavors to meaningfully enhance teaching and learning at HCU. Additionally, she serves as the program coordinator and course developer for the Master of Science in Learning, Technology, and Design program. She also has chaired or served as a committee member on the dissertation committees of nine doctoral students, including members of the first cohort of doctoral graduates from HCU.

Dr. Alaniz has designed and delivered more than 150 professional presentations in the United States and abroad, and she has authored and/or co-authored more than 20 publications, including six books in the areas of priority management, instructional design, authentic assessment, collegial coaching in academic settings and educational applications of digital tools and resources.

She was selected as a Fulbright Specialist by the J. William Fulbright Council for International Exchange of Scholars. Additionally, Dr. Alaniz represented her college as the Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Nominee in the 2019-2020 academic year. Her calling as an educator has led her to a wide range of professional



opportunities, including more than 15 years of service as a teacher in public and private school settings and more than a decade of experience as a digital learning specialist.

Additionally, for the past 14 years, Dr. Alaniz and her husband Steven have served thousands of neighbors within the Houston community through a nonprofit outreach program called Apartment Life.

Dr. Alaniz holds a Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a Specialization in Learning, Design and Technology from the University of Houston; a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a Specialization in Instructional Technology from Houston

Christian University; a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing from Texas A&M University; and a Certificate in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from the Texas Education Agency. She is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration in Marketing from Houston Christian University.

Scan the QR code to read about HCU's 2022-2023 Piper Professor nominees.



We believe that receiving a challenge coin from a veteran is a great honor as it signifies an eternal impact was made in the veteran's life while attending HCU."

– Cody Harrington



A Challenge Worth Meeting

HCU Launches Military Challenge Coin Initiative

HCU alum Cody Harrington is a U.S. Military combat veteran who served 8 years as an army paratrooper in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Toward the end of his military career, he experienced a crisis of faith that led him to question the deeper issues of life until he crossed paths with an individual who shared the Gospel with him. The encounter transformed his life and set him on a path that eventually led him to enroll at Houston Christian University (HCU), formerly Houston Baptist University.

Today he is fighting on a different battlefield as Assistant Director of International & Veteran Services at HCU where he stands in the gap to help student veterans transition from military service to pursuing their educational goals.

"As veterans, we understand servant leadership. We gave up our rights as citizens to serve our country and in that same capacity, I get to do the same thing here," said Harrington in a HCU "Think About It" podcast interview.

Under the leadership of Shannon Bedo, Director of International and Veteran Student Services at HCU, Harrington launched a Military Challenge Coin initiative in the spring of 2023 to celebrate the achievements of student veterans and pay tribute to the faculty and/or staff members who provide invaluable support to them during their time at the University.

"In the military community, challenge coins are a catalyst for servicemembers to honor those who have made a difference in their lives and careers. Our aim at HCU is to continue this tradition by starting our own version. We give two coins to each graduating veteran, one to keep for their own memories and one to give to an HCU faculty or staff member who has made a positive impact on their educational journey," shared Bedo.

Seven student veterans in the Spring 2023 graduating class were presented with the commemorative coins - one to celebrate completion of their degrees and one to

share with a faculty or staff member who impacted their lives during the course of their studies.

"We believe that receiving a challenge coin from a veteran is a great honor as it signifies an eternal impact was made in the veteran's life while attending HCU," said Harrington.

Dr. Mary White, Asst. Professor of Education was the first HCU professor to receive this special honor. HCU alumna, Kenyada Fore, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, earned a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction this past spring and presented Dr. White with the special coin.

Witnessing elite military leaders present military coins to her fellow Marines, the HCU student veteran valued the opportunity to recognize Dr.

White's impact on her life in a similar way.

"You have partaken in the development of me becoming a teacher, so I pass to you the additional coin I received from HCU for your leadership in serving me. Thank you, Dr. White. I will always remember you," said Fore in a special note to her advisor.

The touching tribute brought tears to Dr. White's eyes. She commended the HCU student veteran for completing her graduate degree in the face of numerous challenges.

"In my brief time as her advisor, Kenyada has actually encouraged

me the most. Her resilience as a single mom moving to a new city and finishing her degree reminded me of my single motherhood. We have prayed together, cried together and even laughed together. Her sharing this medallion reminds me why I'm an educator and why I am a Christian who advises HCU students," said Dr. White.

HCU was among 530 out of 1,800 schools chosen this past spring to receive the 2023-2024 Military Friendly Schools Designation and one of 250 schools chosen to receive a "Gold Ranking" for its leading practices, outcomes and effective programs for student veterans.



Military Challenge Coin

A New Era for Husky Football



December 13, 2022 marked the beginning of a new era for HCU football with the introduction of Braxton Harris as the second head coach in the program's history.

"We couldn't be more excited and we are ready to hit the ground running at HCU," Harris said when introduced as the Huskies' head coach. "We are excited for the opportunity to be back in the state of Texas at a faith-based university that doesn't just talk about it – they live it. We were looking for a place that not only has football, but a place to grow in faith and family – everything we wanted – and HCU is a great opportunity for that."

"We are committed to winning," Harris continued. "We are going to say it over and over, we are not only going to do it right, but we can do it while winning."


"Braxton Harris is a great fit for Houston Christian University," President Robert B. Sloan said. "We welcome him, his wife, Jennifer, and their four children to the HCU family. His record of achievement with respect to building successful programs, combined with his love of young people, as reflected in his ability to recruit players and lead them to success, both academically and competitively, give the Huskies a promising future." Harris, 38, spent three seasons at Campbell, including this past season as the Associate Head Coach, Linebackers Coach and Recruiting Coordinator. During the December 2021 Early

Signing Period, the Camels landed the top freshman class in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) according to Lights On College Sports, signing three of the nation's top 10 recruits. Campbell placed a program-record 12 student-athletes on the All-Big South teams last season, including linebacker CJ Tillman. Safety Myles Rowser was named to the Bluebloods Freshman All-American Team.

In his first season at Campbell, Harris helped the Camels rank fourth in the FCS in takeaways (25) and defensive touchdowns (4). Tillman earned Freshman All-American honors and was a finalist for the Jerry Rice Award given to the top freshman in the FCS.

Prior to Campbell, Harris was the head coach at Howard Payne in Brownwood, Texas, from 2017-19. He led the Yellow Jackets to a 5-5 record in his final season, posting the program's most overall wins and conference wins (4) since 2006. He also spent time as the assistant head coach and co-defensive coordinator at Texas Lutheran from 2013-16, helping guide a previously 0-10 program to a 25-5 record over three years and three consecutive conference championships. He originally joined the TLU staff in 2011 as the defensive ends and linebackers coach, as well as special teams coordinator and recruiting coordinator.

Harris was the safeties coach at Waco High School for one year, after beginning his coaching career at his alma mater, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, in Belton, Texas, from



"We were looking for someone who will energize the football program and someone with strong Houston and Texas ties to recruit at an elite level."

- Steve Moniaci, HCU Director of Athletics

2006-2009. He played quarterback for UMHB from 2003 to 2005 and was a member of the Crusaders' 2004 NCAA Division III National Championship finalist team.

Upon his hiring, Harris quickly set about assembling a coaching staff with strong Texas ties. After getting his primary staff in place, the staff had less than a month to go until national signing day on Feb. 1. In less than a month, the Huskies had put together the top recruiting class in program history and a class ranked No. 10 nationally in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), first among all Texas FCS schools and first among all Southland Conference schools.

"We targeted Coach Harris from the start," Director of Athletics Steve Moniaci said. "We were looking for someone who will energize the football program and someone with strong Houston and Texas ties to recruit at an elite level. Our talent pool during the search was tremendous, as we visited with some great coaches, but in the end, we came back to where we started and feel Coach Harris is the best fit for HCU."

From there, the Huskies have added more than 25 transfers from Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and FCS programs and junior colleges, adding experience to the roster.

"We're in the fourth largest city in the United States," said Harris. "The greatest football is in Houston, Texas. You can drive 10 minutes from our campus and hit three football games with Division-I caliber athletes. We brought back at least 20 Houston kids who are transfers and are coming

back home and then at least another 10 are from the state of Texas."

Spring practices gave Harris his first opportunity to see his returning players, and a handful of newcomers, in action on the field.

"Spring was a lot of fun. It was good to see the coaching staff mix with our players," Harris added. "We were fortunate, we already had a solid group of players on campus, and we believe in those guys. It was neat to see those guys continue to believe and to build trust with our coaching staff."

Much like the beloved sign from TV show, Ted Lasso, "BELIEVE" is a word that holds resonance for Harris as a leader of the HCU football program. He stresses the need for the coaches and team to believe in their mission and their abilities as a group. Additionally, he knows the importance of not only talking the talk, but walking the walk.

"You have to do what you say you're going to do. When I walked into a room with these guys on December 13, I told them my plan to be successful. I've asked them throughout my time so far, how are we doing? We have a leadership council that meets with me weekly and they help hold me accountable."

Harris and the Huskies kicked off the 2023 football season with a 66-0 win over Arkansas Baptist in the team's opening home game.



Sharp Gym, home of HCU men's and women's basketball and volleyball programs, received a welcomed upgrade this summer with the installation of a new playing surface featuring a refreshed court design.

The maple surface is a Robbins floor that was installed this summer by NAH Sports Flooring and includes recycled components in the shock pads. In addition to the new flooring, the court design now features the new Husky head logo at center court, "HUSKIES" on both baselines and smaller logos with "HCU" and the Husky head together on opposite corners of the floor.

The new floor replaces the old playing surface that was originally installed in the summer of 1994.

At Husky Field, meanwhile, the HCU baseball team is now making full use of its new indoor player development facility.

The new building allows the Huskies to be able to practice regardless of weather conditions outside.

The 7,200 sq. ft. facility features nearly 4,000 sq. ft. of multi-purpose turf and three full-size hitting cages and a custom-built, baseball-only, weight room in partnership with Power Lift.

Dunham Field at Husky Stadium also underwent a facelift this summer with a brand new FieldTurf surface laid and a new field design applied.

FieldTurf is among the most trusted artificial playing surfaces available for football fields, the choice of more than 1,000 colleges and universities along with various NFL stadiums and practice facilities.

The new field has the updated Husky Head at mid-field, updated Southland Conference logos and still boasts the "Dunham Field" name. Additionally, the end zones are now blue with "HUSKIES" in white with an orange outline.

HCU Soccer Set to Kick Off in Ohio Valley Conference

Houston Christian University (HCU) accepted an invitation to join the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) as a men's soccer affiliate member, beginning play in the Fall of 2023.

The Ohio Valley is the 24th Division-I conference to sponsor men's soccer, and will receive an automatic qualifier to the National Collegiate Athletics Association Championship tournament.

An affiliate member of the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) for the past 10 years, HCU is joined by fellow Southland Conference member and former WAC affiliate member Incarnate Word in moving to the OVC.

"We are very excited for the opportunity to be an affiliate member of the OVC! We look forward to competing in this newly-formed conference," said HCU Head Coach Ryan Pratt.

HCU is one of just four Division-I men's soccer programs in the state of Texas (University of the Incarnate Word (UIW), Southern Methodist University and UT Rio Grande Valley, the others), thus making conference affiliation a very fluid situation over the years. The Southland Conference does not sponsor men's soccer.

The move to the OVC marks the sixth different affiliation for the program since it was reinstated in 2006 after a hiatus of 15 seasons. The Huskies were a member of the Trans America Athletic Conference from 1979-90.

A member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics and the Red River Athletic Conference in that opening 2006 campaign, the Huskies then transitioned back to the Division 1 ranks in 2007.

After one year as an independent, the Huskies spent time in the Atlantic Soccer Conference from 2008-11 and the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation in 2012, before joining the WAC in 2013.

"It's an exciting day for the HCU men's soccer program with the move to the Ohio Valley Conference as an affiliate member," stated Athletic Director Steve Moniaci. "We certainly want to thank the WAC for a great 10 years of partnership as we make this shift to what we believe is a terrific opportunity with the OVC."

Four OVC institutions currently field men's soccer teams: Eastern Illinois, Lindenwood, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Southern Indiana. In addition to HCU and UIW, Chicago State and Liberty also accepted invitations to join the OVC as affiliate members for the 2023 season, bringing the total number of schools in the league to eight in its inaugural run.

The league will grow to nine in 2024 when Western Illinois joins the OVC as a full member across all sports.





Husky Coaching Spotlight:

Mary-Ellen Hall

The number of current collegiate coaches and administrators who can say they have been present for more than three decades of an athletic department's history is relatively small. Houston Christian University (HCU) has three such coaches on its staff, but it's head softball coach since 1992 and Senior Woman Administrator (SWA), Mary-Ellen Hall, boasts the longest tenure.

Hall found her way to, then, Houston Baptist University coming out of high school at a time when the University didn't sponsor collegiate softball. She attended school, participated in intramurals and played in summer softball leagues. It was intramurals that eventually landed her a spot on the Huskies' volleyball team when the program was started in her junior year.

Hall was approached by Coach Jennifer Ferguson about trying out for the volleyball team and responded, "I don't jump. No." Hall ended up earning a spot on the inaugural

volleyball squad for the 1986 season. She spent two years with the volleyball program before graduating in 1988. It was around the time of her graduation that it was announced the school was starting a softball program.

"I was about to graduate, and didn't really know what I was going to do," said Hall. "I thought I was going to be a sports psychologist. I didn't have any big plans. The school announced softball and I thought I could get my master's and do that at the same time. So, I walked into David Swonke's office and told him my background in softball and he said, 'Great. You're the assistant.' And the rest is history."

At the time, HBU was a member of the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) Division-I Trans-America Athletic Conference and the fledgling softball program was to start play in less than 12 months for the spring 1989 season. Swonke, who was the men's soccer coach, didn't make it to opening day and Dr. Les Saunders took over as head softball coach and Hall's boss.

"Being a coach, it's a non-traditional SWA role. I look at it like it's supporting women athletes. It's being supportive of our female athletes and our coaches and being an advocate."

- Coach Hall

"When we first started, we played in a T-shirt and a pair of shorts," Hall said. "We played our first four years without a field on campus. That first year everybody wanted on our schedule. We travelled in a van and everything was minimal." For perspective, the Huskies now have four different pairs of uniform pants and five jerseys, with multiple combinations possible.

That first season, as an NCAA Division-I member, the Huskies went 4-24. With a year under their belt and another round of recruiting, the school also decided to transition to the NAIA ranks for the 1990 season.

"The second year, we made a pretty quick turnaround in recruiting and got some more good players in," said Hall. "Then, as we transitioned out of Division I, I think it helped. We just didn't have the things we needed to be a Division-I program."

Hall credits the recruitment of Rachelle Willhite as one of the best decisions she ever made, not just because it brought Rachelle to the Huskies' program but because it got her father, Roger Willhite involved. Willhite became an assistant coach and was responsible for building Husky Field on campus as a place for his daughter and the Huskies to play.

"That really changed a lot of things for us," said Hall. "That was the start." The on-campus facility helped jumpstart a softball program that became a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) power and enjoyed a 15-year stretch of winning seasons, including a 51-5 campaign in 2005 that ended with the Huskies ranked No. 2 in the nation.

Now, Hall stands at 880-career wins and is the second-longest tenured coach in NCAA Division I, behind only Holly Hesse at Missouri State.

In addition to her role as head coach, Hall has also served as the University's SWA for more than a decade. The SWA designation was created by the NCAA in 1981 to ensure women were involved in the male-dominated administration of college athletics. As SWA, Hall has multiple duties as a senior-level administrator on top of her coaching duties.

"Being a coach, it's a non-traditional SWA role," Hall said. "I look at it like it's supporting women athletes. It's being supportive of our female athletes and our coaches and being an advocate."

She's in regular contact with other SWAs around the Southland Conference and attends annual meetings with her league counterparts. "It's honestly fascinating. We're an open group and really share a lot, and I think that's how you grow and learn. It's really interesting going to meetings with other SWAs from the conference and being around these women who have achieved so much and seeing how they do things on their campus."

Having spent more than three decades on the HCU campus as a student, a student-athlete, a coach, a leader and an administrator, Hall has seen first-hand the growth of her sport and the opportunities college athletics can provide.

"The game of softball has grown so much and there are so many opportunities for these kids," she added. "The experiences and opportunities these kids have through sports really can help set them up for jobs and careers ahead of them. There are more opportunities for recognition of the hard work they put in. You hear the word 'empowering' a lot, but it's really true. It helps them believe what they can do and accomplish across women's sports."



A Husky Hero: *Celebrating the Service of Clay Porter*

In 1962, I was with my mother in her 1956 black and white Chevrolet Bel Air station wagon (with three on the tree) on our way to check out Houston's newest and first air-conditioned mall, Sharpstown Center. We left Robindell neighborhood and traveled down Beechnut, passing the A&P grocery store, McMahon Drugs, Wackers Five and Dime, and the Washateria. We were about half way to the mall when we passed a construction site. My mother pointed to a sign and said, "Look, they are getting ready to open a Baptist College soon, maybe you'll go there." The unenthusiastic reply from me, a grumpy six year old, "I'm never leaving home."

I first stepped foot on campus via bicycle in 1969 to play basketball in Sharp Gym with my neighborhood friends. I would later return via auto in 1974 for high school basketball practice with the Sharpstown Apollos. Our court had some issues and our coach was the brother of HBU Basketball Coach Lonnie Richards, who with his white pants, white dress shoes and a dab of Brylcreem, let us practice there. He also invited our team to come out and watch some games.

The events were well attended by the students, and we saw some really good basketball games and players. Our favorite was Robert "Babyface" Page, who later went on to play for the Harlem Globetrotters.

In Sharp, there was a stage on one end of the gym that was about six feet away from the court. During Husky basketball games, you couldn't help but notice a man

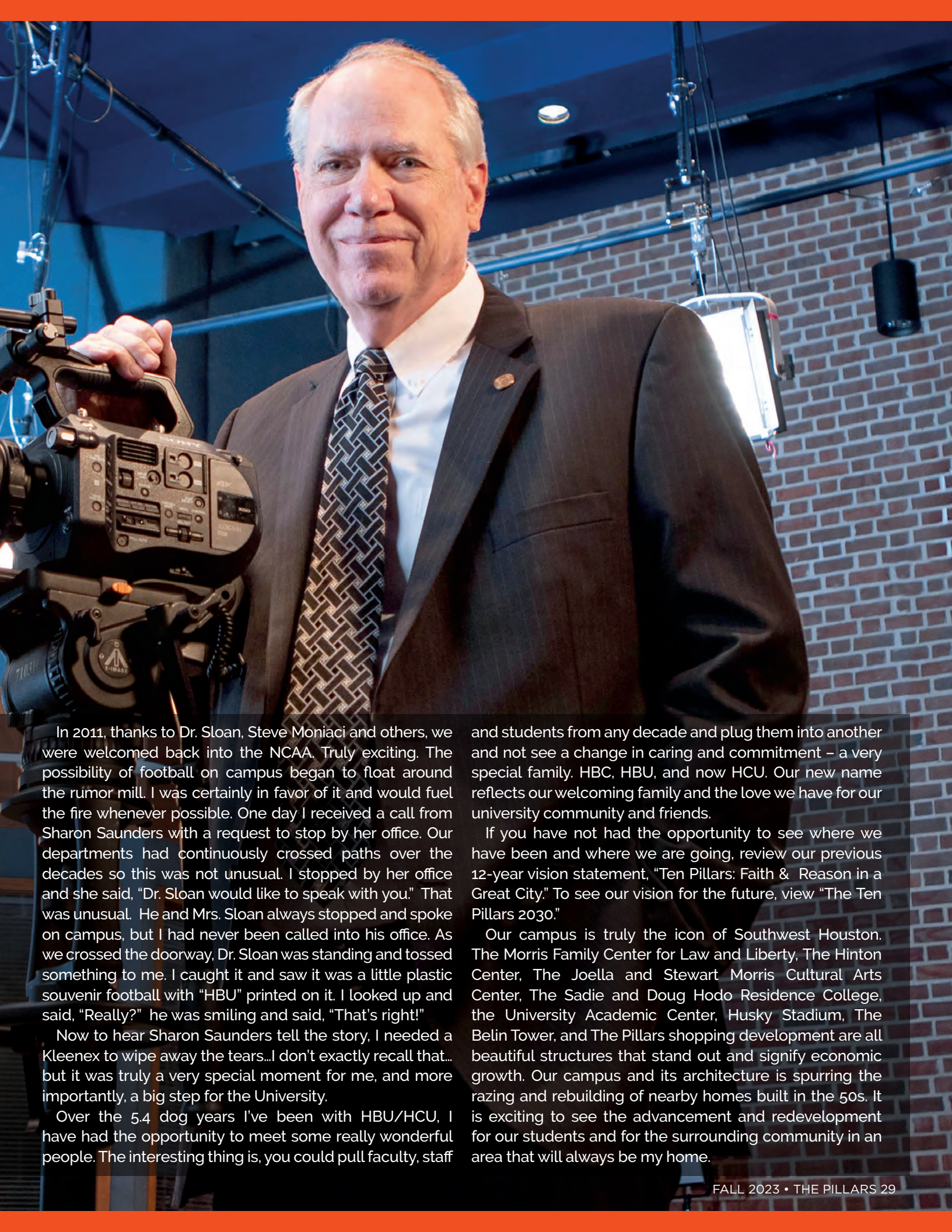
sitting in a wingback chair on the very edge of the stage who seemed to use his proximity to the court to give the referees a hard time. I found out he was the president of the school, Dr. William H. Hinton.

I returned to campus in April of 1985 and interviewed with Dr. Joan DeRooy and Dr. Gerda Smith for a position with Advancement/Professional Development. My good friend Isaac Simpson had called me earlier in the week to inform me of an opening he thought I might be interested in. I was hired and he and I would work together for the next 29 years.

During that time, we were broadcasting an MBA degree and I worked with some outstanding faculty members from the College of Business. Rusty Brooks, George Flowers, Robert Bush and Darlene and Tony Serrato were a few of the great people I met.

Robert Beauchamp, currently chairman of the board of directors of BMC Software, was one of our MBA students via television. Our sons played baseball together in Sugar Land. BMC Software would later donate a broadcast switcher to the TV Studio – an amazing gift for the students and the program.

As an adjunct professor in Mass Communications, I had the opportunity to work with some very creative students with great personalities. I always enjoyed my time spent working with them, even and after a phone call and a long conversation with the FBI asking about "suspicious characters claiming to be my students" recording in the streets of Rice Village. I still keep up with those graduates through the HCU Alumni Association and Facebook.



In 2011, thanks to Dr. Sloan, Steve Moniaci and others, we were welcomed back into the NCAA. Truly exciting. The possibility of football on campus began to float around the rumor mill. I was certainly in favor of it and would fuel the fire whenever possible. One day I received a call from Sharon Saunders with a request to stop by her office. Our departments had continuously crossed paths over the decades so this was not unusual. I stopped by her office and she said, "Dr. Sloan would like to speak with you." That was unusual. He and Mrs. Sloan always stopped and spoke on campus, but I had never been called into his office. As we crossed the doorway, Dr. Sloan was standing and tossed something to me. I caught it and saw it was a little plastic souvenir football with "HBU" printed on it. I looked up and said, "Really?" he was smiling and said, "That's right!"

Now to hear Sharon Saunders tell the story, I needed a Kleenex to wipe away the tears...I don't exactly recall that... but it was truly a very special moment for me, and more importantly, a big step for the University.

Over the 5.4 dog years I've been with HBU/HCU, I have had the opportunity to meet some really wonderful people. The interesting thing is, you could pull faculty, staff

and students from any decade and plug them into another and not see a change in caring and commitment – a very special family. HBC, HBU, and now HCU. Our new name reflects our welcoming family and the love we have for our university community and friends.

If you have not had the opportunity to see where we have been and where we are going, review our previous 12-year vision statement, "Ten Pillars: Faith & Reason in a Great City." To see our vision for the future, view "The Ten Pillars 2030."

Our campus is truly the icon of Southwest Houston. The Morris Family Center for Law and Liberty, The Hinton Center, The Joella and Stewart Morris Cultural Arts Center, The Sadie and Doug Hodo Residence College, the University Academic Center, Husky Stadium, The Belin Tower, and The Pillars shopping development are all beautiful structures that stand out and signify economic growth. Our campus and its architecture is spurring the razing and rebuilding of nearby homes built in the 50s. It is exciting to see the advancement and redevelopment for our students and for the surrounding community in an area that will always be my home.



Mission Accomplished

HCU Alum Plays Role in Artemis I Launch



Josh Erwin never imagined that he would one day play a role in a historic launch that would

enhance U.S. space exploration.

Growing up in a family of avid sports lovers, Erwin achieved his dream of playing collegiate sports when he earned a spot on the Houston Christian University (formerly Houston Baptist University) Husky football team.

A talented student-athlete who played safety on the Husky Football Team, Erwin successfully mastered his studies, earned Southland Conference All-Academic Team honors and grew in his faith during his time in college.

He credits the passion that HCU professors Dr. Gardo Blado and Dr. James Claycomb shared for the field of physics for inspiring him to change his major from pre-engineering to physics.

"I was always intrigued with discovery and creative investigation and enjoyed being able to use a series of

processes and techniques to solve problems," said Erwin, a graduate of Alvin High School.

His academic preparation at HCU paved the way for Erwin to carve out a successful career at NASA where he began working as an engineer creating simulation models used to train flight controllers and astronauts. A year later, he was promoted to flight controller in Mission Control before playing a pivotal role in the history-making launch of NASA's Artemis I mission last fall.

"For the first time since the 1970s, we put a human-rated spacecraft in the moon's orbit and went further from earth than any human-rated spacecraft has ever gone before. Various different systems and operations were tested and verified on this mission that have built a stepping stone for the subsequent missions that will lead to putting American boots back on the moon," said Erwin.

The HCU alum described the success of the Artemis I mission as "a monumental step for America's human spaceflight program that opened the gates for the next generation of deep space human exploration."



Looking back, he credits the foundation he received at HCU for being contributing factors to his success.

"I valued the Christ-based foundation of the university that enables both academic and spiritual growth. There are many organizations at HCU that enable this development which helped me become a better student, athlete and professional," said Erwin.

The Alvin, Texas native also attributed his alma mater's small class sizes and his ability to form relationships with his professors for his academic success.

"Instead of being one of a hundred in a class, I was given the opportunity to engage in direct communication and team coordination with my colleagues and professors on a daily basis. This helped me develop great leadership and relationship-building skills that brought great transitional value to my professional career," shared Erwin.

Beyond his academic and career achievements, Erwin credits his grandfather, Jack Mackey, for teaching him the importance of hard work and dedication, and above all, what it looks like to be a God-fearing man.

Celebrating the birth of their first son, Erwin and his wife plan to pass on those same values.

"I pray to raise him in the Gospel and cultivate his passions like many did for me," said Erwin.



Photos courtesy of NASA

Making the List

Hannah Mannion Named on Houston Business Journal 40 Under 40 List



Photo credit: Lucy Fay Photography

Houston Christian University (HCU) alumna Hannah Mannion has been named a Houston Business Journal (HBJ) Class of 2023 40 Under 40 Award honoree. An international student from Langley, England, Mannion earned an MBA from HCU in 2020 and has made a significant impact in the community serving families in need.

The annual 40 Under 40 list of honorees, chosen by HBJ staff members, recognizes the best and the brightest individuals in the business community who have made significant contributions in their respective industries. Candidates, who must be under 40 and reside in a specific 10-county area of Houston, are evaluated based on professional accomplishments, community involvement, philanthropic efforts and other exemplary qualities.

Mannion earned a double degree in educational studies and modern history from Keele University before receiving her graduate degree from HCU. She joined NestQuest, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing housing and educational stability to under-resourced families, and in less than one year was promoted to Development and Operations Manager and a year later to Chief Development Officer. Fueled by her own childhood experience of housing and education instability after a traumatic accident left her mother disabled, Mannion used her business acumen to help NestQuest grow and expand its reach in serving families in need.

She has extended her passion for serving struggling families in her new role as Development Manager for SEARCH Homeless Services, an organization that provides hope, opportunity and transformation for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Mannion has also served on the Mayor's Commission for Building and Standards.

She is honored to have been named to HBJ's 40 under 40 list and credits the foundation she received at HCU,

formerly Houston Baptist University, for being pivotal to her success.

"I really want to share this incredible honor with the school which gave me a solid foundation upon arrival to Houston as an international student," said Mannion. "The family, community and passion [HCU] provided me with, ensure I am able to serve Houston in a multitude of ways."

Mike Rome, HCU Dean of the Archie W. Dunham College of Business, commended Mannion's selection.

"What a great honor for Hannah to be named to the Houston Business Journal 40 Under 40 List. She is a thoughtful, natural leader, well-spoken with an intentional make up to give back, and as described by her father, a hard worker. We are very proud of her at the HCU Dunham College of Business for her achievement," said Rome.

Shannon Bedo, HCU Director of International & Veteran Services, is not surprised by Mannion's success.

"There are students who come and go, and there are students whom you remember forever. Hannah is one of those students whom you never forget. She was always on top of everything she needed to do, from international requirements to academics. She would check in with me often, maybe with questions or maybe just to chat. When she graduated, I knew she would move on to great things, and she has proven that correct beyond what I even imagined. Congratulations to Hannah on this prestigious award, and I pray that God continues to bless her in her ministry and career," said Bedo.

According to HBJ, this year's young professionals have faced losses, conquered language barriers, become the first in their family to graduate college, endured personal and professional challenges and overcome a variety of other obstacles to make noteworthy contributions to their community.

Alum-A-Grams

1960s

Carol Ware '69 retired after 45 years at Second Baptist School in Houston.

1970s

Rick Scarborough '72 is the President of Recover America.

Joseph Knight '74 works in Sales at HD Supply.

Robert Keptra '78 authored "Basic Sound Doctrine," a workbook for individual and group Bible Study available on Amazon.

1980s

Richard Wilcox '82 is the Care and Community Pastor for Faith Bible Church.

Mary (Menge) Brown '84 is an OR Nurse at The Woman's Hospital of Texas.

Louis G. Bruno, MBA '86 retired in 2020 after a 43-year career in sales management with Procter & Gamble, a journey that was accelerated by his education at HCU. He just finished writing his second book, "The Love of San Demetrio," which will be available at Seahillpress.com in the fall of 2023.

Joseph Edralin '86 is the Medical Director of Preemie Place at Pediatrix.

Matthew England '86 is the Alliance and Channel Executive for ADP.

Pedro Ruiz '86 is a Lawyer for Zende Del & Associates.

Scott Talbert '86 is a Teacher at Giddings High School.

Stephen Moore '87 is the Director of IES Holdings.

Cindy Tait '89 is the Senior Certified Medication Technician for Precision for Medicine.

1990s

Cindi Renae (Smith) Green '90 is an English Instructor at Tarleton State University. She has also been a freelance writer since 2007 and has published over 40 books and hundreds of articles. Check her out on Amazon.

Cynthia McDowell '90 is an Executive Assistant to the CEO & Board Liaison at American Legislative Exchange Council. She is also a professional voice actor and is cast in American Cornerstone Institute's "Star Spangled Adventures" the third episode of the Boston Tea Party (voice of Priscilla) and in an upcoming episode on Women's Right to Vote.

Carlos Munoz '90 is a Family Physician at OakBend Medical Group.

J Christy (Gessleman) Rasch '90 is a Missionary and Church Planter for Paragon Ministries International.

Dale Camperi '91 is the Owner of Camperi's Office Furniture.

Nichole Pruitt '93 is a Program Coordinator at Bayou Bend.

Holly Ray '93 was named the new Chief of Schools for Grapevine-Colleyville ISD.

Wendy (Thomas) Hinnenkamp '94 is a Business Analysis Manager for American National Insurance Company.

Tom Kennedy '94 is the COO of Precise Standards & Solutions, Inc.

Kaddie (Mahoney) Platt '94 is the Head Volleyball Coach and Health Fitness Teacher at Memorial High School.

Dora (Tordella) Rios '94 is a Licensed Professional Counselor for Houston Center for Christian Counseling.

Kara (Howe) Baker '97 is the Owner of Houston Swim Club.

Becah (Lavender) Butler '97 is the Chief Program Officer for The Brookwood Community.

Kirsten (Blakeman) Patterson '97 is an Occupational Therapist.

2000s

Sandra (Wolfe) Bickerstaff '00 is a Registered Nurse at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital.

Jon Lineberger '01 is the President of Texas for ACE Scholarships. ACE Scholarships advocates for school choice and fundraises for low-income families to send their student to the school of their choosing.

Janet Poe '01 is a LPHA/Therapist at The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD.

Dr. Charlotte Holliday '01 is a Data Analyst for Fresenius Medical Care.

Mason Mileur '02 is the Owner and MD at Austin Medical Associates.

Ramon Verduzco '02 is a Teacher for Fort Bend ISD.

Pamela Birk '03 is the Chief Talent & Business Excellence Officer for the Association for Materials Protection and Performance.

Jo Ann Fey, M.Ed. '03 was named the Superintendent for Killeen ISD.

Cynthia (Spencer) Edwards '04 is an Evaluation Specialist for Houston ISD.

Erica (Wease) Shott '08 is a Teacher and Dual Credit Instructor for CFISD.

Chinyere (Amaechi) Mbamalu '09 is a Senior Project Manager for the City of New York Department of Social Services.

Justin Wilson '09 is a Teacher and Coach for Dickinson ISD.

2010s

Silem Chavarria '11 is a Teacher in Conroe ISD.

Alina (La) Truong '11 owns Fish Bowl Poke & Pho in McKinney, TX and is in the process of opening another business in Frisco, TX.

Alfred Mascorro '12 is an Assistant Chief Nursing Officer for Rio Grande Regional Hospital.

Giovanna (Henriquez) Pennick '12 is a School Counselor for Alief ISD at Elsie Ninth Grade Center.

Chris Pinto '12 is the Vice President of Financial Consultant for Fidelity Investments.

Chloe McClain '12 is a Senior Registered Nurse at MD Anderson Cancer Center and recently won the Citation Award for Researching Nursing Practice in May 2023.

Erika (Silva) Vivas '12 is an Elementary School Librarian for Katy ISD.

Angelliki Liamis '13 is a Project Manager for ExxonMobil.

Larry Freaney '14 is the Director of Education and Assessment at Rejoice Counseling Apostolate.

Elizabeth (Decker) Humphries '14 is a Choir Director for Lamar Consolidated ISD.

DeAnna McDougal '14 is the Healthy Living Director for YMCA.

Antonio T. Smith, Jr. '14, MATS '15 is the CEO of Density6.

Alum-A-Grams

Jonathan Fleming '15 is the North Houston Area Director for Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Emily (Lopez) Lee '15 is the Manager of Commercial Underwriting at Comerica Bank.

Linda (Rovira) Lopez '16 is the Quality Outcomes Specialist for Houston Methodist Hospital.

Terrell Brown '17 is a Treasury Analyst for Acutane.

Renee Gentle '17 is a Chiropractor and owner of The Gentle Chiro.

Dylan Harriger '17 is an Attorney for Halloran Sage.

Paul Roxas '17 is a Senior Account Executive for Acutane.

Joe Koenig '18 is the Product and Services Manager at Cummins Inc.

Alec Chadwick '19 is the Senior Carrier Sales Representative for Arrive Logistics.

Chace Freely '19 is a Teacher for Cypress-Fairbanks ISD.

Kimberly (Schwab) Lopez '19 is the Hospital Director for Emergency Pet Care of Texas.

Jonathan Rangel '19 is a Spanish Teacher for Waxahachie ISD.

Garry Russell '19 is a Mental Health Counselor for Real Impact Counseling.

Levi Shealy '19 is a Sales Manager at Marcus & Millichap.

2020s

Sarah (Tabor) Baker '20 is a Labor and Delivery Nurse at St. Luke's Baptist Hospital.

Aaron Gonzalez '20 is the Sr. Pharmacy Technician for The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Emily (Hernandez) Basquez '21 has been promoted to the Senior Executive Search Recruiter at Vanderbloemen Search Group.

Sarah Cruz '21 is a Broker Assistant for CRC Insurance.

Evelyn Kamau '21 is a Staff Nurse at Houston Methodist.

Sean Norman '21 is the IT Support Specialist for The Hotchkiss School.

Megan Vasquez '21 is a Special Education Teacher for Pasadena ISD.

Ashlyn Jordan Dobson '21, MEd '22 is a Teacher and Coach for Dickinson ISD.

Nicholas Belbas '22 is a Cybersecurity Analyst for Chevron.

Sebastian Calderon '22 is a Research Technician II for the Wythe Lab at Baylor College of Medicine.

Roudini "Riz" Crescini, MA '22 is an Adjunct Instructor at the University of Kitakyushu.

Catalina Elwonger '22 is a Research Technician for Baylor College of Medicine.

Olivia Estes '22 is the Visual Merchandising Specialist for Lululemon.

Janie Johnson '22 is the Director of Children's Ministry at First Montgomery Baptist Church.

Arnie Palyola '22 is the Property Manager for Nevada City Inn.

Alisson Quintanilla '22 is a Detention Officer for the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

Ginia (DeArmon) Warren '22 is the HR Director for Indus Communities.

Daylon Piper '23 is a Pastoral Assistant at University Park Baptist Church.

Andrea De Leon '23 is an Ophthalmic Technician at Today's Vision.

Jacqueline DeVoge '23 is a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology for Fort Bend ISD.

Holli Evans '23 is a full-time Educator at Lululemon.

Jeffrey Green '23 works in People and Culture for IKEA.



Josselin (Hernandez) Hovater '19 married in 2022 and moved to Idaho.

HUSKY PUPS



Shelby (Stafford) Waddell '17, MATS '19 and her husband, Chris, welcomed their second child, Eva Rae Waddell, on March 27, 2023.



Katie '15 & Gabirel '14 O'Neale welcomed their second child, Lilian Joy O'Neale, on January 9, 2023.



Ja'Lyric (Giddens) González '17 and her husband welcomed their beautiful baby boy, Blaze, into the world in April.

IN MEMORIAM



James "Jim" Whitfield Balkum, former Assistant Vice President of ITS, went to be with his Lord and Savior on July 3, 2023



Rev. Clarence Darnell Allen '97 went to be with his Lord and Savior on June 25, 2023.



Sandra June Price '68 passed away on August 17, 2022.



Robert Joseph Clary '77 passed away on March 11, 2023.



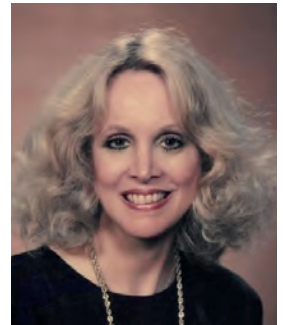
Larry Edwards '77 passed away on May 15, 2022.



Velura Ann Johnson '85 passed away on May 8, 2023.



Dr. James Tsao, former professor, passed away on January 23, 2023.



Susan Tipery-Deter '91 passed away on May 16, 2023.



Michael P. Hagen, Sr. '78 was welcomed home to the Lord on July 11, 2023.



Charles Prince '71 passed away on March 1, 2023.



Michael Vernon Morgan passed away on June 23, 2023.



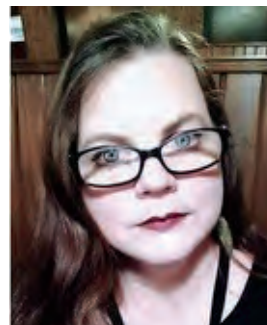
Amanda Cowan, MLA '95 passed away on August 4, 2021.



Angela Jacobson '88 passed away on January 8, 2023. She is survived by her husband, **Eric '88**, and daughter **Cheyenne MS '19**.



Gem Childress, Former Member of the Board of Trustees at HCU, passed away on June 29, 2023.



Brandice Dionne Russell Pearce Snowden passed away on June 23, 2023. She had started her Doctorate Studies at HCU in Mental Health.



Vicki Ruth Wilson '72 passed away on April 11, 2023.

IN MEMORIAM



Hank Chamberlain, Former Member of the Board of Trustees, passed away on April 22, 2023.



Dr. Elysse Peavy, former professor, passed away on October 20, 2022.



Bill Robbins, Former Member of the Board of Trustees, passed away on April 13, 2023.



Dr. John I. Brady, Jr. '71 passed away on February 14, 2023.



June Jolly '70 passed away on October 30, 2022.



Benjamin Benner '03 passed away on January 25, 2023.



William Harold Sellers, Former Member of the Board of Trustees, passed away on January 3, 2023.



Dorothy "Dot" Gaze passed away on January 3, 2023.



Marissa Dikeman '23, was a current student set to graduate this past May. She passed away on December 29, 2022.



David Lu Mao '24, was a current student set to graduate in 2024. He passed away on December 26, 2022.



Frances Feltovich '87 passed away on November 14, 2022.



Renee Griffin '70 passed away on November 18, 2022.



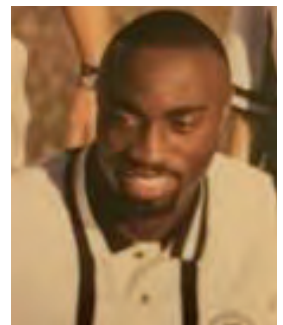
Warren Dexter Jerome Jones, M.Ed. '01, passed away on September 23, 2022.



Dr. Robert "Bob" Walker, passed away on October 25, 2022.



Jane Ann Bickham passed away on October 25, 2022.



Samuel Patrick Reagan '03 passed away on March 28, 2020.



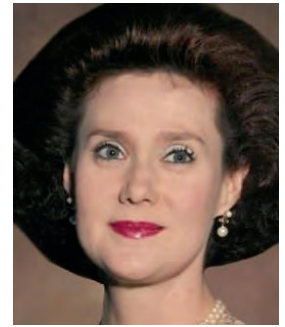
Mack Boykin,
passed away on
September 1, 2022.



Max Grigsby, Former Member
of the Board of Trustees, passed
away on July 30, 2022.



Virginia Schneider,
Member of the Guild, passed
away on July 7, 2022.



Dr. L. Brooke Tucker,
former professor, passed
away on June 7, 2022.



Ann Haigh,
passed away on
June 2, 2023.



Diana Miles '88
passed away on
May 5, 2023.



Roger Green '72
passed away on
April 25, 2023.



Donna Cross '85
passed away on
March 17, 2023.



Leah Bernicker '84
passed away on
February 16, 2023.



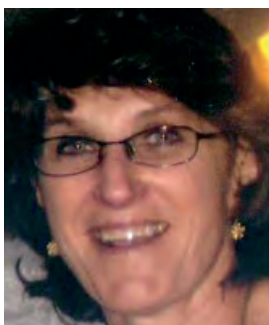
**Virginia Ann Young
Stutts** passed away
on January 8, 2023.



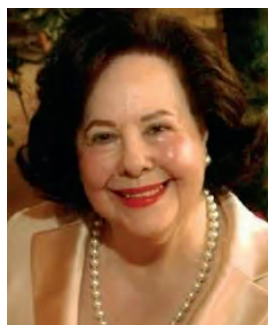
Roderick Nealy '05
passed away on
January 1, 2023.



Umesh Verma
passed away on
December 26, 2022.



Karen Cegielski '95
passed away on
December 8, 2022.



Grace Gandy
passed away on
November 17, 2022.



Marvy Finger
passed away on
October 22, 2022.



Rebecca Helmreich '82
passed away on
October 10, 2022.



The Legacy of Linda Dunham

HCU celebrates the life and legacy of Linda Dunham who passed away on April 21, 2023, at the age of 82. Mrs. Dunham, and her husband, Archie W. Dunham, have made a significant impact on the life of HCU through the years.

The couple's generosity and support have left a mark on the landscape of HCU in significant ways, including the establishment of the Linda and Archie Dunham Theater, the Archie W. Dunham College of Business, Dunham Bible Museum and Dunham Field.

HCU President Robert Sloan described Mrs. Dunham as "one of the kindest, most gracious Christian women any of us could ever have been blessed to meet and know."

"Her partnership in all the successes of Archie Dunham were known and evident to all. And her loving way of raising and nurturing her children and grandchildren has left an enduring testimony to the power, strength and influence of a Christian woman. She will be greatly missed, but we do not grieve as those who have no hope. We share with Linda a faith

in the Lord Jesus, in whose presence she lives already in Paradise," said Dr. Sloan.

Linda Dunham was an active member of The Guild and was described by members as "a Martha and a Mary ... a woman of strong faith and a wonderful prayer warrior for many, as well as a do-er. She worked tirelessly alongside her husband and her family to help others in need."

An Endowed Scholarship was established in Mrs. Dunham's name by The Archie Dunham family. The School of Nursing will be named the "Linda Dunham School of Nursing" in her honor and the new nursing complex being constructed at Houston Christian University will be named the "Dunham Family Nursing Center" in the family's honor.

The Dunhams were recognized in 2019 as HCU's "Family of the Year" for their faith, integrity, generosity and service to God's Kingdom. Their family includes Steven Dunham, Laura Shook, and Cary Dunham '93 and his wife, Jess Rogers Dunham '00, MEd '02, both alumni of HCU.

Tables and Tickets Still Available!!



**Houston
Christian
UNIVERSITY**

2023
SPIRIT of Excellence GALA

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2023

Registration **6:30PM** • Awards, Dinner & Keynote Address **7:00PM**

HOUSTON CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



We have limited VIP table sponsorships from \$5,000 to \$50,000 each. There is still the possibility of **putting together a table of 10 with individuals or couples buying \$500 tickets...**full details can be reviewed at HC.edu/spiritofexcellence.

PURCHASE TICKETS OR A TABLE For questions or assistance in making plans to attend individually or with a group, please reach out to Candace Desrosiers at 281.649.3049 or email spiritofexcellence@HC.edu.



Featuring Keynote Speaker

DALLAS JENKINS creator, producer, and director of America's "must see" Christian TV series, *The Chosen*, about the life of Christ. *The Chosen* is a fan-supported, seven-season episodic television series that creates an authentic and intimate picture of Jesus' life and ministry, seen through the eyes of the people who knew him.

Over the course of its first two seasons, the series has garnered praise from critics and fans alike for its historical and biblical accuracy, playful spirit, stirring drama, genuine humor, and disruptive impact.

When you support the Spirit of Excellence Gala, you support the University's ability to help students fund their Christian education.

ALL FUNDS RAISED BENEFIT SCHOLARSHIPS.

When you invest in scholarships, you support the calling placed on the lives of students to do the work only they can do. Houston Christian University has a proven track record of taking the dreams of students and turning them into realities that positively impact our society.

EMCEE Deborah Duncan of KHOU-11's Great Day Houston

ATTIRE Campus Chic - Jeans and Jackets



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